

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 7: The Law-Giving God

Unit 7 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"What Are God's Laws Like?

God's Laws Are Perfect!" *PFI ESV Songs 7, Tracks 3,4*

Unit 7 Bible Verse and Song: Psalm 19:7,9,11, ESV

"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; (sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned;) in keeping them there is great reward."

PFI ESV Songs 7, Tracks 5,6

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 4:

Jesus Kept God's Law Perfectly,

So by His Grace He Could Save God's People

From the time Adam and Eve became lawbreakers, people have offered sacrifices for their sins.

God's laws tell us there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. God commanded the Israelites to offer up the blood of animals when they sinned, as a sign of their desire to turn from their sins and trust in Him to save them. God received their offerings, given in repentance and faith, and allowed them to remain in fellowship with Him.

But the blood of animals could never take away the sins of a human. Only the blood of a human who lived God's laws perfectly and offered up his life in the sinner's place could do that. God, in His mercy, did just this. He sent His Son Jesus to take on human flesh and be that perfect sacrifice for sins.

Jesus was fully God and fully human. He was perfect; He was not born with a sinful heart like us. Jesus kept all of God's laws. He loved God and others perfectly. He fulfilled all of God's Law with His life. He offered up His life on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for God's people's sins. He took upon Himself the punishment they deserved that they might be forgiven their sins, once and for all. On the third day, God raised Jesus, showing that the power of sin and death had indeed been broken by His perfect sacrifice.

None of us will ever be able to earn salvation with a perfectly lived life, but each of us can have salvation through God's grace—His undeserved gift of salvation to sinners—if we come to Him in repentance and faith in Jesus.

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 4 Bible Verse: 1 Peter 3:18

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God."

CASE STORY

Exodus 25-31, 35-40 Leviticus, Numbers

Our story is called:

The Case of the Torn Curtain.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:

1. What was behind this special curtain? Who got to go behind it to do what?
2. Who tore this curtain? What did it mean?

This story takes place in Old Testament times, at Mt. Sinai, about 140 years before Jesus lived on earth.

It was New Year's Day and the people of Israel were celebrating! After months of hard work, all the parts to the Tabernacle were finished! Moses gathered all the people to watch this special tent go up. First Moses draped the huge sheet of beautiful, handmade fabric over the gold-covered wooden frame that made up the Tabernacle's walls and roof. How exquisite was the fabric, woven out of finely twisted linen and embroidered with mighty cherubim in blue, scarlet and purple! Then Moses covered up the beautiful fabric with protective layers of goat's hair, rams' skin dyed blood red, and finally the waterproof hides of sea cows. The Tabernacle was up! Now it was time to fill it with all the special things the LORD had commanded them to make.

First, there was the golden Ark of the Covenant, containing the covenant that the LORD had made with the Israelites. Moses carried it into the tent and set it in place in the very back. Then he put up a curtain woven with beautiful cherubim across the tent to separate the space where the Ark was from the rest of the tent. This tiny space was called the Most Holy Place. There, between the two golden cherubim that bent over the top of the Ark's cover, would the LORD's presence dwell especially with His people. Only the high priest would be allowed in there, and he only once a year with a special blood sacrifice. The LORD was holy; His people were sinful lawbreakers. His hatred of sin would break out in judgment against their sinfulness and they would die, if He did not stay separate from them. So He did. His special presence would dwell with them, but only from behind the curtain.

After putting up the shielding curtain, Moses filled the rest of the tent—called the Holy Place—with other things the LORD had them make. There was the golden Table with the twelve, freshly baked loaves of the Bread of Presence (one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel). There was the golden Lampstand with its seven almond-bud-shaped

lamps which must always stay lit; and, the golden Altar of Incense which would burn incense and oil as the priests prayed for the people.

Then Moses covered the entrance to the Holy Place with another curtain woven with cherubim. It must be shielded from the people, too. Now only the priests would be allowed to go in. The LORD was holy; His people were sinful lawbreakers. His hatred of sin would break out in judgment against their sinfulness and they would die, if He did not stay separate from them. His special presence would dwell with them, but only through priests, from behind the curtain.

There was still more to be done. Moses set up the two things that stood outside of the Tent. He placed the Altar of Burnt Offering near the entrance to the Tabernacle and offered burnt offerings and grain offerings on it, just as the LORD commanded him. Then he placed the Bronze Basin with special water for the priests and Moses to wash their hands and feet in before entering the tent or approaching the Altar of Burnt Offerings. Last of all, Moses set up the courtyard around the Tabernacle and the Altar. He put up a curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. Even the courtyard must be shielded. The people could come in the courtyard, but only according to certain rules the LORD gave them. His special presence would dwell with them, but according to certain rules, through priests and from behind the curtain.

At last the tabernacle was ready. It was time for the LORD's presence to dwell there among them. The people watched amazed as the cloud of God's Shekinah glory—his visible Presence— covered the Tent of Meeting and filled the Tabernacle. Not even Moses could enter the tent because the cloud had settled upon it and the glory of the LORD filled it. God's presence had really come to dwell among His people in a special way—but only, always, according to certain rules, through priests and from behind the curtain.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Prepare the Tabernacle, the priests and the people so that they can worship Me and fellowship with Me. Make sure they prepare exactly as I tell them to. I am a holy God. My hatred of sin will break out in judgment against their sinfulness if they do not," He warned. Moses listened carefully to the LORD's instructions. There was much to be done! There were special washings in the Bronze Basin for the priests. Then, special clothes to wear. White linen for the priests. An special hat, blue robe

and vest (called an ephod) with twelve beautiful jewels in it for Aaron, the high priest—one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were special sacrifices for the sins of the priests, too, so that they could enter the Tabernacle without God's hatred of sin judging them. The LORD accepted these sacrifices, given in repentance and faith, and counted the priests as acceptable in His holy sight. Now they were ready to make offerings to Him for the people.

When Moses had done everything the LORD commanded, the LORD began to speak to Aaron. "Now you and your sons are ordained as priests," the LORD told him. "In seven days, gather all the people together again right here at the entrance to the Tabernacle. On that day, you will offer sacrifices to dedicate the people to Me and I will appear to all of them. But, you must do exactly what I tell you to do if the people are to worship Me and have fellowship with Me from behind the curtain."

Seven days came and went. All the people gathered together at the entrance to the Tabernacle. Once more sacrifices needed to be made. Sacrifices for the sins of the priests and for the sins of the people, too. Bulls, rams, goats, grain and olive oil were laid on the Altar as offerings to the LORD, exactly as He told them to.

Then Moses and Aaron went into the Holy Place to meet with the LORD, to ask Him to accept the sacrifices of the people and fulfill His promise to appear to the people. When they finished praying, they came out and Aaron, the high priest faced the people and blessed them something like this: "May the LORD bless you and keep; May the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; The LORD [accept you] and give you peace."

As soon as Aaron finished speaking, the LORD answered his prayer of blessing for the people, for immediately glory of the LORD appeared in dazzling brilliance to all the people. Before their very eyes, blazing fire came out from the LORD's Presence and consumed the offering on the altar in one big blast! When the people saw it, they shouted for joy. The LORD had accepted their sacrifices, given in repentance and faith. They fell flat, face down on the ground and worshiped Him. He was the holy God; they were sinful lawbreakers. And yet, the LORD had made a way for them to worship Him and be in fellowship with Him. And on this very special day, had even shown a little of His splendid, glorious presence to them that was usually only hidden behind the curtain.

The bulls, rams, oxen and goats sacrificed for the priests and the people that day were the first of thousands and thousands of animals offered to the LORD over the years. But, no matter how many animals were offered it was never enough to pay for the people's sins and never enough to take away the curtain that stood between the holy God and His sinful people. No. There was only one sacrifice that could do that: the sacrifice of a perfect life given up in place of sinful people. There was no one on earth who could do this, but there was someone in heaven! God, Himself!

So God the Father sent His Son, Jesus into the world. He was human like all other people, yet He was no sinful lawbreaker. He lived a perfect life. He could be the sacrifice that was needed; and that's just what He chose to do. He offered up His lifeblood on the cross to His Father as the perfect substitute sacrifice for sinful people. God the Father poured out all of His wrath onto Jesus for God's people's sins until Jesus had paid for every last one. And because He was fully God as well as fully human, there was no end to the power of His blood. His perfect blood was enough not just to save one of God's people, but ALL of God's people-- all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as Savior.

And you know, the most amazing thing happened when Jesus died on the cross that Friday, two thousand years ago. Right when Jesus finished bearing all of God's people's sins, He cried out, "It is finished!" and died. And at that very moment, the curtain that separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was ripped in two by unseen hands. Why? Because no longer was the curtain needed to protect God's people from God's wrath against their sins. No longer could they only have fellowship with Him from behind the curtain through priests. He was still the holy God; and they were still sinful lawbreakers. But now Jesus had completely satisfied the holy wrath of God against His people's sin. They could have close fellowship with God because of what He had freely done for them.

The sins of God's people were now completely paid for by Jesus. Death could no longer hold Him in the grave! Jesus rose from the dead and went up to heaven to reign and to send the Holy Spirit to dwell in the hearts of God's people. No longer would there be fellowship from behind the curtain. Now it would be fellowship from inside the heart, and one day even face to face with God forever.

Our Bible Truth is: Jesus Kept God's Laws Perfectly, So by His Grace He Could Save God's People

Our Bible Verse is: 1 Peter 3:18

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God."

Yes, as wonderful as the fellowship of God's Holy Spirit in their hearts, God's people look forward most of all to the day when they will see Him face to face. When they die, their spirits go to be with Him in heaven. Then on the wonderful day when Jesus comes back, He will give them all wonderful new bodies that rise up from their graves and join with their spirits. They will live in the new heaven and earth God will make for them. And there, they will not just have fellowship with Him in their hearts by His Holy Spirit. No. On that day, they will live with Him, face-to-face in His glorious presence. Perfectly happy forever and ever.

Let's praise God for sending Jesus as the once-and-for-all final sacrifice for the sins of His people. Let's ask Him to help us to trust Him as the only Substitute for our sins. Let's ask Him to send His Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts that we might have fellowship of His presence even now, and we might listen, do and walk in His holy ways all of our lives. And one day, go to be with Him forever.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU	BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: Only the blood of a human who lived God’s laws perfectly and offered it up in a sinner’s place could pay for a sinner’s sins. Only then could he be forgiven. Answer: True. Praise God! He did just that for sinners through Jesus!</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions a. What was behind this special curtain? Who got to go behind it to do what? Answer The Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies--the special dwelling place of the LORD’s presence with His people. Only the high priest, once a year, to make a special offering for the sins of the people.</p> <p>b. Who tore this curtain? What did it mean? Answer We don’t know exactly, but God was the one who caused it to be torn. It meant that Jesus had given himself as the full payment for the sins of God’s people and made the way of salvation.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: 1 Peter 3:18 “For ___ also suffered ___ for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring ___ to God.” Answers: Christ; once; us.</p>	<p>Amazing Grace <i>PFI ESV Songs 7, Tracks 17,18</i></p> <p>Verse 1 Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind but now I see.</p> <p>Verse 2 ‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed!</p> <p>Words: John Newton Music: Virginia Harmony: arr. Edwin O. Excell</p> <p>We would all be lost in our sins and rebellion forever, if it were not for God sending His Son Jesus. Jesus kept God’s laws perfectly and offered up Himself as the perfect sacrifice needed for sin. Then He gives to all who repent of their sins and trust in Him the amazingly gracious gift of salvation. He first gives them “sight” to make them aware of their sinfulness and to fear His judgment, then as they turn to Him, He relieves their fears by taking away their guilt the hour they believe.</p>
AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY	BIBLE VERSE SONG
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being the Maker of the way to true and everlasting fellowship with You through Jesus.</p> <p>C God, we confess that we, like the Israelites, are sinners who cannot stand before You, the holy God. We need a Savior!</p> <p>T God, we thank You that now sinners like us can have close fellowship with You, not behind a curtain, but in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit. Thank You for providing salvation through Jesus!</p> <p>S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Give us close fellowship with You!</p>	<p>For Christ Suffered for Sins <i>PFI ESV Songs 7, Track 19</i></p> <p>For Christ suffered once for sins, once for sins, The righteous for the unrighteous that he might bring us to God, Bring us to God, For Christ suffered to bring us to God. First Peter Three, eighteen.</p> <p>Words: 1 Peter 3:18 ESV Music: Constance Dever ©2015</p> <p>Jesus chose to suffer and die on the cross as the perfect substitute for all who turn from their sins and trust in Him as Savior. He alone is righteous. He alone kept God’s laws perfectly, so he alone could bring us to God. He knew none of us could never pay for our own sins. We would never be able to come to God on our own. So He chose to give up His life to give them salvation by His grace--His free gift given to undeserving sinners, like you and me. Yes, He would bring us to God.</p>