

Leviticus 16 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[Another Overview Chart of Leviticus](#) - Charles Swindoll
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| LEVITICUS THE BOOK OF SANCTIFICATION AND WORSHIP Adapted and modified from C. Swindoll | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Leviticus 1-17 | Leviticus 18-27 |
| The Way to God Access | The Walk with God Lifestyle |
| The Approach: Offerings | Practical Guidelines |

| | |
|--|--|
| The Representative: Priest | Chronological Observances |
| The Laws: Cleansing Physically & Spiritually | Severe Consequences Verbal promises |
| Ritual for Worship Worshipping a Holy God | Practical for Walking Living a Holy Life |
| Location: Mt Sinai for one full year | |
| Theme: How sinful humanity can approach and worship a holy God | |
| Key Verses: Lev 17:11, 19:2, 20:7-8 | |
| Christ in Leviticus: In every sacrifice, every ritual, every feast | |
| Time: about 1446BC | |
| Key words: <p>Holy - 90x/76v (with forms of the root for holy 152x) more than in any OT book (Lev 2:3, 10; 5:15f; 6:16f, 25-27, 29f; 7:1, 6; 8:9; 10:3, 10, 12f, 17; 11:44-45; 14:13; 16:2-4, 16f, 20, 23f, 27, 32f; 19:2, 8, 24; 20:3, 7, 26; 21:6-8, 22; 22:2-4, 6f, 10, 14-16, 32; 23:2-4, 7f, 20f, 24, 27, 35-37; 24:9; 25:12; 27:9f, 14, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32f);</p> <p>Atonement - 51x/45v - (Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7f; 14:18-21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10f, 16-18, 24, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:27f; 25:9)</p> <p>Offering - 326x/199v (Lev 1:2-4, 6, 9f, 13f, 17; 2:1-16; 3:1-3, 5-9, 11f, 14, 16; 4:3, 7f, 10, 14, 18, 20f, 23-26, 28-35; 5:6-8, 15f, 18f; 6:5f, 9f, 12, 14f, 17f, 20f, 23, 25, 30; 7:1f, 5, 7-11, 13-16, 18, 20f, 25, 29f, 32-35, 37f; 8:2, 14, 18, 21, 27-29, 31; 9:2-4, 7f, 10, 12-18, 21f, 24; 10:12-17, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:10, 12-14, 17, 19-22, 24f, 28, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15, 24f, 27; 17:4f, 8; 19:5, 21f, 24; 21:6, 21; 22:12, 18, 21-23, 25, 27; 23:8, 12-14, 25, 27, 36-38; 24:7, 9; 27:9, 11)</p> <p>Tent of meeting - 43x/41v (Lev 1:1, 3, 5; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4f, 7, 14, 16, 18; 6:16, 26, 30; 8:3f, 31, 33, 35; 9:5, 23; 10:7, 9; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7, 16f, 20, 23, 33; 17:4ff, 9; 19:21; 24:3)</p> <p>Law - 16x/16v; (Lev 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1, 7, 11, 37; 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57; 15:32)</p> <p>Sacrifice - 41x/34v; (Lev 3:1, 3, 6, 9; 4:10, 26, 31, 35; 7:11-13, 15-18, 20f, 29, 32, 34, 37; 9:4, 18; 10:14; 17:5, 7f; 19:5; 22:21, 24, 27, 29; 23:19, 37)</p> <p>Anoint - 17x/15v; (Lev 4:3, 5, 16; 6:20, 22; 7:36; 8:2, 10-12, 30; 10:7; 16:32; 21:10, 12)</p> <p>Sin - 111x/90v (Lev 4:2f, 8, 14, 20-29, 32-35; 5:1, 5-13, 15-18; 6:2-4, 17, 25f, 30; 7:7, 37f; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16-19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15f, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:17, 22; 20:20; 21:21; 22:9; 23:19; 24:15; 25:1, 27; 26:18, 21, 24, 28, 46; 27:34)</p> <p>Iniquity - 10x/8v (Lev 7:18; 16:21f; 19:8; 26:39-41, 43)</p> <p>Death - 17/16v (Lev 16:1; 19:20; 20:2, 4, 9-11, 15f, 27; 24:16f, 21; 27:29)</p> <p>Die - 15x/15v (Lev 7:24; 8:35; 10:2, 6f, 9; 11:39; 15:31; 16:1f, 13; 17:15; 20:20; 22:8f)</p> <p>Blood - 86x/65v (Lev 1:5, 11, 15; 3:2, 8, 13, 17; 4:5-7, 16-18, 25, 30, 34; 5:9; 6:27, 30; 7:2, 14, 26f, 33; 8:15, 19, 23f, 30; 9:9, 12, 18; 10:18; 12:4f, 7; 14:6, 14, 17, 25, 28, 51f; 15:19, 25; 16:14f, 18f, 27; 17:4, 6, 10-12; 18:6, 12f, 17; 19:26; 20:18f; 25:49)</p> <p>Sabbath - 13x/10v (Lev 16:31; 23:3, 11, 15f, 32; 24:8; 25:2, 4, 6)</p> <p>The LORD spoke to Moses - 28x/28v - (Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1)</p> <p>Jubilee - 20x/18v (Lev 25:10-13, 15, 28, 30f, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27:17-18, 21, 23-24)</p> <p>Consecrate - 24x/23v - (Lev 6:18, 27; 7:35; 8:10-12, 15, 30; 11:44; 12:4; 16:19; 20:7; 21:8, 10; 25:10; 27:14-19, 22, 2)</p> <p>Covenant - 10x/8v (Lev 2:13; 24:8; 26:9, 15, 25, 42, 44f)</p> <p>Fat - 52x/33v (Lev 3:3f, 9f, 14-17; 4:8f, 19, 26, 31, 35; 6:12; 7:3f, 23-25, 30f, 33; 8:16, 25f; 9:10, 19f, 24; 10:15; 16:25; 17:6)</p> | |

Leviticus 16:1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the LORD and died.

- **after the death of the two sons of Aaron** Lev 10:1-2
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Lev 23:27-32 gives a summation of the Day of Atonement...

Lev 23:27 "On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the **day of atonement**; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD. 28 "Neither shall you do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God. 29 "If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. 30 "As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. 31 "You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. 32 "It is to be a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your sabbath."

Now the LORD spoke to Moses - The laws were revealed not to the priests but directly to Moses, who thus functioned as mediator between the priests and God.

After the death of the two sons - This historical context signifies that the rules regarding the Day of Atonement were revealed to Moses to prevent other priests meeting a similar fatal fate while serving the tabernacle.

Remember: The theme of Leviticus is "Be holy for I am holy." And so in this very critical chapter on The Day of Atonement, Moses begins with a reminder of the unholy, of how one is NOT to approach our Holy God...

Lev 10:1 Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

Leviticus chapters 11–15 explain the difference between clean and unclean because a basic purpose of the priesthood was to teach the people the word of God. Making offerings and leading worship were not the priests' sole functions. Many of us think of the priests Israel primarily as the custodians of the sacrificial system, but from the beginning of the priesthood, God commanded them to instruct the people.

Lev 10:10 and so as to make a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean, 11 and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses."

New Living = 10 You are to distinguish between what is holy and what is ordinary, what is ceremonially unclean and what is clean. 11 And you must teach the Israelites all the laws that the LORD has given through Moses."

Gordon Wenham draws an interesting conclusion regarding the Day of Atonement...

The main purpose of the day of atonement ceremonies is to cleanse the sanctuary from the pollutions introduced into it by the unclean worshippers (cf. Lev 16:16, 18-19). Without a purpose such as this there would have been little point in the high priest putting his life at risk by entering into the holy of holies. The aim of these rituals is to make possible God's continued presence among his people. (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament - Leviticus)

Key Words in Leviticus 16:

Atonement - 15x in 12v - Lev 16:6 Lev 16:10 Lev 16:11 Lev 16:16 Lev 16:17 Lev 16:18 Lev 16:24 Lev 16:27 Lev 16:30 Lev 16:32 Lev 16:33 Lev 16:34

Make atonement for (self, etc) - Lev 16:6, 11, 17, 24, 33, 34;

Goat(s) - 14x in 12v - Lev 16:5 Lev 16:7 Lev 16:8 Lev 16:9 Lev 16:10 Lev 16:15 Lev 16:18 Lev 16:20 Lev 16:21 Lev 16:22 Lev 16:26 Lev 16:27

Lot(s) - 5x in 3v - Lev 16:8, 9, 10.

Offer/Offering - 20x in 10v - Lev 16:3 Lev 16:5 Lev 16:6 Lev 16:9 Lev 16:11 Lev 16:15 Lev 16:20 Lev 16:24,

Lev 16:25 Lev 16:27

Holy - 12x in 11v - Lev 16:2 Lev 16:3 Lev 16:4 Lev 16:16 Lev 16:17 Lev 16:20 Lev 16:23 Lev 16:24 Lev 16:27
Lev 16:32 Lev 16:33

Aaron - 9x in 9v - Lev 16:1 Lev 16:2 Lev 16:3 Lev 16:6 Lev 16:8 Lev 16:9 Lev 16:11 Lev 16:21 Lev 16:23

Before the Lord - Lev 16:7, 10, 12, 13, 18, 30.

Permanent statue - Lev 16:29, 31, 34

A C Gaebelein's outline of Leviticus 16:

1. The command how Aaron was to enter (Lev 16:1-5)
2. The presentation of the offerings (Lev 16:6-10)
3. The blood carried into the Holiest (Lev 16:11-19)
4. The scapegoat (Lev 16:20-22)
5. Aaron's burnt offering and that for the people (Lev 16:23-25)
6. The ceremony outside of the camp (Lev 16:26-28)
7. Cleansed and resting (Lev 16:29-34)

The day of atonement was for the full atonement of all the sins, transgressions and failures of Israel, so that Jehovah in His holiness might tabernacle in their midst. On that day alone the Holiest was opened for the high priest to enter in. That all connected with this day is the shadow of the real things to come, and that in the New Testament we have the blessed substance, is well known. The Epistle to the Hebrews is in part the commentary to Israel's great day of atonement.

NOW THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSES AFTER THE DEATH OF THE TWO SONS OF AARON reference to death of Nadab & Abihu in Lev 10:1-2 shows historical character of the Leviticus & also serves to frame Lev 11-15 on uncleanness as an introduction to Lev 16. Conclusion from Lev 11-15 = uncleanness was inevitable -- hence need for cleansing Day of Atonement, so that Yahweh could continue to dwell among His people.

Why does this reference stand at the head of the regulation for the Day of Atonement? The reason is to sternly warn the high priest to conduct himself properly when he enters the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement so that he does not lose his life as they did (Lev 22:2). The high priest may not enter "the Holiest Place," any time he wishes but only on specified occasions like the Day of Atonement.

WHEN THEY HAD APPROACHED THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD: qarab = coming very near into intimate proximity, close enough to see, speak, touch

AND DIED: Most likely these specific instructions, ordinances, and rituals for the great Day of Atonement were made essential after the incident of the death of Nadab and Abihu, who intruded into the Holy Place and were slain by the direct judgment of God. The great Day of Atonement offered an explanation for the sudden death of these two men. The utter holiness of God and the utter sinfulness of man are made clear in this service. There is a great gulf between God and man, but it is not fixed.

DAY OF ATONEMENT POSSIBLE ORDER OF EVENTS

The following sequence describes the activities of the High-Priest and those who assisted him on the Day of Atonement:

THE INITIAL SECTION DEALS WITH THE HIGH PRIEST ATONING FOR HIMSELF (Something Jesus, the better Priest, did not have to do)

1) Lev 16:17- No one allowed in Tent of Meeting on that day except the High Priest

Why is this important? The fact that the High Priest performed the work of atonement ALONE, pictures Jesus as the One Who alone accomplished full and final atonement for mankind. Jesus quoted Zechariah's prophecy that He would be left alone declaring to His disciples "You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED.'" (Mk 14:27, Mt 26:31 both taken from Zech 13:7) In John Jesus declared "Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is

with Me." (Jn 16:32) Isaiah's prophecy also seems to allude to Jesus being left alone to accomplish the work of redemption, asking "who shall declare His generation?" (Isaiah 53:8). Henry Morris explains that this phrase " means "Who of His generation shall declare for Him?" Even His disciples forsook Him and fled." Mark records that at Jesus' arrest "they all left Him and fled." (Mark 14:50). Even in Gethsemane He was alone in agonizing prayer (see Lk 22:43, 44, 45, 46).

3) Lev 16:3 - "Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering." - This was preparation for the sin offering and burnt offering for himself and his family.

Comment: This is a difficult verse to interpret in my opinion. If one interprets the term "**holy place**" as the *sanctuary area* in general (as in NIV, NLT), then this would seem to be a description of Aaron simply bringing the bull and ram into the fenced area. And since these were animals for himself and his family, he would have to provide them.

4) Lev 16:4 - The High Priest bathed and changed - Presumably he would first bathe (at the bronze laver in the courtyard), and then put on the holy linen tunic and linen undergarments.

Where did he change his glorious garments for the more humble attire? Most likely (in order to be discreet) he change his clothing in the tabernacle (behind the curtains leading into the Holy Place). In Lev 16:23 he changes in the Tent of Meeting which supports this first change as occurring in the same location. In any event, he was certainly outside of the view of the people.

Even as the Jewish High Priest changed garments, so too did Jesus. Jesus Who "existed in the form of God" (Php 2:6-note) **laid aside** His majesty and glory before He "**clothed Himself**" with flesh and **blood** (cp Heb 2:14-note), which was necessary because it was only by the payment of His **blood** that eternal life would be made possible for all who would believe in Him.

These less ornate, "humbler" garments were required for the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:11-14). For a description of the priests' normal clothing, see Ex 28:1-43 and Lev 8:6-19.

John 19:23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the **tunic**; now the **tunic** (Lxx = chiton) was seamless, woven in one piece.

Comment: The **tunic** in Greek is **chiton**, an undergarment worn next to the skin (a frock) and over it was usually worn a mantle which was laid aside in the house. Chiton is the Greek word used to translate **tunic** in Lev 16:4.

This more humble attire reminds us of Jesus' humbling of Himself and then putting on His majestic clothing at His exaltation...

Phil 2:5-note **Have this attitude** (present imperative - the only way this attitude can be our habitual practice is by yielding to and relying upon the Holy Spirit to give us that desire and the power to follow through [Php 2:13-note] and NOT by relying on our own strength!) in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself** by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

5) Lev 16:5, 7-8 - The High Priest "shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats and one ram for a burnt offering." He **cast lots for the two goats** (Lev 16:7, 8), one of which will be offered in step #9 below.

Note that at this time, the High Priest would have 5 animals (bull and ram for himself; 2 goats and ram for the people).

From the congregation (emphasizes the national participation in this atonement as well as a picture of Jesus Who came from the nation of Israel, from the tribe of Judah, Mt 1:1-2)

6) Lev 16:11 - High Priest offers his sin offering (bull) for himself and his household.

Comment: This act clearly separates the human priesthood from the priesthood of Jesus who was without sin. The writer of Hebrews says...

Heb 5:1-3-**note** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; 2 he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is **beset with weakness**; 3 and because of it he is **obligated to offer sacrifices for sins**, as for the people, so also for **himself**.

FIRST ENTRANCE INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES

7) Lev 16:12-14 - High Priest takes coals from the outer bronze altar where the bull has been offered and adds **incense**. Lev 16:14 begins with "*moreover*" (NAS), "*and*" (ESV, Lxx), which seems to tie this verse with the previous two passages. It follows that after putting coals and incense inside the veil, the High Priest also takes in the bull's blood to **sprinkle on and in front of the mercy seat** (for himself and his household).

9) Lev 16:15 - The High Priest then **sacrifices one goat** as a sin offering for the people.

SECOND ENTRANCE INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES

10) Lev 16:15-16 - The High Priest enters inside the veil a second time with the blood of the goat to be sprinkled on the mercy seat and in front. This act accomplishes atonement for the **holy place** (HCSB, NIV = "Most Holy Place", NAS, ESV, NKJV, NET = "*Holy Place*," NAB, NJB = "sanctuary",), the **"tent of meeting"** (NLT = "the entire Tabernacle") and for the **people**.

11) Lev 16:16, 18, 19 - The High Priest goes out of the Holy of holies and makes atonement for the **altar** by placing blood from the bull (for himself) and blood of the goat (for the congregation) on the four horns of the altar.

12) Lev 16:20-21 - High Priest offers the live goat (scapegoat) by placing both hands on its head and confessing the sins of Israel

13) Lev 16:22 - Scapegoat is dispatched to the wilderness (Lev 16:20-22).

14) Lev 16:23 - The High Priest goes into the Tent of Meeting, removes his linen garments and leaves them lying there.

15) Lev 16:24 - The High Priest bathes again "in a holy place", puts on his priestly garb and comes forth (NIV - "comes out" - suggesting he is in an enclosure hidden from view while he is bathing) to "offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people."

This picture of leaving the linen garb may foreshadow Jesus leaving His burial clothes in the tomb as recorded by John...

Simon Peter therefore also came, following him (John), and entered the tomb; and he beheld the **linen wrappings** lying there, and the face-cloth, which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. (Jn 20:6-7)

16) Lev 16:25 - HP offers up in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar.

17) Lev 16:26 - the goat keeper cleansed himself outside the camp.

18) Lev 16:27 - The bull-and-goat sin offerings were carried outside the camp to be burned.

Comment: A picture of Jesus crucified outside the city gate. **MacArthur** says "This represents the historical reality of Christ's death outside of Jerusalem (Heb 13:10-14)."

19) Lev 16:28 - The one who burned the sin offering cleansed himself.

Robert Morgan - There are three major ways in Leviticus in which we learn of Jesus Christ. First, through the sacrifices and offerings prescribed in chapters 1-7. Second, through the duties of the High Priest who prefigured Christ. Third, in the Feasts and Festivals of ancient Israel, which are described later in this book.

I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God:

He bears them all and frees us
From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in his blood most precious,
Till not a spot remains

William MacDonald Notes on Leviticus 16 - The greatest, day on the Jewish calendar was the Day of Atonement, when the high priest went into the Most Holy Place with sacrificial blood to make atonement for himself and for the people. It fell on the tenth day of the seventh month, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles. Although the Day of Atonement is usually listed along with the feasts of Jehovah, it was actually a time of tasting and solemnity (Lev 23:27-32).

It will be helpful to remember that in this chapter the Most Holy Place is called the Holy Place, and the Holy Place is called the tabernacle of the congregation (KJ V) or the tent of meeting (NASB).

The sacrilege of Nadab and Abihu forms the backdrop for these instructions (Lev 16:1). A fate similar to theirs would befall the high priest if he entered the Most Holy Place on any day other than the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:2). And on that day he must carry the blood of a bull for a sin offering and of a ram for a burnt offering (Lev 16:3).

The order of events is not easy to follow, but the following is a general outline of the ritual. First the high priest bathed and dressed in white linen garments (Lev 16:4). By way of preliminaries, he brought a bullock and a ram to the tabernacle. He would offer these for himself and his family, the bullock for a sin offering and the ram for a burnt offering (Lev 16:3). He brought two goats and a ram which he would offer for the people, the goats for a sin offering and the ram for a burnt offering (Lev 16:5). He presented the two goats before the door of the tabernacle and cast lots—one goat for Jehovah and one as a scapegoat (Lev 16:7, 8). The word translated “scapegoat” is Azazel, an obscure word which is difficult to define.

Then he killed the bullock as a sin offering for himself and his house (Lev 16:11). Next he took a censer of coals and handfuls of incense and carried them into the Most Holy Place. There he poured the incense over the live coals, causing a cloud of incense to cover the Holy Place (Lev 16:12, 13). He returned to the altar of burnt offering for some blood of the bullock, took it into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled it on top of the mercy seat and in front of it seven times (Lev 16:14). He slew the goat chosen for a sin offering (Lev 16:8), and sprinkled its blood, as he did the blood of the bullock, before and on the mercy seat (Lev 16:9, 15). This made atonement for the Most Holy Place because of the impurities of the sons of Israel (Lev 16:16). By the sprinkling of blood he also made atonement for the tabernacle and for the altar of burnt offering (Lev 16:18, 19), though the details here are not clear. Atonement started with the Most Holy Place, then worked outward to the Holy Place and finally to the brazen altar (Lev 16:15-19). After he laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat (Lev 16: 8) and confessed the sins of the people (Lev 16:10, 20, 21), a chosen man led the goat into the wilderness (Lev 16:21, 22). The two goats symbolized two different aspects of atonement: “that which meets the character and holiness of God, and that which meets the need of the sinner as to the removal of his sins.” Aaron’s laying his hands on the head of the live goat pictures the placing of the sins of Israel (and of ourselves) on the goat, to be taken away forever (Lev 16:21). The high priest bathed in “a holy place” (NASB), perhaps at the laver, then put on his garments of glory and beauty (Lev 16:23, 24a). Jewish tradition says that the white linen garments were never worn again. “The high priest, next offered two rams as burnt offerings, one for himself and the other for the people (Lev 16:24b). He turned the fat of the two sin offerings on the altar while their flesh, hides, and refuse were being burned outside the camp (Lev 16:25, 27). Even the skin of the burnt offering, which usually went to the priest (Lev 7:8), was to be burned. According to the Talmud, the high priest went into the Holy of Holies after the evening sacrifice to bring out the censer.

From the above it will be seen that the high priest entered the Most Holy Place at least four times. This does not contradict Hebrews 9:7-12, where the thought is that there was only one day in the year when the high priest could enter.

Despite the solemn ceremonies of this day, its failure to adequately deal with sins was written across it in the words “once every year” (Lev 16:34). “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb. 10:4 NASB). In vivid contrast is the work of Christ, by which human sins are totally removed instead of being merely covered for a year!

Leviticus 16:2 The LORD said to Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, or he will die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.

- **he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil** Lev 23:27 Ex 26:33,34 30:10 40:20,21 1Ki 8:6 Heb 9:3,7,8 Heb 10:19,20

- **or he will die:** Lev 16:13 8:35 Nu 4:19 17:10 Mt 27:51 Heb 4:14-16 10:19
- **I will appear in the cloud :** Ex 40:34,35 1Ki 8:10-12 2Ch 5:14
- **over the mercy seat:** Ex 25:17-22)
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Not enter at any time - This was a divine appointment and not a matter of personal preference as emphasized by the deadly experience recalled in Lev 16:1! God wanted to make sure the priest take care in how they approached His Holy presence.

Praise God that we are under the New Covenant of grace which gives us continual access the Throne of grace! I fear we take this incredible (and incredibly costly) privilege far too lightly in modern day Christianity! (I certainly speak for myself, but my attitude is being changed as I study the great truths revealed in the book of Leviticus).

The appointed day was the 10th of 7th month (Lev 16:29; 23:26-32; 25:9; Nu 29:7-11). The Jewish calendar is described in Lev 23 where we note the importance of 7th month (our mid-Sept to mid-Oct). On the 1st day of 7th month, the trumpets were blown to announce the beginning of a new year (Rosh Hashanah Lv23:23-25). While the blowing of the trumpets announced a new year, only the shedding of blood could give the people a new beginning. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb 9:22). Then on the 10th day was the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:26-32), and this was followed by the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), on the 15th of month and lasted a week (Lv23:33-44). The death of Christ on the Cross fulfilled the Day of Atonement.

Wenham - Before the tabernacle had been built God had come to his people on Mount Sinai. Now he dwells among them in the innermost part of the sanctuary. Familiarity can breed contempt. These laws drive home the truth that God is just as holy and demands just as much reverence when he dwells permanently with Israel as on the first occasion when he appeared on Sinai (Ex. 19). (NICOT)

Promises to Israel - The approach to God was always limited, and it was never true that there are many ways to God. There always was only one way. Under the Law of Moses the one way was by means of the *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement sacrifice.

The holy place inside the veil - This is clearly the Holy of Holies (cp Ex 26:33-34)..

NET Note - The Hebrew term פָּרֹכֶת (parokhet) is usually translated "veil" or "curtain," but it seems to have stretched not only in front of but also over the top of the ark of the covenant which stood behind and under it inside the most holy place, and thus formed more of a canopy than simply a curtain.

Before the mercy seat - The Hebrew literally reads something like "to the faces of the atonement plate." Compare other translations - NIV = "the atonement cover"; NCV = "the lid on the Ark"; NLT = "the Ark's cover – the place of atonement." God's Word Translation has an interesting paraphrase...

The LORD said, "Tell your brother Aaron that he cannot go into the holy place whenever he wants to. If he goes up to the canopy and stands in front of the throne of mercy on the ark, he will die, because I appear in the smoke above the throne of mercy.

The cloud over the mercy seat - see study of **Shekinah (Shechinah)**

Mercy seat ([03727](#)) (**kapporet/kapporeth**) always refers to golden cover of Ark in the Holy of Holies (tabernacle or temple). God promised to meet with men (Nu 7:89). The word, however, is not related to mercy and of course was not a seat. The word is derived from the root kaphar (from koper - to ransom) meaning to "to atone" or to atone by offering a substitute. The **kapporet** was central point at which Israel, thru high priest, could come into presence of God.

| THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|---|--|---|---------------------|
| 1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach) | | | 3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost | | 7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot) | |
| Passover Pesach | Unleavened Bread | First Fruits | Feast of Weeks | | Feast of Trumpets | Day of Atonement |
| | | | | | | Feast of Booths |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| Lamb's blood on Door Ex 12:6-7 | Purging Leaven (Sin) | Wave Offering (Promise of Harvest to come) | Wave Offering of two loaves of leavened bread (promise of harvest to come) | I N T E R L U D E | Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation | Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30 | Celebrates harvest, memorial of God's care in wilderness |
| 1st Month, 14th Day Lev 23:5 | 1st Month, 15th Day Lev 23:6-8 (1st & 8th are Sabbath) | Day after Sabbath Lev 23:9-14 | 50 Days after first fruits Lev 23:14-21 | | 7th Month, 1st Day Lev 23:23-25 (A Sabbath) | 7th Month, 10th Day Lev 23:26-32 (A Sabbath) | 7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath) |
| Christ our Passover has been sacrificed | Clean out the old leaven... just as you are in fact unleavened | Christ has been raised... the first fruits | Promise of the Spirit, Mystery of Church - Jews and Gentiles in one body | | Regathering of Israel before final day of atonement Jer 32:37-41 | Israel repents and looks to Christ in one day Zech 3:9-10, 12:10, 13:1, 14:9 | All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16-19 |
| 1Cor 5:7 | 1Cor 5:7-8 | 1Cor 15:20-23 | Acts 2:1-47 1Cor 2:13 Eph 2:11-12 | | Ezekiel 36:24 | Ezekiel 36:25-27 Heb 9:10 Ro 11:25-29 | Ezek 36:28 |

Leviticus 16:3 "Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering."

- **Aaron shall enter the holy place with this:** Heb 9:7,12,24,25
- **with a bull for a sin offering :** Lev 4:3 8:14 Nu 29:7-11
- **and a ram for a burnt offering:** Lev 1:3,10 8:18 9:3
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

The term **holy place** in the context of this verse is interpreted by some versions as representative of the entire sanctuary area, not one of the inner rooms of the Tabernacle proper (NIV = "Aaron is to enter the sanctuary area"; NLT = "Aaron enters the sanctuary area.")

AARON: The unique feature about this day was that the high priest alone performed the ritual with NO assistance whatsoever. It was all his work, from the menial tasks to the high priestly offers. All the other priests retired from the tabernacle. He alone entered, for the work of atonement was his. What a beautiful picture of our Great High Priest Who went alone to the Cross even to the point of crying out to His Father "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" (Ps 22:1 - See more discussion in notes on Lev 16:1).

| SUPERIOR PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS | |
|--|---|
| AARON | JESUS |
| Sinner in need of atonement Hebrews 5:1-3 | Pure and sinless in no need of atonement Hebrews 7:26ff |
| Had to repeat the sacrifices | Eternal redemption secured by one sacrifice Hebrews 9:6-14, Heb 9:25ff |

| | |
|---|--|
| Aaron's rituals gained entrance to earthly sanctuary | Christ's death gained entrance into the true tabernacle Hebrews 9:24 |
| Repetition of sacrifices constant reminder of need to atone for sin | Christ's once for all sacrifice secured permanent forgiveness Hebrews 10:1-18 |

SHALL ENTER THE HOLY PLACE WITH THIS: It wasn't enough that the high priest serve on the right day, for the right purpose, and that the people have the right heart attitude. It was also important that the high priest follow the right procedure that God gave to him. The Day of Atonement was not a time for innovation because too much was at stake.

Heb 9:6 Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, 7 but into the second only the high priest enters, once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

WITH A BULL FOR A SIN OFFERING: These animals had to be examined to make sure they had no defects.

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

Promises to Israel The atonement was always by blood – Leviticus 17:11.

A BURNT OFFERING: 'olah = most frequent offering. This offering symbolized TOTAL SURRENDER OF A WORSHIPER'S HEART AND LIFE to God. This offering signified voluntary and complete dedication and consecration to the Lord. The 'OLAH was the only offering wholly burned. Thus the whole animal is brought to the altar and the whole is offered as a GIFT to the LORD. Whole (rather than "burnt") offering would better convey the theology. The burning is essentially secondary to the giving of the **whole** creature to Yahweh.

See word study on **Burnt offering** ([05930](#)) **'olah**

The burnt offerings were the first sacrifices revealed because these were the ones to be most frequently offered: every morning and evening (Nu 28:1–8), every Sabbath (Nu 28:9, 10), the first day of each month (Nu 28:11–15), and at the special feasts (Nu 28:16–29:40). This offering was an offering of repentance for sins committed, with the desire to be purged from the guilt of sinful acts.

A male without blemish was required, as it was the choicest offering of the flock. at the door ... before the Lord. This entrance to the courtyard around the tabernacle where the altar of burnt offering stood (Ex 40:6) would place the one offering a sacrifice on the north side of the altar (cf. 1:11). God's presence in the "Shekinah Glory" cloud rested upon the mercy seat of the ark in the Holy of Holies inside the tabernacle proper. The offering was brought to and offered before the Lord, not before man.

First, Aaron bathed himself, put on clothing, and offered a sin offering for himself and the other priests (Lev 16:11).

J R Miller - Devotional on Leviticus 16:3 - "This is how Aaron is to enter the sanctuary area: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering."

The high priest must make an offering for himself—before he could present the sacrifice for the people. The lesson is for all who would intercede with God for sinners, or engage in any way in the Lord's work. They must strive that their own life may be unspotted and their own sins put away—before they go to God for others.

A painter noticed some little blotches on the wall he had painted in delicate tints. Taking a wet cloth he sought to remove the spots; but he only made them worse, for the cloth in his hand was soiled and unclean. So it is when one with spotted hands seeks to remove the faults and blemishes of other lives.

A little child reached out his hand to his mother to receive a present she was about to give him; but his hands were soiled, and his mother said she could not give him what she had for him until they were washed clean. We cannot cleanse the lives of others, nor minister in their behalf, nor can we receive gifts and blessings from God for ourselves or others—if our own hands are foul. We must seek forgiveness first for ourselves.

Leviticus 16:4 "He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on.

- **He shall put on the holy linen tunic** Lev 6:10 Ex 28:2,39-43 39:27-29 Isa 53:2 Eze 44:17,18 Lu 1:35 Php 2:7 Heb 2:14 7:26

- **Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on:** Lev 8:6,7 Ex 29:4 30:20 40:12,31,32 Rev 1:5,6
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

HE SHALL PUT ON THE HOLY LINEN TUNIC: This and the other vestures were peculiar for this day's services. In the priests' ordinary day to day service he carried this out in his other priestly garments. For a more complete description of the priests' normal clothing see Ex 28:1-43 and Lev 8:6-19.

Regarding the clothing described here in Lev 16:4, the high priest wore them later for the burnt offering (cf. Lev 16:24). These clothes were less ornate and on this most solemn Day of Atonement would serve to portray the High-Priest as God's humble servant, one who as a sinner was himself in need of atonement (as described in Lev 16:11-14).

Wenham - Beautiful colored materials (of the normal priestly garments), intricate embroidery, gold and jewelry made him look like a king. On the day of atonement he looked more like a slave. (NICOT)

NET Note - The term **"tunic"** refers to a shirt-like garment worn next to the skin and, therefore, put on first (cf. Ex 28:4, 39-40; 29:5, 8; 39:27). It covered the upper body only. For detailed remarks on the terminology for the priestly clothing in this verse (except the "linen leggings") see the notes on Lev 8:7-9 and the literature cited there.

THE LINEN UNDERGARMENTS SHALL BE NEXT TO HIS BODY: This prefigures Christ being made sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2Co 5:21), for Christ Jesus... became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness (1Co 1:30). - a divinely provided garment that the first sinners might be made fit for God's presence.

The high priest laid aside his garments of glory and beauty. He became attired in the pure white linen garments devoid of all ornamentation, signifying the highest degree of holiness and humility. (cp Phil 2:8) He washed himself and put on the linen garments only. He must be unadorned but pure.

As discussed above, this is a beautiful foreshadowing of Christ, our High Priest, Who laid aside His glory even as the HP took off his glorious garments, replacing them with the holy linen tunic. Christ laid aside His glorious royal robe and took upon Himself the form of a man that He might qualify as the Sacrificial Lamb on the Cross, the Mercy Seat of God. (Jn 1:1,14,18.) Our Lord did not lay aside His deity, but He put aside His glory when He came down to this earth and became a man. (Phil 2:5-8).

NET Note comment on "next to his body" - As in many instances in Lev 15:2,3, the term "flesh" or "body" here is euphemistic for the male genitals, which the priest must be careful not to expose during such ritual procedures (see Ex 20:26 with 28:42-43). **[NET Note on Lev 15:2** - It is well-recognized that the term "flesh" (i.e., "body") in Leviticus 15 refers regularly and euphemistically to the male and female genital members or areas of the body (HALOT 164 s.v. 5 בָּשָׂרָא). The euphemism has been retained in this translation since it is, in fact, intended in the Hebrew text. Some English versions partially remove the euphemism (e.g., NAB "from his private parts"; NRSV "from his member") while some remove it completely (e.g., NLT "a genital discharge"; TEV "from his penis"; CEV "with an infected penis").]

Girded with the linen sash - The sash fastened the tunic around the waist (Exod 28:4, 39; 29:9; 39:29).

AND ATTIRED WITH THE LINEN TURBAN: all the other glorious garments were laid aside but he still wore the turban bearing the inscription "holy to the Lord" (Cp Jn 1:14).

NET Note on linen turban - The turban consisted of wound up linen (cf. Ex 28:4, 37, 39; Ex 29:6; Ex 39:31; Lev 16:4). It is usually thought to be a "turban," but it might be only a "turban-like headband" wound around the forehead area.

THEN HE SHALL BATHE HIS BODY IN WATER AND PUT THEM ON: The high priest then took off his glorious garments, washed at the laver, and put on the simple linen garments of an ordinary priest. He left his special garments in the holy place, where he would return later to put them on again. Laying aside his glorious robes might be a picture of humiliation, and washing at the laver was of sanctification. He was setting himself apart to serve the Lord and His people on this special day.

In a much greater way, our Lord Jesus Christ did all of this for us. "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (Jn 17:19). He never needed to be cleansed from sin because He was sinless, but He did set Himself apart to serve us. He laid aside His glory and came into this world as a poor baby. As God's Suffering Servant, He humbled Himself and died on the cross (2Co 8:9; Phil. 2:5-11). His work completed, He returned to heaven and "dressed Himself" once again in the glory that is rightfully His (Jn 17:1,5).

Robert Morgan - What was the significance of this? Well, it seems that there is a two-fold importance. First, on this day the High Priest became a servant. He clad himself in garments akin to those worn by servants—white shorts and a white top. Simple white garments. He removed his ornate garments that spoke of the dignity of his standing before God and clad himself in the garments of a servant. It speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, on the Day of Atonement, laid aside His glorious garb, his raiment of light, and

took upon Himself the form of a servant, becoming in likeness like a man. He said, "The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many."... Second, the white clothing spoke of holiness, which was the real emphasis of the day. What does the word "atonement" mean? What was the purpose of the day? The word "atonement" means "at-one-ment." It signifies that God is on one side as a holy and righteous God, and we are on the other side as benighted and defiled sinners. And Jesus Christ, the Perfect Man, stands between us, ready to forgive our sins and to clothe us, as it were, with His own righteousness that we might be reconciled to God.

Leviticus 16:5 "He shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering.

- Lev 4:14 8:2,14 9:8-16 Nu 29:11 2Ch 29:21 Ezr 6:17 Eze 45:22,23 Ro 8:3 Heb 7:27,28 10:5-14
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

The Talmud stipulated that the two goats be as alike as possible - in size, color, and value.

Two male goats - literally "he-goats of goats"

TWO MALE GOATS FOR A SIN OFFERING: two goats constituted one sin offering which illustrates two aspects of the **better sacrifice** our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished as our High Priest. The slain goat was to be offered for a sin offering, demonstrating the fatal consequences of sin. The scapegoat was carried into the wilderness demonstrated that their sins, once atonement was provided, would be carried away and forgotten. Christ, of course, fulfilled both aspects of the sin offering in Himself, being offered as a sacrifice for sins, removing our sins, and giving us His righteousness (Hebrews 9:7,25,26-note; Heb 10:14-17-note).

(1) SLAIN GOAT (Lev 16:15) represents Christ dying in our place as our Substitute (substitutionary death) for the sins of man. Christ's blood covered the Mercy Seat, providing propitiation (1Jn 2:2; 1Jn 4:10; Ro 3:25, Heb 2:17)

1John 2:2-note and He Himself is the **propitiation** (hilasterion - word study) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

1John 4:10-note In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.

Rom 3:25-note whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

Heb 2:17-note Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make **propitiation** for the sins of the people.

(2) SCAPEGOAT (Lev 16:21), the "goat of removal" depicts Christ's BEARING OUR SINS AWAY, expiation (cf. Ps 103:12; Heb 9:26).

Ps 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Heb 9:26-note Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away (do away with something established) sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

AND ONE RAM FOR A BURNT OFFERING ('olah): two goats but only one ram. Along with the High Priest's ram (Lev 16:3), these were to be offered as burnt offerings (Lev 16:24).

Leviticus 16:6 "Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household.

- **Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself** Lev 8:14-17 Heb 9:7
- **that he may make atonement for himself and for his household:** Lev 9:7 Ezr 10:18,19 Job 1:5 Eze 43:19,27 Heb 5:2
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Heb 9:7-note but into the second only the high priest enters, **once a year**, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

THEN AARON SHALL OFFER THE BULL FOR THE SIN OFFERING: The high priests of old had to make atonement on **yearly** (Heb 9:7) whereas Jesus' sacrifice was "**once for all**" (Heb 7:27; 9:12; Heb 10:10).

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

FOR HIMSELF: The high priest needed a sacrifice because he was a sinner, but Jesus didn't need a sacrifice for Himself because He is sinless (Heb 7:23-28).

MAKE ATONEMENT FOR HIMSELF AND FOR HIS HOUSEHOLD: The Biblical use and meaning of the word "atonement" must be sharply distinguished from its use in theology. In theology it is a term which covers the whole sacrificial and redemptive work of Christ. In the OT, atonement is the English word used to translate the Hebrew words which mean cover, coverings, or to cover. Atonement is, therefore, not a translation of the Hebrew but a purely theological concept. The Levitical offerings "covered" the sins of Israel until and in anticipation of the cross, but did not "take away" (Heb 10:4) those sins. These were the sins committed in OT times ("covered" meantime by the Levitical sacrifices), which God "passed over" (Ro 3:25), but God's righteousness was never vindicated until Jesus Christ was "presented... as a sacrifice of atonement." (Ro 3:25). It was the Cross, not the Levitical sacrifices, which made full and complete redemption. The OT sacrifices enabled God to go on with a guilty people because those sacrifices pictured or foreshadowed the cross. To the offerer they were the confession in essence that they deserved the death the animal died

Promises to Israel There was the necessity of a mediator. Under the Law of Moses the mediator was the High Priest.

Make atonement (03722)(**kaphar**) is derived from **koper** which means "ransom," so that kaphar means "to atone by offering a substitute." To cover, to forgive, to make amends, to pardon, to appease, to expiate (extinguish the guilt of a crime by subsequent acts of piety or worship, by which the obligation to punish the crime is canceled), to reconcile, to ransom (Isa 47:11), to remove by paying a price, to be annulled (Isa 28:18). It describes a covering over, often with blood of sacrifice, to atone for some sin. Atonement means that a price is paid and blood is shed, because life must be given for life (Lev 17:11).

The **Lxx** translates **kaphar** with **exilaskomai** (see **hilaskomai**) which means to make atonement (used in Ge 32:21, Ex 30:10, 15, 16; Ex 32:30, 1Sa 3:14, Dt 21:8, Nu 35:33) - Kittel's Theological Dictionary says that "The most striking thing about the development of the terms (**exilaskomai** and **hilaskomai**), however, is that words which were originally used to denote man's action in relation to God cease to be used in this way in the NT and are used instead of God's action in relation to man." (3:317).

Atonement -

- [If Jesus is our atonement, why did He die at Passover instead of the Day of Atonement?](#)
- [Yom Kippur - Wikipedia](#)
- [What is the Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)?](#)
- [What is the meaning of Azazel / the scapegoat?](#)
- [What is the true meaning of Rosh Hashanah?](#)
- [What is the Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)?](#)
- American Tract Society [Atonement](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Day of atonement](#) [Atonement](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Day of Atonement](#) [Atoning Sacrifice](#) [Atonement](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Day of Atonement](#) [Atonement](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Day of Atonement](#) [Atonement](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Atonement \(2\)](#) [Atonement](#) [Day of Atonement](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Day of Atonement](#) [Atonement](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Atonement](#) [Atonement day of](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Atonement](#)

Baker - At its most basic level, the word conveys the notion of covering but not in the sense of merely concealing. Rather, it suggests the imposing of something to change its appearance or nature. It is therefore employed to signify the cancellation or "writing over" of a contract (Isa. 28:18); the appeasing of anger (Gen. 32:20[21]; Pr. 16:14); and the overlaying of wood with pitch so as to make it waterproof (Gen. 6:14). The word also communicates God's covering of sin. Persons made reconciliation with God for

their sins by imposing something that would appease the offended party (in this case the Lord) and cover the sinners with righteousness (Ex. 32:30; Ezek. 45:17; cf. Da 9:24). In the OT, the blood of sacrifices was most notably imposed (Ex. 30:10). By this imposition, sin was purged (Ps 79:9; Isa. 6:7) and forgiven (Ps. 78:38). The offenses were removed, leaving the sinners clothed in righteousness (cf. Zech. 3:3, 4). Of course, the imposition of the blood of bulls and of goats could never fully cover our sin (see Heb. 10:4), but with the coming of Christ and the imposition of His shed blood, a perfect atone ([Complete Word Study Dictionary- Old Testament](#))

Vine - Most uses of the word, however, involve the theological meaning of “covering over,” often with the blood of a sacrifice, in order to atone for some sin. It is not clear whether this means that the “covering over” hides the sin from God’s sight or implies that the sin is wiped away in this process. As might be expected, this word occurs more frequently in the Book of Leviticus than in any other book, since Leviticus deals with the ritual sacrifices that were made to atone for sin. For example, Lev. 4:13-21 gives instructions for bringing a young bull to the tent of meeting for a sin offering. After the elders laid their hands on the bull (to transfer the people’s sin to the bull), the bull was killed. The priest then brought some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting and sprinkled it seven times before the veil. Some of the blood was put on the horns of the altar and the rest of the blood was poured at the base of the altar of burnt offering. The fat of the bull was then burned on the altar. The bull itself was to be burned outside the camp. By means of this ritual, “the priest shall make an atonement [kaphar] for them, and it shall be forgiven them” (Lev. 4:20). The term “atonement” is found at least 16 times in Lev. 16, the great chapter concerning the Day of Atonement. Before anything else, the high priest had to “make atonement” for himself and his house by offering a bull as a sin offering. After lots were cast upon the two goats, one was sent away into the wilderness as an atonement (v. 10), while the other was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat as an atonement for the people (vv. 15-20). The Day of Atonement was celebrated only once a year. Only on this day could the high priest enter the holy of holies of the tabernacle or temple on behalf of the people of Israel and make atonement for them. Sometimes atonement for sin was made apart from or without blood offerings. During his vision-call experience, Isaiah’s lips were touched with a coal of fire taken from the altar by one of the seraphim. With that, he was told, “Thy sin is purged [kaphar]” (Isa. 6:7). The English versions translate the word variously as “purged” (kjv, jb); “forgiven” (rsv, nasb, tev); and “wiped away” (neb). In another passage, Scripture says that the guilt or iniquity of Israel would be “purged” (kjv, neb) by the destruction of the implements of idolatrous worship (Isa. 27:9). In this case, the rsv renders kaphar as “expiated,” while the nasb and tev translate it as “forgiven.”

John Stott -We strongly reject, therefore, every explanation of the death of Christ which does not have at its center the principle of ‘satisfaction through substitution,’ indeed divine self-satisfaction through divine self-substitution.”

Scofield - Hebrew kaphar means to propitiate, to atone for sin. According to Scripture the sacrifice of the law only covered the offerer's sin and secured the divine forgiveness.

In Genesis 6:14 kaphar describes the coat or cover of the ark with tar or pitch.

Kaphar - 94v - appease(1), appease*(1), atone(3), atoned(2), atonement is made(1), atonement shall be made(1), atonement was made(1), atoning(1), canceled(1), expiation can be made(1), forgave(1), **forgive**(4), forgiven(5), made atonement(3), **make atonement**(71), makes atonement(2), making atonement(1), pardon(1).

Gen 6:14; 32:20; Ex 29:33, 36f; 30:10, 15f; 32:30; Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7f; 14:18-20, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10-11, 16-18, 20, 24, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:28; Nu 5:8; 6:11; 8:12, 19, 21; 15:25, 28; 16:46f; 25:13; 28:22, 30; 29:5; 31:50; 35:33; Deut 21:8; 32:43; 1 Sam 3:14; 2 Sam 21:3; 1 Chr 6:49; 2 Chr 29:24; 30:18; Neh 10:33; Ps 65:3; 78:38; 79:9; Prov 16:6, 14; Isa 6:7; 22:14; 27:9; 28:18; 47:11; Jer 18:23; Ezek 16:63; 43:20, 26; 45:15, 17, 20; Dan 9:24.

Leviticus 16:7 "He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

- Lev 1:3 4:4 12:6,7 Mt 16:21 Ro 12:1
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Before the LORD - We see the fulfillment of this OT picture of the High Priest going into the presence of God in Hebrews...

But when Christ appeared as a **high priest** of the good things to come, He entered through the **greater and more perfect tabernacle**, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; (Heb 9:11 **note**)

For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the **presence of God** for (on our behalf) us; (Heb 9:24)

- **Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats:** Nu 26:55 33:54 Jos 18:10,11 1Sa 14:41,42 Pr 16:33 Eze 48:29 Jon 1:7 Acts 1:23-26
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Aaron shall cast lots - Casting lots was a method used to reveal God's purposes in a matter. (cf. Josh 14:1, 2; 1Sa 14:38-43; 1Chr 25:8-31; Jonah 1:7; Acts 1:26). In other words, God decided the outcome of the goats. This same procedure was used for selecting Matthias, Judas the Betrayer's replacement (Acts 1:23-26).

NET Note on casting lots Lev 8:8: The Urim and Thummim were two small objects used in the casting of lots to discern the will of God (see Ex 28:30; Nu 27:21; Dt 33:8; 1Sa 14:41 in the LXX and 1Sa 28:6; Ezra 2:63 and Neh 7:65). It appears that by casting them one could obtain a yes or no answer, or no answer at all (1Sa 28:6).

Scapegoat (05799) ('aza'zel) means the goat of departure (removal, far removed) and is derived from 2 words, 'ez, aze = goat + 'azal = to go away or disappear (Note: While this etymology is one of the most accepted derivations, it is not). Some refer to him as the "escape goat." The Lxx translates the Hebrew **Azazel** (the name used in some translations - RSV, JB) with the Greek word **apopompaiois** which is actually an adjective which means a carrying or sending away. In the Lxx the definite article precedes this word and conveys the idea "to the one who carries away." Later rabbinic writings viewed Azazel as the name of the place in the wilderness to which the goat was sent.

The Lxx translates 'aza'zel with the adjective **apopompaiois** which describes a carrying away. Liddell-Smith-Jones says **apopompaiois** refers to "carrying away evil, of the scapegoat. II. To be cast out, abominable (related to apompempe = send away), valediction, divorce (**Ed**: presumably the idea is a sending away of one's wife), averting an ill omen, getting rid."

'Aza'zel - 4x in 3v - Lev 16:8 Lev 16:10 (twice) Lev 16:26

- [What is the meaning of Azazel / the scapegoat?](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Azazel](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Azazel](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Azazel](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Azazel](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Azazel](#)
- Hitchcock Bible Names [Azazel](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Azazel](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Scapegoat](#)
- American Tract Society [Scapegoat](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Scapegoat](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Scapegoat](#)

NET Note overview of the major views of this word **Azazel** - The meaning of the Hebrew term אֶזָּאֵל ('aza'zel, four times in the OT, all of them in this chapter; vv. 8, 10 [2 times], and 26) is much debated. There are three or perhaps four major views (see the summaries and literature cited in J. Milgrom, Leviticus [AB], 1:1020-21; B. A. Levine, Leviticus [JPSTC], 102; J. E. Hartley, Leviticus [WBC], 237-38; D. P. Wright, The Disposal of Impurity [SBLDS], 21-25; M. V. Van Pelt and W. C. Kaiser, NIDOTTE 3:362-63; and M. S. Moore, NIDOTTE 4:421-22). (1) Some derive the term from a combination of the Hebrew word עֵז ('ez, "goat"; i.e., the word for "goats" in v. 5) and אָזַל ('azal, "to go away"), meaning "the goat that departs" or "scapegoat" (cf., e.g., the LXX and KJV, NASB, NIV, NLT). This meaning suits the ritual practice of sending the so-called "scapegoat" away into the wilderness (vv. 10, 21-22, 26). Similarly, some derive the term from Arabic 'azala ("to banish, remove"), meaning "entire removal" as an abstract concept (see BDB 736 s.v. 2) .(אֶזָּאֵל) Some see the term as a description of the wilderness area to which the goat was dispatched, deriving it somehow from Arabic 'azazu ("rough ground") or perhaps אָזַז, ('azaz, "to be strong, fierce"). (3) The most common view among scholars today is that it is the proper name of a particular demon (perhaps even the Devil himself) associated with the wilderness desert regions. Levine has proposed that it may perhaps derive from a reduplication of the ר (zayin) in עֵז combined with אֵל ('el, "mighty"), meaning "mighty goat." The final consonantal form of אֶזָּאֵל would have resulted from the inversion of the א (aleph) with

the second r. He makes the point that the close association between עֲזָזִים and שְׂעִירִים (shé'irim), which seems to refer to "goat-demons" of the desert in Lev 17:7 (cf. Isa 13:21, etc.), should not be ignored in the derivation of Azazel, although the term ultimately became the name of "the demonic ruler of the wilderness." The latter view is supported by the parallel between the one goat "for (ל, lamed preposition) the LORD" and the one "for (ל) Azazel" here in Lev 16:8. The rendering as a proper name has been tentatively accepted here (cf. ASV, NAB, NRSV, TEV, CEV). Perhaps a play on words between the proper name and the term for "goat" has occurred so that the etymology has become obscure. Even if a demon or the demonic realm is the source for the name, however, there is no intention here of appeasing the demons. The goal is to remove the impurity and iniquity from the community in order to avoid offending the LORD and the repercussions of such (see esp. vv. 21–22 and cf. Lev 15:31). [Net Notes on Leviticus 16:8](#)

Harrison - The meaning of this word (Azazel) is far from certain... The word may perhaps signify 'removal' or 'dismissal'... Probably the best explanation is that the word was a rare technical term describing 'complete removal.'

Guzik - There were elaborate Jewish traditions about Azazel, saying he was a demonic being that the Messiah would defeat. More likely, Azazel simply referred to this goat's function of symbolically removing sin from Israel.

Ross Price - Among the Arabs, the name **Azazel** refers to an evil demon. Those who regard it as a demon of the wilderness appeal to such passages as Ps 106:37; Deut 32:17; Lev 17:7; 2Chr 11:15; Isa 13:21; 34:14; Mt 12:43 ff.; Lk 11:24 ff.; Rev 18:2. The Epistle of Barnabas 7:6–11 (mid. 2nd cen. A.D.) definitely considers this scapegoat to be a type of Christ our Sinbearer (cf. Isa 53:4–6). And so it has been treated frequently in later Christian thought. Others suggest that the term has special reference to the place of banishment, or that it may specify a curse offering to the author of demoniacal sin (cf. Gal 3:13). Radical liberals view it as simply a relic of some ancient magical pagan rite which was incorporated into Judaism. The Caffers of South Africa have a ceremony in which a goat is taken into the presence of a sick man, where the sins of the kraal are confessed over it and a few drops of blood from the sick are allowed to fall on the head of the goat, which is then turned out into an uninhabited part of the veldt. Thus the animal becomes a vehicle for the expulsion of evil, being transferred to the animal, is lost in the desert. Evangelical Christians see here a type of the removal of sin and guilt achieved in the person of our Saviour, and for that reason, they are loath to think of the "scapegoat" as an offering for the placating of a demon. See Festivals: Day of Atonement. (The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia)

Leviticus 16:9 "Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell, and make it a sin offering.

- **offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell** Ac 2:23 4:27,28
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Then - Always take note of this time sensitive word as it often marks sequence of events. See value of observing **expressions of time**.

AARON SHALL OFFER THE GOAT ON WHICH THE LOT FOR THE LORD FELL: Compare this with the idea of "predestined" (Acts 2:23 Acts 4:27,28)

Acts 2:23 this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

Acts 4:27 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

For the LORD - To be the blood offering on the altar.

See study of **sin offering** (02403) chattat/chattath

Leviticus 16:10 "But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

- **But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell:** Lev 16:21,22
- **to make atonement upon it:** Isa 53:5,6,10,11 Ro 4:25 2Co 5:21 Heb 7:26,27 9:23,24 1Jn 2:2 1Jn 3:16;
- **to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat** Lev 14:7
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

"THE GREAT ESCAPE" **THE "DIVINE (E)SCAPEGOAT!"**

"The Great Escape" is a 1963 American World War II epic film that depicts an escape by British Commonwealth prisoners of war from a German POW camp. The film stars Steve McQueen, James Garner, and Richard Attenborough....The film is based on Paul Brickhill's 1950 book of the same name, a non-fiction first-hand account of the mass escape from **Stalag Luft III** in Sagan (now Żagań, Poland), in the province of Lower Silesia, Nazi Germany. **A heavily fictionalised version of the escape is depicted in the film.**" The Leviticus 16 account of the escape made possible by the scapegoat however is not fiction, but is immutable Word of God given to sinners (all of us Ro 5:12+) in danger of eternal punishment in a "divine POW (prisoner of war) camp " not named Stalag Luft III but the Lake of Fire!

Scapegoat (05799) ('**aza'zel**) - If you add an "e" to "**scapegoat**" you would get a non-word but you would get a great word picture of what Christ's atonement accomplished for us on the old rugged Cross. His death enabled our **GREAT ESCAPE!** The writer of Hebrews warns his readers by asking a question "how **will we escape** if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard." (Hebrews 2:3+). The "**Escape**" provided by the **(E)Scapegoat** is "**so great**" an answer to Jesus' probing question to all who think that "religion" can save them **You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?**" (Mt 23:33). And it also answers Paul's question "And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will **escape** the judgment of God?"

As Paul said in his letter to the Colossians "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day (**ED**: et al OT shadows like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement)—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." (Col 2:16-17)

So it is very clear that the scapegoat sent away into the desert foreshadows Christ taking sins as far away as the east is from the west when He died on the Cross

THOUGHT - Dear reader, either you will serve as your own "scapegoat" carrying away your sins for eternity in the "desert" of Hell, never to be found again or you place your faith in Christ's finished, fully atoning work on the Cross, and He becomes your "**Divine (E)Scapegoat!**"

Make atonement (03722) (**kaphar**)

Spurgeon - The glorious Son of God condescends to become the atonement for sin-- He is taken to the tree; our sins are made to meet upon his blessed head, and there he dies the just for the unjust. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Standing by the tree of doom, we look up to that blessed Savior with all-absorbing admiration and love. We admire him as the masterpiece of divine wisdom, grace, power, and truth; and, admiring, we love him; we pledge ourselves to him. Joy, joy, joy for ever! The brightest day that ever dawned on us was that day when we saw all our sins numbered on **our blessed Scapegoat** and carried away into the wilderness of forgetfulness! Henceforth we live for Christ! Henceforth our chief glory is the cross! Henceforth our best ideal of glory for ourselves is to see Jesus glorified! The torrents have swept us away! We are no longer bound to this earth! We are borne along by the irresistible force of eternal love!

Joseph Parker (People's Bible Commentary) - "... a scapegoat"—Leviticus 16:10 - We must be very careful in the application of this term. It is one of the terms liable to abuse. The image has always been accepted as one symbolical of the work of Christ in bearing away the sins of the world. Considered strictly as a figure, it is full of beauty and helpful suggestiveness. It has, nevertheless, been open to the most mischievous perversion. We use the term now too freely in describing the action of a man who wishes to lay upon another the blame of actions which he himself has done. We speak of certain men as being "mere scapegoats"; as if they had been dragged in to meet the necessities of a situation and to relieve others from the burden of just penalties.—The figure is not the less appropriate that it is open to perversion.—Sometimes the value of an analogy depends upon the fineness and even subtlety of its relations. We are never at liberty to abuse an analogy. Jesus Christ comes before us in the aspect of one who voluntarily takes upon himself our sins and bears them away so that they never can be found again.—Notice that he accepts the position voluntarily.—Notice that he himself actually proposes to become, in this sense, the Scapegoat of the human family.—Notice also that the sinner must be a consenting party to this most mysterious arrangement.—The Scapegoat does not come into the world and carry away the sins of mankind in any arbitrary fashion.—Every sinner must put his hands, as it were, upon the Christ of God, and by that act intimate his desire that Christ would bear his sins away.—Do not make a mere convenience of Christ.—Do not consider the presence of the Scapegoat a license to sin.—The deceitful heart may say,—Take your own course, do just what you please, and at the end of the sinful day place all your iniquities upon the head of the Scapegoat, and he will bear them away into the wilderness of oblivion.—This is perversion; this is more than perversion, it is unpardonable blasphemy.—Blessed is the thought that the sin is borne away where it can never be found any more.—To have the memory of sin, to be for ever reminded of the commission of sin, to suffer all the inflictions possible to imagination in connection with sin, would be to destroy the very heaven

which is connected with forgiveness.—In some mysterious way, not to be measured by human words or even conceived by human thought, sin is cast away where even the accuser cannot find it, or the enemy bring it back to fling it in our burning face.—This is a divine dispensation. It is therefore not to be explained or made easy to the comprehension of mere reason. It is rather to be accepted by faith and by love, and being so accepted, the heart is aware of its certainty of preciousness by the sweet peace which steals into it and rules it into profound repose. ([Leviticus 16 The People's Bible by Joseph Parker](#))

Allen Ross - Leviticus 16 “The Scapegoat”

Israel's ritual on the great Day of Atonement included the selection of two goats, one for the LORD and one for “azazel.” Four times this strange word occurs in the chapter, and no other place in the Bible. It has been analyzed and interpreted in a number of ways; but the etymology indicates it means “a goat that goes away.” The early English translation of “scapegoat” has caught on, and that word “scapegoat” has been applied to a number of other things in English usage.

But in the ritual of the atonement, the priest was to sacrifice the one goat for a purification offering. Then he was to lay his hands on the other goat, the living goat, and confess over it all the wickedness and all the rebellions of the people. This would go beyond the ordinary sacrifices for atonement, for they were offered for sins of ignorance or inadvertence. This covered all sins. By this rite of transference the sins were placed on the goat's head. The goat was then to be taken outside the camp into the desert and abandoned to die there.

In the legislation of the later Jewish Mishnah, when the Jews were living in the settled cities of the land, the goat was led away, outside the city to a precipice and thrown over so that it would die. Then the person who led it away would signal the results back so that the priest and the people would know that the intent of leading the goat away was assured.

On this one special day of the year the people would know that all their sins were forgiven because they were symbolically placed on the scapegoat which was taken out of the city to die in a solitary place.

The prophet Isaiah refers to this in His prophecy of the suffering of the Messiah when he writes, “All we like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isa 53:6).

Hebrews 13:12 makes it clear that Jesus, who took all our sins on Himself and died for us, died outside the city as the fulfillment of the scapegoat. In the old city of Jerusalem the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the likely spot of the crucifixion, appears to be well within the city. However, when Jesus died that part of the city was outside the walls. The early church keenly noted the spot where He died, and recalled how it fulfilled the type of the scapegoat taking the sins away.

The Scapegoat

It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people. —John 11:50

The company was losing money. The price of its stock was sliding, and the corporate board was grumbling. So the president, desperate to do something, fired the vice-president in charge of sales.

In a similar situation, a college basketball team was mired in a losing season after 6 consecutive successful years and three visits to the NCAA Tournament. Attendance was down and the alumni were howling. So the university fired the coach.

In both cases, good people were released because the organization needed a scapegoat. They focused the blame on one person, even though many were at fault.

That's what happened to Jesus. The high priest Caiaphas, without knowing the full import of his words, said it would be best to sacrifice one man, Jesus. He thought it would save the nation from the oppressive Romans (Jn. 11:47-50). What he didn't realize was that Jesus was bearing the guilt and penalty for the sins of the world in fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the two goats—one a sacrifice for sin, the other a scapegoat which symbolically carried their sins away (Lev. 16).

We deserve eternal death. How grateful we can be that God made Jesus our scapegoat.

Lord, thank You for eternal life,
For dying in my place,
For taking all my punishment,
For showing me Your grace. —Sper

Christ became our scapegoat that we might escape sin's penalty.

By David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Other Goat

Read: Leviticus 16:5-22

He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. —1 John 2:2

The Scapegoat, a novel by Daphne du Maurier, is about two men who are amazed at the striking similarity in their appearance. They spend an evening together, but one runs off, stealing the other's identity and leaving him to step into a life filled with problems. The second man becomes a scapegoat.

The origin of that word comes from a ceremony performed with two goats on the Hebrew Day of Atonement (known today as Yom Kippur). The high priest would sacrifice one goat and symbolically place the sins of the people on the head of the other—the scapegoat—before it was sent into the wilderness carrying away the blame of the sin (Lev. 16:7-10).

But when Jesus came, He became our scapegoat. He offered Himself up “once for all” as a sacrifice to pay for the sins of “the whole world” (1 John 2:2; Heb. 7:27). That first goat had been sacrificed as a sin offering for God's people and symbolized Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The other goat was a representation of the completely innocent Jesus accepting and removing our sin and guilt.

None of us is without sin—but the Father laid on Jesus “the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6). God sees followers of His Son as blameless—because Jesus took all the blame we deserve.

Jesus our Savior left heaven above, Coming to earth as a Servant with love; Laying aside all His glory, He came, Giving His life, taking all of our blame. —Hess

Jesus takes our sin and gives us His salvation.

By Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Blame Game

Read: Leviticus 16:5-22

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! —John 1:29

I've been blamed for a lot of things, and rightly so. My sin, failure, and incompetence have caused grief, anxiety, and inconvenience for friends and family (and probably even for strangers). I've also been blamed for things that were not my fault, things I was powerless to change.

But I have stood on the other side of the fence hurling accusations at others. If they had just done something different, I tell myself, I would not be in the mess I'm in. Blame hurts. So whether guilty or not, we waste lots of time and mental energy trying to find someone else to carry it for us.

Jesus offers us a better way to deal with blame. Even though He was blameless, He took upon Himself the sin of the world and carried it away (John 1:29). We often refer to Jesus as the sacrificial lamb, but He was also the final scapegoat for everything that is wrong with the world (Lev. 16:10).

Once we acknowledge our sin and accept Christ's offer to take it away, we no longer have to carry the weight of our guilt. We can stop looking for someone to blame for what's wrong with us, and we can stop accepting blame from others trying to do the same.

Thanks to Jesus, we can stop playing the blame game.

Help me, Lord, to be honest when I am at fault and to confess that to You—instead of looking for someone else to blame. Thank You for taking my blame on Yourself.

Honesty about our sin brings forgiveness.

By Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Tale Of Two Goats

Two goats without blemish stood before the high priest in the bright Middle Eastern sun. Lots were cast, and the priest slowly led one to the altar to be killed as a sin offering for the people. Its blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. That goat was a sacrifice.

The other goat, known as the scapegoat, portrays another truth. The priest placed both his hands on its forehead and confessed the sins of Israel. Then the goat was led out into the desert and turned loose. As it wandered away, never to be seen again, it symbolically took Israel's sins along with it. They were gone. The people were reconciled to God. That goat was a substitute.

Both of these goats were pictures of what Christ would do for us. The cross became an upright altar, where the Lamb of God gave His life as a sacrifice for sin. And what the scapegoat symbolically portrayed for Israel—the removal of their sins—Jesus fulfilled in reality. He became our substitute. Because of our identification with Him as believers, our sins have been taken away completely.

Two goats representing two truths: sacrifice and substitution. Both were fulfilled in Christ when He died on the cross and made full atonement for our sins. Praise God! —David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Guilty, vile, and helpless we,
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
Full atonement! Can it be?
Hallelujah, what a Savior!
—Bliss

Jesus took our place to give us His peace.

Leviticus 16:11 "Then Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself."

- Lev 16:3,6
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Then - Always take note of this time sensitive word as it often marks a sequence in a series of events. See value of observing **expressions of time**.

See study of **Make atonement** (03722) **kaphar**

See study of **sin offering** (02403) **chattat/chattath**

For himself - When Jesus offered a perfect atonement for sin, He did not need to make a sin offering for Himself:

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. (Heb. 7:26-28)

Promises to Israel Because the human mediator, the High Priest, was himself a sinner, he needed the protection of blood. So for that reason a bull had to be offered to atone for his own sins. His sins had to be dealt with before he could begin to deal with the sins of the people.

Modern Jewish Practices

- [EXCERPT FROM PROMISES TO ISRAEL](#)

1. The Basic Tenant

Modern Judaism says that on the Day of Atonement man can achieve atonement for his own sins.

2. Substitutions

Modern Judaism has also inaugurated certain substitutions for the biblical practice. In place of the affliction of the soul it is now the affliction of the body. So it has become a day of fasting and prayer. The second substitution, especially among the ultra-orthodox, is that in place of a goat, which was the biblical sacrifice, they sacrifice a rooster for the men and a chicken for the woman.

3. No Sacrifices

Most Jews today do not sacrifice anything, not even a chicken. They have inaugurated certain substitutions for sacrifices. There are three such substitutions:

- a. Repentance involves three elements: first, there should be remorse for the past; second, a commitment for the future; and third, a confession of sin.
 - b. Prayer
 - c. Charity
4. A Day of Preparation

The Day of Atonement is looked upon as a day of preparation for the joy of the next holy season, the Feast of Tabernacles [Succot]. So in preparation, among the ultra-orthodox Jews there is the sacrifice of a chicken. For a male, a rooster is offered and for a female, a hen. There is a special Hebrew prayer recited at the killing of the chicken which states: "This is my substitute. This is my exchange. This is my atonement. This fowl will go to its death and I shall enter a good and long life of peace."

5. The Concept

The Jewish concept of this day is that it is a day of judgment. On this day, Judaism teaches, there is the weighing in Heaven of good deeds and bad deeds in order to determine whether one is going to be inscribed for a good year or not.

6. The Atonement of Sins

Jewish practice raised the question as to exactly what sins are atoned. There is a statement made in the Jewish Talmud: "If a man says, 'I shall sin' and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement is coming, will it atone? It does not atone." If a man sins a deliberate sin on the assumption that that sin will be removed on the Day of Atonement then the Day of Atonement will not remove that sin.

So what sins are atoned for on the Day of Atonement? According to Judaism, sins between God and man are atoned by the Day of Atonement, but sins between man and man are not forgiven on the Day of Atonement until the offender has appeased the offended. A famous rabbi of the Talmudic period said, as he was commenting on Psalm 51, "He who repents is regarded by God as if he went up to Jerusalem and offered sacrifices to Him."

7. Repentance

Because of the central role of repentance in modern Jewish practice, the rabbis teach that whoever repents is regarded by God as if he had gone up to Jerusalem and offered sacrifices to Him.

8. Expiation

Another Rabbinic teaching states that sin offerings and guilt offerings and death on the Day of Atonement do not expiate sin without repentance. If there is no repentance, none of these things will avail.

9. The Services

On a normal day there are three Jewish services. The first is known as the Shacharit which is the morning service. Second is the Mincha which is the afternoon service. Then third is the Maariv which is the evening service.

On the Sabbath day there is a fourth one added which is known as the Musaf which means "the additional service." On the Day of Atonement there is a fifth service added known as the Neilah which means "the concluding service."

10. The Book of Jonah

The Book of Jonah is read during the Mincha service which is the afternoon service. Jonah is read on the Day of Atonement to teach two things:

- a. That one cannot run from God
- b. That with repentance God will forgive even as He forgave the sins of Nineveh.

11. Confession

There is a special confession known as the Ashamnu Confession which is recited on this occasion. The word Ashamnu means "we have sinned." The confession begins "we have sinned, we have acted treacherously." As they cite a whole list of various sins, the breast is smitten with the recitation of each sin. The Ashamnu confession is recited at all five services of the Day of Atonement.

12. The Kol Nidrei

There is a special prayer recited or sung today known as the Kol Nidrei which means "all vows" which is sung in the evening service. This is a special prayer which contains an annulment of all vows made innocently or under duress such as forced conversion. When Jews were forcefully converted to Christianity, they were exempted from the vow made under duress by means of this prayer on the Day of Atonement.

This renunciation of all vows refers to personal religious vows and not vows made to man. Any obligations they have made to other men must be fulfilled and the singing of the Kol Nidrei does not exempt a Jew from fulfilling his vows to men. Although it is only done in the evening service, it is chanted three times to emphasize its importance.

13. The Yizkor

The Yizkor is a special prayer that is recited in remembrance of those that have passed away. For some Jewish groups it is performed in the morning service and for others it is performed in a different service. But all recite the Yizkor prayer at some point during the day.

14. The Affliction of the Body

The Day of Atonement is not so much an affliction of the soul today, but an affliction of the body. The affliction, according to rabbis, is five forms of self-denial:

- a. Abstain from eating and drinking in order to enhance spirituality.
- b. Refrain from washing and bathing for these things cause comfort and they are not to feel comfortable on this day.
- c. Refrain from being anointed, for in ancient days people were anointed with oil and this was a refresher. Today this prohibition includes hand and facial creams for the same reason.
- d. No wearing of leather shoes or sandals. These are luxury items and on the Day of Atonement one is not to show off any luxury items. Furthermore, the rabbis taught that on the Day of Atonement the whole earth is holy ground and therefore shoes or rubber or canvas must be worn so that the ground may be felt.
- e. No co-habitation or sexual relationships with a spouse.

15. A Day of Rest

Because this is the Shabbat Shabbaton, the Sabbath of Sabbaths, there is no work allowed. There is to be no carrying of anything from the private to the public domain, no kindling of fires, and no working with animals. Anyone who violates this Shabbat Shabbaton is considered as if he had rejected the Law of Moses in its entirety.

Leviticus 16:12 "He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil."

- **from upon the altar before the LORD:** Lev 10:1 Nu 16:18,46 Isa 6:6,7 Heb 9:14 1Jn 1:7;
- **finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil:** Ex 30:34-38 31:11 37:29 Rev 8:3,4
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

The altar before the Lord - (Lev 16:12, 18) refers to the altar of burnt offering in the outer court.

Inside the veil - Inside the Holy of Holies, the place where the presence of the LORD was manifest. The veil served to separate the all from the holy and consuming presence of God. Aaron (and all the other human high priests) had to hold the curtain aside in order to enter (can you imagine their fear and trepidation as they carried out this simple maneuver?) This shadow was fulfilled in Christ's crucifixion on Calvary. When Jesus died the veil in Herod's temple was torn from top to bottom, signifying that God now granted believers access into His presence through Jesus Christ.

Mt 27:50-51 (Mk 15:37-38; Lk 23:44-46) And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split

Heb 10:19 Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by

a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Leviticus 16:13 "He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the ark of the testimony, otherwise he will die."

- **He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD** Ex 30:1,7,8 Nu 16:7,18,46 Rev 8:3,4
- **that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat** Ex 25:21 Heb 4:14-16 7:25 9:24 1Jn 2:1,2
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

That the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the ark- The purpose of the cloud of incense was to protect the priest from death in the presence of the LORD.

Mercy seat ([03727](#)) (**kapporet/kapporeth**) always refers to golden cover of Ark in the Holy of Holies (tabernacle or temple). God promised to meet with men (Nu 7:89). The word, however, is not related to mercy and of course was not a seat. The word is derived from the root kaphar (from koper - to ransom) meaning to "to atone" or to atone by offering a substitute. The **kapporet** was central point at which Israel, thru high priest, could come into presence of God.

The OT sacrifices never removed man's sin because it was "impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4). The Israelite's offering implied confession of sin and recognized its due penalty as death; and God passed over his sin in anticipation of Christ's sacrifice which did, finally, put away those sins "committed beforehand" [OT times] (Heb 9:15,26; Ro 3:25).

Kapporeth - 22v in NAS - Ex 25:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Ex 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6, 7, 8, 9; Ex 39:35; 40:20; Lev 16:2, 13ff; Num 7:89; 1 Chr 28:11

Vine - This noun form of kapar has been variously interpreted by the English versions as "mercy seat" (kjv, rsv); "cover" (neb); "lid" (tev); "throne of mercy" (jb); and "throne" (Knox). It refers to a slab of gold that rested on top of the ark of the covenant. Images of two cherubims stood on this slab, facing each other. This slab of gold represented the throne of God and symbolized His real presence in the worship shrine. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sin offering on it, apparently symbolizing the blood's reception by God. Thus the kapporet was the central point at which Israel, through its high priest, could come into the presence of God. This is further seen in the fact that the temple proper was distinguished from its porches and other accompanying structures by the name "place of the mercy seat (kapporet)" (1 Chron. 28:11). The Septuagint refers to the mercy seat as a "propitiary" (hilasteirion).

Harris in Expositor's Bible Commentary - The Greek word in the LXX **hilasterion (word study)** renders the Hebrew word כַּפֹּרֶת (kappōret, "atonement cover") and is applied to Christ in Rom 3:25 (KJV, "propitiation"). The NIV rendering in Rom 3:25 ("sacrifice of atonement") is equivalent to the more technical word "propitiation" and quite properly connects the teaching of Romans with the Hebrew name of the lid of the ark and its background of the atoning sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement (see Introduction, pp. 522-23).

Otherwise he will die: As far as we know, no high priest ever died in the Holy of Holies with the possible exception of Nadab and Abihu. However, we don't know exactly where they died.

Wenham - The smoke of the incense was to cover the mercy seat, so that the high priest would not be killed (Lev 16:12-13). The most obvious explanation is given by Hertz: "the purpose of the incense-smoke was to create a screen which would prevent the High Priest from gazing upon the Holy Presence." Keil suggests that the incense was to prevent God seeing the sinner. Insofar as the incense is said to cover the mercy seat rather than the high priest (Lev 16:13), the former interpretation seems the more plausible. Nevertheless, sometimes incense can avert God's wrath (Ps. 141:2; Num. 17:11ff. [Eng. 16:46ff.]), and this idea may underlie the use of incense here. (NICOT)

Kenneth Matthews - A Jewish legend, not found in the Bible or in Jewish interpretation, says that Aaron was fitted with a rope around his waist or legs when he went inside the curtain. If the wrath of God flared against the high priest and he died on the spot, the priests from the outer room could pull the body out of the Most Holy Place. What this legend shows is the Jewish understanding of the peril that the Day of Atonement caused. (Leviticus: Holy God, Holy People)

Leviticus 16:14 "Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on

the east side; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

- Lev 4:5,6,17 8:11 Ro 3:24-26 Heb 9:7,13,25 10:4,10-12,19 12:24
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Mercy seat ([03727](#)) (**kapporet/kapporeth**) - This was the place where God "will meet with you" (Ex 30:6). When Moses met with the Lord, it was from above the mercy seat that the voice of God could be heard (Nu 7:89).

The "mercy seat" was the gold plate or slab that lay on top of the ark. At each end of the top was fashioned an angelic figure with wings whose eyes were cast downward, looking on the "mercy seat" under their wings. The notion of a "seat" probably derived from the imagery of God enthroned on or above the cherubim (e.g., 1Sa 4:4; Ps 99:1). The ark is identified as "the footstool" of God in 1Chr 28:2.

Guzik comments -

According to Jewish tradition, it was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest - and only the high priest - could pronounce the name of God, the sacred Tetragrammaton YHWH. When he entered the Holy Place with the blood of the goat set apart to the Lord, he would utter the name. He was the only one, and that was the only time, when the name could be uttered, and the high priest was to pass on the exact pronunciation of the name of God to his successor with his dying breath.

The idea was that God was above the mercy seat (I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat, Lev. 16:2), and as He looked down upon the ark of the covenant, He saw the sin of man. Man's sin was represented by the items in the ark of the covenant: Manna Israel complained about, tablets of law Israel broke, and a budding almond rod given as a response to Israel's rebellion. Then, the high priest sprinkled atoning blood seven times on the mercy seat - covering over the emblems of Israel's sin. God saw the blood cover over the sin, and atonement was made.

This captures the thought behind the Hebrew word for atonement: Kipper, which means, "to cover." Sin was not removed, but covered over by sacrificial blood. The New Testament idea of atonement is that our sin is not merely covered, but removed - taken away, so there is no barrier between God and man any longer.

Leviticus 16:15 "Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat."

- **Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people** Lev 16:5-9 Heb 2:17 5:3 9:7,25,26
- **and bring its blood inside the veil:** Lev 16:2 Heb 6:19 9:3,7,12
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

The entire procedure forcefully illustrates the abiding truth that the only way a sinful man can stand before a holy God is to stand on "**blood ground**" (cf. Lev 17:11; Heb. 9:22). Further, it prefigured Christ's entering the Most Holy Place behind the veil in man's behalf to make full atonement for sin (cf. Heb. 6:19, 20; 9:11-14; 10:19, 20).

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

Mercy seat ([03727](#)) (**kapporet/kapporeth**) always refers to golden cover of Ark in the Holy of Holies (tabernacle or temple). God promised to meet with men (Nu 7:89). The word, however, is not related to mercy and of course was not a seat. The word is derived from the root kaphar (from koper - to ransom) meaning to "to atone" or to atone by offering a substitute. The **kapporet** was central point at which Israel, thru high priest, could come into presence of God.

Guzik - The goat that was sacrificed was also **like Jesus**, in that the goat was spotless, was **from the people of Israel** (Lev. 16:5), was **chosen by God** (Lev. 16:8), and the goat's **blood was taken to the Holy Place to provide atonement**

Henry Law -

The sentenced goat then died. Now mark, my soul, the uses of its blood. With this the high-priest ventures within the mystic veil. The mercy-seat receives the drops. The holy tent is also strewn throughout. Seven times the golden altar's horns are touched.

How fearful, yet how comforting, this sight! There is an universal need. There is a co-extensive cure. Man cannot move, but sin moves with him. Man cannot move, where reconciliation cannot come. There is wide remedy for the wide malady. But further mark the Gospel of this blood-red scene. Blood is our purchase-price. Justice has claims. The law has dues. Our debts are countless. Every moment swells the amount. How can we buy our souls from wrath? Our best is only sin. But let all creditors bring forth their books. Christ sprinkles every page. The dreadful writing disappears. Let heaven suspend its scales. Sin's load is an exceeding weight. But here is blood divine. Therefore it out-weighs.

Blood is our peace. Sin seen in its true light—sin felt in its strong power—is misery's misery, and anguish more than scorpion's sting. The broken heart is one abode of woe. The wounded conscience writhes, and cannot rest. But when the Spirit shows the blood, all dread forebodings cease. It proves, that peace is signed in heaven. It waves an olive-branch throughout the soul. It places pardon in the happy hand.

The blood has a sin-killing power. Sin is a weed with many roots. They widely spread, and ever strive to rise. But touch them with the blood. Let the heart feel, that sin slew Christ, and nailed the God-man to the accursed tree. How can that now be loved, which pierced that brow, those hands—those feet—that side? A holy feeling shudders at the thought. It clasps the Savior, and treads down His foe.

The blood drives Satan back. There is no place impervious to his tread. There is no moment free from his approach. No palace, and no hut exclude. He has a key for every chamber—every pew. No busy hours are too full for him; no stillness is too still. Nothing can daunt him, but this blood. The messengers of wrath passed not the lintels marked from the paschal lamb. So when this ensign is displayed, temptation starts and flees.

The blood bars hell. Those cells cannot admit a Christ-washed soul. If it be possible, let such approach. The chains refuse to touch. The fires curl back abashed. The gnawing worm can find no prey. The jailor drops his keys. My soul, see to it, that this blood is yours. It is sure safeguard against hell-pains.

The blood removes the hindrances to heaven. Behold the countless multitudes before the throne. All nations, kindreds, people, and tongues swell the vast throng. But every robe is white, and every hand uplifts a palm. The question has been put, "Whence came they?" The answer tarried not. "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." My soul, is not your one desire to join this company, and share their joy? See to it, that this blood is yours. No other cleansing can remove the heaven-expelling guilt.

The blood fills heaven with songs. The ransomed fall before the Lamb. This is the substance of their mighty song. "You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood." Angels swell the strain, "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain." My soul, is time fast bearing you to raise this chorus higher? It is so, if this blood is yours. They cannot sing above, who have not washed on earth. ([The Scapegoat](#))

Matthew Henry - Lev 16:15-34 typifies the two great Gospel privileges, of the remission of sin, and access to God, both of which we owe to our Lord Jesus. See the expiation of guilt. Christ is both the Maker and the Matter of the atonement; for he is the Priest, the High Priest, that makes reconciliation for the sins of the people. And as Christ is the High Priest, so he is the Sacrifice with which atonement is made; for he is all in all in our reconciliation to God. Thus he was figured by the two goats. The slain goat was a type of Christ dying for our sins; the scapegoat a type of Christ rising again for our justification. The atonement is said to be completed by putting the sins of Israel upon the head of the goat, which was sent away into a wilderness, a land not inhabited; and the sending away of the goat represented the free and full remission of their sins. He shall bear upon him all their iniquities. Thus Christ, the Lamb of God, takes away the sin of the world, by taking it upon himself, John 1:29. The entrance into heaven, which Christ made for us, was typified by the high priest's entrance into the most holy place. See Hebrews 9:7. The high priest was to come out again; but our Lord Jesus ever lives, making intercession, and always appears in the presence of God for us. Here are typified the two great gospel duties of faith and repentance. By faith we put our hands upon the head of the offering; relying on Christ as the Lord our Righteousness, pleading his satisfaction, as that which alone is able to atone for our sins, and procure us a pardon. By repentance we afflict our souls; not only fasting for a time from the delights of the body, but inwardly sorrowing for sin, and living a life of self-denial, assuring ourselves, that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. By the atonement we obtain rest for our souls, and all the glorious liberties of the children of God. Sinner, get the blood of Christ effectually applied to thy soul, or else thou canst never look God in the face with any comfort or acceptance. Take this blood of Christ, apply it by faith, and see how it atones with God.

Leviticus 16:16 "He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities.

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- **He shall make atonement for the holy place:** Lev 16:18 8:15 Ex 29:36,37 Eze 45:18,19 John 14:3 Heb 9:22,23
 - [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Personal Application of this OT Truth - I was thinking about the application of the cleansing of the tabernacle and the altar and it hit me that WE are the "tabernacle" (1Cor 3:16, 1Cor 6:19-20-note) and our heart is the "altar" (cf Pr 4:23-note, Ps 139:23,24-note) and we are daily in the world and contaminated with "impurities" which grieve the presence of God's Spirit within us (Eph 4:30-note, cf quench the Spirit 1Th 5:19-note) and so we need (not yearly but daily!!!) to lay our hands on the "scapegoat" and confess our sins, known and unknown (1Jn 1:9-note), that we might experience the fullness of the presence and pleasure of God.

HE SHALL MAKE ATONEMENT FOR THE HOLY PLACE: The object of this solemn ceremony was to impress the minds of the Israelites with the conviction that the whole tabernacle was stained by the sins of a guilty people.

Wenham - The uncleanness that affects every man and woman to a greater or lesser degree (see Lev. 11–15) pollutes the sanctuary. These atonement-day rituals make the impossible possible. By cleansing the sanctuary they permit the holy God to dwell among an unholy people (Lev 16:16–17; cf. Isa. 6:3ff.; Ps. 15; 24:3ff.). (NICOT)

See study of **sins**([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

DEVOTIONAL He Has Removed Our Sins from Us (Lev. 16)

I don't know how she got my phone number. But she called my Phoenix home daily from Toronto, Canada.

She was one of those folks who are tormented by uncertainty. Was she really forgiven? Did she really believe? Had God accepted her? After each conversation she seemed relieved, reassured. But the next day, the phone would ring again, as she shared her inner torment.

The ceremony described in Leviticus 16 reminds us that God doesn't intend you or me to doubt. He wants us to know that we are forgiven. He wants us to worship Him in the full assurance of faith.

What conveys assurance? The image of the scapegoat. The picture of the high priest, symbolically transferring "all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all of their sins"—to the goat. And the picture of that goat being led out into the wilderness, never to be seen in the community of Israel again.

David understood the message, and wrote in one of his psalms, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12).

Call up that image next time you feel uncertain about your relationship with God. Imagine all your sins. Close your eyes, and sense your sins being carried away, not by Israel's scapegoat, but by Jesus Himself. Then let assurance of forgiveness bring you inner peace.

Your sins are gone. As far as the east is from the west. So you truly are free. Free to worship God and to give Him thanks.

Personal Application

How does knowing that you are forgiven affect your feelings about God? About yourself? About your past sins and failures?

Quotable

"What could you want that forgiveness cannot give? Do you want peace? Forgiveness offers it. Do you want happiness, a quiet mind, certainty of purpose, and a sense of worth and beauty that transcends the world? Do you want care and safety, the warmth of sure protection always? Do you want quietness that cannot be disturbed, a gentleness that can never be hurt, a deep abiding comfort, and a rest so perfect it can never be upset?

"All this forgiveness offers you, and more. It sparkles in your eyes as you awake, and gives you joy with which to meet the day. It soothes your forehead while you sleep, and rests upon your eyelids so you see no dreams of fear and evil, malice and attack. And when you wake again, it offers you another day of happiness and peace."—Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. (Lawrence Richards - The 365 Day Devotional Commentary)

Leviticus 16:17 "When he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel.

- **no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out** Ex 34:3 Isa 53:6 Da 9:24 Lu 1:10 Ac 4:12 1Ti 2:5 Heb 1:3 9:7 1Pe 2:24 3:18
- **that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel** Lev 16:10,11
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Holman Christian Study Bible Notes - The atoning blood would purify the people of their sin and rebellion. This definitely points toward Christ, whose blood provides for the purification of all sin (Heb 9:24-28).

Leviticus 16:18 "Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides.

- Lev 16:16 4:7,18 Ex 30:10 John 17:19 Heb 2:11 5:7,8 9:22,23
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Leviticus 16:19 "With his finger he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it.

- Eze 43:18-22 Zec 13:1
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Leviticus 16:20 "When he finishes atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat.

- **When he finishes atoning for the holy place:** Lev 16:16, 6:30, 8:15 Eze 45:20 2Co 5:19 Col 1:20
- **he shall offer the live goat:** Ro 4:25, 8:34 Heb 7:25 Rev 1:18
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

He - The Jewish high priest, a shadow of our Great **High Priest** (Heb 3:1-note, cp Col 2:17-note) Paul writes that through "it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him (Messiah) and through Him to reconcile (**apokatallasso**) all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven." (Col 1:19-20-note)

Finishes - He finished the atoning work, but it was only for that year. When Jesus our Great High Priest finished (Jn 19:30-note) His atoning work, "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, waiting from that time onward UNTIL (expression of time = up to the time = indicates this will occur) HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." (Heb 10:12-134-note; Heb 10:14-note, see also Heb 10:4-7-note, Heb 10:5-7-note, Heb 10:8-9,10-note)

Atoning (03722)(**kaphar**) means "to cover, to forgive, to expiate, to reconcile. This word is of supreme theological importance in the Old Testament as it is central to an Old Testament understanding of the remission of sin. At its most basic level, the word conveys the notion of covering but not in the sense of merely concealing. Rather, it suggests the imposing of something to change its appearance or nature. It is therefore employed to signify the cancellation or "writing over" of a contract (Isa. 28:18); the appeasing of anger (Gen. 32:20[21]; Prov. 16:14); and the overlaying of wood with pitch so as to make it waterproof (Gen. 6:14). The word also communicates God's covering of sin. Persons made reconciliation with God for their sins by imposing something that would appease the offended party (in this case the Lord) and cover the sinners with righteousness (Ex. 32:30; Ezek. 45:17; cf. Dan. 9:24). In the Old Testament, the blood of sacrifices was most notably imposed (Ex. 30:10). By this imposition, sin was purged (Ps. 79:9; Isa. 6:7) and forgiven (Ps. 78:38). The offenses were removed, leaving the sinners clothed in righteousness (cf. Zech. 3:3, 4). Of course, the imposition of the blood of bulls and of goats could never fully cover our sin (see Heb. 10:4), but with the coming of Christ and the imposition of His shed blood, a perfect atonement was made (Rom. 5:9-11)." ([Complete Word Study Dictionary- Old Testament](#) - recommended)

Offer (07126)(**qarab**) first means to draw near or approach conveying the basic idea of close proximity to the subject to the object, in this case the high priest to the altar. Compare Ex. 29:4; Lev. 1:5, 13, 14; Num. 16:9.

Live goat - see [Scapegoat devotionals](#)

Holman Study Notes - The second phase of purification occurred through the removal of the scapegoat. The author of Hebrews drew a parallel to this ritual when he affirmed that Christ offered Himself as a sin offering once and for all (Heb 10:10). Jesus is also compared to the scapegoat because He also "suffered outside the gate, so that He might sanctify the people by His own blood"

(Heb 13:12). The fact that Jesus took our sins upon Himself is also affirmed in Isa 53:5-6; 2Co 5:21; Gal 3:13; and 1Pe 2:24. From a symbolic perspective, when Jesus died on the cross, the curtain that divided the holy of holies from the holy place was torn from top to bottom (Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45), signaling access to God by all people through Christ's atoning act on our behalf.

Leviticus 16:21 "Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness."

- **Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat** Lev 1:4 Ex 29:10;
- **confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins** Lev 26:40 Ezr 10:1 Ne 1:6,7 9:3-5 Ps 32:5 51:3 Pr 28:13 Da 9:3-20 Ro 10:10
- **he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away** Isa 53:6 2Co 5:21
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat - This was a shadow of the substitutionary atonement fulfilled by the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus.

Isa 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; **The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him**, And by His scourging we are healed.

Isa 53:6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused **the iniquity of us all To fall on Him**

Isa 53:10 But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; **If He would render Himself as a guilt offering**, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand.

Isa 53:12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet **He Himself bore the sin of many**, And interceded for the transgressors.

2Cor 5:21-note He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins.

And sinners plunged beneath that flow lose all their guilty stains.

[**Play this beautiful rendition of — "There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood"**](#)

Send it away - This was a picture of their sins bore away or put away.

Iniquities... transgressions... sins - Three terms are also used here for the people's sins and taken together would encompass all dimensions of their breaking of God's law. All of these terms are in the plural, indicative of the frequency of humans' sinning. By confessing these sins with both hands placed on the goat's head, the high priest symbolically transfers the sins of the congregation to the scapegoat.

See study of **sin** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

Henry Law - The other goat appears. With anxious eye the multitude intently gaze. It is a moment big with results. The high-priest comes. His outstretched hands are pressed upon its head. This gesture is token of transmitted guilt. He then tells out the fearful catalogue of Israel's sins. In sign the substitute receives the mass of sin. What a deep feeling would pervade the camp! How many lightened hearts would say, 'My burden leaves me. The Scape-goat takes it, and I am relieved.'

The laden victim is then led away. It is borne beyond the camp—beyond all sight—beyond the track of man—to the far borders of a desert wild. Released, it disappears in rocks and thickets of an untrod waste. Unseen, unknown, forgotten, it departs from mortal view. It is now buried in oblivion's land.

There is no brighter picture of the full pardon of all sin in Christ. Faith knows this Scapegoat well. Daily it uses the relief. It hides no sin. It cloaks no guilt. It tells out all upon the head of Christ. Thus have I done. Such is my wretched state. But I cast all on one, who waits to bear, and bears it far away. Christ hastens away with the accursed load, and God's all-searching eye can no more find.

Oh precious tidings! Oh heart-cheering truth. The spirit wills, that this full comfort should most largely flow, and hence by frequent

testimony He confirms the truth. Is the east distant from the west? Can we move through the intervening space? As we advance the horizon still recedes. Infinite separation infinitely separates. Thus far our Scapegoat bears our guilt away. Ps. 103:12. ([The Scapegoat](#))

Robert Hawker - PAUSE, my soul! and behold the tender mercy of thy God, in thus causing to be represented to the church of old, by so striking a service, that grand and most momentous doctrine of the gospel, which, in after ages of the church, was fully set forth and completed when Jehovah laid upon our Lord Jesus Christ the iniquities of his people. And do, my soul, attend to those several most interesting points here graciously revealed. As first—This was the express command of God. Yes! who but God could transfer, or permit a change of persons in the transferring of sin? This is one of the most blessed parts of the gospel, that when Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the tree, it was by the express will and appointment of Jehovah. The Lord Jesus took not those sins on himself; but the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. Mark this down in strong characters. Then next consider—that as Jesus had a transfer of all the sins of his people, consequently they were no longer upon the people from whom they were transferred. Here faith finds full scope for exercise, in giving God the credit due to God. The sending away the goat was intended to represent the full remission of sins; and by the goat bearing them away to a land not inhabited, intimated that those sins should never be seen or known any more, according to that precious Scripture of the Holy Ghost by the prophet: “the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.” Jerem. 50:20. And there is one sweet thought more, not to be overlooked in this blessed Scripture, concerning those sins. Observe, my soul, the particularity of the expression. The confession of Aaron, the great high-priest, was not only of all the iniquities of the children of Israel, but of all their transgressions in all their sins. Pause, my soul, over this view, and recollect that there are many, and sometimes very heinous and aggravated, circumstances of transgression in thy sins. Now what a sweet thought of relief to thy mind is it, under particular and galling circumstances of sin, to behold thy Jesus bearing thy sins, and all the transgression of all thy sins. The Lord caused to meet in him, as the passage might have been rendered, the iniquities of us all. Isaiah 53:6. Jesus was made the common receiver, the drain, the sink, into which all the sins, and every minute and particular sin was emptied. He shall drink of the brook in the way, said the Holy Ghost, Psalm 110:7. Was not this the black, the filthy brook of Cedron, into which all the filth from the sacrifices of the temple were emptied? Here it was Jesus passed, when, in the night of his entering on his passion, he went into the garden. Look on this, my soul, and see where it doth not strikingly, though solemnly at the same time, set forth Jesus bearing all and every particular transgression in all thy sins. One thought more. The goat, thus laden with all the sins of the people, was to be sent away by the hand of some fit man into the wilderness. As none but Jesus could be competent to bear sins, so none but Jesus could be fit to bear them away into a land of everlasting forgetfulness. It doth not lessen the beauty of this blessed Scripture in the representation here made, in Jesus being set forth under two characters; for he is so in many. None but Jesus can indeed accomplish all; he is the High-Priest, the Altar, and the Sacrifice, through all the law; and he is the fit man here represented, as well as the burden-bearer of sin. Hail, thou Great High-Priest! Blessed for ever be thou who hast borne away all the sins of thy people into a land not inhabited. Thou hast crossed out, in God’s book of account, each and every individual sin, and the transgression of all our sins, in the red letters of thy blood; and never shall they appear again to the condemnation of thy people.

Leviticus 16:22 "The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

- **The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities:** Isa 53:11,12 John 1:29 Ga 3:13 Heb 9:28 1Pe 2:24
- **to a solitary land:** Heb. of separation, Ps 103:10,12 Eze 18:22 Mic 7:19
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

The goat is sent away into the wilderness under the control of a person prepared for this task presumably to make sure that it does not run about through the camp. He would also (presumably) make sure that once he is in the wilderness, the scapegoat does not turn back into the congregation.

F B Meyer - Unto a solitary land. (R.V.)

This chapter is full of Christ in his most precious death for men. Its various aspects are set forth under these diverse sacrifices, as light reflected from the many facets of a diamond. We think now only of the live goat which was led away into the wilderness. We see in it:—

Christ made sin. — With both hands Aaron, in symbol, transferred all the iniquities, sins, and transgressions of the people to the head of the goat, which became so identified with them that it was accounted an unclean thing; and even he who led it away must needs wash his clothes and bathe. This is what the apostle means when he says that Jesus was made sin for us. Our sins met in Him; were assumed by Him; He stood before God as though, in some mysterious sense, they were his own.

Christ bearing sin away. — As the goat went away, the eyes of the people followed it, and they were taught to believe that sin was no longer reckoned to them. Aaron put off his linen garments and arrayed himself in festal robes, and came forth to bless the congregation. What rejoicing must have broken from the crowds! So Jesus, in his matchless grace, has borne away the sin of the world into a land of forgetfulness. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Christ's loneliness. — He was alone in his mediatorial work. None could bear Him company. Loved ones might stand beside his cross, or in after ages suffer, as He did, deaths of martyrdom; but none could do what He did as the sacrifice for sin. Ah, how lonely He was! Even the Father seemed to have forsaken Him! Before the universe, in that dread hour, the Savior stood in awful, unapproachable solitude!

Tale Of Two Goats - In all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. -- Hebrews 2:17-note

Two goats without blemish stood before the high priest in the bright Middle Eastern sun. Lots were cast, and the priest slowly led one to the altar to be killed as a sin offering for the people. Its blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. That goat was a sacrifice.

The other goat, known as the scapegoat, portrays another truth. The priest placed both his hands on its forehead and confessed the sins of Israel. Then the goat was led out into the desert and turned loose. As it wandered away, never to be seen again, it symbolically took Israel's sins along with it. They were gone. The people were reconciled to God. That goat was a substitute.

Both of these goats were pictures of what Christ would do for us. The cross became an upright altar, where the Lamb of God gave His life as a sacrifice for sin. And what the scapegoat symbolically portrayed for Israel—the removal of their sins—Jesus fulfilled in reality. He became our substitute. Because of our identification with Him as believers, our sins have been taken away completely.

Two goats representing two truths: sacrifice and substitution. Both were fulfilled in Christ when He died on the cross and made full atonement for our sins. Praise God! —David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Guilty, vile, and helpless we,
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
Full atonement! Can it be?
Hallelujah, what a Savior!
—Bliss

([Play Modern rendition of Man of Sorrows](#))

([Play Hallelujah! What A Savior](#))

**Jesus took our place
to give us His peace.**

THE SCAPEGOAT "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people." - John 11:50

The company was losing money. The price of its stock was sliding, and the corporate board was grumbling. So the president, desperate to do something, fired the vice-president in charge of sales.

In a similar situation, a college basketball team was mired in a losing season after 6 consecutive successful years and three visits to the NCAA Tournament. Attendance was down and the alumni were howling. So the university fired the coach. In both cases, good people were released because the organization needed a scapegoat. They focused the blame on one person, even though many were at fault.

That's what happened to Jesus. The high priest Caiaphas, without knowing the full import of his words, said it would be best to sacrifice one man, Jesus. He thought it would save the nation from the oppressive Romans (Jn. 11:47-50). What he didn't realize was that Jesus was bearing the guilt and penalty for the sins of the world in fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the two goats - one a sacrifice for sin, the other a scapegoat which symbolically carried their sins away (Leviticus 16).

We deserve eternal death. How grateful we can be that God made Jesus our scapegoat.- D C Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, thank You for eternal life,
For dying in my place,

For taking all my punishment,
For showing me Your grace.-- Sper

**Christ became our scapegoat
that we might escape sin's penalty.**

The Other Goat (Our Daily Bread) - Read: Leviticus 16:5-22 He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. —1 John 2:2 The Scapegoat, a novel by Daphne du Maurier, is about two men who are amazed at the striking similarity in their appearance. They spend an evening together, but one runs off, stealing the other's identity and leaving him to step into a life filled with problems. The second man becomes a scapegoat.

The origin of that word comes from a ceremony performed with two goats on the Hebrew Day of Atonement (known today as [Yom Kippur](#)). The high priest would sacrifice one goat and symbolically place the sins of the people on the head of the other—the scapegoat—before it was sent into the wilderness carrying away the blame of the sin (Lev. 16:7-10).

But when Jesus came, He became our scapegoat. He offered Himself up “once for all” as a sacrifice to pay for the sins of “the whole world” (1 John 2:2; Heb. 7:27). That first goat had been sacrificed as a sin offering for God's people and symbolized Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The other goat was a representation of the completely innocent Jesus accepting and removing our sin and guilt.

None of us is without sin—but the Father laid on Jesus “the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6). God sees followers of His Son as blameless—because Jesus took all the blame we deserve. -- Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus our Savior left heaven above,
Coming to earth as a Servant with love;
Laying aside all His glory, He came,
Giving His life, taking all of our blame.
—Hess

**Jesus takes our sin
and gives us His salvation.**

James Hastings - Great Texts of the Bible - THE SCAPEGOAT The goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a solitary land. —Lev. 16:22.

I THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

THIS is part of the ritual of the Day of Atonement. Now the Day of Atonement represents the culminating institution of the Levitical system. Not only, from a merely formal point of view, does Lev. 16 form the climax of the sacrificial and purificatory ordinances contained in Lev. 1–15, but the ceremonial itself is of a peculiarly comprehensive and representative character. It was a yearly atonement for the nation as a whole (including the priests); and not only for the nation, but also for the sanctuary, in its various parts, in so far as this had been defined during the past year by the sins of the people in whose midst it stood.

¶ In Rabbinical literature the Day of Atonement becomes practically the great Day of Repentance, the culmination of the Ten Days of Repentance. It brings with itself purification, the Father in Heaven making white the sin committed by the son, by His forgiveness and pardon. “It is the Day of the Lord, great and very terrible,” inasmuch as it becomes a day of judgment, but also the Day of Salvation. “Israel is steeped in sin through the Evil Yezer in their body, but they do repentance and the Lord forgives their sins every year, and renews their heart to fear Him.” “On the Day of Atonement I will create you a new creation.” It is thus a penitential day in the full and in the best sense of the word.

¶ The Talmudical treatise on the ritual of the Day of Atonement is entitled Yoma, “the day,” which sufficiently expresses its importance in the series of sacrificial observances. It was the confession of the incompleteness of them all, a ceremonial proclamation that ceremonies do not avail to take away sin; and it was also a declaration that the true end of worship is not reached till the worshipper has free access to the holy place of the Most High. Thus the prophetic element is the very life-breath of this supreme institution of the old covenant, which therein acknowledges its own defects, and feeds the hopes of a future better thing.

II THE TWO GOATS

1. On this day the Congregation of Israel brought two goats for the purpose of atonement. For these, lots were cast at the door of the sanctuary, "one lot for Jehovah, and the other lot for Azazel." The one on which the lot of Jehovah fell was then slain as a sin-offering. The other was brought before God "to make atonement over it, to send it away for Azazel into the wilderness." Then, after the sins of the congregation had been confessed, this animal was made the bearer of all the sins of the now reconciled Israel, and was led away into the wilderness and there let loose "in a solitary land."

¶ Most solemn as the services had hitherto been, the worshippers would chiefly think with awe of the high-priest going into the immediate presence of God, coming out thence alive, and securing for them by the blood the continuance of the Old Testament privileges of sacrifices and of access unto God through them. What now took place concerned them, if possible, even more nearly. Their own personal guilt and sins were now to be removed from them, and that in a symbolical rite, at one and the same time the most mysterious and the most significant of all. All this while the "scapegoat," with the "scarlet-tongue," telling of the guilt it was to bear, had stood looking eastwards, confronting the people, and waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away "unto a land not inhabited." Laying both his hands on the head of this goat, the high-priest now confessed and pleaded: "Ah, Jehovah! they have committed iniquity; they have transgressed; they have sinned—Thy people, the house of Israel. Oh, then, Jehovah! cover over (atone for), I intreat Thee, upon their iniquities, their transgressions, and their sins, which they have wickedly committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee—Thy people, the house of Israel. As it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant, saying: "For on that day shall it be covered over (atoned) for you, to make you clean; from all your sins before Jehovah, ye shall be cleansed." And while the prostrate multitude worshipped at the name of Jehovah, the high-priest turned his face towards them as he uttered the last words, "Ye shall be cleansed!" as if to declare to them the absolution and remission of their sins. Then a strange scene would be witnessed. The priests led the sin-burdened goat out through "Solomon's Porch," and, as tradition has it, through the eastern gate, which opened upon the Mount of Olives. Here an arched bridge spanned the intervening valley, and over it they brought the goat to the Mount of Olives, where one, specially appointed for the purpose, took him in charge. Tradition enjoins that he should be a stranger, a non-Israelite, as if to make still more striking the type of Him who was delivered over by Israel unto the Gentiles. Scripture tells us no more of the destiny of the goat that bore upon him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, than that they "shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness," and that "he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." But tradition supplements this information. The distance between Jerusalem and the beginning of "the wilderness" is computed at ninety stadia, making precisely ten intervals, each half a Sabbath-day's journey from the other. At the end of each of these intervals there was a station, occupied by one or more persons, detailed for the purpose, who offered refreshment to the man leading the goat, and then accompanied him to the next station. By this arrangement two results were secured: some trusted persons accompanied the goat all along his journey, and yet none of them walked more than a Sabbath-day's journey—that is, half a journey going and the other half returning. At last they reached the edge of the wilderness. Here they halted, viewing afar off, while the man led forth the goat, tore off half the "scarlet-tongue," and stuck it on a projecting cliff; then, leading the animal backwards, he pushed it over the projecting ledge of rock. There was a moment's pause, and the man, now defiled by contact with the sin-bearer, retraced his steps to the last of the ten stations, where he spent the rest of the day and the night. But the arrival of the goat in the wilderness was immediately telegraphed, by the waving of flags, from station to station, till, a few minutes after its occurrence, it was known in the Temple, and whispered from ear to ear, that "the goat had borne upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited."

2. What, then, was the meaning of a rite on which such momentous issues depended? Everything about it seems strange and mysterious—the lot that designated it, and that "to Azazel", the fact that, though the highest of all sin-offerings, it was neither sacrificed nor its blood sprinkled in the Temple; and the circumstance that it really was only part of a sacrifice—the two goats together forming one sacrifice, one of them being killed, and the other "let go," there being no other analogous case of the kind except at the purification of a leper, when one bird was killed, and the other dipped in its blood, and let go free. For the common worshipper, then, the broad impression of this Day of Atonement was that the sins of the people were not only atoned for by the death of a victim, but separated from them and banished to forgetfulness through the same offering in another phase. While in the typical sacrifice this could be effected only by means of two victims, in the eternal reality to which it pointed the one Saviour who died and rose again becomes at once the atoning Sacrifice and the risen Sanctifier by whom our sin is removed.

¶ These two goats were not for Aaron, but for the people. We must regard them as if they were but one offering, for it needed both of them to set forth the divine plan by which sin is put away; one was to die, and the other was typically to bear away the sins of the people. One goat was to show how sin is put away in reference to God by sacrifice, and the other goat was to show how it is put away in reference to us, God's people, by being carried into oblivion.

¶ Man hath not done anything on the day of sacrifice more pleasing to God than spilling blood; for verily the animal sacrificed will come on the day of resurrection with its horns, its hair, its hoofs, and will make the scale of his good actions heavy: and verily its blood reacheth the acceptance of God, before it falleth upon the ground: therefore be joyful in it.

III FOR AZAZEL

1. Of the two goats it is stated (16:8) that the one was “for Jehovah,” the other “for Azazel” (R.V.; the A.V. uses here the word “scapegoat”). “Azazel” is not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament, and its meaning is much disputed. In the apocryphal Book of Enoch, Azazel is a spirit, the leader of the evil angels who formed unholy alliances with the “daughters of men” (Gen. 6:2, 4). But whatever the precise attributes with which Azazel was invested at the time when the ritual of Lev. 16 was framed, there can be little doubt that the ceremonial was intended as a symbolical declaration that the land and people are now purged from guilt, their sins being handed over to the evil spirit to whom they are held to belong, and whose home is in the desolate wilderness, remote from human habitations (verse 22, “into a land cut off”). No doubt the rite is a survival from an older stage of popular belief, engrafted on, and accommodated to, the sacrificial system of the Hebrews. For the expulsion of evils, whether maladies or sins, from a community, by their being laid symbolically upon a material medium, there are many analogies in other countries. The belief in goblins, or demons (Jinn), haunting the wilderness and vexing the traveller, is particularly common in Arabia: in the Old Testament it is found in Lev. 17:7; Isa. 13:21, 34:14 (“satyrs,” lit. he-goats, and Lilith, the night-monster). Azazel must have been such a spirit, sufficiently distinguished from the rest, in popular imagination, to receive a special name, and no doubt invested with attributes which, though unknown to us, were perfectly familiar to those for whom the ceremonial of Lev. 16 was first designed.

¶ The rendering of the A.V., “scapegoat,” inherited from the “Great Bible” of 1539, may be traced back through Seb. Münster (“caper abiturus”), Coverdale (“the free goat”), Luther (“der ledige Bock”), and Jerome (“caper emissarius”) to the Greek translation of Symmachus; but it implies a derivation opposed to the genius of the Hebrew language, besides being inconsistent with the marked antithesis between “for Azazel” and “for Jehovah,” which does not leave it open to doubt that the former is conceived as a personal being, to whom (cf. verse 26) the goat is sent. All the principal modern authorities agree in explaining Azazel as a personal name. “Scapegoat” is, however, a felicitous expression; it has become classical in English; and there is no reason why it should not be retained as a term descriptive of the goat sent into the wilderness, provided it be clearly understood that it is in no way a rendering of the Hebrew.

2. The Jewish rite presents marks of strong kinship with similar rites which are still observed in every part of the world. It was originally a rite of exorcism, and was modified into an object-parable of those great ethical lessons which God wished to impress upon the conscience of the chosen people, and in due time upon the human race. On the four great continents, and in many islands of the sea, it is carried out, with the variation due to local conditions, at fixed seasons of the year, or in times of epidemic. In some form or other it must have been in vogue before the dispersion of the primitive races, or at least have been suggested by ideas common to mankind in the cradle-lands of the prehistoric dawn. It was practised amongst unlettered and classical races alike, and in some parts of Europe variant types of the ceremony have survived the spread of the Christian faith.

¶ In some of the islands of South-Eastern Asia the ceremony is found in one of its most elementary forms. The custom has, of course, adapted itself to conditions where domestic animals are unknown and the inland areas present no deserts into which a scape-victim bearing the ills of the people could be dismissed. A ship is prepared on board which rice, eggs, and tobacco are placed, whilst a priest cries out: “All ye sicknesses, measles, agues, depart!” The ship is carried down to the shore, launched when a breeze begins to blow from off the land, and left to drift out to sea. The priest then cries out, “All the sicknesses are gone!” and the people who had shut themselves up in their homes through fear come forth again with a sense of relief. In the inland parts of the island the priests brush the people with branches of trees which are supposed to gather up all the evil influences that cleave to their bodies, and then throw the infected branches into the river to be carried out to sea.

¶ A tribe of American Indians make white dogs their scape-victims, and drive them off into the prairie, whilst another tribe paint a man black to represent a demon and at last chase him from the village. A similar custom prevails amongst the aborigines of the Chinese Highlands. In times of epidemic a man is chosen for the victim, his face is smeared with paint, and with curses and tomtoms he is then driven forth from the hamlet and forbidden to return.

3. The Jewish religion took hold upon a truth in this crude observance common to all races, and taught the multitude to look for release from sin by one who should be made sin for them. In the prefigurative ceremony the burden of the assembly’s sin was transferred to a pair of victims, one of which was slain at the altar where its life was offered to an offended God, whilst the other was driven forth into the wilderness, carrying into inaccessible places the burden placed upon it. The principle needed fine definitions and

careful safeguards in the after-ages, but it expressed a rough and enduring truth without which social and religious life are alike impossible. The vicarious principle is not ordained to compromise or destroy responsibility, but the denial of its presence and working, within divinely appointed limits, involves the denial of that providential order under which mankind is placed.

¶ But how is the modern world to be taught the vicarious principle when it has so little knowledge of the meaning of sin? No doubt ignorance of the nature of sin is largely due to ignorance of the Bible. Holman Hunt tells us his experience of this double ignorance when he returned from Palestine with his great picture, "The Scapegoat."

Mr. Gambart, the picture-dealer, was ever shrewd and entertaining. He came in his turn to my studio, and I led him to "The Scapegoat."

"What do you call that?"

" 'The Scapegoat.' "

"Yes; but what is it doing?"

"You will understand by the title, *Le bouc errant*."

"But why *errant*?" he asked.

"Well, there is a book called the Bible, which gives an account of the animal. You will remember."

"No," he replied; "I never heard of it."

"Ah, I forgot, the book is not known in France, but English people read it more or less," I said, "and they would all understand the story of the beast being driven into the wilderness."

"You are mistaken. No one would know anything about it, and if I bought the picture it would be left on my hands. Now, we will see," replied the dealer. "My wife is an English lady; there is a friend of hers, an English girl, in the carriage with her. We will ask them up; you shall tell them the title; we will see. Do not say more."

The ladies were conducted into the room.

"Oh, how pretty! what is it?" they asked.

"It is 'The Scapegoat,' " I said.

There was a pause. "Oh yes," they commented to one another, "it is a peculiar goat; you can see by the ears, they droop so."

The dealer then, nodding with a smile towards me, said to them, "It is in the wilderness."

The ladies: "Is that the wilderness now? Are you intending to introduce any others of the flock?" And so the dealer was proved to be right, and I had over-counted on the picture's intelligibility.

4. This rite also provided a form of absolution which comforted the conscience-stricken Israelite, and gave fresh courage to his soul. It addressed itself to the imagination, and accomplished this specific end in a more vivid and impressive way than the common sacrifices of the tabernacle. This action-parable, in which perhaps there was much of condescension to the superstition of the age, helped men to feel that the load of guilt was gone, that clouds of gathering wrath had been dispersed, and that the sky from which God looked down was fair and smiling once more. In many places where similar rites were observed, the people crouched with fear in their houses, and some trace of this feature of the custom appears in the Book of Leviticus, which forbade the people entering into the tabernacle whilst the goat for sacrifice was being offered. When the rite had been accomplished, men and women breathed freely once more, as though the world were no longer a place of penalty and a prison-house. The sense of fear was dispelled from the heart as the dim figure of the man leading the scapegoat disappeared over the tops of the hills, and no news of the year was received with greater gladness than the word signalled back to the city that the victim with its burden had passed into the waste wilderness. The rite was obviously adopted to keep alive the expectation of a time when evil should be cast forth into the desolate spaces of the Universe, and the last trace of sin and its curse should be taken away from the city and the people of God. The ceremony was surely a prophecy in symbol of the true Day of Atonement, when the Man of God's choice should carry the burdens of the race into the land of forgetfulness and gracious oblivion.

¶ No sins are reckoned against us by God; on His side they are all put away—in relation to Him they have no existence. Hence our Lord says (Matt. 9:2): "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins have been done away." "Son"—for He is speaking to him as to a child of God, and tells him, without any solicitation on his part, an eternal fact, viz.—that his sins have no existence as in the mind or eye of God. The same truth is expressed in the parable of the prodigal son—there is no reckoning of sin against the prodigal on the father's side.

Rest, weary heart!

The penalty is borne, the ransom paid,

For all thy sins full satisfaction made!

Strive not to do thyself what Christ has done,

Claim the free gift, and make the joy thine own;

No more by pangs of guilt and fear distrest,

Rest! calmly rest!

IV SACRIFICE AND SEPARATION

Once a year the sins of the people were thus solemnly atoned for, and the nation's lost holiness was restored (verse 30, "to cleanse you: from all your sins shall ye be clean before Jehovah"). The slain goat made atonement for the people's sins, and restored their peace and fellowship with God; the goat over which the people's sins were confessed, and which was afterwards sent away to Azazel in the wilderness, symbolized visibly their complete removal from the nation's midst (Ps. 103:12; Mic. 7:19): a life was given up for the altar, and yet a living being survived to carry away all sin and uncleanness: the entire ceremonial thus symbolized as completely as possible both the atonement for sin and the entire removal of the cause of God's alienation.

1. Sacrifice.—No specific mention is made of this rite in the subsequent books of the Bible, but it probably coloured the language of the prophet as he portrayed the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, who was despised and rejected, and from whom men hid their faces. The iniquity of the erring flock laid by a Divine hand upon His sacred person suggests the picture of the high priest transferring the common sin to the scape-victim by words of confession and the laying on of his hands. When the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews asserts that it is not possible for "the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin," he perhaps has in view at the moment the offerings of the great Day of Atonement. This rite of course is included without express mention in the statement that the meaning of all sacrifice is consummated and fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ. Our Lord gathers up into His ministry and death the peculiar lines of thought indicated in this ceremony. In setting Himself to deal with the problem of suffering by first of all attacking the problem of sin, Jesus was bringing home to the multitude the fundamental lesson of this ancient ritual.

2. Separation.—We can almost see the figure of the scape-victim, looming through the shadows of the night, as Matthew describes the great healer casting out devils when the sick were brought to His feet in the Sabbath twilight. The evangelist seems to see the sicknesses He healed transferred to His weary form, and weighting His sympathetic soul, and sums up the picture in the memorable words of the prophet, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." In Jesus Christ the rite comes back into some kind of external likeness to the primitive form, but with an unutterable difference, a difference consisting in an overwhelming contrast rather than a comparison. The scape-victim is the Man of Sorrows, chosen not by lot, but by the decree of the Most High, proclaimed through signs and wonders which God did by Him in the midst of the people. He is selected, if we may use the contrast without irreverence, not like the victim of primitive societies, who was singled out for the office by a degradation which seemed openly to challenge the wrath of the gods, but because of His transcendent dignity and holiness. It is no slave or war-captive who is dragged to this pathetic and ignominious ministry, but the Lord of heaven and the Prince of the kings of the earth, drawn by His own free compassions for the guilty and burdened race, made a curse to redeem us from the curse which cleaves to all offenders against God.

¶ **"Unto a solitary land."** The solitude of the Sin-bearer is something altogether distinct from the solitude of the Holy One. In His human life, our blessed Lord was, in a certain sense, solitary for this simple reason that He moved on a higher platform than others. He did not find Himself able to educate His own most intimate followers into sympathy with His own real aspirations, or to bring them under the law of life, under which He moved and acted. They remained of the earth, earthy, while He was above it, breathing a purer atmosphere, and living by a higher law. This solitude of holiness separated Him from sinners: but that very separation which, from time to time, made Him lead, in His humanity, a strange lonesome life, yet brought Him into such full contact with all the glorious beings and the realities of the spirit-world, that such a solitude could hardly be looked upon with any considerable regret, or be the source of any actual pain. But it was otherwise now. We are speaking, not of the solitude of the Representative of holiness and purity, but of the solitude of the Sin-bearer, because He was the sin-bearer.

¶ **It was a weary journey that the scapegoat took.** It left the fertile fields, and the babbling brooks of Israel, far behind: the distant heights of Carmel disappeared on the far-off horizon; before it, there opened up a boundless waste of desert sand, while the "fit man" trudged on relentlessly, farther, and farther, many a weary mile, and still the scapegoat followed him, bearing the sins of the people. The grassy plains have disappeared; the last palm tree is lost in the distance; the sound of running waters has long since died upon the ear; and all around there is the barren waste of desert sand; and still the man trudges on, and still the scapegoat follows him. All alone in the desolate wilds, all alone in a blighted land, and not inhabited. And then the fit man disappears. He had led the goat into the solitude, and lo, it is left alone—all alone. Wistfully it gazes round on the dreary scene. Oh, for one blade of grass! oh, for one drop of water! Its eyes are strained, its nostrils dilated, if by chance it may catch a breath of something like fertility borne in the gale from the distance: but no. In solitude and weariness it still goes wandering on, and every step it takes, brings it farther, and farther still, into the silent desolate desert: the scapegoat is all alone. The weary day drags out its long hours: the dark and mournful night closes in; the morning sun rises up with blistering heat; its lips are parched, its limbs are

trembling: it sinks amidst the desert sand, and dies. For it must be remembered that it was a late custom that threw it over the rock; at the first it was simply left to die.

And so the scapegoat bore the sins of the people into the land of separation. Leave it there, and come to Calvary.

We seem to see the Scapegoat of the human family led by the hand of the "fit man." We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews that the Lord Jesus Christ, "by the eternal Spirit" offered Himself to God. That same Spirit of God that led Him alone into the wilderness, not that He might find comfort, but that He might meet with temptation, has led Him right up to Jerusalem. He set His face like a flint to go; but still the Spirit led, and still He pursued His leading, until He finds Himself in Gethsemane. The terrible darkness is beginning to gather round Him, and the agony to oppress His soul; but the Spirit of God leads on, and the Scapegoat continues to follow. He finds Himself all alone in the judgment hall, separated from those who were dearest to Him, and not one friendly voice raised up on behalf of the dying Son of God: but the Spirit still leads on, and the Scapegoat must still follow. He finds Himself nailed to the cross, and His lips are parched with thirst, and His body quails in agony. Will He not now pause and call for the ten legions of angels? Might He not raise those languid, dying eyes, and demand a draught of the sparkling waters of life from His Father's hand? But the Spirit still leads on; and the Scapegoat must follow. Deeper and deeper, into the darkness; down into the solitude of sorrow, down into the desolate land not inhabited; and, by and by, from the breaking heart, there rings throughout God's universe the cry of "the Forsaken," "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" The Scapegoat has found the land of separation at last, all alone in the darkness. The isolating influences of sin have done their work. He is shut out from the light of His Father's eye, or to Himself He seems to be: the joy, the delight of His Life is gone: the blessed fellowship seems broken: there is a horrible sense of loneliness within His heart, and a terrible desolation within His guiltless soul. So He sinks, He staggers, He dies: Jesus, "the Forsaken."

And so He bore our sins into the land not inhabited. No witnessing spirit can find them there; no denizen of those dreary regions can rediscover them. They are left amid the wastes of desolation; they are sunk like a stone into the depths of the vast ocean of infinite love. They are lost sight of by man; the very devils of hell cannot rediscover them; the angels find them obliterated from their view, and God Himself has turned His back upon them, and left them in the land of separation.

"Now have I won a marvel and a Truth;"
So spake the soul and trembled, "dread and ruth
Together mixed, a sweet and bitter core
Closed in one rind; for I did sin of yore,
But this (so said I oft) was long ago;
So put it from me far away, but, lo!
With Thee is neither After nor Before,
O Lord, and clear within the noon-light set
Of one illimitable Present, yet
Thou lookest on my fault as it were now.
So will I mourn and humble me; yet Thou
Art not as man that oft forgives a wrong
Because he half forgets it, Time being strong
To wear the crimson of guilt's stain away;
For Thou, forgiving, dost so in the Day
That shows it clearest, in the boundless Sea
Of Mercy and Atonement, utterly
Casting our pardoned trespasses behind,
No more remembered, or to come in mind;
Set wide from us as East from West away:
So now this bitter turns to solace kind;
And I will comfort me that once of old
A deadly sorrow struck me, and its cold
Runs through me still; but this was long ago.
My grief is dull through age, and friends outworn,
And wearied comforters have long forborne
To sit and weep beside me: Lord, yet Thou
Dost look upon my pang as it were now!"

Jerry Bridges - THE SCAPEGOAT

The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area.(LEVITICUS 16:22)

The greatest scapegoat in all of history is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word is never used of Him in the Bible, but it is used of a male goat in the Old Testament sacrificial system which pictured the one great sacrifice of Jesus in His death. Each year this elaborate system of sacrifices reached its climax on the great Day of Atonement, when two male goats were selected.

One was to be killed and its blood sprinkled on and before the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place where God symbolically dwelt (Leviticus 16:15–19). This goat's death as a sacrifice to God symbolized our Lord's propitiatory sacrifice for us on the cross.

The priest would lay his hands on the head of the second goat "and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins." Then the goat would be led "away into the wilderness," never to be seen again. This goat was called the scapegoat because all the guilt of the people was symbolically transferred to it, and their sins carried away into the desert (verses 20–22).

The death of the first goat symbolized the means of propitiating the wrath of God through the death of an innocent victim substituted in the sinner's place. The sending away of the second goat set forth the effect of this propitiation, the complete removal of the sins from the presence of the Holy God and from His people.

Since both goats represented Christ, we may say Christ became our scapegoat, bearing the guilt of our sins in His propitiatory sacrifice and by that act bearing them away from the presence of His holy Father.

Jerry Bridges - REMOVED

Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!(JOHN 1:29)

Expiation is another seldom-used and little-understood theological word. You can readily see its spelling similarity to propitiation. In fact, the two words are often confused, though significantly different in meaning.

Propitiation addresses God's wrath. It is the work of Christ saving us from that wrath by absorbing it in His own person as our substitute. Expiation, which basically means "removal," accompanies propitiation and speaks of Christ's work in removing or putting away our sin. Such is the symbolism of the two goats used on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:20–22). The first goat represented Christ's work of propitiation as it was killed and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat. The second goat represented Christ's work of expiation in removing or blotting out the sins that were against us. The object of propitiation is God's wrath; the object of expiation is our sin, which must be removed from His presence.

The two goats together constituted one offering, and both represent the work of Christ on our behalf. It would have been a blasphemous affront to a holy God to send one goat away into the desert without first sacrificing the goat whose blood symbolized the blood of Christ that alone propitiates the wrath of God.

Do you see how the work of Christ is infinitely greater than the greatest depth of your sin? The work of Christ is finished. Nothing more remains to be done. God's wrath has been propitiated. Our sins have been removed. The question is, will we appreciate it, not only at our initial moment of salvation but for our day-to-day acceptance with God? Only as we do this will we truly begin to appreciate the glory of the cross and the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Charles Stanley - The Divine Scapegoat

SCRIPTURE READING: Leviticus 16:1–22 KEY VERSE: Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Through repeated usage, the term scapegoat has become quite familiar to our secular culture. Its meaning—"an innocent party being blamed"—has its roots, however, in an ancient Hebrew ritual known as the Day of Atonement.

This holy day occurred once each year. The high priest took two male goats as a sin offering for the iniquities of the people. One goat was slaughtered, and its blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. The remaining goat was sent into the wilderness—after the high priest had placed his hands on the goat's head and confessed the sins of the nation over it. Through this "scapegoat" observance, God showed His mercy to the Israelites, allowing Him to continue His covenant relationship with them.

In much the same way, Jesus became the divine scapegoat for the sins of the world. He was and is the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29 NASB).

Our sins were placed on Him at Calvary. Indeed, our sins put Him there.

Jesus took the blame so that we could live. Have you trusted in His atonement? Have you come to Him for the forgiveness of your sins? Have you been healed of your transgressions through His sacrifice?

Almighty God, thank You for the sacrifice of Your Son, Jesus, as the divine scapegoat for my sins. I praise You that He took the

blame, so I could live. I rejoice in the liberating truth of His atonement for me.

Leviticus 16:23 "Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there.

- Lev 16:4 Eze 42:14 44:19 Ro 8:3 Php 2:6-11 Heb 9:28
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Heb 9:28-note so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Promises to Israel The atonement included the covering of both known and unknown sins. The presence of sin was always assumed to be true. The entire Mosaic system was based upon the premise that sin was the problem. Because sin was always assumed to be there, the Day of Atonement included atonement for known and unknown sins both.

Leviticus 16:24 "He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.

- **He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place:** Lev 16:4 8:6 14:9 22:6 Ex 29:4 Heb 9:10, Heb 10:19-22 Rev 1:5,6
- **put on his clothes:** Lev 8:7-9 Ex 28:4-14 29:5
- **offer his burnt offering:** Lev 16:3,5
- **make atonement for himself and for the people:** Lev 16:17
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Put on his clothes - Aaron now puts on the high priestly garments in order to offer up the burnt offering.

Guzik - When atonement was finished, the priest emerged from the tabernacle in glory - with the humble garments taken off and in his normal clothes for glory and beauty. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest was **humble** (Lev. 16:4), he was **spotless** (Lev. 16:11), and he was alone (Lev. 16:11-14), and he emerged victorious - just like Jesus was in accomplishing our work of atonement.

Burnt Offering - Recall that the burnt offering was a whole offering and spoke of dedication of oneself wholly to the Lord. It typified the Lord Jesus' offering of Himself unto death (Heb. 10:5-7). Believers should similarly offer themselves up to God as living sacrifices to God...

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Ro 12:1-2).

Leviticus 16:25 "Then he shall offer up in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar.

- Lev 16:6 Lev 4:8-10,19 Ex 29:13
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) chattat/chattath

Leviticus 16:26 "The one who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water; then afterward he shall come into the camp.

- **The one who released the goat as the scapegoat :** Lev 16:10,21,22
- **shall wash his clothes and bathe his body:** Lev 16:28 14:8 15:5-11,27 Nu 19:7,8,21 Heb 7:19
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Heb 7:19-note (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

See study of **Scapegoat** ([05799](#)) **'aza'zel**

Leviticus 16:27 "But the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire.

- **But the bull of the sin offering:** Lev 4:11,12,21 6:30 8:17
- **shall be taken outside the camp:** Mt 27:31-33 Heb 13:11-14
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Wenham - The NT makes nothing of the scapegoat led away into the wilderness; but ever since the epistle of Barnabas, written c. A.D. 200, Christians have seen in the scapegoat a type of Christ. As it was led out to die in the wilderness bearing the sins of the people, so Christ was crucified outside Jerusalem for the sins of his people.

See study of **sin offering** ([02403](#)) **chattat/chattath**

Outside the camp (28x in 27v in Scripture) - Ex 29:14; 33:7; Lev 4:12, 21; 6:11; 8:17; 9:11; 13:46; 16:27; 17:3; 24:14, 23; Num 5:3f; 12:14f; 15:35f; 19:3, 9; 31:13, 19; Deut 23:10, 12; Josh 6:23; Heb 13:11, 13

Heb 13:11-note For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.13 Hence, let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

Outside the camp (this exact phrase 28x in 27v in NAS) - Ex 29:14; 33:7; Lev 4:12, 21-note; Lev 6:11-note.; Lev 8:17-note.; Lev 9:11; Lev 13:46-note.; Lev 16:27-note (good note by Richard Phillips).; Lev 17:3-note.; Lev 24:14, 23-note.; Nu 5:3-4; 12:14-15; 15:35-36; 19:3, 9; 31:13, 19; Dt 23:10, 12; Josh 6:23; Heb 13:11-note Heb 13:13-note. and "outside the gate" in Heb 13:12-note.

Richard Phillips on outside the camp...

It is clear from what follows that the writer of Hebrews does not expect his readers to become popular by standing firm against false teaching. He therefore adds a statement that connects our disgrace to the disgrace of the cross, which was erected "outside the camp." He writes, "Jesus also suffered **outside the gate** in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him **outside the camp** and bear the reproach he endured" (Heb 13:12-13-note).

Because Jesus taught the truth about God, about man, and about the only way of salvation, he was despised and rejected by men, and was literally cast **outside the city gates**. There He was put to death as one accursed. Jesus' whole ministry and message were outside the pale of worldly religion, and so he became an object of scorn and abuse. **Outside the gate** he suffered and died. In that separation, a principle is established for all who would come to God through Him. **Outside the camp** is where we go to find the grace of God, for that is where the Cross was raised, where God meets with us to forgive our sin and to accept us in the righteousness of the Son Whom the world despised.

This means that if you want acceptance in the courts of respectable academia, if you want to be admired in the cocktail lounges of conventional and progressive worldly wisdom, and especially if you want to avoid the scandal of a religion that man rejects, then you may not have fellowship with this Jesus Christ. You may not approach His Cross by staying within the safe confines of the worldly city, for the Cross is found outside the camp. But if you go **outside the gates** of worldly acceptance, not because you have some grudge against the world but because you see Jesus there, you will gain the salvation He bought with His blood to make you holy unto God.

Since salvation is found in Jesus Christ and in Him alone, the writer exhorts us, "Therefore let us go to him **outside the camp** and bear the reproach he endured" (Heb 13:13-note). This is an often suppressed truth about Christianity, that the blessings of salvation cannot be had without the disgrace of Jesus' Cross. Paul wrote, "Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and

the wisdom of God" (1Cor. 1:22-24). To Timothy he wrote, "All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2Ti 3:12-**note**). Jesus made it quite clear that following him means rejection by this world. He said to the disciples, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:18-19). If we want to be joined to Christ and his salvation, there is no way for us to avoid bearing the disgrace with which he was sent **outside the camp**... F. F. Bruce completes the analogy:

Now, in the person of Jesus, God had again been rejected in the camp; His presence was therefore to be enjoyed **outside the camp**, where Jesus was, and everyone who sought Him must go out and approach Him through Jesus. In this context the "**camp**" stands for the established fellowship and ordinances of Judaism. To abandon them, with all their sacred associations inherited from remote antiquity, was a hard thing, but it was a necessary thing... What was formerly sacred was now unhallowed, because Jesus had been expelled from it; what was formerly unhallowed was now sacred, because Jesus was there.

So it is today, that wherever Jesus is denied as the only Savior for sinners, whether in false churches, in families, or in the world at large, all who stand with him must be willing to go **outside the camp**. But to those who do decide to follow Him, Jesus says, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30). ([Hebrews \(Reformed Expository Commentary\)- Richard D. Phillips](#))

Leviticus 16:28 "Then the one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water, then afterward he shall come into the camp."

- Lev 16:26
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Then - An **expression of time** - marks what is next in a narration.

Leviticus 16:29 "This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you;

- **in the seventh month:** Lev 23:27-32 Ex 30:10 Nu 29:7 1Ki 8:2 Ezr 3:1
- **you shall humble your souls:** Ps 35:13 69:10 Isa 58:3,5 Da 10:3,12 1Co 11:31 2Co 7:10,11
- **and not do any work:** Lev 23:3,7,8,21,28,36 Ex 12:16 20:10 Isa 58:13 Heb 4:10
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

KJV - And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall **afflict (humble) your souls**, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

Permanent statute - everlasting. How could this be true today? For the unbelieving nation of Israel this would still be "permanent" statute but it is one that they cannot fulfill for they have no Tabernacle or Temple. This inability should frustrate them and drive them to Jesus, the better sacrifice.

For you - For "who?" For the nation of Israel (see Lev 16:34 **for the sons of Israel**).

Statute (02708) (**chuqqah** from **chaqah** = to cut in, inscribe, decree) means something prescribed, an enactment, statute.

Chuqqah - - appointed(1), customs(5), due(1), fixed order(m)(1), fixed patterns(m)(1), ordinance(5), ordinances(1), statute(25), statutes(62), statutory(2).

Gen 26:5; Ex 12:14, 17, 43; 13:10; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; Lev 3:17; 7:36; 10:9; 16:29, 31, 34; 17:7; 18:3ff, 26, 30; 19:19, 37; 20:8, 22f; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; 24:3; 25:18; 26:3, 15, 43; Num 9:3, 12, 14; 10:8; 15:15; 18:23; 19:2, 10, 21; 27:11; 31:21; 35:29; Deut 6:2; 8:11; 10:13; 11:1; 28:15, 45; 30:10, 16; 2 Sam 22:23; 1 Kgs 2:3; 3:3; 6:12; 9:6; 11:11, 33f, 38; 2 Kgs 17:8, 13, 19, 34; 23:3; 2 Chr 7:19; Job 38:33; Ps 18:22; 89:31; 119:16; Jer 5:24;

10:3; 31:35; 33:25; 44:10, 23; Ezek 5:6f; 11:20; 18:9, 17, 19, 21; 20:11, 13, 16, 19, 21, 24; 33:15; 37:24; 43:11, 18; 44:5, 24; 46:14; Mic 6:16

You shall humble your souls - In contrast to other national days of gathering, the Day of Atonement was a day to **humble your souls**.

Criswell on **humble** (afflict) **your souls** - "Afflict your souls" (cf. Lev 16:31) denotes prayer and fasting (alt. humble yourselves). Of all the holy convocations of ancient Israel, the Day of Atonement was the only fast day.

Humble (06031) ('**anah**) means to be afflicted, be bowed down, be humbled, be meek. '**Anah** frequently expresses the idea God sends affliction to discipline (Dt 8:2-3, see context Dt 8:5, 1Ki 11:39; Ps 90:15 Luke 3:5). It often speaks of harsh and painful treatment (Isa 53:4, Ge16:6). '**Anah** is most frequently translated in LXX by **tapeinoo** (as it is here in Lev 16:29). God commanded them to "afflict themselves" ("deny yourselves" Lev 16:31NIV), which is the same word used to describe the pain that the Egyptians inflicted on the Hebrews (Ex 1:11,12) and the suffering Joseph felt in prison (Ps 105:18)!

Even today religious Jews observe **Yom Kippur** (or from Judaism 101 = **Yom Kippur**) with fasting and prayer. Although the Day of Atonement is listed among the feasts of Jehovah, it was actually a time for **fasting** rather than **feasting**. However, after the sin question was settled, there came a time of rejoicing in the **Feast of Tabernacles**.

MacArthur - This act of denying oneself was probably with respect to food, making the Day of Atonement the only day of prescribed fasting in Israel's annual calendar.

'**Anah** is in fact used in the context of fasting in several other passages...

Ps 35:13 "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I **humbled** ('**anah**) my soul with fasting; And my prayer kept returning to my bosom."

Isaiah 58:3 'Why have we **fasted** and Thou dost not see? [Why] have we **humbled** ourselves (**Ed**: the implication being that when they fasted, they humbled themselves) and Thou dost not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast (**Ed**: the day you "humbled" yourselves) you find [your] desire, And drive hard all your workers.

Isaiah 58:5 "Is it a **fast** like this which I choose, a day for a man to **humble** himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed, And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD?

Anah - 75v in **NAS** - afflict(16), afflict him at all(1), afflicted(22), affliction(1), disturbed(1), do violence(1), force(1), humble(12), humbled(6), humbling(1), mistreat(1), oppressed(1), oppressors(1), ravish(1), ravished(2), silenced(1), submit(1), treated her harshly(1), violate(1), violated(5), weakened(1). **KJV translates** - **afflict 50, humble 11**, force 5, exercised 2, sing 2, Leannoth 1, troubled 1, weakened 1, misc 11; 84 (Note more uses in KJV).

Gen 15:13; 16:6, 9; 31:50; 34:2; Ex 1:11f; 10:3; 22:22f; Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 29, 32; Nu 24:24; 29:7; 30:13; Deut 8:2f, 16; 21:14; 22:24, 29; 26:6; Jdg 16:5f, 19; 19:24; 20:5; 2Sa 7:10; 13:12, 14, 22, 32; 1Kgs 2:26; 8:35; 11:39; 2Kgs 17:20; 2Chr 6:26; Ezra 8:21; Job 30:11; 37:23; Ps 35:13; 88:7; 89:22; 90:15; 94:5; 102:23; 105:18; 107:17; 116:10; 119:67, 71, 75, 107; 132:1; 140:12; Isa 25:5; 31:4; 53:4, 7; Isa 58:3, 5, 10; 60:14; 64:12; Lam 3:33; 5:11; Ezek 22:10f; Dan 10:12; Nah 1:12; Zeph 3:19; Zech 10:2.

NET Note - The verb "to humble" here refers to various forms of self-denial, **including but not limited to fasting** (cf. Ps 35:13 - "I humbled my soul with fasting" and Isa 58:3, 10). The Mishnah (m. Yoma 8:1) lists abstentions from food and drink, bathing, using oil as an unguent to moisten the skin, wearing leather sandals, and sexual intercourse (cf. 2Sa 12:16-17, 20).

Leviticus 16:30 for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

- Ps 51:2,7,10 Jer 33:8 Eze 36:25-27 Eph 5:26 Tit 2:14 Heb 9:13,14 Heb 10:1,2 1Jn 1:7-9
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

For - This is a **term of explanation** (NIV uses "because") which explains why this day was so special and was to be a permanent statute.

YOU SHALL BE CLEAN FROM ALL YOUR SINS BEFORE THE LORD (Ps 103:12; Isa 38:17; Mic 7:19). This day provided ceremonial cleansing for one year, and pictured the forgiveness of God available to all who believed and repented. And remember

that it also provided for cleansing of the Tabernacle and altar, which was critical in assuring they would continue to experience the presence of Jehovah in their midst.

Guzik - God wanted them to afflict themselves so they could identify with the sacrifice for sin. Afflicting the soul brought the Israelite into sympathy with the afflicted sacrificial victim, even as the believer identifies with Jesus Christ on the cross.

Cleanse (02891) (**taher**) is used in OT almost exclusively of moral or ritual purity (Exceptions Job 37:21, Mal 3:3). In Lev 16:30 it is translated with **katharizo** (from **katharos** = pure, clean, without stain or spot; English words - catharsis = emotional or physical purging, cathartic = substance used to induce a purging, Cathar = member of a medieval sect which sought the purging of evil from its members). **Katharizo** means to make clean by taking away an undesirable part. To cleanse from filth or impurity.)

Taher - 79x in NAS (**Note concentration in Leviticus**) - become clean(2), becomes clean(2), becomes cleansed(1), clean(25), cleanse(15), cleansed(19), cleansing(1), cleared(1), pronounce him clean(6), pronounce the clean(1), pronounce clean(2), pronounces him clean(1), pronouncing it clean(1), pure(2), purge(1), purged(2), purified(5), purifier(1), purify(5), purifying(1), remain(1), unclean*(1).

Gen 35:2; Lev 11:32; 12:7f; 13:6, 13, 17, 23, 28, 34, 37, 58f; 14:4, 7ff, 11, 14, 17ff, 25, 28f, 31, 48, 53; 15:13, 28; 16:19, 30; 17:15; 22:4, 7; Num 8:6f, 15, 21; 19:12, 19; 31:23f; Josh 22:17; 2 Kgs 5:10, 12ff; 2 Chr 29:15f, 18; 30:18; 34:3, 5, 8; Ezra 6:20; Neh 12:30; 13:9, 22, 30; Job 4:17; 37:21; Ps 51:2, 7; Pr 20:9; Isa 66:17; Jer 13:27; 33:8; Ezek 22:24; 24:13; 36:25, 33; 37:23; 39:12, 14, 16; 43:26; Mal 3:3.

Below are some representative uses of **taher**...

The importance of purification antedated the giving of the Law for even Jacob understood this concept...

So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and **purify** (command using **taher**; Lxx = **katharizo**) yourselves, and change your garments; (Ge 35:2)

David prayed to God...

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and **cleanse** (**taher**; Lxx = **katharizo**) me from my sin. (Ps 51:2 **note**)

Purify (imperfect verbal form is used here to express David's wish or request) me with hyssop, and **I shall be clean** (**taher**; Lxx = **katharizo**); Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (Ps 51:7 **note**)

NET Note: David uses the language and imagery of such rites (cleansing himself with hyssop - cp Ex 12:22, Lev 14:4-6, 49-52, Nu 19:6-18) to describe spiritual cleansing through forgiveness.

Comment: David used a similar Hebrew word **tahor** in Ps 51:10 **note** ("clean" = **tahor**; Lxx = **katharos**)

Here is one of the most important questions any person can ever ask...

Who can say, "I have **cleansed** (**taher**) my heart, I am pure from my sin"? (Pr 20:9, see also Eccl 7:20)

[Click here](#) ([and here](#)) for more background on the important Biblical concept of **clean** and **cleansing**.

See study of **sins** (02403) **chattat/chattath**

Holman Study Bible - The Day of Atonement (Hb yom kippur) was an annual ceremony held on the tenth day of Tishri (September/October). Self-denial is usually associated with fasting and prayer (Isa 58:3,5). The Targum adds that the people should abstain from "food and drink, from the enjoyment of the baths and anointing, from wearing shoes, and from marital intercourse." Today, **Yom Kippur** is generally celebrated as a day of confession of sin and asking for forgiveness. Readings from Leviticus are included in this celebration, one of the most important holy days in Judaism.

The **Day of Atonement** (Yom Kippur), occurring on the 10th day of the seventh month, (Tishri, Sept-Oct) prefigures **the national repentance of Israel**, when a believing remnant of Jews (**See study of "Remnant"**) will turn to the Messiah and be forgiven (Zech 3:9, Zech 12:10; Zech 13:1). In almost every verse dealing with the Day of Atonement, God repeats the command to do no work. The only person who was to be active on this day was the high priest. The Lord reinforced the charge by threatening to destroy any person who violated it. This command in Leviticus 16 is given as a picture or shadow of the truth that salvation was not by our works but by the finished work of Christ Jesus our Great High Priest, a salvation "not on the basis of deeds which we have done" (Titus 3:5). There can be no human works involved in the cleansing of our sins. Christ's work and His alone is the source of eternal salvation. The writer of Hebrews says

how much more will the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, **cleanse** (**katharizo**) your conscience from **dead works** (cp **the stipulation here in Lev 16:29** to

abstain from work!) to serve the living God? (Heb 9:14)

Guzik comments on modern Jewish customs regarding the Day of Atonement, [Yom Kippur](#)...

- Modern Jews who do observe the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) typically fast for that day. Yet they have no sacrifice for sins.
- Some Jews consider their own sacrifice to be a suitable substitute; today some sacrifice a rooster for every male in the family, and a hen for every female, on the day of atonement - a vague shadow of obedience to Leviticus 16.
- Some Jews consider charity a suitable substitute for sacrifice; the word "charity" in modern Hebrew is the same as the word for "righteousness."
- Some Jews consider sufferings a suitable substitute for sacrifice; among the Jews of Eastern Europe there used to be custom to inflict 39 lashes upon themselves on the Day of Atonement.
- Some Jews consider good works or the study of the law as suitable substitutes for sacrifice.
- Yom Kippur ends with the blowing of the Shofar, the trumpet that heralds the coming of the Messiah. An ancient prayer in a Jewish Day of Atonement liturgy reads:

Our righteous Messiah has departed from us,

We are horror-stricken, and have none to justify us.

Our iniquities and the yoke of our transgressions

He carries who is wounded because of our transgressions

He bears on His shoulder the burden of our sins.

To find pardon for all our iniquities.

By His stripes we shall be healed -

O Eternal One, it is time that thou should create Him anew!

Spurgeon - The annual atonement

'For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.' Leviticus 16:30

It seems that the divine atonement puts away the sin of sin, the essence and heart of sin. Sin has its core, its kernel, its mortal spot. Within a fruit there is a central stone or pip; this may serve as the likeness of sin. Within each iniquity there seems to lie a something more essentially evil than the act itself: this is the kernel of intent, the core of obstinacy, the inner hate of the mind. Whatever may be the sin of the soul or the soul of the sin, atonement has been made for it all. Most sins are a conglomerate of sins. A sin may be compared to a honeycomb: there are as many sins within one sin as there are cells within a piece of comb. Sin is a swarming, hiving, teeming thing. You can never estimate its full vileness, nor perceive all its evil bearings. All sorts of sins may hide away in one sin. It would puzzle all the theologians in the world to tell what sin was absent from Adam's first offence. I could take any point you choose and show that Adam sinned in that direction. All sin was within that first sin. Sin is a multitudinous evil, an aggregate of all manner of filthiness, a chain with a thousand deadly links. A sinner is like a man possessed with a devil who cries, 'My name is Legion: for we are many.' It is one in evil and yet countless in forms. The atonement is more than equal to sin: it takes away all our transgressions in all our sins. It is the fullest purgation that could be imagined. The Lord Jesus has not left upon those for whom he has made atonement a single 'spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing', so far as their justification is concerned. He has not left an iniquity for which they can be condemned before the bar of judgment.

Warren Wiersbe - On that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. LEVITICUS 16:30

The book of Leviticus was given to the Jewish priests and their people so that they might "distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" (Lev. 10:10; see 11:47); for God's command is, "You should therefore be holy, for I am holy" (11:45). That order was given not only to the Israelites, but also to the church (1 Pet. 1:13-16). In Scripture, sin is compared to dirt, and God's people today are probably more in danger of being defiled by the world, the flesh, and the devil than were the ancient Jews (Eph. 2:1-3; 5:1-14). God taught his people spiritual discernment by giving them rules related to diet, personal health, and hygiene.

Cleansed by water. Defilement is a picture of sin, but washing is a picture of forgiveness (Ps. 51:2, 7). In the Bible, water for drinking is a symbol of the Spirit of God (John 7:37–39), but water for washing pictures the Word of God. “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you,” said Jesus (John 15:3), and Paul wrote about “the washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:25–27). In the Old Testament sanctuaries, there was a large basin full of clean water called the laver. There the priests washed their hands and feet regularly during their daily ministry, for if they did not, they were in danger of being judged by God (Exod. 30:17–21). Note that the priests were defiled while they served the Lord in the sanctuary.

Cleansed by blood. In the previous meditation, we touched upon the power of sacrificial blood to deliver God’s people from bondage and judgment, as the blood of the lamb did for each Jewish household in Egypt. “According to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22). It was Jesus on the cross who “loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (Rev. 1:5). We are justified (declared righteous) by his blood (Rom. 5:9) and also sanctified (made righteous) by his blood (Heb. 13:12). When we confess our sins to the Lord, he forgives us and cleanses us through the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:5–10).

Cleansed by fire. This applied primarily to the metal spoils of battle (Num. 31:21–24), “everything that can endure fire.” But it also reminds us that God sometimes puts us in the fires of tribulation so that we might be purified. “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word” (Ps. 119:67, 71, 75; see Heb. 12:11; 1 Pet. 1:6–7). When we go through the fire, God is with us and will use us to glorify him (Isa. 43:2; Dan. 3:16–26).

Are we distinguishing between the clean and the unclean and choosing only the very best for our lives (Ezek. 22:23–31; 44:23)? If not, we may find ourselves in the furnace of affliction experiencing the chastening of the Lord (Heb. 12:1–11). This doesn’t mean being condemned by a stern judge, but being “spanked” by a loving Father whose goal is “that we may be partakers of His holiness” (Heb. 12:10), knowing the difference between clean and unclean.

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:11

Leviticus 16:31 "It is to be a sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute.

- Lev 23:32 25:4 Ex 31:15 35:2
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

IT IS TO BE A SABBATH OF SOLEMN REST: Literally a "Sabbath of Sabbaths" = more sacred and more strictly observed than the normal weekly Sabbath. The fact that the people weren't to do any work reminds us that we are saved wholly by God's grace, through faith, and not because of our character or our good works (see Eph 2:8–9 which precedes our "good work" in Eph 2:10).

Guzik - This sabbath of solemn rest demanded a cessation of works, even as the believer is justified and finds atonement apart from his own works, being justified by the work of another. This means that all the charity, all the sufferings, all the study of the law in the world cannot atone for sin - we must rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Ryrie - humble your souls included fasting. The Day of Atonement was the only required day of fasting, though other days were added. See notes on Zech. 7:3; 8:19; Matt. 9:14; Acts 27:9.

FOR YOU, THAT YOU MAY HUMBLE YOUR SOULS; IT IS A PERMANENT STATUTE Regardless of the day of the week on which it fell, the annual Day of Atonement was considered a Sabbath, and the people weren't allowed to work. The "affliction" on the Day of Atonement is usually interpreted to mean fasting and the confession of sin. On that day, God called His people to get serious about sin; the church needs to heed that call today. This reminds of the call of James...

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (James 4:8–10).

See study on **Humble** ([06031](#)) **'anah**

Vance Havner - Repentance is almost a lost note in our preaching and experience, and the lack of it is filling our churches with baptized sinners who have never felt the guilt of sin or the need of a Savior... We are trying to get young people to say, 'Here am I' before they have ever said, 'Woe is me!'

Leviticus 16:32 "So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments,

- the priest: Lev 4:3,5,16
- consecrate: Heb. fill his hand, Ex 29:9 *marg: to minister: Ex 29:29,30 Nu 20:26-28
- put on the linen: Lev 16:4
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Anointed (04886) (**masah/maschah**) has the basic meaning of to smear something on. To rub with oil. Anointing was used in the OT to set apart someone or some thing (Ge 31:13) for office or function (prophetically of the holy temple Da 9:24 and of the Holy One Isa 61:1 > Lk 4:18).

Mashach often translated in LXX with Greek verb **chrío** meaning to anoint and in the NT used figuratively in the NT, of God's activity in appointing someone to an office, function, or privilege (eg, Jesus in Luke 4:18, Acts 4:27, Jesus anointed with the Holy Spirit in Acts 10:38. or Christian workers 2Cor 1:21).

Mashach - 67v in NAS - anoint(21), anointed(42), anointing(1), oil(1), painting(1), spread(4).

Gen 31:13; Exod 28:41; 29:2, 7, 29, 36; 30:26, 30; 40:9ff, 13, 15; Lev 2:4; 6:20; 7:12, 36; 8:10ff; 16:32; Num 3:3; 6:15; 7:1, 10, 84, 88; 35:25; Judg 9:8, 15; 1 Sam 9:16; 10:1; 15:1, 17; 16:3, 12f; 2 Sam 2:4, 7; 3:39; 5:3, 17; 12:7; 19:10; 1 Kgs 1:34, 39, 45; 5:1; 19:15f; 2 Kgs 9:3, 6, 12; 11:12; 23:30; 1 Chr 11:3; 14:8; 29:22; 2 Chr 22:7; 23:11; Ps 45:7; 89:20; Isa 21:5; 61:1; Jer 22:14; Dan 9:24; Amos 6:6

Genesis 31:13 'I am the God of Bethel, where you (Jacob - Israel) **anointed** a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'

Ordained (04390) (**male**) means to be full or to fill. This verb is combined with the Hebrew word for hand (yad) and is more literally translated "the priest... whom he shall **fill his hand** (translated in Lxx with teleioo = carry through completely +cheir = hand) to act as priest under his father."

Leviticus 16:33 and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.

- Lev 16:6,16,18,19,24 Ex 20:25,26
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Holy Sanctuary - NET Note says ""the sanctuary of the holy place." Although this is the only place this expression occurs in the OT, it clearly refers to the innermost shrine behind the veil-canopy, where the ark of the covenant was located."

Day of Atonement made expiation for three areas— Holy of Holies, Tent of Meeting, and altar —as well as the priests and people. Sin contaminates. Blood purifies.

Leviticus 16:34 "Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did .

- **Now you shall have this as a permanent statute:** Lev 23:31 Nu 29:7
- **to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year** Ex 30:10 Heb 9:7,25 10:3,14
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

See study of **sins** (02403) **chattat/chattath**

Every year - With the destruction of their temple by the Romans in 70A.D., the required sacrifices have been eliminated, so that the observance of this day can have **no "atoning" value** for them. We see this alluded to in Hosea...

Hos 3:4 For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols.

Comment: The "many days" have continued now for almost 2000 years. The children of Israel have been

without a king and a prince ever since Nebuchadnezzar deposed and blinded King Zedekiah, after slaying his sons before his eyes (2Ki 25:7). Israel has been without sacrifices and priestly ephods ever since the Romans destroyed the temple in A.D. 70.

Disciple's Study Bible - So serious was sin under the old covenant that a special day was appointed annually to make atonement for the sins of the people. Under the new covenant, Jesus died once for all sin. His death is the new covenant's answer to the Day of Atonement under the old covenant. See Heb 10:11-18. Still, God's people need to be aware of our sins, confess them to God regularly, and find His forgiveness. We can never ignore the serious nature of sin in our lives.

Comment: We do well to recall the seriousness of the Day of Atonement and not become lax in guarding our hearts from the subtle snares of sin (especially thinking that since we are in the New Covenant of grace, we can be less vigilant than ancient Israel. This is the lie our adversary would have us "bite" on!)

And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did - Aaron's obedience was complete as was Jesus and as should be ours as priests unto the Lord (1Pe 2:5, 9).

Henry Morris - This annual "day of atonement" is still observed by the Jews as Yom Kippur (Leviticus 23:26-32). Ever since the destruction of their temple by the Romans in 70 A.D., however, their required sacrifices have been arbitrarily eliminated, so that the observance of this day can have no "atoning" value for them (Hosea 3:4). (Defender's Study Bible)

G Campbell Morgan - Lev. 16:34 - To make atonement for the children of Israel because of all their sins once in the year.—This chapter contains the instructions which were given concerning the observance of the Day of Atonement. This was in many ways the greatest day in the religious year of the Hebrew people, for this was the most important religious rite in the whole economy. In this rite provision was made for dealing with the whole question of sin, known and unknown. We noticed in an earlier note, when dealing with the difference between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering (Lev 4), that the element of accountability was conditioned in knowledge, but that sin, in the sight of God, is sin, even though committed in ignorance. All sin, therefore, was dealt with on the day. Every arrangement was intended to impress upon the mind the solemnity of the approach of the soul to God, and to stress the truth that the sinner has no right of access save that which is provided for him through sacrifice. As these arrangements are pondered, one can easily realize that their necessary imperfection could not produce anything like perfect rest in the conscience. Indeed, the more sensitive the spirit, the more that imperfection would be realized. For us there is no waiting for an annual day of atonement. We need not wait, with sin undealt with for an hour. Our Priest abides in the holiest, and we have access there through Him at all times. This should not make us less reverent in our coming, but more so. The cleansed conscience is never rude, irreverent. It is ever subdued, chastened, sensitive. It rejoices in freedom, but never loses the sense of debt. (Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT.

Leviticus 16; Romans 5:1-10; Hebrews 10.

The word "atonement" does not mean reconciliation so much as "covering." It is never once used in the Old Testament in the sense of to reconcile, always as "coverings," or "to cover." The atonement was that by which everything was covered that hindered man's approach to God. The great day of atonement was the great day of coverings. Just as the curtains of the Tabernacle covered the holy things from the eye of man, so the atonement covers our sins and iniquities from the eye of God. It secures unto us the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all that believe. What a covering! The great day of atonement was—

I. A Day of Priestly Humiliation. The robes of glory and beauty had to be laid aside and the common "holy linen coat" put on. In the morning of this great day he went forth in the form of a servant. How solemn and suggestive is all this! Christ came not forth to make an atonement in the robes of His visible glory. The glory that He had with the Father was laid aside. In the form of a servant "He appeared to put away sin" (Heb. 9:25). The priest was still the high priest, although clothed in the ordinary coat. The Lord Jesus was still the eternal Son, although He made Himself of "no reputation." Even when "in fashion as a man" He was clothed in the pure white linen coat of a spotless character.

II. A Day of Special Sacrifice. The taking of the two goats from the congregation as one sin-offering was a singular yet most instructive type. Having come from the people, the people were therefore represented in them. In Adam, the first man, all die. In Christ, the second man, taken from among the people, shall all be made alive. These two goats bring out, not only Christ's connection with the people as man, but also the twofold aspect of His sacrificial work. Both goats were presented before the Lord, then, after the lot was cast, one was given to the Lord, the other became the scapegoat for the people. The great sin-atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ had to meet all the holy claims of God, and all the deep need of sinful humanity. As the two goats constituted one offering, so Christ by His one offering met the twofold need of God and man. The day that Christ died upon the cross was the world's great day of atonement. What has it brought for thee?

III. A Day of Solemn Imputation. We read, "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all their iniquities and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities" (Lev. 16:21, 22). Substitution is clearly taught here. The goat bore the sins of the people, they were laid on by one who was "holiness to the Lord," the holy One of God. How significant these words are, "Jehovah laid on Him the iniquities of us all. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He hath put Him to grief" (Isa. 53:6, 10). The holy God laid on His holy Son the sin of the world. Christ "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). We sometimes sing, "I lay my sins on Jesus." But what right have I to lay my sins on the holy Son of God? I dare not. But oh, the depths of divine grace, it pleased the Father to do it. Who can challenge the righteousness of substitution when it is the Lord's doing.

These two goats reveal the twofold aspect of the redemption that is in Christ. The one goat was offered to the Lord for an atonement, the other was a substitute for the congregation. The first cannot save without the second. The atonement of Christ is the opening up of a way of access to God. It is the providing of that which is sufficient to cover the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:3). He is the atonement (covering) for our sins, whether we believe it or not, but He is only the substitute and Saviour of those who identify themselves with Him through faith in Him. When we come to Christ we take shelter under the covering of His wings (Matt. 23:27).

IV. A Day of Lonely Service. While the priest was making atonement no man was to be in the Tabernacle till he came out (Lev. 16:17). He was to be alone in his solemn work. It was his own work, the work for which God had called him and sent him. How like this is to the work of the Son of Man. He looked, but there was none to help Him. While treading the winepress of sorrow and suffering He was "alone." He took Peter, James, and John into the garden with Him. But still, in the bloody sweat of His awful agony He was alone. He came and found them sleeping. He looked, but there was none to help. In the dark and bitter hour of death He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Psa. 22:1). He was alone. But even while going about preaching and teaching He was alone. "Neither did His brethren believe in Him" (John 7:5), and His closest disciples did not fully understand Him. In His sacred, holy, self-sacrificing purpose He was alone. Sinners, stand back, ye can have no hand at all in this great atoning work. "God has laid help in One that is mighty" (Psa. 89:19).

V. A Day of Acceptance before God. Once a year, on this great day, the high priest entered within the holy vail. He carried with him the blood of the sacrifice, while his hands were full of sweet incense. The blood he sprinkled both upon and before the mercy-seat, on the place where God rested, and on the place where he himself stood. Thus the blood made atonement before God, and gave man a ground of acceptance in His holy presence. He stood on "redemption ground." The incense was put upon the fire in the censer, and the cloud of fragrance was to cover the mercy-seat. As we have already observed, the word "atonement" means covering. Here we see the merit of the atoning death in the cloud of incense, covering both God and man. The priest was within the vail on the ground of atoning blood, standing as the peoples' representative. Accepted before God. What a picture of Jesus, our great High Priest, who now appears in the presence of God for us! He hath entered in by His own blood, and we are accepted in Him, in Him whose merit covers both the mercy-seat of God and the naked soul of man.

VI. A Day of Soul Affliction. On that day "ye shall afflict your souls" (Lev. 16:29). While the people looked on and saw the priest accomplished for them the great atoning work, they were to afflict their souls. It was to bring sorrow and repentance into their hearts because of their sins. "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him" (Zech. 12:10). It is a solemn, heart-breaking sight, to look upon the Lamb of God being slain for us. Can you look upon Him whom your sins have pierced without your soul being afflicted? There were to be no frivolous hearts on that awful day. The great atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ can only be appreciated by afflicted and sin-smitten souls. In the presence of the dying Son of God the mouths of argument and controversy must be sealed with dumbness. "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54). "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like My sorrow" (Lam. 1:12). Through the tears of a crushed and broken heart can we best see the beauty and deep meaning of "the blood of the Lamb."

VII. A Day of Perfect Rest. "Ye shall do no work at all; it shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you" (v. 31) The priest shall make an atonement for you. Ye shall do no work. What a perfect pattern we have in this! On the day of atonement the people whose sins are being atoned must do nothing. Anything they do just goes so far to hinder the great work of the priest. They cannot help, they must cease from their doings and trust the work of the priest on their behalf. How beautifully simple all this is. Christ alone can put away sin. We must rest from our works. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saves us" (Titus 3:5). "By the deeds of the law shall no man be justified in the sight of God" (Rom. 3:20). We are "justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). Jesus paid it all. Rest!

The Result of the Priestly Work was that they were "clean before the Lord." What a blessed privilege. Although we take much soap and make ourselves never so clean in our own eyes, only the precious blood of God's redeemed Son can make us clean in His eyes. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). "Except I wash thee, thou hast no part with Me" (John 13:8). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

James Smith - THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. THE WORK OF CHRIST. Leviticus 16.

The Day of Atonement was Israel's great day. All the vessels and services derived their value from it. It was the most solemn day in all the year to the high priest. The day of Christ's humiliation was the most solemn day in all the history of His eternal existence. In verse 30 we have the key to the whole chapter. There is—

1. The work: "an atonement for you."
2. The worker: "the priest."
3. The time: "on that day."
4. The purpose: "make you clean before the Lord."

This great day was the—

1. Day of needful humiliation. The garments of glory and beauty had to be laid aside for the plain "holy linen coat" (v. 4). He could not represent the people before God until atonement was made. Christ made Himself of no reputation (see Phil. 2:7, 8). Though in the form of a servant, his character was as "holy linen" (Heb. 7:26).
2. Day of special sacrifice (vs. 5-11). The priest had first to offer a sacrifice for himself. His own standing had to be secured before God. Christ being the Son, needed not this (Heb. 7:27). The two goats constituted one offering, representing the two aspects of Christ's death. The one went up (margin 9), the other went away (v. 12; John 1:29)—atonement and substitution.
3. Day of solemn imputation. "Aaron shall confess all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat" (vs. 21, 22). The goat became a curse for them (Gal. 3:13), was led into a land not inhabited (Mark 15:34), bearing their iniquities in its body (1 Peter 2:24; Isa. 53).
4. Day of nearness to God (vs. 12-15). On that day the veil was opened. Christ's death removed the last barrier (Luke 23:45). The way into the holiest is now manifest (Heb. 9:8). The blood was sprinkled upon and before the mercy-seat, signifying—(1) a complete acceptance; (2) a secure standing (Eph. 1:6, 7).
5. Day of real affliction. "This shall be a statute for ever, ye shall afflict your souls" (v. 29). Sin is no trifle, neither is atonement. Frivolous hearts will always treat it lightly. The awful atonement must be accepted with convicted and broken hearts (John 16:8; Acts 2:37).
6. Day of perfect rest. "Ye shall do no work at all" (v. 29; see chap. 23:30). On the day of atonement the priest did all the work. Jesus did it all (John 19:30). Proud man would fain do something to help himself to God, but that something can only bring death (Eph. 2:8).
7. Day of blessed experience. "Clean from all your sins before the Lord" (v. 30). It is ours to accept by faith what He has done, this brings salvation (Acts. 13:39). And to believe what He hath said, this brings assurance (1 John 5:13). If the death of Christ has not made us clean before the Lord it has availed us nothing (John 13:8).

A M Hodgkin ([Christ in All the Scriptures - Contents](#))

The Day of Atonement--The deepest thought of the Book of Leviticus centers round the Great Day of Atonement (ch. 16). It was a day of humiliation. The sense of sin was to be deepened to its utmost intensity in the national mind. It occurred but once a year. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb 9:28). There is no repetition of His sacrificial work. In the whole year of time, there is but one atonement day. With his golden censer of incense and the blood of the bullock for a Sin offering, the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies and made atonement for himself and his family.

The Sin offering for the people consisted of two goats. The one on which the lot of the Lord fell was slain as a Sin offering, and the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies, sprinkling its blood on the Mercy-Seat and before the Mercy-Seat seven times, as he had done with the blood of the bullock. The other goat was the scapegoat, and over its head Aaron confessed the sins of all the people, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent it away by the hand of a "fit man" into the wilderness. "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world"; "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (John 1:29; Isa 53:6).

The two goats formed but one offering, two were needed to complete the type. The slain goat showed that perfect atonement had been made to God for sin, the living goat showed that perfect pardon was granted to the people. The sacrifice was altogether out of proportion to the need-- two goats for the sins of the congregation for a whole year. It was purposely out of proportion to show that the whole system was

temporary and typical. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb 10:4). No animal, no man, no angel could atone for sin. "God manifest in the flesh" alone could do it, and therefore He became Man that He might be able to suffer and die for sin in man's place. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2Cor 5:19). It was as perfect God and perfect Man that He atoned for our sins (see Heb 1:2,3; 2:14).

The flesh of the Sin offering on the Day of Atonement was burnt outside the camp. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb 13:12,13). The same Cross which has brought us inside the veil with regard to our access to God, has cast us outside the camp as regards our relation to the world.

Promises to Israel (ED COMMENT: THE FOLLOWING IS INTERESTING BUT IS NOT DESCRIBED IN THE SCRIPTURES, EXCEPT FOR THE CURTAIN INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES BEING SPLIT) On the Day of Atonement in 30 AD several months after the first Feast, Passover, a couple of things are recorded by Josephus, the Talmud and one in the Gospel account of Matthew in the New Testament. Remember 70 AD was when the Temple was destroyed, so 40 years before that date is 30 AD. Here is what the Talmud and Gospel account records:

1. Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the scarlet cord stopped turning white showing that *Yom Kippur* sacrifice was not accepted by God. This is by far the most interesting of the Jewish sources that has to do with the legend of *Azazel*. The *Azazel* is the Jewish name for the scapegoat. In the ritual for the Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur*, two goats were brought into the Temple, one was killed as a blood sacrifice, the other one after the laying on of hands was chased out into the wilderness, symbolically carrying the year's sins. That was the scapegoat.

According to Jewish writing of this period, it became the custom to tie a red ribbon around the scapegoat, and when the goat was sent out to the wilderness the ribbon turned white. The changing of the color of the red ribbon to white signified that God had forgiven the sins of Israel for that year. The Jewish legend goes on to say that the red ribbon stopped turning white, 40 years before the destruction of the Temple. So, as of the year 30 AD, God was no longer forgiving the sins of Israel by means of the *Yom Kippur* sacrifice of the slaying of on goat, and the sending forth of the other in to the wilderness.

2. Josephus says that there was a sudden mysterious extinction of the middle light of the Menorah in the Holy Place that was to be kept burning continually. While the other six remained lit, the one in the middle suddenly went out.

3. Both Josephus and the Talmud both mention that the very heavy Temple doors, which took several men to close and open, suddenly and inexplicably opened on their own accord. One of the chief rabbis of that day, Yochanan Ben Zakkai, a witness according to the Talmud, when he saw this happening turned around and said to the Temple, "O Temple, O Temple, there is no need for you to say anything, I know that you are destined for destruction."

4. In Matthew 27:51 it is recorded that the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was rent from top to bottom.

DAY OF ATONEMENT - "This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year" (Leviticus 16:34).

On Easter Sunday in 1908, William Grenfell, a missionary doctor in Labrador, started a sixty-mile journey with his sled dog team to help a desperately ill person. To shorten the trip, he decided to cross a frozen bay, though he knew the ice had begun melting.

The ice broke and Grenfell and his dogs fell into the frigid water. The doctor and three dogs crawled onto a floating piece of ice. To keep himself from freezing to death, he eventually killed his three dogs and covered himself with their bloody skins.

Grenfell struggled for physical survival and found it in a bloody covering. So in a way did ancient Israel. God's people fought both nature and themselves, and their internal battle with sin produced never-ending guilt. In the various tabernacle offerings, God provided a way for people to relieve their guilt through bloody sacrifices. The word atone may mean "to cover." Thus in atonement the blood of a slain animal hid a person's sin, bringing forgiveness and access to God.

Because the people could never stop sinning, the need for animals was never ending. The priest was as much butcher as confessor.

At best, he had a grisly task. No less nauseating was Golgotha. No less unfathomable is the mystery of blood—shed to cover the sins of the whole world. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Illustrations on Atonement ([Sermon Illustrations](#))

ATONEMENT

I read about a small boy who was consistently late coming home from school. His parents warned him one day that he must be home on time that afternoon, but nevertheless he arrived later than ever. His mother met him at the door and said nothing. At dinner that night, the boy looked at his plate. There was a slice of bread and a glass of water. He looked at his father's full plate and then at his father, but his father remained silent. The boy was crushed.

The father waited for the full impact to sink in, then quietly took the boy's plate and placed it in front of himself. He took his own plate of meat and potatoes, put it in front of the boy, and smiled at his son. When that boy grew to be a man, he said, "All my life I've known what God is like by what my father did that night." **J. Allan Peterson.**

The government of Polish Prime Minister Jaruzelski had ordered crucifixes removed from classroom walls, just as they had been banned in factories, hospitals, and other public institutions. Catholic bishops attacked the ban that had stirred waves of anger and resentment all across Poland. Ultimately the government relented, insisting that the law remain on the books, but agreeing not to press for removal of the crucifixes, particularly in the schoolrooms.

But one zealous Communist school administrator in Garwolin decided that the law was the law. So one evening he had seven large crucifixes removed from lecture halls where they had hung since the school's founding in the twenties. Days later, a group of parents entered the school and hung more crosses. The administrator promptly had these taken down as well.

The next day two-thirds of the school's six hundred students staged a sit-in. When heavily armed riot police arrived, the students were forced into the streets. Then they marched, crucifixes held high, to a nearby church where they were joined by twenty-five hundred other students from nearby schools for a morning of prayer in support of the protest. Soldiers surrounded the church. But the pictures from inside of students holding crosses high above their heads flashed around the world. So did the words of the priest who delivered the message to the weeping congregation that morning. "There is no Poland without a cross." - **Chuck Colson, Kingdoms in Conflict, pp. 202-3.**

Alila stood on the beach holding her tiny infant son close to her heart. Tears welled in her eyes as she began slowly walking toward the river's edge. She stepped into the water, silently making her way out until she was waist deep, the water gently lapping at the sleeping baby's feet. She stood there for a long time holding the child tightly as she stared out across the river. Then all of a sudden in one quick movement she threw the six month old baby to his watery death.

Native missionary M.V. Varghese often witnesses among the crowds who gather at the Ganges. It was he who came upon Alila that day kneeling in the sand crying uncontrollably and beating her breast. With compassion he knelt down next to her and asked her what was wrong.

Through her sobs she told him, "The problems in my home are too many and my sins are heavy on my heart, so I offered the best I have to the goddess Ganges, my first born son." Brother Varghese's heart ached for the desperate woman. As she wept he gently began to tell her about the love of Jesus and that through Him her sins could be forgiven. She looked at him strangely. "I have never heard that before," she replied through her tears. "Why couldn't you have come thirty minutes earlier? If you did, my child would not have had to die."

Each year millions of people come to the holy Indian city of Hardwar to bathe in the River Ganges. These multitudes come believing this Hindu ritual will wash their sins away. For many people like Alila, missionaries are arriving too late, simply because there aren't enough of these faithful brothers and sisters on the mission field. --**Christianity Today, 1993.**

During the Middle Ages there was a popular story which circulated about Martin of Tours, the saint for whom Martin Luther was named. It was said that Satan once appeared to St Martin in the guise of the Savior himself. St. Martin was ready to fall to his feet and worship this resplendent being of glory and light. Then, suddenly, he looked up into the palms of his hands and asked, "Where are the nail prints?" Whereupon the apparition vanished. **Source Unknown.**

Theologians tell a story to illustrate how Christ's triumph presently benefits our lives: Imagine a city under siege. The enemy that surrounds the city will not let anyone or anything leave. Supplies are running low, and the citizens are fearful. But in the dark of the night, a spy sneaks through the enemy lines. He has rushed to the city to tell the people that in another place the main enemy force has been defeated; the leaders have already surrendered. The people do not need to be afraid. It is only a matter of time until the besieging troops receive the news and lay down their weapons. Similarly, we may seem now to be surrounded by the forces of evil -- disease, injustice, oppression, death. But the enemy has actually been defeated at Calvary. Things are not the way they seem to be. It is only a matter of time until it becomes clear to all that the battle is really over. **Richard J. Mouw**, *Uncommon Decency*, pp. 149-150.

For family devotions, Martin Luther once read the account of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar in Genesis 22. His wife, Katie, said, "I do not believe it. God would not have treated his son like that!" "But, Katie," Luther replied, "He did." -- **W. Wiersbe**, *The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers*, p. 191.

Mahatma Gandhi is fasting to protest the riot killings that followed the partition that created Hindu India and Moslem Pakistan in 1947. A fellow Hindu approaches to confess a great wrong. "I killed a child," says the distraught man. "I smashed his head against a wall." "Why?" asks the Mahatma (Hindu for "Great Soul"). "They killed my boy. The Moslems killed my son." "I know a way out of hell," says Gandhi. "Find a child, a little boy whose mother and father have been killed, and raise him as your own. Only be sure he is a Moslem--and that you raise him as one." *Reader's Digest*, February 1992, p. 106.

In his book *Written In Blood*, Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained that she had the same disease the boy had recovered from two years earlier. Her only chance for recovery was a transfusion from someone who had previously conquered the disease. Since the two children had the same rare blood type, the boy was the ideal donor.

"Would you give your blood to Mary?" the doctor asked. Johnny hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he smiled and said, "Sure, for my sister." Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room--Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but when their eyes met, Johnny grinned. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, Johnny's smile faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. With the ordeal almost over, his voice, slightly shaky, broke the silence. "Doctor, when do I die?"

Only then did the doctor realize why Johnny had hesitated, why his lip had trembled when he'd agreed to donate his blood. He's thought giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. In that brief moment, he'd made his great decision. Johnny, fortunately, didn't have to die to save his sister. Each of us, however, has a condition more serious than Mary's, and it required Jesus to give not just His blood but His life. Thomas Lindberg.

God requires satisfaction because He is holiness, but He makes satisfaction because He is love. A.H. Strong.

Em Griffin writes, in *Making Friends*, about three kinds of London maps: The street map, the map depicting thoroughways, and the underground map of the subway. "Each map is accurate and correct," he writes, "but each map does not give the complete picture. To see the whole, the three maps must be printed one on top of each other. However, that is often confusing, so I use only one 'layer' at a time.

"It is the same with the words used to describe the death of Jesus Christ. Each word, like redemption, reconciliation, or justification, is accurate and correct, but each word does not give the complete picture. To see the whole we need to place one 'layer' on top of the other, but that is sometimes confusing--we cannot see the trees for the whole! So we separate out each splendid concept and discover that the whole is more than the sum of its parts." John Ross.

STATISTICS AND STUFF Who can estimate the value of God's gift, when He gave to the world His only begotten Son! It is something unspeakable and incomprehensible. It passes man's understanding. Two things there are which man has no arithmetic to reckon, and no line to measure. One of these things is the extent of that man's loss who loses his own soul. The other is the extent of God's gift when he gave Christ to sinners... Sin must indeed be exceeding sinful, when the Father must needs give His only Son to be the sinner's Friend! J.C. Ryle, *Foundations of Faith*.

"laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

Commenting on this verse Martin Luther wrote: "All the prophets did foresee in Spirit that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, blasphemer, etc., that ever was or could be in all the world. For he, being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world is not now an innocent person and without sins... but a sinner." He was, of course, talking about the imputing of our wrongdoing to Christ as our substitute.

Luther continues: "Our most merciful Father... sent his only Son into the world and laid upon him... the sins of all men saying: Be thou Peter that denier; Paul that persecutor, blasphemer and cruel oppressor; David that adulterer; that sinner which did eat the apple in Paradise; that thief which hanged upon the cross; and briefly be thou the person which hath committed the sins of all men; see therefore that thou pay and satisfy for them. Here now comes the law and saith: I find him a sinner... therefore let him die upon the cross. And so he setteth upon him and killeth him. By this means the whole world is purged and cleansed from all sins."

The presentation of the death of Christ as the substitute exhibits the love of the cross more richly, fully, gloriously, and glowingly than any other account of it. Luther saw this and gloried in it. He once wrote to a friend: "Learn to know Christ and him crucified. Learn to sing to him, and say, 'Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, I am your sin. You have taken upon yourself what is mine and given me what is yours. You became what you were not, so that I might become what I was not.'" What a great and wonderful exchange! Was there ever such love?

James Packer, *Your Father Loves You*, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986.

We trample the blood of the Son of God if we think we are forgiven because we are sorry for our sins. The only explanation for the forgiveness of God and for the unfathomable depth of His forgetting is the death of Jesus Christ. Our repentance is merely the outcome of our personal realization of the atonement which He has worked out for us. It does not matter who or what we are; there is absolute reinstatement into God by the death of Jesus Christ and by no other way, not because Jesus Christ pleads, but because He died. It is not earned, but accepted. All the pleading which deliberately refuses to recognize the Cross is of no avail; it is battering at a door other than the one that Jesus has opened. Our Lord does not pretend we are all right when we are all wrong. The atonement is a propitiation whereby God, through the death of Jesus, makes an unholy man holy. Oswald Chambers.

TODAY IN THE WORD

Modern Jews call the Day of Atonement "Yom Kippur" and regard it as the holiest day on their calendar. On Rosh Hashanah, it is believed that God writes a "book" of each person's actions during the past year. Eight days later, on Yom Kippur, these "books" are irrevocably sealed. The eight days, known as "Days of Awe," are a time to repent and be cleansed from sin, and thus to alter the judgments inscribed in the "books." During this time, many Jews wear white as a symbol of purification.

How does today's reading describe this important day? As a climactic day of holiness and purity, which is why it is placed here in the flow of Leviticus. It took place around September or October, in between the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month of the Jewish year.

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest washed carefully, put on special garments, and made sin offerings for himself and the community. He sprinkled atoning blood throughout the tabernacle area and publicly confessed the sins of the nation (Leviticus 15:21). The people were required to rest and fast. They were to "deny" themselves in the sense of humbling themselves before the Lord about their sin (Leviticus 15:29, 30, 31)

This was the one and only day of the year when the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled sacrificial blood directly on the cover of the ark. The smoke from the burning incense hid the ark and protected the priest from the overwhelming glory and presence of God. And just in case he inadvertently did something wrong, two rams were sacrificed as an extra burnt offering at the end of the whole procedure.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY If you skipped "Today Along the Way" for July 4, why not return to it now? We suggested spending time in personal and national confession of sin—an application that also fits well with our topic today of the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16

Day of Atonement: A Day of Grace

Yom Kippur, or the Jewish Day of Atonement, is still a day of solemn reflection and fasting. One Jewish woman explains, "When the fast is over, the hope is that your prayers were answered, and you were written in the Book of Life and it will be a good year."

Believers in Christ can count on more than simply hoping that God has heard our prayers and forgiven our sins. Jesus' death on the cross, perfectly figured in the ceremony described here, was the finally sufficient atoning sacrifice for our sins. Tomorrow, we'll explore that symbolism.

Today, we take a broader view of the Day of Atonement. First, we note the previous breach of priestly protocol. Nadab and Abihu died when they approached the Lord inappropriately (see May 12). Aaron was stunned into silence by this swift expression of God's judgment and probably felt reluctant to resume his priestly duties.

On the one hand, the Day of Atonement was certainly a day for appropriate fear. It highlighted God's unconditional holiness. The high priest could enter the Holy of Holies only once a year, and when he did, he had to bring blood sacrifices both for himself and his family as well as for the entire nation. The incense burning on his censer was meant to obscure a view of the cover of the atonement seat; he was forbidden to look upon God. Every part of the ceremony signified a careful approach of the living God. The penalty of any misstep was death.

But while the ceremony inspired fear, it was also an expression of grace. Despite their sin and unworthiness, this great God of Israel had made His dwelling in their midst and made provisions for approaching Him.

Apply the Word - An important reason to read a book like Leviticus is to shape our view of God. Culture today encourages people to believe what they want to believe. Inevitably, people draw conclusions about God according to their own preferences. The truth is, however, that God is not who we want Him to be but who He has revealed Himself to be in the Scriptures.

Leviticus 16:1-20, 20-22 "THE SCAPEGOAT"

"It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people." - John 11:50

The company was losing money. The price of its stock was sliding, and the corporate board was grumbling. So the president, desperate to do something, fired the vice-president in charge of sales.

In a similar situation, a college basketball team was mired in a losing season after 6 consecutive successful years and three visits to the NCAA Tournament. Attendance was down and the alumni were howling. So the university fired the coach. In both cases, good people were released because the organization needed a scapegoat. They focused the blame on one person, even though many were at fault.

That's what happened to Jesus. The high priest Caiaphas, without knowing the full import of his words, said it would be best to sacrifice one man, Jesus. He thought it would save the nation from the oppressive Romans (Jn. 11:47-50). What he didn't realize was that Jesus was bearing the guilt and penalty for the sins of the world in fulfillment of the Old Testament picture of the two goats - one a sacrifice for sin, the other a scapegoat which symbolically carried their sins away (Leviticus 16).

We deserve eternal death. How grateful we can be that God made Jesus our scapegoat.- D C Egner [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Lord, thank You for eternal life,
For dying in my place,
For taking all my punishment,
For showing me Your grace.-- Sper

Christ became our scapegoat that we might escape sin's penalty.

Leviticus 16 What Was the Purpose of Animal Sacrifices?

Dan Vander Lugt

According to Scripture, sacrifice was instituted and approved by God. But when worship of the true God was abandoned, blood sacrifice was transformed into a way to magically appease, manipulate, and avert the anger of imaginary gods. The apostle Paul wrote:

Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen (Romans 1:21-25).

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting (Romans 1:28).

(See the ATQ article, Why Did Ancient Pagans Practice Blood Sacrifices?)

Faithful sacrifice in worship of the true God was reinstated at the time of the Flood (Genesis 8:20-21) and confirmed when God established a special covenant with a man of faith named Abraham.

Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3).

Faith in God's goodness and grace became the bridge between sinful creatures and a holy God (Hebrews 11:6-19). Abraham demonstrated his genuine faith by his radical obedience. He was willing to offer his long-awaited, precious son, Isaac, as a sacrifice to God (Genesis 22:1-3). God didn't dispute or deny human unworthiness, or imply that death wasn't the necessary price for atonement. It was necessary, after all, for Abraham to be willing to bring Isaac as a sacrifice. But God didn't require Isaac to die. God Himself provided a sacrifice—a ram (Genesis 22:12-13)—to die in his place.

On the mountain top in Moriah (traditionally identified as the temple mount in Jerusalem), God revealed His grace and mercy in a way that—for Abraham and his descendants—clearly ended the practice of human sacrifice. In the Old Testament law, God clearly forbade that man shed human blood in sacrifice (Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

Since God was now known as both holy and merciful, sacrifice was no longer to be motivated by superstitious fear. It was to be the expression of conscious acknowledgment of guilt, of belonging to God, and of desiring to be restored to fellowship with Him. 2

The Old Testament law (Leviticus 16) introduced the ritual of atonement, in which the life of a goat was accepted by God as a symbolic substitution for the lives of a corrupt people who were individually and corporately worthy of death. But Old Testament sacrifices were not in themselves sufficient to atone for sin. They were sufficient only to point forward to the coming of the Messiah who would die in atonement for the sins of the world. Hebrews 10:4 declares,

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Further, Hebrews 10:10-14 tells us that "by one offering He (Christ) has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

One of the main purposes of Old Testament law was to make the people of Israel conscious of the great gap between their own weakness and corruption and the expectations of a Holy God (Romans 5:12-20). Old Testament sacrifices accustomed the Jews to acknowledge their guilt and their need for divine grace and forgiveness. But it was only through Christ's perfect life and death that actual and permanent atonement was made for the sins of an evil world. By entering His own created universe and assuming the penalty for its sin, His infinite suffering has atoned for the natural and moral evils that resulted from His creatures' freedom to sin (Luke 22:20 ; John 6:53 ; Romans 3:25 ; 1 Corinthians 10:16 ; Ephesians 2:13 ; Hebrews 9:14 ; 1 Peter 1:18-19). Jesus Christ was a human sacrifice, but not a sacrifice offered up by fallen mankind to God. He offered Himself up freely as a sacrifice by God to God for mankind 3 (John 3:16 ; John 11:27-33 ; Romans 8:32 ; 1 John 4:9).

Unlike the sacrifices of the pagans, Old Testament sacrifices had to be offered in a spirit of humility and repentance (Numbers 15:22-31 ; Isaiah 66:1-4 ; Amos 5:21-24). It wasn't enough that they simply be performed as magical means of appeasement. Back To Article

"The object of the sacrifice is to establish a moral relation between the man as a personal being and God the absolute Spirit, to heal the separation between God and man that had been caused by sin. Now, as free personality is the soil out of which sin has sprung, so must the atonement be a work rooted in free personality as well. Being outside the sphere of moral freedom, the animal may be regarded as innocent and sinless; but for the same reason it cannot possess innocence in the true sense of the word and thus have a righteousness that could form an adequate satisfaction for the sin and guilt of man" (New Unger's Bible Dictionary, p.1100). Back To Article

"Who makes the propitiation? In a pagan context, it is always human beings who seek to avert the divine anger either by the meticulous performance of rituals, or by the recitation of magic formula, or by the offering of sacrifices (vegetable, animal, or even human). Such practices are thought to placate the offended deity. But the gospel begins with the outspoken assertion that nothing we can do, say, offer, or even contribute can compensate for our sins or turn away God's anger. There is no possibility of persuading, cajoling, or bribing God to forgive us, for we deserve nothing at His hands but judgment. Nor, as we have seen, has Christ by His sacrifice prevailed upon God to pardon us. No, the initiative has been taken by God Himself, in His sheer mercy and grace" (John Stott, The Atonement). Back To Article

<http://questions.org/attq/what-was-the-purpose-of-animal-sacrifices/>

Leviticus 16 - Hebrews 9

Day of Atonement: Forgiveness Made Complete in Jesus

In the book, Devil at My Heels, Louis Zamperini tells his incredible life story. As a World War II bombardier, he was captured by the

Japanese and tortured as a POW for two years. Later, Zamperini met Jesus and was granted the power to forgive those who had beaten and tortured him.

God's heart pulses with forgiveness. He wants to show mercy and to forgive sin. The rituals of the Day of Atonement, performed only once a year, were a picture of the people of God securing His forgiveness and mercy. The symbolism of these rituals is rich with meaning, pointing to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

The author of Hebrews works to draw out the connections to the Old Testament priestly code and ceremony with the New Testament gospel. First, he explains what was insufficient in the old covenant. All of the prescriptions for the sacrifices, all the regulations for worship—these never did complete the full work of forgiveness. Those who came to the tabernacle with their offerings left with the nagging sense that they were still failures, undeserving of God's mercy. The blood of bulls and goats had a superficial kind of effect. They could declare a person ceremonially clean, but they could not fully absolve the conscience (v. 9).

Jesus, whose sacrifice was made in heaven, not the tabernacle, brought before God His own perfect blood. There was no need to bring sacrifice for His own sin, only the sin of the people. There was no need to repeat the sacrifice year after year. It was complete and final from the very beginning. And His blood had a power that the blood of bulls and goats did not: it had the power to free people from guilt and their terrifying sense of failure, and to commission them for the purpose of priestly service.

Apply the Word - Have you experienced the free and freeing forgiveness of God? Or does your conscience remain tortured, replaying scenes of your failures and past sins? God's desire is that you walk in the freedom of His forgiveness. Share with a friend how you're struggling to receive God's forgiveness, and have that friend pray for you.

Leviticus 16:1-34

Fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. - Hebrews 3:1

TODAY IN THE WORD

Let your imagination take you back several thousand years to the time of Israel's wilderness wandering. The golden calf incident showed you that God is holy and takes sin seriously. On occasion, you and your family have brought a goat to the tabernacle to be sacrificed as a sin offering. But throughout the year, there have been ways that you have sinned, not to mention thoughts that have been less than holy. So, you have been eagerly anticipating this day, the Day of Atonement.

Before you stands the great high priest Aaron. He is human like you, but he leads you into worship and sacrifices on your behalf. On his breastplate, you see the stone bearing the name of your tribe, together with eleven other stones (Ex. 28:21). As he offers sacrifices concerning his own sin (v. 6), he also sacrifices for your sins (Leviticus 16:15). As he sprinkles the blood of the sacrificed goat in the Most Holy Place, he makes atonement for your sin (Leviticus 16:16). Finally, he confesses your sins and all the people's sins over the live goat. As the goat is led away into the wilderness, you see the guilt of your sin removed (Leviticus 16:22).

The Day of Atonement made possible this restoration of the people that was essential for continued worship of the Lord God. Atonement, or the covering of sin, showed that shedding of blood was necessary. In other words, death was the price required of sinful humans. In the Old Testament, the blood shed was that of bulls and goats. But in the New Testament, we learn that only the blood shed by Jesus Christ could fully restore fellowship between God and man.

TODAY ALONG THE WAY Reread today's passage, taking note of the function of the high priest, the sacrificed goat, and the scapegoat. Then read Isaiah 53:4, 5, 6, 7, 8. In what ways is Jesus, the Suffering Servant, like the goat sacrificed as a sin offering? In what ways is Jesus like the scapegoat who removes the guilt of our sins? Later in our study, we'll look at Jesus as the true High Priest, but for now, take some time to praise the Father for sending the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Leviticus 16:1-28

Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people. - Hebrews 9:28

TODAY IN THE WORD

If you were an "average" Israelite standing by your tent on the Day of Atonement, you would be witnessing and participating in a very solemn and important event.

First of all, you would have been fasting since the evening before. This was to prepare your heart before the Lord, and because even minor household activities such as lighting a fire and cooking were prohibited.

You would also see the high priest in his special garments as two goats were brought before him at the door of the tabernacle, the "Tent of Meeting" (Leviticus 16:7). He would cast lots for the goats, choosing one for sacrifice and the other to be the "scapegoat" that would be released into the wilderness.

But the real focus and concern of this holy day was the moment when the high priest, carrying the blood of the sacrifice, stepped behind the curtain into the Most Holy Place by himself to make an atonement for the sins of Israel for another year (Leviticus 16:15, 16, 17).

It doesn't take much imagination to sense the hushed tension the Israelites must have felt as they waited to see if the Lord would accept the sacrifice and cover their sins for the coming year.

No one was allowed to go with the high priest into this small room where the presence of God resided. Since the priest faced death if he failed to follow the Lord's requirements, his garment was fringed with bells so the people could hear that he was still moving around. There was also a rope tied around his ankle, so he could be pulled from the inner sanctuary if anything went wrong.

What a relief it must have been when the high priest pushed aside the curtain and stepped out, and the word spread, ""The atonement has been made!"" The people also had a visible testimony to this when their sins were confessed over the head of the scapegoat and it was released in the wilderness, symbolically carrying away Israel's sins.

It's hard for us to imagine this ritual happening every year, with our forgiveness before God hanging in the balance each time. Praise God for Jesus' ""once-for-all"" sacrifice!

TODAY ALONG THE WAY Although we do not have to bring animals or food to God as sacrifices to atone for sin, we are not empty-handed worshippers.

One of the sacrifices we, as New Testament Christians, can make is ""to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased"" (Heb. 13:16). Is there someone in your neighborhood or church who has a need you can help meet? Do what you can in the name of Christ, as a witness to the other person and a sacrifice of gratitude to Him.

Leviticus 16:6-10, 20-31

He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites. - Leviticus 16:21

TODAY IN THE WORD

In modern usage, the idiom "scapegoat" is negative. If the boss is "looking for a scapegoat," it means he wants someone to take the blame, no matter who deserves it. Perhaps the truth is too complex to understand or admit, or perhaps he himself is guilty of failure or wrongdoing and doesn't want to acknowledge it.

A "scapegoat" is someone who takes undeserved blame, usually unwillingly. This person may be powerless in the situation and is innocent of what he or she is being "punished" for. Most people would sympathize with a "scapegoat," but no one would want to be one.

The literal "scapegoat" of the Old Testament did indeed receive punishment for others, but it did so as part of God's directions for the sin offering. The animal was a hapless victim--as is the focus in the modern phrase--but the community identified with the animal in a redemptive ritual. Identifying with the sacrificial animal by laying hands on it symbolically, and even legally, transferred guilt to it.

The sin offering described in today's reading took place on the Day of Atonement, when Aaron as high priest represented the entire nation before the Lord. On this special day, two "scapegoats" were offered, one to be sacrificed and one to be sent from the camp into the desert. The animals became a substitutionary atonement, that is, they died or were exiled in place of the worshiper. By rights, this should have been the fate of the guilty people!

The first goat paid the price of sin, which is death. But what about the second goat? Why was it sent out of the camp? This goat symbolized the cleansing or removal of sin. "On this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the Lord, you will be clean from all your sins" (Lev. 16:30).

TODAY ALONG THE WAY On the Day of Atonement, the Israelites had to show their sincerity by fasting ("deny yourselves," Lev. 16:29). Many of us might not be familiar with the Bible's teaching on this discipline or how it applies to us today. In the Bible, who fasted, when, how, and why? What can be learned from these examples? Is there any teaching relevant to this topic? What is the

POEMS

In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,

And stopp'd my wild career:
I saw One hanging on a Tree
In agonies and blood,
Who fix'd His languid eyes on me.
As near His Cross I stood.

Sure never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look:
It seem'd to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke:
My conscience felt and own'd the guilt,
And plunged me in despair:
I saw my sins His Blood had spilt,
And help'd to nail Him there.

Alas! I knew not what I did!
But now my tears are vain:
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I the Lord have slain!
A second look He gave, which said,
"I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die that thou may'st live."

Thus, while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue,
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too.
With pleasing grief, and mournful joy,
My spirit now if fill'd,
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by Him I kill'd!
John Newton, 1725-1807.

Jesus Christ, our blessed Savior,
Turned away God's wrath forever;
By His better grief and woe
He saved us from the evil foe.
Christ says: 'Come, all ye that labor,
And receive My grace and favor';
They who feel no want nor ill
Need no physician's help nor skill.
As His pledge of love undying,
He this precious food supplying,
Gives His body with the bread
And with the wine the blood He shed.
Praise the Father, who from heaven
Unto us such food hath given
And, to mend what we have done,
Gave unto death His only Son.
If thy heart this truth professes
And thy mouth thy sin confesses,
His dear guest thou here shalt be,
And Christ Himself shall banquet thee.
John Huss