

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
[A third Overview Chart of Leviticus](#)

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 1446 BC	
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>	

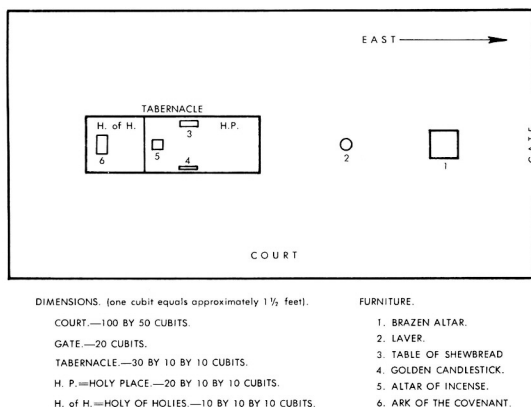
Leviticus 16:1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the LORD and died.

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

Related Passages:

Lev 23:27+ summation of the Day of Atonement...“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.”

Lev 25:9+ ‘You shall then sound a ram’s horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land.



Pattern of the Tabernacle-Click to Enlarge

THE LESSON OF PRESUMPTUOUS WORSHIP GOD APPROACHED ONLY ON HIS TERMS

To help understand the sequence of events note that Lev 16:1-10 are Yahweh's instructions regarding preparation for the sacrifices, a bull and ram for Aaron and two goats and a ram for the people. It is not until Lev 16:11 that the actual sacrifices begin to take place. Lev 16:11-14 marks Aaron's first entry into the holy place behind the veil, first taking incense into the holy place (is this a separate trip? some think so and then he goes back out to get the blood of the bull and comes in a second time). Then in Lev 16:15-19 he enters the Holy Place a second time and makes atonement with the goat of the sin offering for the people. Note that not only does he make atonement for the people at this time, but he also makes atonement for (1) the holy place (Lev 16:16, 17), (2) for the tent of meeting (Lev 16:16) and (3) for the brazen altar (Lev 16:18) with blood of both the bull and the goat. Then in Lev 16:20-22 he lays hands on the second live goat, confesses all iniquities, transgressions and sins of Israel and sends it to the wilderness, depicting sending their sins far away! Then in Lev 16:23-29 he bathes and apparently puts on his priestly garb and on the brazen altar offers the burning offering for himself and the people. Notice the three baths in this section for symbolic cleansing from contaminating effects of sin. Finally, Lev 16:29-34 in essence summarizes this day specifying the timing of once per year and in Lev 16:33 reviewing the 5 atonements carried out on this day which is to be a permanent statute. This section has one additional facet of the day which is to be a day when they humble their souls and do no work.

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 (Lev 10:1-2) - One might subtitle this verse learning from the failures of others and holiness is not to be trifled with. 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.

Gordon Wenham has an interesting comment that , "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. 16:16, 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." (See [The Book of Leviticus - Page 228](#)).

F Duane Lindsey adds "It is true that the cleansing of "the most holy place, the Tent of Meeting, and the altar" (Lev 16:20) was a theologically significant feature of the Day of Atonement which appeared to be accomplished by the blood manipulation ritual of the slain goat for the people (Lev 16:15-19). But the completion of the sin offering with the live goat ritual involved a substitutionary carrying away of the people's sins (Lev 16:22) which were identified as "all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins" (Lev 16:20), so that they "will be clean from all [their] sins" (Lev 16:30). Of course Aaron and his household were the initial objects of the atoning sacrifice's special rituals (Lev 16:6, 11-14). So the special atonement ritual averted the wrath of God for all the sins of the people for the past year. (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament - Page 195](#))

Richard Hess - On God's act of addressing Moses, see comments on Lev 4:1. Verse 1 qualifies this with a note that it occurred after the death of Aaron's sons. This explicitly connects the chapter with Leviticus 10 and the events recounted there. Though Lev 11 – 15 logically precede Lev16, they have no chronological context. Leviticus 10, with its defilement of the sanctuary and the sin of the sons of Aaron, precedes ch. 16 and demonstrates the need for a ceremony of atonement that restores fellowship between God and Israel. (**ED**: In other words it appears that these instructions almost immediately follow the pollution of the Tabernacle and death of Aaron's sons. One can only imagine that Aaron's full attention is focused on the instructions he receives from Moses!) (See [Expositor's Bible Commentary - page 1099](#))

David Guzik - To the ancient Jews the Day of Atonement was called "the great day" or sometimes even just "the day." It was and remains the only day of commanded fasting on the Jewish calendar. Modern Jews still regard Yom Kippur an important day of fasting, soul searching, and righting wrongs – yet they offer no sacrifice for sin.

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. (See [Nadab and Abihu](#))

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."

when they had approached the presence of the LORD : qarab = coming very near into intimate proximity, close enough to see, speak, touch.

THOUGHT - What a contrast is the New Covenant which again and again beckons the blood bought believer to Draw Near (Heb 4:16+, Heb 7:25+, Heb 10:22+). How often do we avail ourselves of this incredible privilege which no Jew not named "high priest" could EVER partake of? Amazing mercy and grace indeed to sinners such as us! Holy Father grant that by Your Holy Spirit (cf Eph 6:18+) we will be enabled to pray without ceasing, continually drawing near to the only One Who is Holy, Holy, Holy. Amen (1Th 5:17+).

[Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!](#)

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim, falling down before Thee,
Who wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth and sky, and sea;
Holy, Holy, Holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
-- Reginald Heber

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. In other words, while Nadab and Abihu died for their presumption, God did not leave Israel without hope. Instead, He provided a way to approach Him safely: through the Day of Atonement ritual, ultimately pointing to Christ.

Spurgeon - "The Lord spoke to Moses." If we may ever set any portion of Scripture before another, this is one of the most precious chapters in the whole compass of revelation and, in some respects, the most remarkable of all. It is so full of wonderfully deep teaching that, instead of a sermon, it might require a volume. And then, perhaps, we would scarcely have done more than skim the surface. There are great difficulties, I may also add, connected with the interpretation, which have puzzled the most learned. I do not at all attempt to solve those difficulties. I desire to give, instead of any attempt at criticism or deep explanation, a simple exposition of this chapter, bringing out of it, I hope, some truths of God which, if they do not belong to the chapter, are, nevertheless, exceedingly precious ones and will, I hope, be useful to us all. In order that he might dwell in the midst of Israel without compromising his character, he was pleased to appoint one day in the year, called the Day of Atonement. This was to purify the camp and make it fit to be the dwelling place of Jehovah. Now God has promised that he will dwell among us, and he does dwell among his own people at this time. He dwells with them in a remarkable way. God is the heritage, the friend, the companion of all his people, but because of their sin, he cannot dwell with these believing men unless an atonement is made. The annual atonement among the Jews was the picture of the great and real atonement, the effectual expiation that, not once a year, but once and for all, the Lord Jesus Christ has offered and that now renders it possible for God to walk with men and dwell among them.

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

Here is my summary from opening paragraph but in more of an outline format:

1. Preparation and Instructions (Leviticus 16:1–10)

- **Context:** After the death of Aaron's sons (Lev 16:1), Yahweh gives detailed instructions to prevent a repeat of their fatal error—entering the Most Holy Place at the wrong time or in the wrong way.
- **Preparation:** Aaron must bring a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering for himself, and two goats and a ram for the people (Lev 16:3–5).
- **Casting Lots:** The two goats are presented before the LORD; one is chosen as a sin offering, the other as the scapegoat (Lev 16:7–10).

2. First Entry: Incense and Blood of the Bull (Leviticus 16:11–14)

- **Sacrifice of the Bull:** Aaron sacrifices the bull for his own sin and his household (Lev 16:11).
- **Incense:** He takes a censer of coals and two handfuls of incense behind the veil, so the cloud covers the mercy seat (Lev 16:12–13).
 - **Is this a separate trip?** Some scholars think so, but the text allows for both actions (incense and blood) to be part of a single entry, or two closely connected entries. The main point is that the incense must precede the sprinkling of blood to shield Aaron from God's glory (Lev 16:13).
- **Sprinkling the Blood:** He then sprinkles the bull's blood on and before the mercy seat (Lev 16:14).

3. Second Entry: Blood of the Goat (Leviticus 16:15–19)

- **Goat for the People:** Aaron sacrifices the goat as a sin offering for the people and brings its blood behind the veil, repeating the sprinkling (Lev 16:15).
- **Atonement for the Holy Place, Tent, and Altar:**
 - **Holy Place:** "Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel..." (Lev 16:16, ESV).
 - **Tent of Meeting:** The atonement is also for the tent (Lev 16:16).
 - **Altar:** He makes atonement for the altar by applying blood to its horns (Lev 16:18–19).

4. Scapegoat Ritual (Leviticus 16:20–22)

- **Confession and Sending Away:** Aaron lays both hands on the live goat, confesses all Israel's sins, and sends it away into the wilderness, symbolizing the removal of sin (Lev 16:21–22).
 - **"And the goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area..."** (Lev 16:22, ESV).

5. Cleansing and Burnt Offerings (Leviticus 16:23–28)

- **Bathing and Changing Garments:** Aaron bathes and changes out of the linen garments (Lev 16:23–24).
- **Burnt Offerings:** He offers burnt offerings for himself and the people (Lev 16:24).
- **Disposal of Sin Offerings:** The remains of the sin offerings are taken outside the camp and burned (Lev 16:27–28).
- **Multiple Washings:** The repeated bathing underscores the need for cleansing from sin's defilement.

6. Summary and Perpetual Statute (Leviticus 16:29–34)

- **Annual Observance:** "And it shall be a statute to you forever... on the tenth day of the seventh month you shall afflict yourselves and shall do no work..." (Lev 16:29, ESV).

- **Purpose:** “For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins.” (Lev 16:30, ESV).
- **Five Atonements:** The text reviews atonement for the holy place, tent, altar, priests, and all the people (Lev 16:33).

Theological Significance

- **Sin’s Seriousness:** The elaborate rituals and repeated washings highlight the seriousness of sin and the holiness of God.
- **Substitution and Removal:** The two goats picture both the payment for sin (sacrifice) and the removal of sin (scapegoat).
- **Pointing to Christ:** The New Testament teaches that these rituals foreshadow Christ’s once-for-all atonement (Hebrews 9:11–14; 10:1–4).
 - “But when Christ appeared as a high priest... he entered once for all into the holy places... by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” (Hebrews 9:11–12, ESV)
 - “He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9:26, ESV)

William Barrick - Modern Judaism refers to this day as Yom Kippur. In Scripture the day is named only at Leviticus 23:27, 28 and 25:9. In those three occurrences it is called *Yom Hakkippurim* (literally, “Day of Atonements”). God gave instruction concerning this day at the conclusion of His instructions regarding purifications (Leviticus 11–15; see especially Lev 15:31). This religious festival is “the climax and crown of Israel’s theology of sanctification.” – James Luther Mays, *The Book of Leviticus, The Book of Numbers*, Layman’s Bible Commentary (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), 52.

Daily Walk - OVERVIEW On the Day of Atonement the nation gathered to watch as the high priest entered the Most Holy Place. Fresh blood was spilled on the altar to cover the sins of the nation for another year—to postpone yet again the final day of reckoning for those sins. Because of the centrality of blood in the nation’s worship, its use was prohibited for any purpose other than that of sacrifice to God, for “it is the blood that makes atonement” (Leviticus 17:11).

YOUR DAILY WALK Have you ever been the “scapegoat” for someone else’s irresponsible action? There are certain categories of individuals who often seem to end up as a scapegoat (the one bearing the blame for others): younger brothers or sisters, the previous generation, the family dog; in short, those least able to defend themselves.

Have you ever wondered where the scapegoat originated? It is as old as Leviticus 16. Every year on the Day of Atonement, Aaron would select a young goat, “lay both hands on the head ... confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites ... [and] send the goat away into the desert” (Leviticus 16:21), presumably to die. Just as the goat slain for the sin offering covered the penalty of the nation’s sin for another year (Leviticus 16:15–19), so the scapegoat carried away (but never cured) the guilt of the nation. Only Jesus Christ—the Perfect Sacrifice and the Perfect Scapegoat—could deal with both.

Now turn to Isaiah 53:3–10 and read about the One who was “crushed for our iniquities.” If you have never done so, thank God for sending His Son to be your scapegoat.

Jesus has crossed out the black lines of our sin with the red lines of His own blood.

INSIGHT Looking Toward a Day That’s Past History

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is commemorated by observant Jews. It falls in September or October on the tenth day after the Jewish New Year and is marked by repentance, prayers, and abstention from food, drink, sex, and work. During this season, pray that all unbelievers will one day accept the once-for-all atonement made by the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Devotional on Leviticus 16:1

Leviticus 16 opens with a sobering reminder: “after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the LORD and died.” Nadab and Abihu’s tragedy was not a random accident—it was a divine warning. God is holy, and His presence cannot be entered on human terms. Presumption cost them their lives.

But notice the mercy in this verse: God did not close the way to Himself forever. Instead, He revealed to Moses the Day of Atonement, a pathway into His presence—though narrow, costly, and carefully prescribed. This mixture of severity and mercy teaches us that while God’s holiness is unbending, His love provides a way for sinners to draw near, albeit it is a small gate, a narrow way and only one way (Mt 7:13-14).

For us, that way is not the blood of bulls and goats, nor the trembling steps of an earthly high priest, but through our Great High

Priest, Christ Himself. He entered once for all into the true Holy of Holies, not with the blood of animals, but with His own blood (Hebrews 9:12). To be sure, the warning of Nadab and Abihu still speaks to us that God must be approached with reverence, never casually or carelessly. Yet the mercy of Leviticus 16:1 also speaks that He has provided a way into His presence and it is wide open through the finished work of Jesus. He Alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through" Him. (Jn 14:6)

The truth of Leviticus 16:1 begs the question, do we treat God's presence as common, like Nadab and Abihu did, or do we enter into His presence with holy awe, trusting only in Christ? The God Who is a consuming fire is also the God who welcomes His children through the blood of His Son, Who took the Father's fire for us!

Before the throne of God above,
I have a strong and perfect plea;
a great High Priest whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me."
-- Charitie Lees Bancroft (1863)

Here are some illustrations of Leviticus 16:1...

1. High Voltage Electricity ⚡

Approaching God's holiness without reverence is like grabbing a high-voltage wire with bare hands. The power is real and dangerous if treated casually, but when approached properly—through the right equipment—it can be harnessed safely. Nadab and Abihu learned that God's presence is not to be touched on our own terms.

2. Restricted Area Warning Signs

Think of areas marked "Authorized Personnel Only". To ignore the sign and barge in is to risk great harm, even death. God's holiness is the ultimate "restricted zone." Only the high priest, only at the right time, and only with blood could enter safely. Christ, however, has opened that restricted area forever for those who come through Him (Hebrews 10:19–22).

3. Prescription Medicine vs. Poison ☠

Medicine can heal when taken as prescribed, but misuse—even of the right substance—can be deadly. Nadab and Abihu brought "strange fire" not commanded by God. The difference between life and death was not in their zeal but in their obedience. God must be worshiped as He prescribes, not as we imagine.

4. Security Clearance Analogy

In military or government contexts, certain places require high-level clearance. To enter without clearance is treasonous. Leviticus 16:1 reminds us that God's throne room requires perfect holiness. The only "clearance" is the blood of Christ, applied by faith.

5. Fire in the Refinery

Inside a refinery, fire is carefully contained. Used rightly, it purifies and produces energy. Used wrongly, it explodes and destroys. The holy fire of God is the same: it consumes sin, but it also refines those who approach Him in the way He has appointed.

6. The Wrong Key in the Lock

Imagine trying to force open a locked door with the wrong key—it damages both the key and the lock. Nadab and Abihu tried to force open God's presence with the wrong "key." Only one key fits: the blood sacrifice God provides. In Christ, the true key has been given, opening the way into God's presence.

DAY OF ATONEMENT POSSIBLE ORDER OF EVENTS

The following suggested sequence is adapted from [MacArthur Study Bible page 176](#) and the [The Reformation Study Bible](#).

- 1) The High Priest washed at the basin in the courtyard and dressed in the tabernacle in a holy linen tunic (Lev 16:4⁺), which in

the Septuagint is the word [chiton](#), the same word used of Jesus' garment while He made atonement on the Cross (cf John 19:23+)

Comment: Even as the Jewish High Priest changed garments, so too did Jesus. Jesus Who "existed in the form of God" (Php 2:6+) **laid aside** His majesty and glory before He "**clothed Himself**" with flesh and blood (cp Heb 2:14+), 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.

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 outer tent). 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.

2) The High Priest offered the bull as a sin offering for himself and his family (Lev 16:3, 6, 1+).

Comment: This act clearly separates the human priesthood from the priesthood of Jesus who was without sin. The writer of Hebrews says "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**. (Heb 5:1-3+)

3) **FIRST TIME IN HOLY OF HOLIES** - The High Priest **entered** inside the veil, into the Holy of Holies, with the bull's blood, incense, and a fire pan full of coals of fire with incense from the brazen altar of burnt offering (Lev 16:12, 13+).

Comment: The incense was to protect the High Priest, because Lev 16:13+ says "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.**"

Lindsey "The high priest was to enter the most holy place three times, the first time with a censer full of burning coals from the altar of burnt offering on which coals he was to burn incense prepared especially for use in the tabernacle (cf. Ex. 30:34–36+)." (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 197](#))

Comment - It appears that **Lindsey** considers the taking of the censer into the Holy of Holies to be a separate trip from taking the blood of the bull. Could the high priest have carried them both on the same trip? If so, then he seems to make only 2 entrances into the Holy of Holies. I guess we cannot be absolutely dogmatic.

4) The High Priest sprinkled the bull's blood on the mercy seat (does not say but possibly 7x) and then sprinkled blood 7 times in front of the mercy seat (Lev 16:14+) carrying this out for himself and for his family

5) The High Priest went back to the courtyard and cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. (Lev 16:7, 8+).

6) The High Priest sacrificed one goat as a sin offering for the people (Lev 16:5, 9, 15+).

7) **SECOND TIME IN HOLY OF HOLIES** - The High Priest took the blood from the sacrificed goat inside the veil, **reentered** the Holy of holies and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat just as he had done with the blood of the bull for himself and his family (Steps #3-4). (Lev 16:15)

Lev 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."

Comment: Sprinkling of the blood of the goat 7 times is not mentioned but the statement "do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull," suggests this was also repeated. 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 and for the people.

8) **THIS STEP IS LESS CERTAIN** - While in the most holy portion of The Tabernacle, Aaron was to use the blood of the sin-offering of the congregation to cover and cleanse the Holy Place itself. Then Aaron was to cleanse the whole of the Tent of Meeting. It is not clear whether he splattered blood all about The Tabernacle to cover it from the sins of the people or whether the blood ceremony he had already performed was sufficient for covering the Holy Place and the whole Tabernacle at the same time.

THIS STEP IS BASED ON Lev 16:16-17+ 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. 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.

[The Reformation Study Bible](#) presumably commenting on the **tent of meeting** says "he went out to the outer part of the tabernacle of meeting and sprinkled the blood (Lev 16:16+)."

8) The High Priest returned to the brazen altar of burnt offering and cleansed it with the blood of the bull and goat (from the previous sacrifices) and with his finger he sprinkled some of the blood on the brazen altar seven times to cleanse it from the impurities of the sons of Israel and also to consecrate it. (Lev 16:18, 19+).

9) The High Priest confessed the sins of Israel while laying his hands on the head of the live goat, the scapegoat which was then dispatched to the wilderness (Lev 16:20-22+).

"When he finishes atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar (DESCRIBED IN STEPS 7-8), he shall offer the live goat. 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. 22 "The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

10) Afterward, the goat keeper cleansed himself (Lev 16:26+).

11) The scapegoat gone, the High Priest removed his special Day of Atonement clothing (described in Lev 16:4), rewashed, and put on the regular priestly garments (Lev 16:23, 24+).

12) The High Priest offered two rams as burnt offerings for himself and the people (Lev 16:3, 5, 24+).

Comment: NIV has "comes out" suggesting he is in an enclosure hidden from view while he is bathing.

13) The fat of the sin offering was burned (Lev 16:25+).

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

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

15) The one who burned the sin offering cleansed himself (Lev 16:28+).

The Day of Atonement: From Shadows to Substance

Here is another way of looking at Leviticus 16 –
Atonement for Priest, People, and Completion in Christ

I. Atonement for the Priest (Lev 16:3–14, 17)

Before the high priest could intercede for the nation, he had to deal with his own sin. This highlights the weakness of the Levitical priesthood and points to Christ, the perfect High Priest who needed no offering for Himself (Heb 7:26–27).

1. Alone in the Tent (Lev 16:17)

- No one was allowed inside while the high priest made atonement.
- **Typology:** Jesus fulfilled this by accomplishing redemption alone (Jn 16:32; Mk 14:27; Isa 53:8).
- Even His disciples abandoned Him, yet the Father was with Him until Mt 27:46

2. Preparations with Animals (Lev 16:3)

- Aaron entered with a bull (sin offering) and a ram (burnt offering) for himself and his household.

- Possible reference to the **sanctuary area** (interpretation varies by translation).

3. Washing & Humble Linen Garments (Lev 16:4)

- Bathed, then put on plain linen garments instead of his ornate high priestly attire.
- **Typology:** Christ humbled Himself, laying aside His glory to take on flesh (Phil 2:6–8).
- Later, Aaron would resume his glorious garments — pointing to Christ's exaltation after His resurrection (Phil 2:9–11).

4. The Bull for Himself and Household (Lev 16:6, 11)

- The bull was sacrificed for his own sins and those of his household.
- **Contrast:** Unlike Aaron, Christ had no sin (Heb 5:1–3).

5. First Entrance into the Holy of Holies (Lev 16:12–14)

- Brought incense and blood of the bull.
- Sprinkled the blood on and before the mercy seat — atonement for himself.

II. Atonement for the People and Sanctuary (Lev 16:15–22)

1. The Two Goats from the Congregation (Lev 16:5, 7–8)

- One goat chosen “for the LORD” (sacrifice), the other “for Azazel” (scapegoat).
- Together foreshadow Christ's one atoning work:
 - **Propitiation** (satisfying God's wrath by blood)
 - **Expiation** (removing sin, sending it away).

2. The Goat Sacrificed (Lev 16:15–16)

- Blood sprinkled inside the veil a **second time**, this time for the people.
- Atonement made for the Most Holy Place, Tent of Meeting, and the people.

3. The Altar Cleansed (Lev 16:16, 18–19)

- Blood of the bull and goat applied to the altar's horns.
- Symbolized purification from Israel's defilements.

4. The Live Goat (Scapegoat) (Lev 16:20–22)

- High priest placed both hands on its head, confessing Israel's sins.
- Goat sent into the wilderness, bearing away the nation's guilt.
- **Typology:** Christ bore our sins and removed them “as far as the east is from the west” (Ps 103:12).
- [Barrick](#) - Some interpreters see an allusion to this goat in Isaiah 53:6 and Hebrews 13:12.

III. Completion & Cleansing (Lev 16:23–28)

1. Changing Garments Again (Lev 16:23–24)

- High priest returned to the Tent, removed linen garments, washed, and put back on his glorious attire.
- **Typology:** Foreshadows Christ leaving His linen wrappings in the tomb (Jn 20:6–7) and being clothed again in majesty.

2. Burnt Offerings (Lev 16:24–25)

- High priest offered his burnt offering and the people's burnt offering.

- Also burned the fat of the sin offering.
- [Barrick](#) -The burnt offerings reminded the priests and people of God's sovereign authority over them.

3. Cleansing Others Involved (Lev 16:26–28)

- The goat-keeper, those burning the remains, all had to wash afterward.
- Bull and goat carcasses carried outside the camp to be burned.
- **Typology:** Christ suffered “outside the gate” (Heb 13:10–14), bearing reproach for us.

IV Miscellaneous Instructions for the Congregation (Lev 16:29-34)

- The Sabbath Fast by the Congregation of Israel (Lev 16:29-31) This fast is the only fasting prescribed by the Law of Moses.
- The full purpose of the day was to be found in the humbling of the entire person to God.
- It was to be a time in which the significance of the day dominated the thought life of every Israelite.
- Each Israelite was to meditate without interruption (by work or by meals) on the holiness of his God and on his own sinfulness — and also on the significance of God's presence in the midst of the nation. Compare Colossians 2:23.

The High Priest's Ministry of Atonement (Lev 16:32-34)

The final section of Leviticus 16 re-emphasizes the centrality of the high priest in the observance of the Day of Atonement.

Christological Summary

- Aaron atoned first for himself — Christ did not need to.
- Aaron entered year after year — Christ once for all.
- Aaron shed animal blood — Christ shed His own perfect blood.
- Aaron wore linen for humility — Christ humbled Himself in incarnation.
- Aaron changed back to glory — Christ was exalted to the Father's right hand.
- Aaron sent the scapegoat away — Christ removed our sins forever.

[William Barrick](#) summarizes - The Day of Atonement was the central observance of the levitical system. It emphasized, more than any other observance, the holiness of God and the sinfulness of His people. It emphasized the lack of direct access to God by anyone at any time under the Mosaic legislation. Therefore, the Day of Atonement is the point of comparison with regard to the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ in Hebrews 8–10. The chief point of the Epistle to the Hebrews (see Hebrews 8:1) is in direct contrast to the chief point of the Mosaic Law (see Hebrews 9:8).

The ritual for the Day of Atonement thus appropriately stands before the laws on holy living.

John Hartley makes an interesting comment - The instruction regarding the Day of Atonement “**prepares for the coming material on holy living.**” It may be said that the moral and spiritual energy for the people to fulfill the laws in Leviticus 17–26 comes out of their finding complete expiation on the Day of Atonement. The ritual for the Day of Atonement thus appropriately stands before the laws on holy living.” (see [Leviticus, Volume 4 - Page 217](#)),

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 fasting 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” (NASH), 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!

INTRODUCTION - Leon Hyatt - Traditionally the special day described in this chapter has been called “The Day of Atonement.” In these comments, it will be called more literally “**The Day of Coverings.**” Actually, no name is given to the day in this chapter; however, it is called “The Day of the Coverings” in Leviticus 23:27; 25:9 and “a day of coverings” in Leviticus 23:28. It is important to notice that in each of those references “coverings” is plural, indicating the multiple coverings that took place on that day. Those coverings included covering all of the priests, covering all of the people, and covering The Tabernacle and all of its parts.

The Day of Coverings was not the only day on which covering from sin could be experienced. The ceremonies revealed in the previous messages from The Tabernacle had been rich in symbolism concerning covering over worshipers to protect them from the

effects of their sins. That covering resulted from offering fire-offerings (Lev. 1:4; 4:20,26,31,35; 5:6,10,13,16,18; 6:7; 7:7; 8:15,34; 9:7; 10:17) and from observing regulations concerning clean and unclean (12:7,8; 14:18,19,20,21,29,53; 15:15,30). The ceremonies described previously were designed to be practiced by individuals and groups anytime they felt a need for them and whenever it was appropriate to express experiences that were taking place in their lives. In those observances, covering from sin came as the person experienced in his heart the repentance, dedication, or cleansing symbolized by the ceremony. The Day of Coverings, on the other hand, was a day when everyone in the nation was called on to repent and to fully dedicate himself or herself to Jehovah so that covering from sin might come to everyone and everything in the nation. Jehovah knew that, as the weeks and months of every year rolled on, unworthy deeds and thoughts would come into the lives of His people. Those unworthy and sinful deeds would hinder their fellowship with God and also would hinder fellowship among the people themselves. As a result, sadness and harm would come to the people and to everything that belonged to them. The relationship of the whole nation to God would be damaged, and the blessings He provided for them would be diminished. Therefore, Jehovah provided a great day in every year when the whole nation would be called away from its sins to repentance and to the covering or protection that repentance brings.

The ceremonies of the Day of Coverings were multiple in number and rich in meaning. Because of the variety of the ceremonies to be conducted on that day, the Day of Coverings became the most important of all of Israel's festival days (see MESSAGES 30-34 for the other festivals authorized at Sinai). The Day of Coverings was different from the other festival days in that the others were days of feasting and rejoicing, while the Day of Coverings was a day of sorrow and repentance. However, most of the symbols of the day were not new. They were the same symbols described in the previous messages concerning the offerings and the cleansing ceremonies, except that on the Day of Coverings they were applied to the whole nation and in some cases were observed in expanded forms.

*It is a mistake to make the Day of Coverings picture salvation,
as so many interpreters have done.*

It is important to remember that the symbols of the previous messages represented experiences in the lives of persons who were in covenant relationship with Jehovah. The same was true when those symbols were applied to the nation on the Day of Coverings. They described experiences of a nation that was in covenant relationship with Jehovah. Thus, it is a mistake to make the Day of Coverings picture salvation, as so many interpreters have done. Just the fact that the day was observed every year shows that it did not picture salvation, because salvation can occur only once in a person's life. On the other hand, experiences important to the daily practice of the saved life can and must occur frequently. The Day of Coverings symbolized the repeated need for spiritual and moral renewal in the life of a nation that belongs to Jehovah.

Introductory note (Lev 16:1)

A. Warning to Aaron not to enter the inner room of The Tabernacle at unauthorized times (Lev 16:2)

B. Preparation for the ceremonies of the day (Lev 16:3-5)

1. Preparation of Aaron (Lev 16:3-4)

- a. Preparation for his offerings (Lev 16:3)
- b. Preparation by bathing and by putting on his holy clothing (Lev 16:4)

2. Preparation of the congregation (Lev 16:5)

C. The covering ceremonies (Lev 16:6-28)

1. Presentation of the sin-offerings (Lev 16:6-10)

- a. Of Aaron (Lev 16:6)
- b. Of the congregation (Lev 16:7-10)

2. The blood ceremony of the sin-offerings (Lev 16:11-19)

- a. Of Aaron (Lev 16:11-14)
- b. Of the congregation (Lev 16:15-19)
 - (1) To cover and cleanse the people (Lev 16:15)
 - (2) To cover and cleanse The Tabernacle (Lev 16:16-17)
 - (3) To cover and cleanse the altar (Lev 16:18-19)

3. The goat of complete removal (Lev 16:20-22)
4. Aaron's second washing (Lev 16:23-24a)
5. The rededication-offerings (Lev 16:24b)
6. The fat ceremony of the sin-offerings (Lev 16:25)
7. The meat ceremony of the sin-offerings (Lev 16:26-28)

D. Interpretation of the day (Lev 16:29-34)

1. Its date (Lev 16:29a)
2. Its spirit (Lev 16:29-31)
3. Its purpose (Lev 16:32-33)
4. Its perpetuity (Lev 16:34, cf Lev 16:31)

Leviticus 16:1 Commentary - [Leon Hyatt](#) - This verse is another Introductory Note, indicating another message delivered to Moses from The Tabernacle. A time note is attached, which states that this message was given "after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before Jehovah and died." That event was described in [MESSAGE 11](#) (Lev. 10:1-7). It occurred on the day the priests first officiated at The Tabernacle altar, immediately after they were hallowed to the priesthood. The sequence of events was as follows: (1) As Jehovah's had commanded Moses when he was on the mountain for 40 days and nights (see comments on Leviticus 8:1-32 in [MESSAGE 10](#)), Moses led in formal ceremonies hallowing Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. Those ceremonies were conducted on the first of seven days that were called "the days of fillings" (see Introduction to [MESSAGE 10](#) and comments on Lev. 8:33-36 in [MESSAGE 10](#)). (2) Aaron and his sons spent the remaining six of the seven days of fillings in study and prayer, preparing for their new responsibilities (see [comments](#) on Lev. 9:1 in [MESSAGE 10](#) and on Lev. 10:1 in [MESSAGE 11](#)). (2) During the six days of prayer and study in The Tabernacle, Jehovah delivered to Moses and Aaron the six messages on practices concerning clean and unclean that are recorded in Leviticus 11-15, (see Introductory Note to each of [MESSAGES 14](#) through 19). Moses delayed recording those messages until after the days of hallowing and fillings were completed in order to avoid interrupting his description of the hallowing events. (3) On the eighth day, the new priests began their official duties as priests (see comments on Lev. 9:1 in [MESSAGE 10](#)). (4) That same day, Nadab and Abihu offered an unauthorized offering before The Tabernacle and were stuck dead (see comments on Lev. 10:1 in [MESSAGE 11](#)). (5) Immediately afterward, while Moses and others were conducting the burial of Nadab and Abihu, Jehovah delivered [MESSAGE 12](#) to Aaron concerning not drinking alcoholic beverages (see Introduction to [MESSAGE 12](#)). (6) When Moses returned from the burial, he approved Aaron's deviation regarding the sinoffering, which constituted [MESSAGE 13](#) (see Introduction to [MESSAGE 13](#)). Thus MESSAGES 11 through 13 were all given on the same day, the day the priests began their official duties and the day Nadab and Abihu rebelled.

QUESTION - [What is the Day of Atonement? Gotquestions.org](#)



Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur.

ANSWER - The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27-28), also known as Yom Kippur, was the most solemn holy day of all the Israelite feasts and festivals, occurring once a year on the tenth day of Tishri, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. On that day, the high priest was to perform elaborate rituals to atone for the sins of the people. Described in Leviticus 16:1-34, the

atonement ritual began with Aaron, or subsequent high priests of Israel, coming into the holy of holies. The solemnity of the day was underscored by God telling Moses to warn Aaron not to come into the Most Holy Place whenever he felt like it; he could only come on this special day once a year, lest he die (v.2). This was not a ceremony to be taken lightly, and the people were to understand that atonement for sin was to be done God's way.

Before entering the tabernacle, Aaron was to bathe and put on special garments (v. 4), then sacrifice a bull for a sin offering for himself and his family (v. 6, 11). The blood of the bull was to be sprinkled on the ark of the covenant. Then Aaron was to bring two goats, one to be sacrificed "because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been" (v. 16), and its blood was sprinkled on the ark of the covenant. The other goat was used as a scapegoat. Aaron placed his hands on its head, confessed over it the rebellion and wickedness of the Israelites, and sent the goat out with an appointed man who released it into the wilderness (v. 21). The goat carried on itself all the sins of the people, which were forgiven for another year (v. 30).

The symbolic significance of the ritual, particularly to Christians, is seen first in the washing and cleansing of the high priest, the man who released the goat, and the man who took the sacrificed animals outside the camp to burn the carcasses (v. 4, 24, 26, 28). Israelite washing ceremonies were required often throughout the Old Testament and symbolized the need for mankind to be cleansed of sin. But it wasn't until Jesus came to make the "once for all" sacrifice that the need for cleansing ceremonies ceased (Hebrews 7:27). The blood of bulls and goats could only atone for sins if the ritual was continually done year after year, while Christ's sacrifice was sufficient for all the sins of all who would ever believe in Him. When His sacrifice was made, He declared, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He then sat down at the right hand of God, and no further sacrifice was ever needed (Hebrews 10:1-12).

The sufficiency and completeness of the sacrifice of Christ is also seen in the two goats. The blood of the first goat was sprinkled on the ark, ritually appeasing the wrath of God for another year. The second goat removed the sins of the people into the wilderness where they were forgotten and no longer clung to the people. Sin is both propitiated and expiated God's way—only by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Propitiation is the act of appeasing the wrath of God, while expiation is the act of atoning for sin and removing it from the sinner. Both together are achieved eternally by Christ. When He sacrificed Himself on the cross, He appeased God's wrath against sin, taking that wrath upon Himself: "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!" (Romans 5:9). The removal of sin by the second goat was a living parable of the promise that God would remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12) and that He would remember them no more (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17). Jews today still celebrate the annual Day of Atonement, which falls on different days each year in September-October, traditionally observing this holy day with a 25-hour period of fasting and intensive prayer. Jews also often spend most of the day in synagogue services.

QUESTION - [If the Jewish people do not offer animal sacrifices, how do they believe they can receive forgiveness from God?](#) [GOTQUESTIONS.ORG](#) [WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - For all intents and purposes, the Jewish practice of animal sacrifice ended in AD 70, the year that the Romans destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. With the temple gone, there is no longer a place for the sacrifices to be offered according to the Mosaic Law (see Deuteronomy 12:13–14). Repeatedly in the Old Testament, the point is made that sacrifices were required to make atonement for sin (e.g., Exodus 29:36; Leviticus 4:31; 9:7; 14:19; 15:15; Numbers 15:25). The shedding of blood is what consecrated things and people to the Lord (Leviticus 16:19; cf. Hebrews 9:22).

With no blood sacrifice today, the Jews have no lawful way of atoning for their sin. Passover is still observed, but without the sacrifice. Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is still on the calendar, but there is never an offering made for sin. The stipulations of the [Mosaic Law](#) remain unchanged, but the Jewish people cannot make things right with God—they cannot find forgiveness—without an animal sacrifice.

Modern Jews believe that forgiveness of sin is obtained through repentance, prayer, and good deeds.

Modern Jews believe that forgiveness of sin is obtained through repentance, prayer, and good deeds. They use verses like Hosea 6:6 to devalue the need for sacrifices: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings." Still, it is hard to overlook such passages as Leviticus 17:11, "The life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."

The fact remains that there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22). The animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant have been replaced by the once-for-all sacrifice for sin given by Jesus, the Messiah. As Jesus established the New Covenant, He "died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:15).

Within a generation of Christ's sacrifice, the Jewish temple was destroyed; the need for animal sacrifices no longer existed, for Christ had fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law (Matthew 5:17). Animal sacrifices were merely a type of the perfect

Sacrifice—the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29). The sacrifice of Christ paid the debt of sin for all mankind, both Jew and Gentile (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 9:12–15).

QUESTION - [What was the biblical role of the high priest? GOTQUESTIONS.ORG](http://GOTQUESTIONS.ORG)

ANSWER - The high priest was the supreme religious leader of the Israelites. The office of the high priest was hereditary and was traced from Aaron, the brother of Moses, of the Levite tribe (Exodus 28:1; Numbers 18:7). The high priest had to be “whole” physically (without any physical defects) and holy in his conduct (Leviticus 21:6-8).

Because the high priest held the leadership position, one of his roles was overseeing the responsibilities of all the subordinate priests (2 Chronicles 19:11). Though the high priest could participate in ordinary priestly ministries, only certain functions were given to him. Only the high priest could wear the Urim and the Thummin (engraved dice-like stones used to determine truth or falsity). For this reason, the Hebrew people would go to the high priest in order to know the will of God (Numbers 27:21). An example of this is when Joshua was commissioned by Eleazar, the high priest, to assume some of Moses’ responsibilities (Numbers 27:21). In the New Testament, we find a reference to the high priest having the gift of prophecy (John 11:49-52).

The high priest had to offer a sin offering not only for the sins of the whole congregation, but also for himself (Leviticus 4:3-21). When a high priest died, all those confined to the cities of refuge for accidentally causing the death of another person were granted freedom (Numbers 35:28).

The most important duty of the high priest was to conduct the service on the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month of every year. Only he was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place behind the veil to stand before God. Having made a sacrifice for himself and for the people, he then brought the blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat, God’s “throne” (Leviticus 16:14-15). He did this to make atonement for himself and the people for all their sins committed during the year just ended (Exodus 30:10). It is this particular service that is compared to the ministry of Jesus as our High Priest (Hebrews 9:1-28).

In understanding the role of the high priest, we can better comprehend the significance of Christ offering Himself for our sins once for all (Hebrews 9:26; 10:10, 12). Through Christ’s sacrifice for us, we are sanctified and set apart for Him. By entering God’s presence on our behalf, Christ has secured for us an “eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12). As Paul has written, “For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

Related Resources:

- [I am Jewish, can I become a Christian?](#)
- [Why were there times in the Old Testament when God forgave people who did not offer a sacrifice?](#)
- [What is the Wailing Wall / Western Wall?](#)
- [What was the Holy of Holies?](#)
- [What were the chief priests?](#)
- [Did the high priest have a rope tied to him when he entered the Holy of Holies?](#)

[Gotquestions](#) says that "Exodus 28:33–35 specified that bells (and knitted pomegranates) were to be worn on the hem of the high priest’s garment so that “the sound of the bells will be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the Lord and when he comes out” (verse 35). The bells provided an audible cue to those outside the tabernacle of the high priest’s whereabouts. They could tell when he entered and exited the Holy of Holies. According to the rope tradition, the bells also provided a means of knowing if the priest had died: if the jingling stopped, the priest on the other end of the rope would be alerted to the fact that the priest had ceased moving. There is nothing in Scripture to indicate that was the purpose of the bells." [William Barrick](#) notes that Aaron did not wear his high priestly garment but wore a tunic (Lev 16:4) which would make bells less likely.

- [What is the true meaning of Rosh Hashanah?](#)

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](#)

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 4:4+ So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the **LORD of hosts who sits above the cherubim**; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

Hebrews 9:7+ but into the second (HOLY OF HOLIES), only the high priest enters once a year (ACTUALLY MORE THAN ONE TIME ON THIS DAY), not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

Exodus 25:17-22+ "You shall make a **mercy seat** ([kapporet/kapporeth](#)) of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. 18 "You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 "Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. 20 "The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. 21 "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark (NOTE IT IS A SEPARATE PIECE), and in the ark you shall put the testimony (THE TABLES OF LAW) which I will give to you. 22 "There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you (SPEAKING TO MOSES) in commandment for the sons of Israel.

Romans 3:25+ Whom (CHRIST) God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** ([hilasterion](#)) in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed



Ark of the Covenant

PERIL OF PRESUMPTION IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Leviticus 16:2 sets the tone for the entire Day of Atonement ritual. God reminds Moses and Aaron that His presence is not to be approached casually or at will. Access into the Most Holy Place—the very throne room of God's earthly dwelling—was tightly restricted and accompanied by grave danger if violated. This warning underscores God's holiness, the seriousness of sin in His presence, and the necessity of God-ordained mediation. The mercy seat, overshadowed by the [Shekinah glory cloud](#), could not be entered into freely by human initiative, but only by the high priest, once per year, and with the appointed sacrifices. This foreshadows the greater High Priest, Jesus Christ, who Alone has torn the veil and granted believers confident access to God's presence (Heb 10:19-21+).

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 ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); [Lxx](#) - [hilasterion](#)) which is on the ark, or he will die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); [Lxx](#) - [hilasterion](#))." - 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. The holy place inside the veil is clearly the Holy of Holies (cp Ex 26:33-34). Before the mercy seat ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); [Lxx](#) - [hilasterion](#)) 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 is the Shekinah (Shechinah)

THOUGHT - Praise God that we are under the New Covenant of grace which gives us continual access the Throne of grace (Heb 4:16+, Heb 10:19-21+)! 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 depiction above is of a believer in the throne room at the throne of grace! Have you ever realized that this is where you go when you enter into prayer with God? It is, believe it or not!

*While the blowing of the trumpets announced a new year,
only the shedding of blood could give the people a new beginning.*

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 Lev 23:23-25). 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.

Gordon 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)

Richard Hess points out that the purpose of the Day of Atonement "is first and foremost not a house for God or even a place for Israel to meet with God, but a structure designed to facilitate God's forgiveness of Israel's sin and his restoration of fellowship with them. For the Christian, the atonement of Jesus' death becomes this "place" of atonement (Ro 3:25)." (See [Expositor's Bible Commentary - page 1099](#))

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.

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.

*The kapporet was central to atonement ritual,
pointing to Christ's once-for-all atonement.*

Leviticus 16:2 Commentary - [Leon Hyatt](#) -

And Jehovah said to Moses, Tell Aaron your brother not to come at all times into the Holy [Place] within the veil. Jehovah began this message with a warning to Aaron not to enter the inner room of The Tabernacle at unauthorized times. The word translated "the Holy [Place]" was a general word referring to any holy place (see comments on Lev. 4:6 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading of the Holy [Place]). Jehovah added the words "within the veil" to specify clearly which Holy [Place] He intended. "Within the veil" was inside the inner room of the tent portion of The Tabernacle. The inner room was separated from the outer room by "the veil" (Ex. 26:33). In Exodus 26:33-34, the inner room is called "The Holiness of Holinesses" or 'The Most Holy [Place].'" The point was that Aaron was not free to enter the inner room of The Tabernacle any time he chose. He was to enter it only at one specified time in performance of his official duties.

This message was intended primarily for Aaron, because the high priest alone was permitted to officiate over the ceremonies of the Day of Coverings. During those ceremonies, he entered into The Most Holy Place (see comments on Lev 16:11 and Lev 16:32 below). The warning of this verse did not mean that Aaron was never permitted to enter the inner room but that he was to be careful to enter it only on the occasion when he was authorized to enter.

and he will not die. If Aaron observed the warning, he would not die. The clear implication was that, if he failed to heed the warning, the penalty would be death (see Introduction to [MESSAGE 24](#) and comments on Lev. 20:2 in [MESSAGE 24](#)). This warning was most appropriate because Aaron's two older sons had died the day before for conducting an unauthorized ceremony before The Tabernacle. Aaron was warned not to commit a similar offense in defiance of Jehovah's instructions. If he failed to follow Jehovah's instructions just as they were given, he too could die.

before the face of The Covering that [is] on the Ark.. This reference is the first mention in the Book of Leviticus of The Covering that was on top of the Ark of the Covenant. It had been mentioned previously in messages to Moses on the mountain, which are recorded in Exodus 25:17-22; 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6-9. The Covering was a slab of solid gold that covered the Ark of the Covenant in the inner room of The Tabernacle. Made into the The Covering and rising above it were the symbols of two cherubim, the mightiest of the angels. They were shown bowing their wings and faces toward The Covering, to show that the highest order of angels gave great reverence to the presence of God and His forgiving grace. The word translated "covering" is a noun built on the same root as the word translated "atonement" in most English translations. The literal meaning of the word is "covering" (see comments on Lev. 1:4 in [MESSAGE 1](#)). In this verse, it is the name of the most sacred place where Jehovah covered the sins of

repentant believers. Though this slab of gold has generally been translated as "mercy seat" in English translations, the literal translation of its name is "The Covering."

Some interpreters hold that "the covering" simply means that the gold slab was a physical covering or lid for the Ark. However, this Covering above the Ark was always connected with the idea of covering the people from their sins. Therefore, it is proper to conclude that the slab of gold was called "The Covering," not because it served as a lid for the Ark, but because it was the most special of the places that symbolized covering people to protect them from their sins. Since the name was used only for the slab of gold that was on the Ark, it will be written in capitals in these comments and called "The Covering."

for I will keep on appearing in a Cloud above The Covering. The reason why Aaron was not free to enter the inner room at any time was that Jehovah's presence in the form of a fiery Cloud appeared above The Covering at all times. The state of the verb translated "will keep on appearing" is imperfect, indicating incomplete or continuing action. The meaning is that the appearance of The Cloud over The Covering was a continuing phenomenon. It abode there continually. The Cloud represented the full presence of Jehovah God. Coming into the full presence of God without proper preparation was dangerous, because no one can see God in His fullness and survive.

The Cloud symbol for Jehovah's presence was a familiar one to the Israelites by that time. It had helped rescue them from the Egyptian army (Ex. 14:19-20,24) and had guided them all the way from Egypt to Mount Sinai (Ex. 13:20-22; 20:18,21; 40:36-37). A fiery Light appeared in the Cloud at night (Ex. 40:38) and also in the daytime on special occasions (Ex. 14:19-20; 16:7,10; 19:9,16-18; 20:18,21; 24:15-18; 29:43; 33:9-10,18-23; 40:34-35,38; Lev. 9:6,23-24). When The Tabernacle was erected, The Cloud and the fiery Light settled over it to show that God revealed His presence there (Ex. 40:38). The dark Cloud and the fiery Light represented different aspects of God's character. The dark Cloud represented the mystery of God, who is hidden from human insight and wisdom because He is too great to be understood by human reason alone. The fiery Light represented God's revealing power, by which He shows Himself to people in ways we could never discover on our own (see comments on Lev. 9:6,23b [MESSAGE 10](#)). In Exodus 40:35, the Light in the Cloud is called "The Glory of Jehovah." Therefore, the Cloud is often properly called "The Glory Cloud."

This verse makes it clear that The Cloud and the fiery Light were present at all times within the inner room of The Tabernacle. Exodus 40:35-38 states that, after The Tabernacle was erected, The Cloud rested **on The Tabernacle, that is, on the roof above The Tabernacle**. Some have suggested that the Cloud that rested on the roof of The Tabernacle extended through the tent into the inner room. Perhaps that suggestion is correct, so that when the Cloud lifted off of The Tabernacle to indicate that the Israelites were to move to another location, The Cloud left the Holiness of Holinesses as well, so that The Tabernacle could be folded and moved to the new location. Numbers 4:4-20 says that, when it was time to move The Tabernacle, Aaron and his sons were to cover the furniture of The Tabernacle before the Levites came in to move it. That chapter says nothing about the Cloud during the dismantling and moving of The Tabernacle. However, the actual wording of this verse is that Jehovah continually appeared above The Covering in "a Cloud," not "The Cloud." That wording may indicate that The Cloud within The Tabernacle was not the same Cloud as The Cloud that rested on the roof, though it was of the same nature. No reason exists why two separate revelations of Jehovah could not have occurred at the same time. His presence certainly was not limited to one place at a time, and no reason can be given why the symbol of His presence should have been limited to only one place at a time.

It was a fearful experience to approach close to the fiery Cloud that symbolized Jehovah's presence. If Aaron approached it without proper covering from his sins and without protection from the full brightness of The Glory Fire, he would not survive (see comments on Lev 16:13 below). Thus, Aaron was warned not to enter the place where The Cloud and The Fire continually appeared unless he was properly authorized and prepared.

Mercy seat ([03727](#)) (**kapporet/kapporeth**; [Lxx](#) - [hilasterion](#)) from **kopher** = the price of a life, ransom and 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 directly 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. Later rabbinic writings describe the kapporet as the throne of God on earth.

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).

KAPPORET - 22v - Always translated "Mercy Seat" Exod. 25:17; Exod. 25:18; Exod. 25:19; Exod. 25:20; Exod. 25:21; Exod. 25:22; Exod. 26:34; Exod. 30:6; Exod. 31:7; Exod. 35:12; Exod. 37:6; Exod. 37:7; Exod. 37:8; Exod. 37:9; Exod. 39:35; Exod. 40:20; Lev. 16:2; Lev. 16:13; Lev. 16:14; Lev. 16:15; Num. 7:89; 1 Chr. 28:11

R. Laird Harris - The Greek word in the LXX **hilasterion**) 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). (Older version of Expositor's Bible Commentary)

The Greek equivalent in the **Lxx** is usually **hilasterion**, "place or object of propitiation," a word which is applied to Christ in Romans 3:25. The translation "**mercy seat**" does not sufficiently express the fact that the lid of the ark was the place where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement. "**Place of atonement**" would perhaps be more expressive.

This slab of gold represented the throne of God and symbolized His real presence in the worship shrine.

W E Vine - "mercy seat; throne of mercy." This noun form **ofkāpar** has been variously interpreted by the English versions as "mercy seat" (kiv, 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 kappōret 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 (kappōret)" (1Ch 28:11). The Septuagint refers to the mercy seat as a "propitiary" (**hilasterion**). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

R Laird Harrison notes that "kippūr. Atonement. kapporet. Mercy seat. These two nouns are derived from the verb as used in the intensive stem: The first is used today in the name of the Jewish holiday yom kippur "day of atonement" (used only in the plural in the OT) which was the tenth day of the seventh month, Tishri. This solemn day was the only day of fasting prescribed for Israel. It was celebrated by a special sin offering for the whole nation. On that day only would the high priest enter within the inner veil bearing the blood of the sin offering (cf. Hebrews 9:7). A second goat was released as an escape goat to symbolize the total removal of sin (see 'āzā'zēl "scapegoat"). **kappōret**. Mercy seat. This noun is used twenty-seven times and always refers to the golden cover of the sacred chest in the inner shrine of the tabernacle or temple. It was from above the mercy seat that God promised to meet with men (Numbers 7:89). The word, however, is not related to mercy and of course was not a seat. The word is derived from the root "to atone." The Greek equivalent in the LXX is usually hilastērion, "place or object of propitiation," a word which is applied to Christ in Romans 3:25. The translation "mercy seat" does not sufficiently express the fact that the lid of the ark was the place where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement. "Place of atonement" would perhaps be more expressive. (online [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

QUESTION - [What is the mercy seat? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The writer to the Hebrews talks about the arrangement of the tabernacle of the Old Testament. The tabernacle was the portable sanctuary used by the Israelites from the time of their wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt to the building of the temple in Jerusalem (see Exodus 25–27). Within the tabernacle was the ark of the covenant which included the mercy seat (Hebrews 9:3-5 NKJV).

The ark of the covenant, the chest containing the two stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments, was the most sacred object of the tabernacle and later in the temple in Jerusalem, where it was placed in an inner area called the Holy of Holies. Also within the ark were the golden pot of manna, such as was provided by God in the wilderness wanderings (Exodus 16:4) and Aaron's almond rod (Numbers 17:1-13). On top of the ark was a lid called the mercy seat on which rested the cloud or visible symbol of the divine presence. Here God was supposed to be seated, and from this place He was supposed to dispense mercy to man when the blood of the atonement was sprinkled there.

In a manner of speaking, the mercy seat concealed the people of God from the ever-condemning judgment of the Law. Each year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the blood of animals sacrificed for the atonement of the sins of God's people. This blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. The point conveyed by this imagery is that it is only through the offering of blood that the condemnation of the Law could be taken away and violations of God's laws covered.

The Greek word for “mercy seat” in Hebrews 9:5 is *hilasterion*, which means “that which makes expiation” or “propitiation.” It carries the idea of the removal of sin. In Ezekiel 43:13-15, the [brazen altar](#) of sacrifice is also called *hilasterion* (the propitiatory or mercy seat) in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) because of its association with the shedding of blood for sin.

What is the significance of this? In the New Testament, Christ Himself is designated as our “propitiation.” Paul explains this in his letter to the Romans: “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed” (Romans 3:24-25 NKJV). What Paul is teaching here is that Jesus is the covering for sin, as shown by these Old Testament prophetic images. By means of His death, and our response to Christ through our faith in Him, all our sins are covered. Also, whenever believers sin, we may turn to Christ who continues to be the propitiation or covering for our sins (1 John 2:1, 4:10). This ties together the Old and New Testament concepts regarding the covering of sin as exemplified by the mercy-seat of God. (See also [What was the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant?](#))

QUESTION- [What is the ark of the covenant? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - God made a conditional [covenant](#) with the children of Israel through His servant Moses. He promised good to them and their children for generations if they obeyed Him and His laws, but He always warned of despair, punishment, and dispersion if they were to disobey. As a reminder of His covenant, the Lord had the Israelites make a box, according to His design, to house the stone tablets containing the Ten Commandments. This box, or ark, was to be kept in the inner sanctum of the wilderness tabernacle and eventually in the temple when it was built in Jerusalem. This chest is known as the ark of the covenant.

Moses instructed [Bezalel](#), God’s anointed craftsman, to build the ark of the covenant (see Exodus 37:1–9; 25:10–22). The “sacred chest” was to be a rectangular wooden box made from acacia wood, overlaid “inside and out with pure gold,” measuring approximately “45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high” (Exodus 37:1–2, NLT). The chest was fitted with two pairs of gold rings on either side in which permanent poles were inserted for transporting the ark. No one was allowed to touch the ark out of reverence for God’s holiness. The poles were also fashioned with acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

The ark of the covenant was built to contain the two tablets of the law given to Moses by God (Exodus 25:16, 21). These tablets were also known as “the testimony,” and thus, the ark was also called “the ark of the testimony” (see Numbers 4:5, Joshua 4:16, ESV). In the original Hebrew, the word translated as “testimony” refers both to the terms of God’s covenant with Israel as written on the tablets of stone and to the covenant itself. Later, Moses had Aaron place [inside the ark](#) a jar of manna to remember God’s faithfulness in providing miraculous bread from heaven (Exodus 16:4, 33) and Aaron’s staff that had budded as a warning against rebellion (Numbers 17:1–13; Hebrews 9:4).

A lid called the “mercy seat” or “the place of atonement” was constructed for the box (see Exodus 25:17). The mercy seat was made of pure gold and covered the entire length and width of the chest. Bezalel crafted two cherubim from hammered gold and molded them atop each end of the mercy seat so that the whole lid was one solid piece of gold. The cherubim faced each other and looked down on the mercy seat with their wings spread wide, overshadowing and protecting it.

The real significance of the ark of the covenant involved the mercy seat. The Hebrew word for “mercy seat” meant “cover, appeasement, or place of atonement.” Once a year, the high priest entered the holy of holies where the ark of the covenant was kept, and here he atoned for his sins and the sins of the Israelite people (Leviticus 16:2–16). Seven times, the priest sprinkled the blood of sacrificed bulls and goats onto the mercy seat. This atonement on [Yom Kippur](#) appeased God’s wrath and anger for past sins committed.

The lid of the ark of the covenant was termed a “seat” because this sacred place was considered God’s holy throne (see Psalm 99:1). Here, the Lord spoke to Moses from between the winged cherubim (Numbers 7:89). Here, where the sacrificial blood was sprinkled and God’s mercy was dispensed, was the only place in the world where atonement could take place.

The mercy seat on the ark was a symbolic foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice for all sin—the blood of Christ shed on the cross for the remission of sins (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12–14; 1 Peter 1:18–19). The apostle Paul, a former Pharisee and one familiar with the Old Testament, knew this concept quite well when he wrote about Christ being our covering for sin in Romans 3:24–25: “And all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.”

Just as there was only one place for atonement of sins in the Old Testament—the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant—so there is also only one place for atonement in the New Testament—the cross of Jesus Christ (1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 3:18). As Christians, we no longer look to the ark but to the Lord Jesus Himself as the One who covers, cleanses, cancels, and atones for our sins (1 John 4:10).

As the Israelites traveled from Mount Sinai to Canaan, the ark of the covenant was to be carried before them through the wilderness as a constant reminder of God's holy, living presence (Numbers 10:33–36). The ark played a central role in Israel's entrance into the Promised Land (Joshua 3:3, 6, 15–16; 4:9; 6:4–16) and the life of God's people there (Joshua 8:33; Judges 20:26–28).

Eventually, Israel lost sight of the ark's true significance. In 1 Samuel 4, the nation was battling the [Philistines](#). When the Israelites suffered a loss, rather than deal with the real problem—sin—they fetched the ark and took it into battle. They viewed the ark as little more than a talisman or ceremonial token that would ensure God's help. As a result, they suffered another defeat, and God allowed the ark to be captured by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:1–11, 17–22; 5:1–12). But the hand of the Lord was heavy on the Philistines, so they returned the ark (1 Samuel 6:1–3, 10–15, 19; 7:1–2).

Much later, King David had the ark brought to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:1–12, 17), and when his son Solomon completed the temple, the ark and all the tabernacle furnishings were placed inside the temple (1 Kings 8:1–12).

The Bible doesn't say precisely when the ark of the covenant was lost to history. Some speculate it was destroyed or potentially removed during various raids (see 1 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Kings 14:8–14). The last time the location of the ark is mentioned in Scripture is when King Josiah ordered the caretakers of the ark to return it to the Jerusalem temple (2 Chronicles 35:1–6; cf. 2 Kings 23:21–23). The ark is not cited in the list of temple spoils that Nebuchadnezzar took to Babylon when Jerusalem was sacked (2 Kings 25:13–17; Jeremiah 52:17–23).

The origins of Israel's ark of the covenant are as mysterious and fascinating as its current whereabouts and final destiny. Archeologists and treasure hunters have sought to find it for centuries. In Revelation 11:19, John sees the ark of the covenant as part of the future heavenly temple. However, this is probably not the same ark Moses built; instead, the heavenly ark is more likely a symbolic representation of God's holy presence.

QUESTION - [What is the ark of the testimony? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The first mention of the ark of the testimony is in Exodus 25:10. God gave Moses specific instructions for building a tabernacle as they traveled in the wilderness. The tabernacle would be the place where the glory of God would dwell among His people (Exodus 25:8–9). Among hundreds of other descriptive instructions for this tabernacle, God told Moses to build an ark of the testimony, also called the **ark of the covenant** (Exodus 25:21–22). The words *testimony* and *covenant* both refer to the conditional agreement made between God and the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. An ark is, literally, a box or chest. So the ark of the testimony is the “box of the agreement.”

The ark of the testimony was a wooden box, covered in gold inside and out. It had four exterior rings through which poles could be attached for carrying. No one but the high priest could touch the ark (Numbers 4:15). To do so would result in instant death, as happened with a man named [Uzzah](#) (2 Samuel 6:1–7). God was beginning to teach His people about His holiness and their unworthiness. He demonstrated to them that His commands were not suggestions to be negotiated. He wanted to teach them to obey Him in all things, whether or not they understood the reason for the rules.

The lid of the ark was also made of gold and formed a seat between two cherubim, called the mercy seat. It was there that God would meet with His people (Exodus 25:22). Inside the ark of the testimony, Moses placed the tablets of the Law that God gave him on the mountain. The ark was placed inside the tabernacle in the most holy place, where only the high priest could go once a year (Exodus 26:34). Through it all, God was painting a picture to help us understand what is required for sinful man to come into the presence of a holy God.

The ark of the testimony got its name from the fact that it would be the housing for God's testimony to His people. His Law was not only verbal, but written, etched in stone (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 5:22), so there could be no excuse for disobedience. Hebrews 9:4 tells us that, later, the Israelites added to the stone tablets within the ark of the testimony a jar of manna (Exodus 16:32–33) and Aaron's rod that budded (Numbers 17:8–10).

The ark of the testimony represented the presence of God with His people, and His power went with them wherever they took the ark (Joshua 3:6; Numbers 10:33–35). The enemies of Israel, the Philistines, stole the ark once (1 Samuel 5:1), hoping its power would help them. They set it in their idol's temple and waited for the good luck it would bring. But calamity broke out among the Philistines, until they begged their leaders to send the ark back to Israel (1 Samuel 5:4, 6, 9, 11–12). God demonstrated that He was not a good-luck charm whose power could be had by whoever captured His ark. The power was not in the ark of the testimony itself; the ark only represented the presence of God with His people.

Since the death and resurrection of Jesus (Romans 14:9), God no longer uses an ark of the testimony to dwell with His people. We are under a [new testament or covenant](#). At Pentecost, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell every believer (Acts 2:1–4, 38–39). We become His temple (1 Corinthians 6:19). When we have been born again by faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:3, 16), we take God with

us everywhere we go. It did the Philistines no good to harbor the ark, because the ark had no power in itself if God was not on their side. Likewise, we do not need physical items—crosses, images, holy relics—to carry the power of God with us because He already abides in us. That awareness of His presence, called the [fear of the Lord](#) (Psalm 19:9; Proverbs 15:33), helps us make decisions that honor Him.

Related Resource:

- [What happened to the ark of the covenant?](#)
- [What was inside the ark of the covenant?](#)
- [Why did God strike Uzzah dead for touching the ark of the covenant?](#)

THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL						
1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach)			3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost	I N T E R L U D E	7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot)	
Passover Pesach	Unleavened Bread	First Fruits	Feast of Weeks		Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement
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)		Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation	Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30
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)
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
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
						7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)
						All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16-19
						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

- [The Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur](#) - Very interesting discussion.
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 9:11-12+ (SUPERIORITY OF PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST) 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; 12 and **not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood**, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Note Aaron Removed Ephod and Priestly Garments before Atoning (cf Lev 16:3)

NO ACCESS FOR AARON WITHOUT ATONEMENT

Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: Here God gives His terms for approaching Him. 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.") I favor the **CSB** version which says "Aaron is to enter **the most holy place** in this way: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 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 ([chattat/chattath](#)) and a ram for a burnt offering ('olah; Lxx - [holokautoma](#)) - Recall that a young bull and a ram were also used in the ordination ceremony from Aaron and his sons in Lev 8:14-21. The Holy God demands a holy approach, thus Moses introduces the solemn requirements for the high priest's entrance into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Aaron could not come before God on his own terms, but only with the prescribed sacrifices. The **bull for a sin offering and a ram for the burnt offering** highlighted the seriousness of sin and the necessity of substitutionary atonement even for the holy priesthood. These animals had to be examined to make sure they had no defects. This verse sets the stage for the entire chapter emphasizing that access to God's presence is possible only through blood. It foreshadows the work of Christ, our Great High Priest, who entered the heavenly sanctuary not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with His own precious blood, securing eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11–12+).

R Laird Harrison - Before he could enter the holy place, the high priest had to sacrifice as a prerequisite a sin offering and a burnt offering to the Lord, the former to be presented in order to secure atonement for himself and his family. (Borrow [Tyndale OT Commentary - Leviticus page 168](#))

The burnt offerings ('olah; Lxx - [holokautoma](#)) 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. The burnt 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.

THOUGHT - Would you consider making a **"burnt offering"** to the LORD today (or better yet to begin each morning with such an offering)? Let me suggest the New Testament way to present a **"burnt offering"** (total surrender of your heart and life) to God. Turn Romans 12:1-2+ into your morning prayer -

Lord, by Your mercies, I present my body to You as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to You, which is my spiritual service of worship. And may I, enabled by Your Spirit and Word, cease being conformed to this world, but be continually transformed by the renewing of my mind, so that you I may prove what the Your will is for my life, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. In Jesus' Name and for Your glory. Amen.

Praise God for the better blood of the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. (Jn 1:29). Amen

What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain:

Oh! precious is the flow

That makes me white as snow;

No other fount I know—

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

— Robert Lowry

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).

Not all the blood of beasts

On Jewish altars slain

Could give the guilty conscience peace,

Or wash away its stain.

But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,

Takes all our sins away;

A sacrifice of nobler name,

And richer blood than they.

--Isaac Watts

Leviticus 16:2 Commentary - [Leon Hyatt](#) - Jehovah then proceeded to describe the one time when Aaron could enter the inner room of The Tabernacle that contained the Ark, The Covering, and the fiery Cloud (**ED:** OTHER WRITERS FEEL HE ENTERED MORE THAN ONCE). The description began with the preparation to be made in advance for the ceremonies of the day. First, Aaron was to take the animals to be used for his offerings to the Holy [Place], that is, to the courtyard of The Tabernacle (see comments on Lev. 6:16 in MESSAGE 5 under the head The Holy [Place]). The offerings were intended not only for himself, but also for his whole family, as is shown clearly by Lev 16:6. The priests were to bring their offerings first, to set an example for the people. The animals Aaron was to bring were a young bull for a sin-offering (see comments on Lev. 4:3 in [MESSAGE 2](#)) and a ram for a rededication-offering (**ED:** BURNT OFFERING)(see comments on Lev. 1:10 in [MESSAGE 1](#)). The sin-offering could have been a full-grown bull, but a young animal was called for to void placing too great a financial burden on Aaron. The rededication-offering (**ED:** BURNT OFFERING) could have been a bull (see comments on Lev. 1:3 in MESSAGE 1), but a less expensive ram was specified on this occasion for the same reason.

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

Burnt offering (05930) '[olah](#)' from '[alah](#)' = to ascend and thus the picture of **going up** in smoke) refers to a whole burnt offering (one which **goes up** in smoke), which was voluntary, was understood as a sacrificial gift to God, resulting in a pleasing aroma acceptable to Jehovah (Lev 1:9). The presenter laid hands on the sacrifice which many feel signifies they saw the animal sacrifice as their

substitute. The blood was sprinkled on the altar (Lev 1:6) When this offering was properly carried out (including a right heart attitude not just a "going through the motions," [which was not pleasing to God - Jer 6:20, Jer 7:21, 23, 24, see David - Ps 51:16-17+] not just an external "work," but an internal submission and obedience to Jehovah), they made atonement and were acceptable before Jehovah. The total burning indicated (or should have indicated) total consecration of the presenter's heart and soul and life to Jehovah.

As noted a key feature of **'olah** appears to be that among the Israelite sacrifices only **'olah** is **wholly burned**, rather than partially burned and eaten by the worshipers and/or the priest. Thus, the whole animal is brought up to the altar and the whole is offered as a gift (*minha*) in homage to Yahweh. Whole offering would be a better rendering in English to convey the theology. It is indeed burned, but the burning is essentially secondary to the giving of the whole creature to Yahweh.

Burnt Offering - **'olah** , "what ascends" in smoke to God, being wholly consumed to ashes. Part of every offering was burnt in the sacred fire, the symbol of God's presence; but this was wholly burnt, as a "whole burnt offering." ([Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#))

Easton on Burnt Offering - It was the most frequent form of sacrifice, and apparently the only one mentioned in the book of Genesis. Such were the sacrifices offered by Abel (Ge 4:3,4 , here called *Minhah*; i.e., "a gift"), Noah (Ge 8:20), Abraham (Ge 22:2,7,8,13), and by the Hebrews in Egypt (Ex 10:25). The law of Moses afterwards prescribed the occasions and the manner in which burnt sacrifices were to be offered. There were "the continual burnt offering" (Ex 29:38-42; Lev 6:9-13), "the burnt offering of every sabbath," which was double the daily one (Nu 28:9,10), "the burnt offering of every month" (Nu 28:11-15), the offerings at the Passover (Nu 19-23), at Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16), the feast of Trumpets (Nu 23:23-25), and on the day of Atonement (Lev 16:1-34). ([Easton's Bible Dictionary](#))

'OLAH IN LEVITICUS - Lev. 1:3; Lev. 1:4; Lev. 1:6; Lev. 1:9; Lev. 1:10; Lev. 1:13; Lev. 1:14; Lev. 1:17; Lev. 3:5; Lev. 4:7; Lev. 4:10; Lev. 4:18; Lev. 4:24; Lev. 4:25; Lev. 4:29; Lev. 4:30; Lev. 4:33; Lev. 4:34; Lev. 5:7; Lev. 5:10; Lev. 6:9; Lev. 6:10; Lev. 6:12; Lev. 6:25; Lev. 7:2; Lev. 7:8; Lev. 7:37; Lev. 8:18; Lev. 8:21; Lev. 8:28; Lev. 9:2; Lev. 9:3; Lev. 9:7; Lev. 9:12; Lev. 9:13; Lev. 9:14; Lev. 9:16; Lev. 9:17; Lev. 9:22; Lev. 9:24; Lev. 10:19; Lev. 12:6; Lev. 12:8; Lev. 14:13; Lev. 14:19; Lev. 14:20; Lev. 14:22; Lev. 14:31; Lev. 15:15; Lev. 15:30; Lev. 16:3; Lev. 16:5; Lev. 16:24; Lev. 17:8; Lev. 22:18; Lev. 23:12; Lev. 23:18; Lev. 23:37

Richard Averbeck on the burnt offering - The burnt offering could be from the cattle (Leviticus 1:3-9), the sheep and goats (Lev 1:10-13), or the birds (Lev 1:14-17 usually limited to the poor, e.g., Leviticus 12:8; 14:22). Amid the diversity of different kinds of animal offerings and the many distinctive ways they were offered to the Lord it appears that there was one constant in the presentation of sacrificial animals: the laying on of the hand (or pl. hands if more than one person was involved). The purpose of this act was to identify the offerer with his or her offering and possibly also to designate or consecrate the offering for the purposes of the offering: "He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him" (Leviticus 1:4). The laying on of the hand did not transfer anything to the offering animal, least of all sin. Only holy things could have contact with the altar. In the scapegoat ritual the high priest was to lay both hands on the animal and confess the sins of the whole congregation in order to expressly transfer the sins to the goat. But in that case the animal was not offered upon the altar but instead sent as far away from the altar as possible (e.g., Leviticus 16:21-22).

The normal form of blood manipulation for the burnt offering was relatively simple: the priest would "splash it around on the altar" (Leviticus 1:5). This was not just a way of disposing of the blood, but a way of offering it on the altar. It corresponded to arranging the pieces of the animal's carcass on the altar (Leviticus 1:8-9).

The offerer normally slaughtered the animal, but the priests placed its various parts on the altar fire (Leviticus 1:7-9a) "to burn all of it on the altar" as a "burnt offering, an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord" (v. 9b). The basic principle behind the burnt offering was that the whole animal was offered on the altar, that is, with the exception of the hide of the larger animals that had been skinned as part of the slaughtering process (Leviticus 1:6; 7:8) and "the crop" of the birds "with its contents" (Leviticus 1:16).

It was the burning of the offering that made it a pleasing aroma to the Lord which, in turn, caused it to arouse a certain kind of response from the Lord. According to Ge 8:20-22 it was the pleasing aroma of the burning meat that led the Lord to promise that he would never again destroy the earth and mankind as he had done in the flood. The burnt offering was a way of calling on the Lord to pay attention to the needs, requests, and entreaties of his worshipers either independently or in association with the peace offering. It was also a means of expressing worshipful responses to the Lord (Lev 22:18-20) and, along with its accompanying grain

offerings, was the staple of the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual festival cycle in the sanctuary (Ex 29:38-45; Numbers 28-29). ([Offerings and Sacrifices - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

Henry Morris - Burnt offerings were offered first of all by Abel (Genesis 4:4), as well as by the later patriarchs. It is the first of the five types of offerings mentioned in Leviticus as incorporated into the ceremonial law of Israel. In order to make a true atonement (or "covering") for sins, the blood of a spotless animal must be shed, thereby anticipating the eventual offering of the sinless blood of the Lamb of God as a once-for-all offering for the sin of the world (John 1:29; 1Peter 1:18-20⁺; Hebrews 10:10⁺). ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

Spiros Zodhiates - The daily services of the temple consisted of **burnt offerings** wherein male lambs were offered every morning and evening, accompanied by cereal oblations and libations (Ex 29:38ff.; Nu 28:1-8). On holy days it was celebrated on a magnified scale. On the Sabbath two pairs of lambs were offered (Nu 28:9, 10). At the new moon, the Passover, and the Feast of Weeks, it consisted of two bullocks, a ram, and seven male lambs, with a corresponding increase of the concomitant offerings (Nu 1:11ff.). The purpose of the **burnt offering** may be understood from its use as the constant element in the organized worship of the community. **It was not connected with any particular form of transgression but was appropriate as the means of approach to God by the people, collectively or individually, who were sensitive to God's majesty and holiness and their standing in His sight.** The effects are described from three points of view—that it is a "savor" or acceptable to God (Lev 1:9, cp Eph 5:2), that it surrounds the worshiper with a "covering" (Lev 1:4), and that it cleanses from ceremonial impurity (Lev 14:20). (Borrow [The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament](#) page 1036)

Sin (02403)(**chattat/chattath**) means wrong, iniquity, sin. **Chattat**, like its NT counterpart (**hamartia**), means to miss or fall short of the mark, which ultimately is the will and plan of God as revealed in Scripture. Sin is whatever misses the will of God for man doctrinally or morally. The result of chattat/chattah is that man misses the goal God has for him by failing to observe the requirements of holy living and thus falls short of spiritual wholeness. We are all sinners. We all miss the mark, and none of us are perfect nor will we ever be perfect in this life. This is why Christ had to die for our sin so we might have His righteousness (see 2Cor 5:21).

Chattat can be an offense against man (1Sa 20:1 Ps 59:3, Ge 31:36 which also has word **pesha'**) but more often represents an offense against God, and is found mainly in the historical and prophetic literature. It is interesting that even pagan Pharaoh recognized his sin against Jehovah and against Moses (Ex 10:16 where sinned = verb chata, [02398](#)), and ask Moses to intercede with God to "remove this death from me." (Ex 10:17)

We get a word picture of the meaning of **miss the mark** by the use of the related verb **chata'** ([02398](#)) in Judges 20:16 where we read that "Out of all these people 700 choice men were left-handed; each one could sling a stone at a hair and not **miss** (**Lxx** = **examartano** [**ex** + **hamartano**] means to miss one's aim, to err, to sin.)." The Hebrew verb chata is used 221v in in OT and is translated "sin" 55x and "sinned" 87x (First use = Ge 20:6, 9). In a different context, chata is used in Pr 19:2 to describe a man in a hurry who "misses his way" (Pr 19:2ESV)

The **NET Note** on Pr 1:10 (which has the cognate word "sinners" -[02400](#)) is interesting, explaining that "the idea of sin is often explained as "missing the moral mark". But the term should not be restricted to the idea of a sin of ignorance or simply falling short of the moral ideal. Its meaning is more likely seen in the related Akkadian term "to revolt, rebel." It is active rebellion against authority. It is used here (Pr 1:10+) in reference to a gang of robbers."

[TWOT \(online\)](#) - like other words related to the notion of "sin" **chattat** assumes an absolute standard or law. But, whereas **pesha'** signifies a "revolt against the standard," and **'avon** means either "to deviate from the standard" or "to twist the standard," **chattat** means "to miss, to fall short of the standard."

Chattat is translated by the Lxx here in Micah 1:13 with the noun **hamartia** which describes a departure from doing what is right, especially as it relates to God's standard of righteousness. In fact the chattat is most commonly translated in the Lxx with hamartia, although occasionally it is translated with **anomia** (Neh 4:5, Job 13:23 uses both **hamartia** and **anomia**) which describes that which is without the law and signifies, not merely the abstract idea, but disregard for, or actual breach of, the law of God.

In Ex 29:14 we see that **chattat/chattath** can refer not only to sin but also to the **sin offering**. This latter meaning takes on special significance in Leviticus 16 which describes in detail the annual [Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)](#), **chattat** is used 8 times to describe the **sin offering** (Lev 16:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 15, 25, 27). How fascinating that the same word **chattat/chattath** describes not only the problem but also the remedy for the problem. Indeed, it was the blood of the **sin offering** that brought atonement (Lev 16:6, 11, 27)! **Mounce** writes

that this "has profound implications for understanding Paul's statement in 2Cor 5:21+, that the One Who knew no sin was made sin for us, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. Did Jesus become sin, or did He become a sin offering? Given Paul's thorough acquaintance with the OT, perhaps both are implied." (**Ed comment:** See Ro 8:3-+ = "in the likeness of sinful flesh and [as an offering] for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh")

The first use of **chattat/chattath** in Genesis personifies **sin** as if it were a fierce animal like a lion getting ready to pounce on Cain, its victim. One might also think of sin here as having a snare (like a trap getting ready to spring) with an attractive power or luring force (See the "**snare**" aspect of Jeroboam's idolatrous calves = 1Ki 12:30; 13:34 = both use **chattat**). What is fascinating is that God tells Cain he must master it (**chattat/chattath**) which means he could have mastered it (God never calls us to do something He does not enable us to carry out), which means that there was surely sufficient grace available to Cain to enable obedience (had his heart wanted to obey)! Amazing grace indeed! And so we read Gen 4:7 = "If you do well, will not [your countenance] be lifted up? (Rhetorical - answer of course is "Yes!") And if you do not do well, **sin** is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master (Heb = *mashal* = "govern" in Ge 1:18) it." We see another aspect of **chattat** in Pr 5:22 where Solomon warns (and sadly failed to heed his own warning - see 1Ki 11:1-11) "His own iniquities (**'avon**) will capture the wicked, and he will be held with the cords of his sin."

In the second use of **chattat** God says "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their **sin** is exceedingly grave." (Ge 18:20)

In Pr 5:22 Solomon warns (and sadly failed to heed his own warning - see 1Ki 11:1-11) of the power of sin using two of the Hebrew words for sin - "His own **iniquities** (**'avon**) will capture (Heb - **lakad** = catch in a net, trap or pit, figuratively of entrapment of men caught in snares laid by enemies as in Jer 5:26; 18:22; Ps 35:8; Lxx translates *lakad* with verb **agreuo** used in " hunting or fishing = to take, catch; figuratively of taking advantage of someone in an unguarded moment, seeking to catch them in a mistake, try to get them to make a wrong statement as in Mk 12:13) the wicked, and he will be held (Heb = **tamak** = basic idea = "grasping securely"!) with the cords of his sin (**chattat/chattath**)."

ISBE - A fairly exact definition of **sin** based on Biblical data would be that sin is the transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4). Ordinarily, sin is defined simply as "the transgression of the law," but the idea of God is so completely the essential conception of the entire Biblical revelation that we can best define sin as disobedience to the law of God. It will be seen that primarily sin is an act, but from the very beginning it has been known that acts have effects, not only in the outward world of things and persons, but also upon him who commits the act. Affects the Inner Life: Hence, we find throughout the Scriptures a growing emphasis on the idea of the sinful act as not only a fact in itself, but also as a revelation of an evil disposition on the part of him who commits the act (Genesis 6:5). ([See full article on sin](#))

Webster (1828) on **iniquity** - 1. Injustice; unrighteousness; a deviation from rectitude; as the iniquity of war; the iniquity of the slave trade. 2. Want of rectitude in principle; as a malicious prosecution originating in the iniquity of the author. 3. A particular deviation from rectitude; a sin or crime; wickedness; any act of injustice.

Webster (1828) on **sin** - The voluntary departure of a moral agent from a known rule of rectitude or duty, prescribed by God; any voluntary transgression of the divine law, or violation of a divine command; a wicked act; iniquity. Sin is either a positive act in which a known divine law is violated, or it is the voluntary neglect to obey a positive divine command, or a rule of duty clearly implied in such command. Sin comprehends not actions only, but neglect of known duty, all evil thoughts, purposes, words and desires, whatever is contrary to God's commands or law.

Webster (1828) on **wrong** - Not morally right; that deviates from the line of rectitude prescribed by God; not just or equitable; not right or proper; not legal; erroneous ; as a wrong practice; wrong ideas; a wrong course of life; wrong measures; wrong inclinations and desires; a wrong application of talents; wrong judgment. Hab. 1.

Vine - The basic nuance of this word is "sin" conceived as missing the road or mark (155 times). Chattat can refer to an offense against a man: (Ge 31:36). It is such passages which prove that chattat is not simply a general word for "sin"; since Jacob used two different words, he probably intended two different nuances. In addition, a full word study shows basic differences between chattat and other words rendered "sin." For the most part this word represents a sin against God (Lev 4:14). Men are to return from "sin," which is a path, a

life-style, or act deviating from that which God has marked out (1Ki 8:35). They should depart from “sin” (2 Kings 10:31), be concerned about it (Ps. 38:18), and confess it (Num. 5:7)....In a few passages the term connotes the guilt or condition of sin = (Ge 18:20). The word means “purification from sin” in two passages = (Nu. 8:7; cf. 19:9). Chattat means “sin offering” (135 times). The law of the “sin offering” is recorded in Lev 4-5:13; 6:24-30. This was an offering for some specific “sin” committed unwittingly, without intending to do it and perhaps even without knowing it at the time (Lev. 4:2; 5:15). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

Baker on **chattat** - A feminine noun meaning sin, transgression, sin offering, punishment. The word denotes youthful indiscretions (Ps. 25:7); evil committed against another (Gen. 50:17); trespasses against God (2 Chr. 33:19; Ps. 51:2[4]; Amos 5:12); a general state of sinfulness (Isa. 6:7); and the specific occasion of sin, particularly in reference to idolatry (Deut. 9:21; Hos. 10:8). It also implies an antidote to sin, including purification from ceremonial impurity (Num. 19:9, 17); the sacrificial offering for sin (Ex. 29:14; Lev. 4:3); and the punishment for sin (Lam. 4:6; Zech. 14:19). In the story of Cain and Abel, sin appears as a creature, ready to pounce, lurking “at the door” of Cain's heart (Gen. 4:7).

Chattat - 267v in **NAS** = offering for the sin(1), punishment(3), purification from sin(2), sin(93), sin offering(117), sin offerings(2), sinful(1), sinned(1), sinner(1), sins(70).

Chattat - 272v in **KJV** = sin 182, sin offering 116, punishment 3, purification for sin 2, purifying 1, sinful 1, sinner 1; 296

Chattat/chattath - 267v - Most of the uses are in Leviticus and Numbers and then in the prophets. - Ge 4:7; 18:20; 31:36; 50:17; Ex 10:17; 29:14, 36; 30:10; 32:30, 32, 34; 34:9; Lev 4:3, 8, 14, 20f, 23ff, 28f, 32ff; 5:6ff; 6:17, 25, 30; 7:7, 37; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16f, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; Lev 16:3, 5-6, 9, 11, 15-16, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:22; 23:19; 26:18, 21, 24, 28; Nu 5:6f; 6:11, 14, 16; 7:16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 46, 52, 58, 64, 70, 76, 82, 87; 8:8, 12; 12:11; 15:24f, 27; 16:26; 18:9; 19:9, 17; 28:15, 22; 29:5, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38; 32:23; Deut 9:18, 21, 27; Josh 24:19; 1 Sam 2:17; 12:19; 14:38; 15:23, 25; 20:1; 2 Sam 12:13; 1 Kgs 8:34ff; 12:30; 13:34; 14:16, 22; 15:3, 26, 30, 34; 16:2, 13, 19, 26, 31; 2 Kgs 3:3; 10:31; 12:16; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28; 17:22; 21:16f; 24:3; 2 Chr 6:25ff; 7:14; 28:13; 29:21, 23f; 33:19; Ezra 8:35; Neh 1:6; 4:5; 9:2, 37; 10:33; 13:26; Job 10:6; 13:23; 14:16; 34:37; 35:3; Ps 25:7, 18; 32:5; 38:3, 18; 51:2f; 59:3, 12; 79:9; 85:2; 109:14; Prov 5:22; 10:16; 13:6; 14:34; 20:9; 21:4; 24:9; Isa 3:9; 6:7; 27:9; 30:1; 40:2; 43:24f; 44:22; 58:1; 59:2, 12; Jer 5:25; 14:10; 15:13; 16:10, 18; 17:1, 3; 18:23; 30:14f; 31:34; 36:3; 50:20; Lam 4:6, 13, 22; Ezek 3:20; 16:51f; 18:14, 21, 24; 21:24; 33:10, 14, 16; 40:39; 42:13; 43:19, 21f, 25; 44:27, 29; 45:17, 19, 22f, 25; 46:20; Dan 9:20, 24; Hos 4:8; 8:13; 9:9; 13:12; Amos 5:12; Mic 1:5, 13; 3:8; 6:7, 13; 7:19; Zech 13:1; 14:19

Isa 6:7 And he touched my mouth [with it] and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity ('avon) is taken away, and your **sin (chattah)** is forgiven.”

There are 3 primary Hebrew words for “sin”. Each is defined based on the existence of God's standard of righteousness (all that God is, all that God commands, all that God demands, all that God approves, all that God provides in Christ Jesus 1Co 1:30) established by God.

1. Chattat/chattath [[02403](#)] = miss the mark or to fall short of the divine standard; to err and wander
2. Pesha' [[06588](#)] = rebellion or transgression, and indicates revolt against the standard.
3. 'Avon [[05771](#)] = iniquity or guilt is a twisting of the standard or deviation from it; crooked dealing[

Other Resources on Sin -

- [Sin \(1\) - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Sin - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Sin - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)
- [Sin \(2\) - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)
- [Sin - Torrey's Topical Textbook](#)
- [Sin - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)

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](#)

Related Passages:

Philippians 2:6-7+ (JESUS "TOOK OFF" HIS HOLY GARMENTS IN HIS INCARNATION) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

THE HIGH PRIEST STRIPPED OF HIS SPLENDOR

Leviticus 16:4 describes the unique preparation required of the high priest before entering the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Aaron, who normally wore garments of beauty and glory (Exodus 28), was commanded on this day to lay aside his ornate attire and clothe himself in simple white linen in keeping with the charge to humble their souls on this day (Lev 16:29+). This symbolized humility and the stripping away of human glory before the holy presence of God. Aaron was also required to bathe, emphasizing cleansing from defilement before entering on behalf of the people. The scene teaches that access to God demands holiness, humility, and cleansing, all of which point forward to Jesus Christ, the sinless and humble High Priest who entered not with outward garments but with perfect righteousness, and who now clothes His people in garments of salvation (Isaiah 61:10; Revelation 7:14).

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, some writers think that the high priest also wore them later for the burnt offering (Lev 16:24), but some writers think he then put on his priestly garb again at that time.

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.

and 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.

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 בֶּשָׂר). 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").]

and he shall be girded with the linen sash and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments)- The sash fastened the tunic around the waist (Ex 28:4, 39; 29:9; 39:29). As alluded to all the other glorious priestly garments were laid aside at this time but he still wore the **turban** bearing the inscription "holy to the Lord" (Ex 28:36). He became attired in the pure white linen garments

devoid of all ornamentation, signifying the highest degree of holiness and humility. (cp Jesus' humiliation in Phil 2:8)

R Laird Harrison on **he shall bathe his body in water and put them on** - Elaborate preparations were needed before the high priest could be considered fit to appear before God at the mercy seat. He had to bathe his body completely, thereby cleansing himself symbolically of all impurity, but instead of wearing the highly decorated garments of his consecration ceremony he was to be attired in simple duty clothes, comprising a coat, breeches, a linen girdle and a turban. While the linen is not described as 'white', it would most probably have been bleached to accord with priestly traditions in the ancient Near East. As such it would depict the purity and state of ceremonial cleanness required for an approach to the most holy God of Israel. This ritual furnishes a dramatic contrast between the holiness and purity of God and the sin of man, emphasizing the need for atonement if the people are to be holy as God is holy. (Borrow [Tyndale OT Commentary - Leviticus page 168](#))

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).

*"On the day of atonement
he looked more like a slave."*

Gordon Wenham adds that normally the high priests "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...But in the presence of God even the high priest is stripped of all honor: he becomes simply the servant of the King of kings, whose true status is portrayed in the simplicity of his dress (ED: COMPARE CHRIST IN Php 2:7-8+)." (See [The Book of Leviticus - Page 230](#))

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 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.

Leon Hyatt **He must bathe in water, and he shall put them on** Before putting on the special clothing, Aaron was to wash himself ceremonially in the courtyard of The Tabernacle, as he had done on the day of his hallowing (Ex. 29:4+; see comments on Lev. 8:6+ in [MESSAGE 10](#)). Evidently this procedure was to be followed each time a priest dressed himself in his holy garments. The washing symbolized his need and desire to rid himself of sins every time he prepared to serve God at His Tabernacle.

Devotional Illustration: Linen Garments & Christ's Humility

On the Day of Atonement, Aaron set aside his ornate priestly robes — garments woven with gold, blue, and scarlet, studded with precious stones that displayed his high office (Exodus 28). Instead, he clothed himself in the plain white linen tunic, sash, and

turban. It was a striking picture: the man who normally carried the names of Israel engraved on gemstones now entered God's presence stripped of outward splendor, clothed in simplicity and humility. Why? Because before the holy God, no human glory can stand.

This scene foreshadows the humility of Christ. Paul tells us in Philippians 2:6–8 that though Jesus was in the form of God, He “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.” Just as Aaron laid aside his glorious robes, Jesus laid aside His visible glory, humbling Himself even to the point of death on a cross. He entered the true Holy of Holies not with embroidered garments, but clothed in perfect righteousness and humility.

And here lies the gospel: the One who laid aside glory now clothes His people in robes of salvation (Isaiah 61:10). The linen garments of Leviticus 16:4 point us forward to the white robes of Revelation 7:14, where the redeemed stand before God, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,

All for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.

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](#)

Two Goats-One Sin Offering

GOATS PICTURE SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT AND REMOVAL OF SIN

Here we see the preparation for the congregation. Leviticus 16:5 introduces the central sacrifices of the Day of Atonement, drawn not from the high priest himself but from the congregation of Israel. Two goats were set apart for the sin offering, one to be slain and its blood carried into the Holy of Holies, the other to be sent away into the wilderness as the scapegoat, bearing the sins of the people. Alongside them, a ram was offered as a burnt offering, symbolizing total consecration to the Lord. This verse highlights that atonement was not a private act for the high priest alone but a national provision for all Israel. It also points beyond the annual ritual to the one perfect offering of Christ, who fulfills both aspects of the sin offering—dying in our place and removing our sins “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12)—and who consecrated Himself wholly to the Father on our behalf.

He shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering([chattat/chattath](#)) **and one ram for a burnt offering** (['olah](#)) - **Two male goats** is literally “he-goats of goats.” The Talmud stipulated that the two goats be as alike as possible - in size, color, and value. Note that the two goats constituted one sin offering which illustrates two aspects of the **better sacrifice** our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished as our High Priest (Heb 9:23). 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+; Heb 10:14-17+).

Richard Hess - The use of a goat to represent the purification offering of the people and the ram to represent the burnt offering differs from what might be expected according to the interpretation of Leviticus 4 and 5. There the bull is brought for a purification offering when the entire community has offended God, and a female goat is sacrificed for the transgression of a citizen of Israel. Here it may be that the choice of a goat for the purification offering symbolizes Israel as a single person in the text. The use of the ram for a burnt offering, though not specified in the initial description of the burnt offering (Lev 1), does occur for Aaron and his sons at their ordination (Lev 8 – 9). ([Expositor's Bible Commentary page 1103](#))

This **one ram** along with the High Priest's ram (Lev 16:3) were to be offered as burnt offerings in Lev 16:24.

(1) SLAIN GOAT (Lev 16:15) represents Christ dying in our our place as our Substitute (substitutionary death) for the sins of man. Christ's blood covered the Mercy Seat, providing propitiation

1 John 2:2+ and He Himself is the **propitiation** ([hilasmos](#)) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

1 John 4:10+ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation** ([hilasmos](#)) for our sins.

Rom 3:25+ whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** (hilasterion) 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+ 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** ([hilaskomai](#)) for the sins of the people.

(2) SCAPEGOAT (Lev 16:21), the "goat of removal" depicts Christ's BEARING OUR SINS AWAY, expiation.

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

Heb 9:26+ 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.

Micah 7:19 He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.

[Leon Hyatt](#) The congregation was to present two male goats for a sin-offering and a ram for a rededication offering (ED: BURNT OFFERING). The animal specified for the rededication offering was a ram, which was neither the most expensive nor the least expensive of those permitted. It was expensive enough to be meaningful for the congregation but not so expensive as to be a burden. The usual animal to be used for a sin-offering in behalf of the congregation was a bull, but a male goat was allowed instead if the sin-offering was accompanied by a bull rededication-offering (ED: BURNT OFFERING). However, in this case two male goats were to be used for the sin-offering instead of a bull. Lev 16:20-22 explain that this special provision for the sin-offering was because the second goat was to be used in a unique way that was a special provision for the Day of Coverings.

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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 4:15+ (THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST DOES NOT NEED TO OFFERING FOR HIMSELF FOR HE IS SINLESS) For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, **yet without sin**.

Hebrews 5:2+ He (Levitical Priests) 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**.

Hebrews 7:25+ Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 **who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people**, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever.

Hebrews 9:7+ 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.

Acts 16:31-32+ (COMPARE AARON OFFERING FOR HIMSELF AND HIS HOUSEHOLD) They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and **you will be saved**, you **and your household** ([oikos](#) - same word in Lxx of Lev 16:6)." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.

THE ATONEMENT BEGINS AT HOME A BULL FOR PRIEST'S OWN SIN

Then - This marks progression in the ritual. Do not be confused as Aaron is not actually making the sacrifice in this verse. Note that Lev 16:11 is almost identical to this verse and mark the actual priestly purification ceremony that takes place in . See [Gordon Wenham's outline](#) of the ceremony below.

Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)) which is for himself. Before the high priest could intercede and mediate for the sins of the nation, he had to deal with his own sin and guilt. Aaron, though chosen by God to serve, was still a sinful man in need of cleansing (Hebrews 5:2+). The high priests had to make atonement on **yearly** (Heb 9:7) whereas Jesus' sacrifice was "**once for all**" (Heb 7:27+; Heb 9:12; Heb 10:10).

For himself: The actual ceremonies of the day were to begin with Aaron's formally presenting to Jehovah the sin-offering that was for himself and his house, which means his family. The high priest needed a sacrifice because he was a sinner, but Jesus didn't need a sacrifice for Himself because He is sinless

The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, 24 but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. 25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever. (Heb 7:23-28+).

Make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for himself and for his household (Lxx - [oikos](#)) : Why his household? Probably because the priesthood belonged to the family of Aaron, and would include all living priests and thus provide for their continued service. By offering a bull for his own sins and for those of his household, Aaron demonstrated the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood and the imperfection of even the highest spiritual leaders under the old covenant. This humbling requirement pointed forward to the coming of Christ, the sinless High Priest, Who had no need to offer sacrifices for Himself but gave Himself once for all to secure eternal redemption (Heb 7:27, Heb 9:12, Heb 10:10).

[Leon Hyatt](#) Presentation of the sin-offerings (Lev 16:6-10) The actual ceremonies of the day were to begin with Aaron's formally presenting to Jehovah the sin-offering that was for himself and his house, which means his family. "His house" probably included not just his sons but all of their family members. Just presenting the animal at the altar provided covering for Aaron and his family.

Gordon Wenham - Outline of the Ceremony (Lev 16:6–10) (see [The Book of Leviticus - Page 230](#))

Lev 16:6–10 summarize the order of the day's events.

1. Aaron offers the bull as a purification offering for himself and the priests (Lev 16:6).
2. Aaron casts lots to decide which goat is to be sacrificed as a purification offering for the people, and which is to be sent into the wilderness (Lev 16:7–8).
3. The goat for the purification offering is sacrificed (Lev 16:9).
4. The other goat is brought before the Lord and then despatched to the wilderness (Lev 16:10).

Lev 16:8 and Lev 16:10 both describe the goat sent into the wilderness as the goat for Azazel.

Below is a somewhat chronological outline from Richard Hess - ([Expositor's Bible Commentary page 1103](#))

- A. Introduction: The Words of God (Lev 16:1 – 2a)
- B. The Preparation of the Priest (Lev 16:2b – 5)
- C. Selection of the Sacrifices (Lev 16:6 – 10)
- D. The Purification Offering of the Priest (Lev 16:11 – 14)
- E. The Purification Offering of Israel and the Atonement of the Holy Place (Lev 16:15 – 19)

F. Atonement for Israel (Lev 16:20 – 22)

G. The Aftermath: Returning from God's Presence (Lev 16:23 – 28)

H. The Continuing Responsibility of Israel and the Priest (Lev 16:29 – 34)

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” (kjb, jb); “forgiven” (rsv, nasb, tev); and “wiped away” (neb). In another passage, Scripture says that the guilt or iniquity of Israel would be “purged” (kjb, 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.

COMMENT - Note the very significant use in the Messianic prophecy in Daniel 9:24+ “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, **to make atonement** for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.”

In Daniel 9:24, this “**atonement**” points beyond the annual rituals to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The prophecy anticipates the cross, where Jesus “made purification of sins” (Hebrews 1:3) and became the true and final atonement. The temporal covering of Leviticus 16 is fulfilled in the eternal cleansing of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:11–14). It speaks of --- **Substitution**: Christ bore the penalty of sin so reconciliation could be made. **Sufficiency**: This was a once-for-all act—no further sacrifices are needed. **Hope** for Israel: The prophecy assured Daniel that sin’s deepest problem would be addressed through Messiah, not just through temple rituals. **GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH THE NATION OF ISRAEL!!!**

Exilaskomai (ἐξilάσκομαι) - from [hilaskomai](#) related to [hilasmos](#) (“propitiation, expiation”) and [hilasterion](#) (“mercy seat, place of atonement”). The prefix Ex- (ἐξ-) adds the sense of “out, fully, completely.” The core meaning: to make expiation, to propitiate, to appease, to atone for, to remove sin or guilt by means of a sacrificial act. This verb emphasizes the thorough removal or satisfaction of guilt. Very frequent in Leviticus 16 (Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur). Used of priests “making atonement” for the altar, the sanctuary, the priests, and the people. Example: Leviticus 16:16 – “And he shall make atonement (ἐξilάσεται) for the Holy Place because of the impurities of the sons of Israel...” Thus in LXX, exilaskomai consistently describes priestly expiation by blood sacrifice.

LSJ (Liddell-Scott-Jones): “to appease, propitiate, atone for, expiate.”

BDAG: “to cause to be favorably inclined or disposed, propitiate; to eliminate impediments that alienate, expiate.”

NIDNTT: Often tied to ritual atonement in the Septuagint (esp. Leviticus) and then fulfilled in Christ in the NT.

EXILASKOMAI - 95X/87V - ONLY IN SEPTUAGINT - Gen. 32:20; Exod. 30:10; Exod. 30:15; Exod. 30:16; Exod. 32:30; Lev. 1:4; Lev. 4:20; Lev. 4:26; Lev. 4:31; Lev. 4:35; Lev. 5:6; Lev. 5:10; Lev. 5:13; Lev. 5:16; Lev. 5:18; Lev. 6:7; Lev. 6:30; Lev. 7:7; Lev. 8:15; Lev. 8:34; Lev. 9:7; Lev. 10:17; Lev. 12:7; Lev. 12:8; Lev. 14:18; Lev. 14:19; Lev. 14:20; Lev. 14:21; Lev. 14:29; Lev. 14:31; Lev. 14:53; Lev. 15:15; Lev. 15:30; Lev. 16:6; Lev. 16:10; Lev. 16:11; Lev. 16:16; Lev. 16:17; Lev. 16:18; Lev. 16:20; Lev. 16:24; Lev. 16:27; Lev. 16:30; Lev.

16:32; Lev. 16:33; Lev. 16:34; Lev. 17:11; Lev. 19:22; Lev. 23:28; Num. 5:8; Num. 6:11; Num. 8:12; Num. 8:19; Num. 8:21; Num. 15:25; Num. 15:28; Num. 16:46; Num. 16:47; Num. 25:13; Num. 28:22; Num. 28:30; Num. 29:5; Num. 29:11; Num. 31:50; Num. 35:33; 1 Sam. 3:14; 1 Sam. 6:3; 2 Sam. 21:3; 1 Chr. 6:49; 2 Chr. 29:24; 2 Chr. 30:18; Neh. 10:33; Ps. 106:30; Prov. 16:14; Ezek. 16:63; Ezek. 43:20; Ezek. 43:22; Ezek. 43:26; Ezek. 45:15; Ezek. 45:17; Ezek. 45:18; Ezek. 45:20; Hab. 1:11; Zech. 7:2; Zech. 8:22; Mal. 1:9

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

TWO GOATS, ONE ATONEMENT SHADOW OF SUBSTITUTION

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest was commanded to take two goats, identical in appearance, and cast lots over them—one to be offered to the LORD as a sin offering, and the other designated as the scapegoat, to be sent away into the wilderness. This divinely ordained ritual highlights God's sovereignty in determining the means of atonement and the dual aspects of sin's removal: propitiation through sacrifice and expiation through removal. In the lot that fell to the LORD, we see the foreshadowing of Christ's death as the offering for sin. In the scapegoat, we see the vivid picture of sins carried far away, never to return. Both goats together typify the fullness of Christ's atoning work—bearing the penalty and removing the guilt.

He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the doorway of the tent of meeting(where the book began in Lev 1:1; Lxx has the "tent of witness" - [marturion](#)) - Though not stated, undoubtedly these were not random animals but carefully selected, *without blemish*, representing purity, ultimately foreshadowing the sinless Lamb of God (Jn 1:29+). Next Aaron was to formally present at the altar the two male goats that were to constitute the sin-offering of the people. The **doorway** was the meeting point between God and man. At the doorway, the priest would then cast the lots (Lev. 16:8), revealing God's choice for each goat's role.

Before the LORD (Lev. 16:7; Lev. 16:10; Lev. 16:12; Lev. 16:13; Lev. 16:18; Lev. 16:30; also Lev 16:1 "presence" = before) The goats had to be presented before Yahweh, showing that the whole ritual was done in God's sight and for God's glory.

*Two goats, one offering —
pointing to one Savior with a twofold work.*

FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST - The goats side-by-side point to Christ's one sacrifice with a double effect: His death satisfies God's justice (like the slain goat). Together, these goats prefigure the twofold accomplishment of Christ's one offering: **Propitiation** (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17) Jesus' blood satisfies the righteous wrath of God. The Lamb of God bore the punishment we deserved. **Expiation** (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:26) Jesus removes sin completely, carrying it "outside the camp" (Hebrews 13:12–13), so it is gone forever. Thus, what two goats could only symbolize, Christ fulfilled perfectly in one act on the cross. The slain goat satisfied God's justice; the scapegoat carried away man's guilt. Both met in Christ's cross.

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+)

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+)

Leviticus 16:8 "Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat.

- **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](#)

THE CASTING OF LOTS: GOD'S SOVEREIGN CHOICE

Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats - 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). The casting of lots emphasizes God's sovereignty in choosing how atonement is accomplished and provides a vivid double picture of sin's penalty and its removal.

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).

Leon Hyatt **And Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats.** The two male goats were each to fill distinctly different roles in the ceremonies. One was to die, and the other was to live. The goat that was to be used for each role was to be chosen by casting lots. **One lot [shall be] for Jehovah, and the other lot for complete removal.** These words have been most puzzling to interpreters. The remainder of the message makes the use of the goats clear, and it is best to interpret their symbolism in the light of the use made of them rather than in the light of the rather obscure phrases of this verse. Therefore, the full meaning of "for Jehovah" and "for complete removal" will be discussed in comments on verses 15-22.

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.'

David 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)

Lot ([01486](#)) [goral](#) refers to any kind of small object (e.g., stick, pebble, shard) used for making decisions by a "random" outcome (see Pr 16:33 on what controls "random") or for determining the will of God. **Lot** is often translated in the Septuagint with [kleros](#) which can also mean inheritance.

Vine on Lot - Gôrâl (גֹּרָל, Strong's [#1486](#)), "lot." This word is attested 77 times and in all periods of the language (if a traditional view of the formation of the canon is accepted). Gôrâl represents the "lot" which was cast to discover the will of God in a given situation: "And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat" ([Lev. 16:8](#)—the first occurrence). Exactly what casting the "lot" involved is not known. Since the land of Palestine was allocated among the tribes by the casting of the "lot," these allotments came to be known as their lots: "This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom ..." (Josh. 15:1). In an extended use the word gôrâl represents the idea "fate" or "destiny": "And behold at eveningtide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us" (Isa. 17:14). Since God is viewed as controlling all things absolutely, the result of the casting of the "lot" is divinely controlled: "**The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.**" (Pr 16:33). Thus, [providence](#) (divine control of history) is frequently (**ED: I WOULD SAY ALWAYS**) figured as one's "lot." ([Vine's Expository Dictionary](#))

Lot [\[EBD\]](#) - (Heb. goral, a "pebble"), a small stone used in casting lots (Num. 33:54; Jonah 1:7). The lot was always resorted to by the Hebrews with strictest reference to the interposition of God, and as a method of ascertaining the divine will (Prov. 16:33), and in serious cases of doubt (Esther 3:7). Thus the lot was used at the division of the land of Canaan among the several tribes (Num. 26:55; 34:13), at the detection of Achan

(Josh. 7:14, 18), the election of Saul to be king (1 Sam. 10:20, 21), the distribution of the priestly offices of the temple service (1 Chr. 24:3, 5, 19; Luke 1:9), and over the two goats at the feast of Atonement (Lev. 16:8). Matthias, who was "numbered with the eleven" (Acts 1:24-26), was chosen by lot. This word also denotes a portion or an inheritance (Josh. 15:1; Ps. 125:3; Isa. 17:4), and a destiny, as assigned by God (Ps. 16:5; Dan. 12:13).

GORAL - 67V - Lev. 16:8; Lev. 16:9; Lev. 16:10; Num. 26:55; Num. 26:56; Num. 33:54; Num. 34:13; Num. 36:2; Num. 36:3; Jos. 14:2; Jos. 15:1; Jos. 16:1; Jos. 17:1; Jos. 17:14; Jos. 17:17; Jos. 18:6; Jos. 18:8; Jos. 18:10; Jos. 18:11; Jos. 19:1; Jos. 19:10; Jos. 19:17; Jos. 19:24; Jos. 19:32; Jos. 19:40; Jos. 19:51; Jos. 21:4; Jos. 21:5; Jos. 21:6; Jos. 21:8; Jos. 21:10; Jos. 21:20; Jos. 21:40; Jdg. 1:3; Jdg. 20:9; 1 Chr. 6:54; 1 Chr. 6:61; 1 Chr. 6:63; 1 Chr. 6:65; 1 Chr. 24:5; 1 Chr. 24:7; 1 Chr. 24:31; 1 Chr. 25:8; 1 Chr. 25:9; 1 Chr. 26:13; 1 Chr. 26:14; Neh. 10:34; Neh. 11:1; Est. 3:7; Est. 9:24; Ps. 16:5; Ps. 22:18; Ps. 125:3; Prov. 1:14; Prov. 16:33; Prov. 18:18; Isa. 17:14; Isa. 34:17; Isa. 57:6; Jer. 13:25; Ezek. 24:6; Dan. 12:13; Joel 3:3; Obad. 1:11; Jon. 1:7; Mic. 2:5; Nah. 3:10

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.

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

The Septuagint 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."

NET Note overview of the major views of this word **Azazel** - The meaning of the Hebrew term אֶזָּזֵל ('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). אֶזָּזֵל 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 ז (zayin) in עֵז combined with אֵל ('el, "mighty"), meaning "mighty goat." The final consonantal form of אֶזָּזֵל would have resulted from the inversion of the א (aleph) with the second ז. He makes the point that the close association between עֵז and שְׂעִירִים (she'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 (לְ, lamed preposition) the LORD" and the one "for (לְ) 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 Note**)

- [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](#)

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of Azazel / the scapegoat? GOTQUESTIONS.ORG](#)

ANSWER - "Azazel" or "the scapegoat" is mentioned in Leviticus 16 as part of God's instructions to the Israelites regarding the Day of Atonement. On this day, the high priest would first offer a sacrifice for his sins and those of his household; then he would perform sacrifices for the nation. "From the Israelite community [the high priest was instructed] to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering" (v. 5). The priest brought the animals before the Lord and cast lots between the two goats – one to be a sacrifice and the other to be the scapegoat. The first goat was slaughtered for the sins of the people and its blood used to cleanse the Most Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the altar (v. 20). After the cleansing, the live goat was brought to the high priest. Laying his hands on the scapegoat, the high priest was to "confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites – all their sins – and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task. The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place; and the man shall release it in the wilderness" (vv. 21-22). Symbolically, the scapegoat took on the sins of the Israelites and removed them (v. 10). For Christians, this is a foreshadowing of Christ.

Christ is the complete atonement for our sins. In many ways, He embodies each aspect of the Day of Atonement. We are told that He is our great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14). He is also the "Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world" (Revelation 13:8) as a sacrifice for our sins. And He is our scapegoat. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." Our sins were laid on Christ – He bore our sins just as the scapegoat bore the sins of the Israelites. Isaiah 53:6 prophesies Christ's acceptance of the sin burden: "We all, 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." After the sins were laid on the scapegoat, it was considered unclean and driven into the wilderness. In essence, the goat was cast out. The same happened to Jesus. He was crucified outside of the city. "He was despised and rejected by men ... He poured out His life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:3a, 12). Jesus embodied what the scapegoat represented – the removal of sins from the perpetrators.

Truly, the Old Testament rituals carry a depth and richness that only God could create. The Day of Atonement foreshadowed the ultimate atonement Christ provides. No longer do we need to sacrifice animals to cover our sins, nor do we need to impute our sins to a scapegoat to have them carried away. Jesus has been sacrificed and "scapegoated" for us. Our sins have been atoned for and removed. "The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming – not the realities themselves," we are told in Hebrews 10:1. "For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. ... Those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ... We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:3-4, 10).

As a side note, the name "Azazel" shows up in some Jewish mythology. While there are different versions in the Book of Enoch, the Book of the Giants, and other pseudepigraphal books, the story is essentially that Azazel was the name of one of the fallen angels who sinned in Genesis chapter 6. As a curse on his sin, Azazel was forced to take the form of a goat-like demon. This myth is not recorded in the Bible. Regardless of the identity of Azazel, the Bible emphasizes the sufficiency and completeness of Christ's sacrifice both to remove our sin and to reconcile us to God.

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 Act 4:27-28
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

THE LORD'S CHOSEN SIN-BEARE

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

Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell, and make it a sin offering([chattat/chattath](#)) - The solemn moment arrives when God's choice is revealed. The lot falls upon one goat, designated "for the LORD." This animal would not live but would die, its blood shed to make atonement for the sins of the people. Aaron, acting as mediator, offered it as a sin offering, demonstrating that sin demands death and that only by the shedding of blood can forgiveness be secured (Hebrews 9:22). The chosen goat prefigures Christ, the Lamb of God, who was not spared but delivered up according to the determined plan of God, to become the once-for-all sin offering for the world.

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) When the lot for the LORD fell on one goat, it signified God's sovereign choice of a substitute. Aaron offered it as the nation's sin offering, its blood making atonement. This pointed forward to Christ, God's chosen Lamb, who by His death bore the penalty of sin and secured eternal forgiveness for all who believe.

Acts 2:23+ (**GOD CHOOSE THE ULTIMATE SIN BEARER IN ETERNITY PAST**) this Man (CHRIST), delivered over **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 4:27-28+ (**CHRIST PREDESTINED TO DIE AS THE ULTIMATE SIN OFFERING**) "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 2 8 to do whatever **Your hand and Your purpose predestined** to occur.

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

Leon Hyatt The goat that was chosen by lot "for Jehovah" was to be offered as a sin-offering in the usual manner. The slaying of the goat does not seem to occur until verse 14, so what is referred to in this verse is the presentation of the goat by pressing hands on its head to signify that the goat represented the people and their repenting of their sins (see comments on Lev. 1: 4 in [MESSAGE 1](#) under the heading And he shall press his hand on the head of the rededication-offering and on Lev. 4:15 in [MESSAGE 2](#) under the heading And the elders of the congregation shall press their hands on the head of the bull at Jehovah's face).

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 the 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](#)!

But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat(['aza'zel](#)) **fell shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement** ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) **upon it, to send** ([shalach](#); Lxx - [aphiemi](#) means to send away, forgive! Same verb used in 1Jn 1:9+!) **it**

into the wilderness as the scapegoat (['aza'zel](#)) This verse describes the second of the two goats used in the Day of Atonement ritual. The first goat was slain, its blood sprinkled within the veil. The second, **the scapegoat**(['aza'zel](#)), was kept alive, symbolically bearing the confessed sins of the people, and sent into the wilderness. Together, the two goats form one atoning act: one displaying [propitiation](#) (satisfying God's wrath by blood) and the other [expiation](#) (removing sins far away). This verse emphasizes that atonement is not complete without both forgiveness and removal of guilt. In Christ, these dual aspects are perfectly fulfilled—His blood satisfies God's justice, and He removes our sins "as far as the east is from the west" (Ps 103:12).

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

-- D C Egnor

THOUGHT - If you add an "e" to "**scapegoat**" (['aza'zel](#)) 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

Dear reader, either you will serve as your own '**scapegoat**' carrying away your sins for eternity in the wilderness "**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!**"

*Many a person today who suffers from what is called a guilt complex
could profit by a study of this ritual for the atonement and removal of sin.*

R Laird Harris points out that Two goats were taken to bear the people's sins. One was killed as a sin offering; the other was sent off into the desert to bear away the sins of the people into an uninhabited place. The two goats thus symbolized both propitiation for sins by death and complete removal of the sins for which atonement was made. Many a person today who suffers from what is called a guilt complex could profit by a study of this ritual for the atonement and removal of sin. (Expositor's Bible Commentary - old edition)

C H 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!

[Leon Hyatt](#) The second goat, which was chosen by lot "for complete removal," was presented before Jehovah at the same time. If this goat was to be given to a demon, it is unexplainable why it was to be presented to Jehovah. This verse simply states that it was presented before Jehovah so that it could be used to symbolize covering "by [its] complete removal into the wilderness." Since the animal was a part of the sin-offering and since "covering" referred to covering from sin (see comments on Lev. 1:4 in [MESSAGE 1](#) under the heading to cover over him), it should be understood that the removal referred to was the removal of sin. Verses 21-22 support this conclusion. They say that the second goat was to be sent away into a secluded place in the wilderness, from which it could not return. Sending the goat away expanded on the symbolism of the sin-offering, which pictured forgiveness, the removal of sins for the people's lives.

Send (send away) (07971) **shalach** means to send, to send forth, to send away, to let go, to put, to expel (cf Ge 3:23). The first use in Ge 3:22 describes Adam as he **stretched** out his hand to take of the forbidden fruit. The second use in Ge 3:23 describes God's punishment - "God **sent** him **out** (shalach) from the Garden." In Ge 8:7 Noah "sent out a raven" then "a dove" (Ge 8:8, 10, 12). In Ge 18:16 Abraham **sent** the visitors (one of which was the LORD!) on their way, thus sending off in a friendly sense. Of the angels who "**reached out** (shalach) their hands and brought Lot into the house." The LORD...**sent** (shalach) us (the angels) to destroy" Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19:13). In Ge 19:29 "when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and **sent** Lot **out** of the midst of the overthrow." Of Hagar and Ishmael "sent...away" into the wilderness of Beersheba (Ge 21:14). In Ge 22:10 "Abraham **stretched out** his hand" as he prepared to sacrifice Isaac. God told him "do not **stretch out** your hand against the lad." (Ge 22:12) We could continue working through the verses which gives us a good sense of what this verb shalach means. In Malachi 3:1 God says He will **send** "My messenger" (Elijah) (cf Mal 4:5). In Malachi 2:16 God says "I hate **divorce**" and the word in Hebrew is **shalach**. Shalach is used to mean - Send fire (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, Amos 2:2,5), a plague (Amos 4:10) or a famine (Amos 8:11). For various lexicon discussions [click here](#). Unfortunately, we have neither time nor space go through all the uses of Shalach, but it would make a very interesting study if you have time (See all 790 verses [here](#)).

Send (forgive) (863) **aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix speaks of separation, putting some distance between + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation. Literally aphiemi means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and refers to total detachment, total separation, from a previous location or condition. It means to send forth or away from one's self. It refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside. In secular Greek aphiemi initially conveyed the sense of to throw and in one secular writing we read "let the pot drop" (aphiemi). From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go. It is worth noting that the most common way aphiemi is translated in the NAS is **left** (to go away from a place, to depart from, to remove oneself from an association with, to leave behind - [ponder how these might relate to "forgiveness!"]) (38x) followed by **forgive** (23x) and **forgiven** (23x).

Aphiemi refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside and as used in the present context means that God lets go of the obligation we "owe" Him because of sin against His holiness. It means to **remit** (to release from the guilt or penalty of) as one would a financial debt (e.g., on the Rosetta stone it refers to the "total remission" of certain taxes). Unfortunately the English word "**forgive**" does not adequately picture the meaning of the Greek.

In secular Greek literature, **aphiemi** was a fundamental word used to indicate the sending away of an object or a person. **Aphiemi** was used to describe the voluntary release of a person or thing over which one has legal or actual control. The related noun **aphesis** meant described a setting free. Later it came to include the release of someone from the obligation of marriage, or debt, or even a religious vow. In its final form it came to embrace the principle of release from punishment for some wrongdoing.

Wuest explains **aphiemi** from God's perspective noting that "It refers to the act of putting something away. God did that at the Cross when He **put sin away** by incarnating Himself in humanity in the Person of His Son, stepping down from His judgment throne, assuming the guilt of man's sin, and paying the penalty, thus, satisfying His justice, and making possible an offer of mercy on the basis of justice satisfied. When a sinner avails himself of the merits of that atoning sacrifice, **he thus puts himself within the provision God made. His sins were put away** at the Cross, and he comes into the benefit of that when he believes. (Bolding added)

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of atonement? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - A number of important words are used in the Bible that speak of the way sinners are made right with God. [Salvation](#), [justification](#), [forgiveness](#), and [adoption](#) are several words used quite often, and most people probably have an adequate understanding of them because they are used in non-theological settings as well. **Atonement** is also an important word, but many people probably have little understanding of what it means since it is almost exclusively theological. A popular definition is that *atonement* is "**at-one-ment**"; in other words, it is the way that we are made one with God when we used to be alienated from Him by our sins. At the heart of the matter, that is correct. **Atonement** was, at one time, not a theological term but simply a common term that meant "reconciliation" and could be used of the transaction between any two parties. Over time, it took on a more exclusively theological meaning.

The word translated "**atone**" literally meant "to cover," but in the Old Testament, it appears to have taken on the theological meaning of "to take away." Even today, we can use the word *cover* to mean "take away": if a person says, "Let me give you \$20 to cover the bill," this does not mean that debt will be merely covered or hidden or "swept under the rug" but that it will be paid and the obligation

removed.

The word **atonement** is used over 100 times in the Old Testament, primarily in the Pentateuch, and it is usually in the context of a sacrifice, either a blood sacrifice or the payment of a certain amount of money. The idea is that a person or thing is unclean due to sin or some other defilement. Then, with a payment or sacrifice, atonement is made for that person or thing, and it is now holy or acceptable.

ED: "ATONEMENT" IN NASB95 - Exod. 29:33; Exod. 29:36; Exod. 29:37; Exod. 30:10; Exod. 30:15; Exod. 30:16; Exod. 32:30; Lev. 1:4; Lev. 4:20; Lev. 4:26; Lev. 4:31; Lev. 4:35; Lev. 5:6; Lev. 5:10; Lev. 5:13; Lev. 5:16; Lev. 5:18; Lev. 6:7; Lev. 6:30; Lev. 7:7; Lev. 8:15; Lev. 8:34; Lev. 9:7; Lev. 10:17; Lev. 12:7; Lev. 12:8; Lev. 14:18; Lev. 14:19; Lev. 14:20; Lev. 14:21; Lev. 14:29; Lev. 14:31; Lev. 14:53; Lev. 15:15; Lev. 15:30; 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; Lev. 17:11; Lev. 19:22; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:28; Lev. 25:9; Num. 5:8; Num. 6:11; Num. 8:12; Num. 8:19; Num. 8:21; Num. 15:25; Num. 15:28; Num. 16:46; Num. 16:47; Num. 25:13; Num. 28:22; Num. 28:30; Num. 29:5; Num. 29:11; Num. 31:50; 2 Sam. 21:3; 1 Chr. 6:49; Neh. 10:33; Ezek. 43:20; Ezek. 43:26; Ezek. 45:15; Ezek. 45:17; Ezek. 45:20; Dan. 9:24

Under the law, **atonement** could be used to cleanse objects. For instance, one must make atonement for a house that has been cleared of mold (Leviticus 14:53).

More often, the idea of **atonement** concerns cleansing a person who has sinned or become defiled in some way: for a woman after childbirth (Leviticus 12:8), a leper who had been healed (Leviticus 14:18–19), or a Nazirite who had broken his vows, even accidentally (Numbers 6:11). The most common uses of **atonement** have to do with sacrifices for an individual sinner (Numbers 5:7–9), a group such as the Levites before they perform temple services (Numbers 8:12), and even the nation as a whole. Leviticus 16 explains the Day of Atonement when the sins of the whole nation are dealt with by a sacrifice.

The word **atonement** only appears in the New Testament once, in the KJV translation of Romans 5:11; however, the concept is found throughout. In 1 Corinthians 15:3, Paul says that a central truth of the gospel is that Christ died “for ([huper](#) = substitution) our sins.” Likewise, Galatians 1:4 says that Christ gave Himself “for ([huper](#) = substitution) our sins.” Before the death of Christ, our sins separated us from God. After His death for our sins, we can be reconciled to God. Just as on the Day of Atonement the sins of the nation were transferred to the sacrifice (Leviticus 16), our sins were transferred to Christ, and He “bore our sins in his body on the cross” (1 Peter 2:24).

Because of the sacrifice of Christ, we can be saved, justified, forgiven, and adopted into God’s family. No single word can adequately summarize all the blessings we have in Christ (Eph 1:3). Even though *atonement* is not used in the New Testament, it is clear that atonement in the Old Testament is the background for the sacrifice of Christ for sinners.

QUESTION - [What is expiation?](#) | [GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The word “expiation” does not appear in the New Testament, but it does accurately describe an aspect of the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf. Expiation means “to cover sin” and/or “to cleanse sin.” Expiation reflects the idea that the negative and degrading effects of our sin are removed through the grace of God. Another word for expiation is [atonement](#), and truly this is one of the results of Jesus’ atoning death for us.

Through expiation—the work of Christ on the cross for us—the sin of all those who would ever believe in Christ was cancelled. That cancellation is eternal in its consequence, even though sin is still present in the temporal sense. In other words, believers are delivered from the penalty and power of sin, but not the presence of it. [Justification](#) is the term for being delivered from the penalty of sin. This is a one-time act wherein the sinner is justified and made holy and righteous in the eyes of God who exchanged our sinful natures for the righteousness of Christ at the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). [Sanctification](#) is the ongoing process whereby believers are delivered from the power of sin in their lives and are enabled by the new nature to resist and turn away from it. Glorification is when we are removed from the very presence of sin, which will only occur once we leave this world and are in heaven. All these processes—justification, sanctification and glorification—are made possible through the expiation or cancellation of sin.

It is good to know also that there are other benefits of Jesus’ death for us. One of them, not included in the concept of expiation, but just as true and biblical, is [propitiation](#), which is “to appease wrath.” Truly the atoning death of God the Son satisfies the wrath of God the Father against rebellious, sinful humanity (John 3:36; Romans 5:9). Expiation, justification, sanctification, glorification, propitiation, and many more - we have countless reasons to praise God and to run to Him in faith and trust.

QUESTION - [What is propitiation?](#) | [GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The word *propitiation* carries the basic idea of appeasement or satisfaction, specifically toward God. Propitiation is a two-part act that involves appeasing the wrath of an offended person and being reconciled to him.

The necessity of appeasing God is something many religions have in common. In ancient pagan religions, as well as in many religions today, the idea is taught that man appeases God by offering various gifts or sacrifices. However, the Bible teaches that God Himself has provided the only means through which His wrath can be appeased and sinful man can be reconciled to Him. In the New Testament, the act of propitiation always refers to the work of God and not the sacrifices or gifts offered by man. The reason for this is that man is totally incapable of satisfying God's justice except by spending eternity in hell. There is no service, sacrifice, or gift that man can offer that will appease the holy wrath of God or satisfy His perfect justice. The only satisfaction, or propitiation, that could be acceptable to God and that could reconcile man to Him had to be made by God. For this reason God the Son, Jesus Christ, came into the world in human flesh to be the perfect sacrifice for sin and make atonement or "propitiation ([hilaskomai](#)) for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

The word *propitiation* is used in several verses to explain what Jesus accomplished through His death on the cross. For example, in Romans 3:24-25 believers in Christ have been "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed." These verses are a key point in Paul's argument in the book of Romans and are really at the heart of the gospel message.

In the first three chapters of Romans, Paul makes the argument that everyone, Jew and Gentile alike, is under the condemnation of God and deserving of His wrath (Romans 1:18). Everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). All of us deserve His wrath and punishment. God in His infinite grace and mercy has provided a way that His wrath can be appeased and we can be reconciled to Him. That way is through the sacrificial death of His Son, Jesus Christ, as the payment for sins. It is through faith in Jesus Christ as God's perfect sacrifice that we can be reconciled to God. It is only because of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection on the third day that a lost sinner deserving of hell can be reconciled to a holy God. The wonderful truth of the gospel is that Christians are saved from God's wrath and reconciled to God not because "we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). The only way for God's wrath against sinful man to be appeased and for us to be reconciled to God is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way. This truth is also communicated in 1 John 2:2, "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." An important part of Christ's saving work is deliverance from God's wrath; Jesus' propitiation on the cross is the only thing that can turn away God's divine condemnation of sin. Those who reject Christ as their Savior and refuse to believe in Him have no hope of salvation. They can only look forward to facing the wrath of God that they have stored up for the coming day of judgment (Romans 2:5). There is no other propitiation or sacrifice that can be made for their sins.

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.

Questionable Teaching - Adventists teach that the scapegoat, or Azazel, is a symbol for Satan. They believe that Satan will finally have to bear the responsibility for the sins of the believers of all ages, and that this was foreshadowed on the Day of Atonement when the high priest confessed the sins of Israel over the head of the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21). They do not believe Satan is a sin-bearer in the sense of atonement (only Christ can atone), but that he will bear the final penalty and accountability for sin when he is cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10). There is absolutely no Scriptural support for this aberrant belief!

*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.**

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 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. By David 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

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. Egener ([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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 4:3-6+ if the anointed priest sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD a bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. 4 'He shall bring the bull to the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, and he shall lay his hand on the head of the bull and slay the bull before the LORD. 5 'Then the anointed priest is to take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting, 6 and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary.

Leviticus 9:7-8+ Moses then said to Aaron, "Come near to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, that you may make atonement for yourself and for the people; **THEN** make the offering for the people,

that you may make atonement for them, just as the LORD has commanded.” 8 So Aaron came near to the altar and slaughtered the calf of the sin offering which was for himself.

Hebrews 5:1-3+ 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 (E.G., DAILY AND ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT); 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.**

Hebrews 9:7+ but into the second (HOLY OF HOLIES), 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.

Hebrews 9:11-12+ 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; 12 and **not through the blood of goats and calves**, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Hebrews 10:10-12+ By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, **SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD**,

ATONEMENT FIRST FOR THE MEDIATOR BLOOD FOR HIMSELF AND HIS HOUSE

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. Note that this verse repeats almost word for word what is recorded in Lev 16:6. Whereas the previous passage described the preparation for purification ceremony, this next section describes the actual purification offering of Aaron for himself and his household in Leviticus 16:11 – 14.

Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)) which is for himself and make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)) which is for himself - Before Aaron could mediate for the people, he first had to deal with his own sin. His position as mediator demanded cleansing by blood, because even the priest was a sinner. This underscores both the holiness of God and the inadequacy of the Levitical priesthood. It foreshadows Christ—the sinless High Priest—who needed no offering for Himself but offered His own life for the sins of His people.

For himself - Here we see a striking contrast between the high priesthood of Aaron and the high priesthood of Jesus, for when Jesus offered a perfect atonement for sin (His own body and blood), He did not need to make a sin offering for Himself as did Aaron. The writer of Hebrews records...

Therefore He (SPEAKING OF JESUS) is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. 26 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. 7:25-28+)

[Leon Hyatt](#) adds that "After the animals had been presented, the next step was to kill the bull that was the sin-offering for Aaron and his family. Though the offering was in behalf of Aaron and his family, the statement is clear that Aaron was to present it, that is, to actually offer it on the altar. Only the high priest was qualified to officiate over the ceremonies of The Day of Coverings. When the animal was killed, the blood was caught in a bowl in the usual manner. It represented as always Aaron's and his sons' pouring out or giving up their lives to Jehovah (see comments on Lev. 1:5 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading shall offer the blood and splash the blood).

Comparisons and contrasts between the high priest Aaron and the Great High Priest Christ-

- **Aaron's Need for Atonement** – Aaron first had to atone for his own sins. Christ, by contrast, is “holy, innocent, undefiled” (Heb 7:26) and needed no sacrifice for Himself.
- **For His Household** – Aaron's sacrifice covered his house (the priestly line). Christ's sacrifice brings forgiveness and cleansing for the household of God, the church (Eph 2:19-20).

- **Repeated Sacrifices vs. Once for All** – The bull was offered every year, highlighting its insufficiency. Christ offered Himself once for all time (Heb 10:10-12).
- **Death of the Bull vs. Death of Christ** – The slaughter of the bull was a shadow. Christ's death is the substance that secures eternal redemption (Heb 9:12).
- **Atonement Before Intercession** – Aaron had to be cleansed before interceding. Christ's sacrifice perfectly qualifies Him to always intercede for us (Heb 7:25).

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 no 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.

Leon Hyatt And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar at Jehovah's face and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it within the veil. The blood ceremony for the sin-offering of the priests on the Day of Coverings was to be different from that of the usual sin offering. Instead of being splattered before the veil, smeared on the horns of the altar of incense, and then poured out in the trough at the base of the altar of re-dedication-offering (see comments on Lev. 4:5- 7 in [MESSAGE 2](#)), it was to be carried into the inner room of The Tabernacle. The purpose of this change was not to symbolize a different truth from those of a regular sin-offering but to symbolize the same truths in a fuller, more expanded way.

Inside the veil obviously means 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.

Lindsey feels that "The high priest was to enter the most holy place three times, the first time with a censer full of burning coals from the altar of burnt offering on which coals he was to burn incense prepared especially for use in the tabernacle (cf. Ex. 30:34-36)." (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 197](#))

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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 10:1-2 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.

PRIEST PROTECTED BY CLOUD OF INCENSE

He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); [Lxx](#) - [hilasterion](#)) **that is on the ark of the testimony, otherwise he will die.** From the context, it seems clear that the purpose of the cloud of incense was to protect Aaron from death in the presence of the LORD. The thick cloud of incense

veiled the high priest from direct exposure to God's holiness, providing a shield of mercy even before the mercy seat! The Hebrew word for "**cover**" here is *kasah*, not *kaphar* (make atonement), and means to conceal which fits well with the interpretation that this cloud of incense was for protection and not just intercession (as incense often symbolizes, e.g., Ps 141:2, Ex 30:7-8, Rev 8:3-4).

This passage emphasizing the need for protection of the priest, underscores that sinful man cannot behold the unveiled presence of God and live. This verse teaches us the seriousness of approaching God and points forward to Christ, Who both shields us from God's holy wrath (1Th 1:10) and intercedes continually for us in heaven (Heb 7:25).

Lindsey agrees writing that **the cloud of incense** "apparently created a smoke screen to prevent his gazing at the Shekinah glory of God's presence over the atonement cover, thus averting divine wrath on himself." (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary - Page 197](#))

Gordon 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; Nu 17:11ff. [Eng. 16:46ff.]), and this idea may underlie the use of incense here. ([The Book of Leviticus](#))

Leon Hyatt **And he shall put the incense on the fire before Jehovah that the cloud of the incense may shield The Covering.**

Offering the blood of the sin offerings on the Day of Coverings was the only ceremonial occasion when Aaron was authorized to enter "within the veil," that is, into The Most Holy Place. He could also enter it to cover the furniture in it with skins when The Tabernacle was to be moved to a different location (see Nu 4:5-6,15). No one but the high priest ever had the privilege of entering The Most Holy Place when its furniture was not covered in preparation for moving. **Even when Aaron entered The Most Holy Place, it was necessary for him to be protected from the full brightness of the glorious revelation of the presence of Jehovah that appeared constantly above The Covering. To protect himself from the brightness of the Glory Fire, Aaron was commanded to take with him a censer on which he had placed coals from the altar of incense and two handfuls of finely beaten incense.** The smoldering incense immediately caused a thick cloud of smoke to fill the room. Aaron would then be protected from the full glare of the fiery Light by two clouds. The first Cloud was the dark Cloud that always accompanied the Glory Fire (see v. 2 above), and the second cloud was the cloud of smoke from the incense. Aaron would be able to see the revelation of Jehovah, but he would be shaded from its full glare by the dark Cloud and the incense cloud. The word translated "shield" in verse 13 is translated as "cover" in most English translations. That translation is permissible, but it is misleading because the word is a different word from the word translated "Covering." The word is translated "shield" above to preserve the distinction. The two clouds shielded Aaron to protect him from being overwhelmed by God's brilliant presence. The Covering symbolized a different kind of covering, that is, protection from the effects of his sins, or forgiveness. **that is over The Testimony.** The Covering is said to be "over The Testimony," because the Record of God's revelations to Moses was called "The Testimony." The Record was called "The Testimony" because it witnessed or testified to what God had revealed to Moses for His people to do (Ex. 16:34; 25:16,21-22). That Record was kept in the Ark. **and he will not die.** When Moses was shielded from the overpowering brilliance of the Glory Fire, he would not die. Being protected by the smoke was equivalent to Moses' experience when he was told on the mountain after Israel's great sin that he could not see God's face and live, so God covered him with His hand and then allowed him to see His back (Ex. 33:18-23; 34:5-7).

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)

Parallels with Christ - The incense cloud shielded the high priest from death in God's presence, but Christ Himself is our covering, clothing us in His righteousness so that we may stand before God (2 Corinthians 5:21). The incense symbolized prayer rising to God, and Christ fulfills this as the One who ever lives to intercede for His people (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34). The high priest could not approach without this protective cloud, but Christ has torn down the veil and opened the way into God's presence for all who trust Him (Hebrews 10:19-20). Just as the priest survived by God's appointed means, so we live only by the intercession and sacrifice of Jesus.

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" (hilasterion).

R. Laird Harris - 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). (Older version of Expositor's Bible Commentary)

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.

NET Then he is to take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the eastern face of the atonement plate, and in front of the atonement plate he is to sprinkle some of the blood seven times with his finger.

CSB He is to take some of the bull's blood and sprinkle it with his finger against the east side of the mercy seat; then he will sprinkle some of the blood with his finger before the mercy seat seven times.

ESV And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat on the east side, and 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](#)

Parallel Passages:

Exodus 25:21-22+ "You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. 22"There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.

Leviticus 4:5-6+ Then the anointed priest is to take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting, and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary.

Hebrews 9:7+ 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.

Hebrews 9:22+ And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Hebrews 10:19-22+ Therefore, brethren, since 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.

Romans 3:25+ 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;

1 Peter 1:18-19+ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Isaiah 52:15 Thus He (MESSIAH) **will sprinkle** ([nazah](#)) many nations (SPEAKS OF SPIRITUAL CLEANSING NOT JUST FOR THE JEWS BUT THE GENTILES), Kings will shut their mouths (AWE, REVERENCE) on account of Him (AT THE SERVANTS HUMILIATION FOLLOWED BY HIS EXALTATION!); For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand (Ro 15:21, Isa 49:6) .

1 Peter 1:2+ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and **be sprinkled with His blood**: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

SEVENFOLD SPRINKLING OF ATONEMENT FORESHADOWS ONCE FOR ALL "SPRINKLING" AT CALVARY

Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle([nazah](#); Lxx = rhaino used in Ezek 36:25+) **it with his finger on the mercy seat** ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); Lxx - [hilasterion](#)) **on the east side; also in front of the mercy seat**([kapporet/kapporeth](#); Lxx - [hilasterion](#)) **he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times** - The instructions in this verse return to the blood of bull last mentioned in Lev 16:11. The **mercy seat** 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.

Richard Hess points out that "The placement of the blood before the place of atonement on the Day of Atonement is not accidental. Elsewhere with the purification offering (Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34; 8:14 – 15) the blood is placed at the base of the altar of sacrifice in order to consecrate it. Here the high priest sprinkles the blood seven times before the place of atonement. By doing so, he purifies the sanctuary from defilement that has entered into the inner part of the sanctuary. He also reconsecrates the sanctuary (Gorman, 88)." (See [Expositor's Bible Commentary - page 1108](#))

This passage describes the high priest's solemn act at the heart of the Day of Atonement. With the blood of the bull—offered first for his own sins—he was to enter the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it on and before the mercy seat. The act of sprinkling seven times emphasized both completeness and perfection in God's sight. This ritual pointed to the truth that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). The covering of the mercy seat with blood symbolized God's wrath turned aside and sin atoned for, so that His holy presence could dwell in the midst of His people. Ultimately, this pointed to Christ, whose blood was not sprinkled on an earthly mercy seat but poured out once for all at Calvary, and who entered the heavenly sanctuary to secure eternal redemption for His people.

Parallel with Christ - The high priest sprinkled the blood of a bull for his own sins, but Christ shed His own sinless blood on behalf of others. The sprinkling had to be repeated year after year, but Christ's sacrifice was once for all, never to be repeated (Hebrews 9:12). The blood was placed on an earthly mercy seat, a copy and shadow, but Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary with His own blood, accomplishing eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:24). The priest sprinkled blood seven times to symbolize completeness, but in Jesus, the work of atonement was perfectly completed in reality once for all. The blood on the mercy seat temporarily covered sin, but the blood of Christ removes it forever, reconciling us to God and granting free access into His presence (Heb 4:16, Heb 10:19-21).

Leon Hyatt **And he shall take from the blood of the bull and splatter [it] with his finger on the face The Covering** Then Aaron was to splatter some of the blood with his finger onto the top of the Covering. The word translated "splatter" is the same word used in Leviticus 4:6 with regard to handling the blood of a sin-offering (see comments on Leviticus 4:6 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading **shall take [some] of the bull's blood . . .**). **on top**. The word translated "on top" literally means "eastward," which strictly would

mean the narrow edge of The Covering that faced toward the east or the front of The Tabernacle. However, the words “on the face of The Covering,” which immediately precede the word “eastward,” cannot reasonably refer to that narrow edge. Most likely in this case the word means “on top.” Splattering the blood on The Covering corresponded to smearing blood on the horns of the altar of incense in the normal sin-offering for a priest and, therefore, symbolized that Jehovah accepted the prayers of Aaron and his sons after they repented of their sins (see comments on Lev. 4:7 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading **And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of incense of spices . . .**). **and he shall splatter the blood seven times with his finger at the face of The Covering.** Next, Aaron was to splatter some of the blood with his finger seven times “at the face of The Covering.” This expression seems to mean in front of The Covering on the ground inside the Most Holy Place. This action corresponded to splattering the blood “before the veil,” that is, outside the veil in a normal sin-offering of a priest. Therefore, it symbolized that Jehovah accepted Aaron and his sons for service in The Tabernacle after forgiving their sins (see comments on Lev. 4:6 in MESSAGE 2 under the heading **shall take [some] of the bull's blood . . .**). Splattering the blood seven times pictured the completeness of their covering from sin and of their acceptance for service at The Tabernacle, since the number seven was considered to be a symbol of completeness.

David 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.**

Jon Courson has an interesting comment on **sprinkle...seven times** (but be a Berean) - Seven is not only the number of perfection, but when Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed, He bled from seven points: There was a crown of thorns around His head. His back was whipped with the flagellum. His left and His right hands were pierced through with spikes driven into the wood of the Cross, as were His left and right feet. And finally, His side bled from the thrust of a spear. Thus, prophetically, the blood was to be sprinkled seven times prefiguring what Christ would do perfectly, completely. (See [Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

Sprinkle (05137) **nazah** means to spatter or sprinkle (Hiphil) blood, oil, water either with the finger (Lev 4:6⁺, Nu 19:4) or a something used for sprinkling (Lev 14:7⁺). The other Hebrew word for sprinkling (**zaraq**) refers to more robust sprinkling (cf Ex 9:8). The majority of occurrences are in the **Hiphil stem**, and they denote ceremonial sprinkling of blood (Lev. 5:9), oil (Lev. 8:11) or water (Num. 19:18) by the priest. Most of the uses refer to sprinkling of blood in the context of ritual cleansing from sin.

Gilbrant - In passages which describe a cleansing for the purpose of ordination, blood is used in combination with oil (Ex 29:21). Water (Nu 8:7) or oil alone (Lev. 8:11) was also used to consecrate men and material for divine service. The word *nāzāh* indicates in part “how much” blood is sprinkled. It signifies a use of the fingers or of a sprinkling device (Lev. 4:6). (Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

TWOT adds “**Sprinkling has reference to cleansing from sin** (Isaiah 52:15; 1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 9:13-14) to obtain ritual purity. Its primary significance derives from its reference to “blood” sprinkling. This particular root is used with blood sprinklings which are lighter both as to how much blood is sprinkled and as to what is expiated (e.g. Leviticus 4:6; Leviticus 5:9; Leviticus 14:7, 51; Numbers 19:4). Expiation for unwitting sin (Leviticus 4:6) and original sin (Leviticus 16:14) are thus interrelated and yet differentiated (i.e. by the relationship between the “sprinkling” and the “smearing” cf. *qāran*). The prophesied servant of the Lord although considered impure” was to “expiate” the sins of the Gentiles (cf. E. J. Young op. cit., Isaiah 52:15—this pronouncement is quite important (Acts 8:32-37).”

Nazah - 23x in 21v - splashed(1), splashes(1), sprinkle(16), sprinkled(4), sprinkles(1). - Ex 29:21; Lev. 4:6; Lev. 4:17; Lev. 5:9; Lev. 6:27; Lev. 8:11; Lev. 8:30; Lev. 14:7; Lev. 14:16; Lev. 14:27; Lev. 14:51; Lev. 16:14; Lev. 16:15; Lev. 16:19; Nu 19:4; Nu 19:18; Nu 19:19; Nu 19:21; 2 Ki. 9:33; Isa. 52:15; Isa. 63:3

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

NET "He must then slaughter the sin offering goat which is for the people. He is to bring its blood inside the veil-canopy, and he is to do with its blood just as he did to the blood of the bull: He is to sprinkle it on the atonement plate and in front of the atonement plate.

CSB "When he slaughters the male goat for the people's sin offering and brings its blood inside the veil, he must do the same with its blood as he did with the bull's blood: he is to sprinkle it against the mercy seat and in front of it.

ESV "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that 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, sprinkling it over 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 6:19-20 9:3,7,12
- [Leviticus 16 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 16:5-9 "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**. 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. 7 "He shall take the **two goats** and present them before the LORD at the doorway of the tent of meeting. 8 "Aaron shall **cast lots for the two goats**, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 "Then Aaron shall **offer the goat on which the lot for the LORD fell, and make it a sin offering**.

GOAT SLAIN FOR THE PEOPLE SPRINKLED ON MERCY SEAT

Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)) 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 ([nazah](#); Lxx = rhaino used in Ezek 36:25+) it on the mercy seat ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); Lxx - [hilasterion](#)) and in front of the mercy seat ([kapporet/kapporeth](#); Lxx - [hilasterion](#)) This verse summarizes the purification offering and in so doing describes the heart of the Day of Atonement sacrifice—the offering made on behalf of the people. After atoning for his own sins with the blood of the bull, the high priest now slaughtered the goat chosen for the people and carried its blood inside the veil into the Holy of Holies. There, he sprinkled the blood on and before the mercy seat, symbolizing the covering of sin and reconciliation with the holy God. This verse highlights that forgiveness was possible only through the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22). Yet it was also temporary, needing to be repeated every year. Ultimately, this blood ritual pointed to Christ, who entered the heavenly sanctuary once for all with His own blood, securing eternal redemption for His people.

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).

[Leon Hyatt](#) Of the congregation (Lev 16:15-19) To cover and cleanse the people (Lev 16:15) And he shall kill the goat of the sin-offering that [is] for the people. After completing the blood ceremony of the sin-offering for himself and his family, Aaron was to return to the courtyard of The Tabernacle. There he was to kill the male goat that had been chosen by lot for the sin-offering of the congregation. Both goats constituted the sin offering of the congregation, but this one was called "the goat of the sin-offering" because it followed the normal procedure for sin-offerings, though with certain variations for this special occasion. The fact that this goat was used in the normal way for sin offerings also explains why it was said to be "for Jehovah" in verse 8. It was offered to Jehovah at The Tabernacle in the customary manner of fire offerings (see comments on Lev. 1:5 in MESSAGE 1 under the heading **And he shall kill the bull). and bring its blood into the house of the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull. He shall splatter it on The Covering and at the face of The Covering** After killing the goat and catching its blood in a bowl, Aaron was to take some of the blood and return to the inner room of The Tabernacle. Here the inner room is called "the house of the veil" because the veil formed it into a separate house or room. Behind the veil in front of the Ark and The Covering, he was to repeat the same ceremony with the blood of the goat that he had performed with the blood of his bull sinoffering. The nation of Israel had been set aside for holy service to Jehovah in just as real and important a way as the priests. For that reason, the form and symbolism of the blood ceremony was the same for a priest and for the congregation in normal sinofferings (see comments on Lev. 4:16-18 in MESSAGE 2). They were also the same in the special procedures for sin-offerings on the Day of Coverings.

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**

Parallels with Christ - The goat was slain for the sins of the people, but Christ became the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). The high priest carried its blood inside the veil once a year, but Jesus entered the heavenly sanctuary once for all through His own blood (Hebrews 9:12, Heb 6:19-20). The sprinkled blood covered sin temporarily, but Christ's blood removes sin forever (Hebrews 10:14, 17-18). The blood of the goat reconciled Israel to God for a season, but Christ's blood has reconciled us eternally, making peace through the cross (Colossians 1:20).

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.

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

Related Passages:

Exodus 29:36-37+ (DAILY ATONEMENT FOR THE BRAZEN ALTAR) "Each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement, and you shall purify the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to consecrate it. 37 "For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall be holy.

Leviticus 8:14-15+ (MOSES MAKES ATONEMENT FOR THE BRAZEN ALTAR) Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering. 15 Next Moses slaughtered it and took the blood and with his finger put some of it around on the horns of the altar, and purified the altar. Then he poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it, to make atonement for it.

ATONING FOR SIN POLLUTING GOD'S TENT AND ALTAR

He shall make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) **for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions** ([peshah](#)) **in regard to all their sins** ([chattat/chattath](#)); **and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities** 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. This verse explains (note "because...") why the High Priest had to make atonement not only for the people, but even for the sanctuary itself. The holy place, though consecrated to God, was defiled by the sins and impurities of the people because God dwelled in their midst. The verse emphasizes the seriousness of sin and how it contaminates not only the sinner, but even the place where God's holy presence abides. This points us forward to Christ, whose blood not only cleanses sinners but also provides a cleansing for all that sin has corrupted, securing eternal access into the true heavenly sanctuary

William MacDonald has an interesting comment regarding the progression of making atonement from inward to outward, from the **mercy seat** to the tent of meeting to the **altar** - Atonement started with the Most Holy Place, then worked outward to the Holy Place and finally to the brazen altar (Lev 16:15-19). (Borrow [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

Gordon 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.). ([The Book of Leviticus](#))

John MacArthur adds that "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. By those sins, they had forfeited the privileges of the presence of God and worship of Him, so that an atonement had to be made for their sins as the condition of God remaining with them." (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Leon Hyatt To cover and cleanse The Tabernacle (Lev 16:16-17) **And he shall cover over the Holy [Place] because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions according to all their sins.** While in the most holy

portion of The Tabernacle, Aaron was to use the blood of the sin offering of the congregation to cover and cleanse the Holy [Place] itself, just as Moses had used the blood of the sin-offering of the priests to hallow both the priests and the altar on the day of their hallowing (Lev. 8:15). The term "Holy [Place]" was a general term for any holy place (Lev. 4:6 in [MESSAGE 2](#) under the heading of the Holy [Place]), but the context makes it clear that the Holy [Place] in question here was the inner room of The Tabernacle.

and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting Then Aaron was to cleanse the whole of the Tent of Meeting. It is not clear whether he splattered blood all about The Tabernacle to cover it from the sins of the people or whether the blood ceremony he had already performed was sufficient for covering the Holy [Place] and the whole Tabernacle at the same time. Comparison with Leviticus 8:10-11,15 indicates that the splattering of the blood in The Most Place was sufficient to bring covering to the whole Tabernacle.

When a person sins, everything that belongs to that person is dirtied and hurt because he abuses them with his sinfulness.

which abides with them in the midst of their impurities The Tabernacle had been dirtied by the uncleanness of the Israelites, in whose midst it was. When a person sins, everything that belongs to that person is dirtied and hurt because he abuses them with his sinfulness. Since the sins of the people had dirtied The Tabernacle, it was logical and right that the blood of their sin-offering would be used to cleanse it.

THOUGHT - I was thinking about the application of the cleansing of the **tabernacle** and the **altar** and it hit me that **WE** are the "tabernacle" ("temple of God" - 1Co 3:16+, 1Co 6:19-20+) and our heart is the "altar" (cf Pr 4:23+) and we are daily in the world and contaminated with "impurities" which grieve the presence of God's Spirit within us (Eph 4:30+, cf quench the Spirit 1Th 5:19+) and so we need (not yearly but daily!!!) to lay our hands on the "scapegoat" (so to speak) and confess our sins, known and unknown (1Jn 1:9+), so that we might experience the fullness of the *presence* and the *power* and the *pleasure* of God. Are any of these "3P's" lacking or a bit "anemic" in your (my) spiritual life? Then perhaps it is a good time to do some inner reflection (Ps 139:23,24+) and confession. Proverbs 28:13+ says "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But (PRAISE THE NAME OF JESUS!) he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion."

Parallels with Christ

- **Atonement for the Holy Place** – The earthly sanctuary required cleansing because of the people's sins. Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary to cleanse it with His own blood (Heb 9:23-24).
- **Sin's Defilement** – Sin contaminates everything it touches, including the dwelling of God. Christ bore our defilement and removed it (positionally) once for all (2 Cor 5:21).
- **God Dwelling Among His People** – God remained in the midst of Israel despite their impurities. In Christ, God came to dwell among sinners (John 1:14), bringing cleansing instead of judgment (cf Col 1:27b).
- **Blood Applied** – Just as blood cleansed the tent, Christ's blood purifies not only people but also creation itself, restoring all things (Col 1:20; Heb 9:14; cf 1Jn 1:7+ = "the blood of Jesus His Son [present tense - continually] cleanses us from all sin.").
- **Holiness Preserved** – Atonement ensured God's holiness was not compromised by dwelling with a sinful people. Christ preserves God's holiness while reconciling sinners (Ro 3:25-26).

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 - BORROW [The 365 Day Devotional Commentary PAGE 80](#))

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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 9:24-28+ 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 us; 25 nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 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 sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S SOLITARY WORK OF ATONEMENT

When he goes in to make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel -- This passage emphasizes the solitary work of the high priest on the Day of Atonement. No one else was permitted inside the tent of meeting while he entered the Holy of Holies. This underscores both the uniqueness and the gravity of the act of atonement. It was not a shared duty, nor could it be assisted by others—the high priest alone bore the responsibility of entering with blood to secure cleansing for himself, his household, and the entire nation.

This scene foreshadows the solitary and sufficient work of Christ, our Great High Priest, Who hung as an offering on the old rugged cross Alone. And after rising and ascending entered the heavenly sanctuary Alone (Heb 4:14+, Heb 6:19-20+), through His own blood, to secure eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12+). Just as no Israelite could intrude upon Aaron's work, so no human work can add to Christ's finished work. Salvation rests solely in Him and is attained by man solely by faith in Christ. Amen.

Addendum: 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).

[Leon Hyatt](#) No one was to be in the tent portion of The Tabernacle when Aaron performed these ceremonies. Since only priests were allowed in the tent portion and they were allowed only in the outer room, this instruction means that no priests were to be allowed in the outer room when Aaron entered the inner room. Thus no other offerings were to be offered that would distract from the holy ceremony Aaron was performing. Everyone was to concentrate on the meaning of these richly significant offerings that Aaron was to offer in behalf of himself, his family, and the whole nation. All of them were being covered and forgiven because all of them were repenting. Renewal was being granted to the whole nation. At that holy moment, no other ceremony or action was to distract their attention from the forgiveness being given to the whole nation.

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](#)

Related Passages:

Exodus 29:12 "You shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger; and you shall pour out all the blood at the base of the altar.

COMMENT - The blood of the bull (a sin offering) was to be applied to the horns of the altar and poured at its base. The horns symbolized strength and power, so marking them with blood indicated that atonement and cleansing were necessary even for the altar itself, the very place of sacrifice. Pouring the blood at the base consecrated the foundation of the altar, signifying that all offerings would rest on a blood-stained foundation. This vivid act reminded Israel that sin contaminates everything, even sacred instruments, and that forgiveness and fellowship with God are possible only through the shedding of blood. It foreshadows the cross of Christ, where His poured-out blood became the foundation for our eternal redemption and the consecration of true worship.

Leviticus 4:7 "The priest shall also put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense which is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

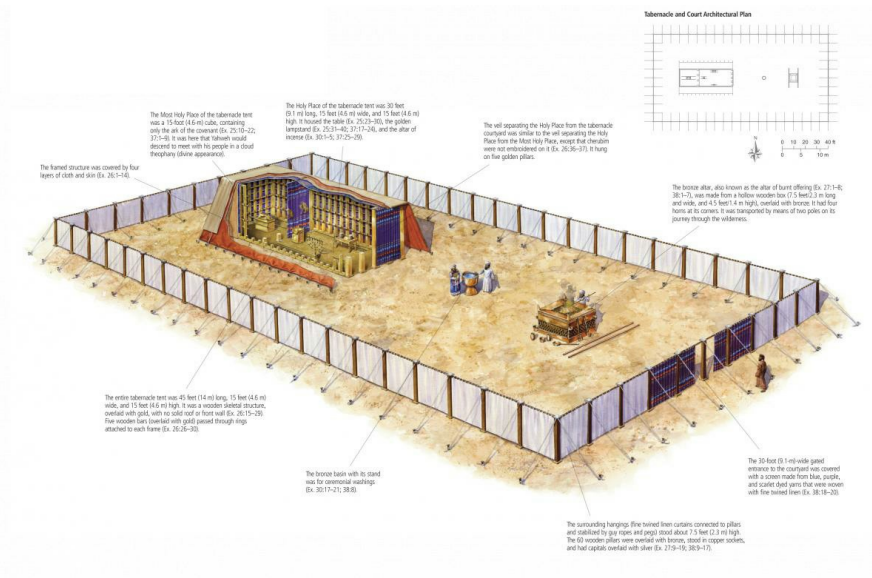
COMMENT - Note that blood was applied in two places: on the horns of the **altar of incense inside the tent**, and poured out at the base of the **altar of burnt offering** outside. The horns of the incense altar—where prayers symbolically rose to God—needed cleansing because sin corrupts even the channel of communion with God.

Ezekiel 43:20 You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it.

Hebrews 9:22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Hebrews 10:10; 14 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (10:14) For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Hebrews 13:10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.



EVEN THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE NEEDED CLEANSING!

Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) 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. Now the focus shifts from the Day of Atonement in the inner sanctuary to the altar in the courtyard. This is amazing! Even the **altar**—the very place where sacrifices were continually offered—was not exempt from the defilement of Israel's sin. The high priest was required to smear the blood of both the bull (for himself) and the goat (for the people) on its horns, symbolizing the need for purification and reconsecration of the place where atonement was made. This act reinforced that sin contaminates not only individuals but also their worship and its instruments. Yet God, in His mercy, provided cleansing so that worship might continue. Ultimately, this foreshadowed Christ, whose blood not only atones for sinners but also consecrates all worship, making it acceptable before God.

Leon Hyatt And he shall go out to the altar that is at Jehovah's face and cover over it. The altar referred to in these verses is the altar of rededication offering that was located in the courtyard outside the entrance to tent portion of The Tabernacle. The altar of incense was inside the first room of The Tabernacle, and it had already been covered in verse 16 along with the Tent of Meeting and all its contents. **and he shall take from the blood of the bull and from the blood of the goat and put [it] on the horns of the altar round about.** The altar outside the Tent was to be covered from the effects of the people's sins by Aaron's putting a mixture of some of the blood from his bull sin-offering and some of the blood of the people's goat sin-offering on the horns of the altar and by splattering some of the blood seven times on the altar itself. Since both the priests and the people had confessed themselves to be sinners, the sins of both had helped to dirty it. Thus, blood from both sin-offerings was to be used to cover it from sins.

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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 4:5-7+ 'Then the anointed priest is to take some of the blood of the bull and bring it to the tent of meeting, 6 and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and **sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD**, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. 7 'The priest shall also put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense which is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

COMMENT - This is the priestly procedure for the sin offering when the anointed priest himself sinned (Lev 4:3). Blood was carried into the sanctuary and applied in three places: sprinkled seven times before the veil (**before the LORD**), placed on the horns of the altar of incense, and poured at the base of the altar of burnt offering. This vivid threefold action symbolized that sin pollutes every dimension of worship—

our access to God (the veil), our prayers (the incense altar), and our sacrifices (the burnt offering altar). The repetition of blood emphasized that only through atonement could fellowship with God be restored. This pointed forward to Christ, who by His own blood removed the barrier of sin, sanctified the prayers of His people, and became the final sacrifice that consecrates all true worship.

Exodus 29:36-37+ “Each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement, and you shall purify the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to consecrate it. 37 “For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall be holy.

Hebrews 9:13-14+ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer **sprinkling those who have been defiled** sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

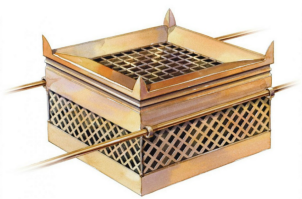
Hebrews 9:19-21+ For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and **sprinkled** ([rhantismos](#)) both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, “THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU.” 21 And in the same way he **sprinkled** ([rhantismos](#)) both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood.

Hebrews 9:22+ And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Hebrews 10:14+ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

1 Peter 1:18-19+ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

1 Peter 2:5+ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.



Altar of Burnt Offering - Brazen Altar
With Four Horns

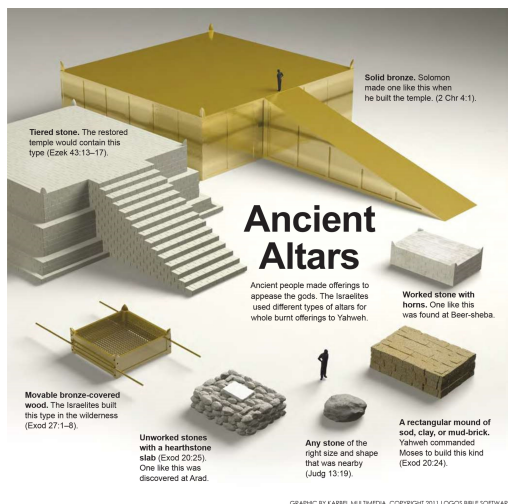
CLEANSING OF BRAZEN ALTAR BY SEVENFOLD SPRINKLING OF BLOOD

With his finger he shall **sprinkle** ([nazah](#); Lxx = rhaino used in Ezek 36:25+) **some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse** ([taher](#); Lxx = [katharizo](#)) **it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it**- This passage describes the high priest's final act of purifying the brazen altar on the Day of Atonement. By sprinkling the blood seven times, he symbolically cleansed and consecrated the altar, which had been continually defiled by the sins of the people. To reiterate, even the instruments of worship needed purification, because sin corrupts everything it touches. The repeated sevenfold sprinkling with blood highlighted both the seriousness of sin and the completeness of God's provision (seven speaks of completeness in Scripture). This act pointed forward to Christ, whose blood not only cleanses His people but also sanctifies and purifies every aspect of their worship. His once-for-all sacrifice consecrates both the worshiper and the worship offered, making it acceptable before God.

[Leon Hyatt](#) And he shall **splatter from the blood onto it with his finger seven times**. Splattering the blood seven times symbolized how completely their sins were covered. **and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel**. In Lev 16:19, “cleansing,” and “hallowing” are made to be equivalent to “cover” in Lev 16:18. The three words had different basic meanings, but their use was so interrelated that they all came to have the same meaning. All three referred to the removal of sin and its effects, so that the person or object could reflect the likeness of Jehovah (see comments on Lev. 8:15 in [MESSAGE 10](#)).

Parallels with Christ - The altar had to be sprinkled with blood repeatedly to be cleansed, but Christ's blood cleanses once for all, perfectly and permanently (Hebrews 10:14). The high priest consecrated the altar from Israel's impurities, but Christ purifies not only

outward things but also the conscience of the believer (Hebrews 9:13–14). The altar needed continual renewal, but in Christ, worship itself has been consecrated so that believers can offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (1 Peter 2:5). Just as the sevenfold sprinkling symbolized completeness, Christ's finished work is the ultimate completeness of atonement—nothing more needs to be added.



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Cleanse (purify) ([02891](#)) [tahir](#) commonly refers to ritual purity or cleanness in the OT. In fact except for Job 37:21 and Mal 3:3, **tahir** almost exclusively of ritual or moral purity. To be clean, be pure, innocent, righteous. To make clean, purify. To be cleansed **Tahir** is the antonym of the Hebrew word "tame" (unclean) Those who contracted impurity, TAME' ([02931](#)), were not permitted to participate in the rituals until they were purified (Lv 22:4-7). Disqualification might be due to afterbirth (Lv 12:7, 8) or other bodily discharges (Lv 15:13). Priests were to be medical examiners to determine when lepers were 'cleansed' (Lv 14:8ff.). In the first use in (Gen 35:2) we read "So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away t he foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments;

The [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) often translates [tahir](#) with the verb [katharizo](#) which describes cleansing from ritual contamination or impurity (Acts 10:15). Katharizo was used of cleansing lepers from ceremonial uncleanness (Mt 8:2-3, et al)

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, Lev 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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 8:15 (CONSECRATION OF AARON AND SONS) Next Moses slaughtered it and took the blood and with his finger put some of it around on the horns of the altar, and purified the altar. Then he poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it, to make atonement for it.

FROM CLEANSING THE ALTAR TO A LIVING GOAT FOR THE PEOPLE

When he finishes atoning ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) **for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat.** This verse marks the transition point in the Day of Atonement ritual. This comprehensive atonement highlighted how deeply sin defiles—not only people, but also the very place of God's presence and the instruments of His service. After the high priest completed the atoning work for the holy sanctuary, the tent of meeting, and the altar, every part of Israel's worship had been symbolically cleansed and he then turned to the scapegoat ceremony.

This division in the ritual highlights two great truths: (1) the need for cleansing of all that sin had defiled, even

the instruments of worship, and (2) the need for sin itself to be carried away from the people. God not only provides cleansing but also removal of guilt. The verse prepares us for the striking symbolism of the live goat, which bore the confessed iniquities of Israel into the wilderness. Together, these ceremonies foreshadow Christ, who both cleanses His people by His blood and bears away their sins forever.

He refers to the Jewish high priest, a shadow of our Great **High Priest** (Heb 3:1+, cp Col 2:17+) 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+)

Finishes atoning - He finished the atoning work, but it was only for that year. When Jesus our Great High Priest finished (Jn 19:30+) 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 10:12-13+; Heb 10:14+, see also Heb 10:4-7+, Heb 10:5-7+, Heb 10:8-9,10+)

He shall offer the live goat - Unlike the first goat, the "live goat" was not killed. Instead, it was presented alive before the Lord to symbolically carry away the people's sins. (See [Scapegoat devotionals](#))

The slain goat showed Christ's death for sin, while the live goat showed the removal of sin's guilt and power. Together, they picture the full scope of Christ's atonement—He died for our sins, and He carried them away, never to return.

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.

THE GOAT OF RELEASE

The priest has done his solemn part,
With blood to cleanse each sacred heart;
The veil, the tent, the altar stone,
All purified before God's throne.

Now stands the goat, still living, near,
To bear away sin's weight and fear;
A symbol cast for all to see—
Our guilt removed, our spirits free.

Yet greater still, the shadow shows,
The Lamb of God, Who fully knows;
He bore our sins, was sent away,
And cleansed our souls that very day.

Finishes (03615)([kalah](#)) to be complete, at an end, finished, accomplished, or spent. To bring a process to completion. To [consummate](#). It can have a positive connotation (Ge 2:1-2), but more often is used in a negative sense.

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. **QARAB** - Lev 16:1, 9, 11. Compare Ex. 29:4; Lev. 1:5, 13, 14; Num. 16:9.

Parallels with Christ - The high priest could not proceed to the scapegoat until he had finished atoning for the holy place, but Christ finished His work of cleansing at the cross, declaring, "It is finished" (John 19:30). The scapegoat pictured the removal of sin from the people, but Christ Himself bore our sins and carried them away forever (Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24). The yearly ceremony had to be repeated, but Christ's once-for-all sacrifice cleansed and removed sin completely (Hebrews 9:12; 10:14). Just as Israel needed both cleansing and removal, Christ provides both—He purifies our hearts and removes our guilt "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).

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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 4:15 'Then the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be slain before the LORD.

Isaiah 53:5+ (FORETELLING OF THE SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT OF MESSIAH) 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**

Isaiah 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.

Isaiah 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.

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

1 Peter 2:24+ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

THE GREAT GOAT TRANSFER OF SIN

Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess ([yadah](#)) over it all the iniquities (['avon](#); Lxx = [adikia](#)) of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions ([pesha'](#)) in regard to all their sins ([chattat/chattath](#); Lxx = [hamartia](#)); and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away ([shalach](#); Lxx = [exapostello](#)) into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness - This verse describes the solemn climax of the scapegoat ritual. By laying both hands on the goat's head, the High Priest symbolically placed the full weight of the people's guilt on the animal. He acknowledged Israel's guilt and the need for a substitute to bear it away. The goat was then sent away into the wilderness, carrying those sins far from God's presence. **Send it away** was a picture of their sins bore away or put away. This ritual portrayed for Israel the reality of sin removed—by a substitute who bore their guilt and by separation that sent it far away. In Christ, the shadow becomes reality for He bore our sins in His body (1Pe 2:24+) and removed them "as far as the east is from the west."

Spurgeon - Notice the repeated "**all**" in this verse: "Aaron will lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the Israelites' iniquities and rebellious acts—all their sins." This was the second part of the atonement showing not sacrifice but the effect of sacrifice and explaining what becomes of sin after the sacrifice has been accepted and the blood has been presented within the veil.

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.

[Leon Hyatt](#) - The sin-offering of the congregation was to be continued by the ceremony of "the goat of complete removal." Aaron was to press his hands on its head and confess over it the sins of the nation. Confessing all the sins of the people could not have

meant naming every sin separately. It meant confessing that their sins were great and many. In this case, Aaron's pressing his hands on the head of the goat meant that the confessed sins of the people were symbolically placed on the goat, so it could carry them away. The only possible conclusion from this part of the ceremony is that the goat of complete removal represented Jehovah, not a demon (see comments on v. 8 above). Only Jehovah can bear away people's sins. Pressing Aaron's hands on the head of the goat of complete removal had a different significance from that same act in regular sin-offerings. In regular sin-offerings, pressing the hands on the head of the animal meant that the animal represented the worshiper and his surrendered life (see comments on Lev. 1:4 in [MESSAGE 1](#) under the heading **And he shall press his hand on the head of the rededication-offering** and on Lev. 4:15 in [MESSAGE 2](#) under the heading **And the elders of the congregation shall press their hands on the head of the bull at Jehovah's face**). In this case, the animal represented God's assuming the burden of the sins of the people and removing it from them.

Confess (03034) **yadah** primarily means to acknowledge or confess sin (Lev 5:5, Lev 16:21 on the Day of Atonement, Lev 26:40, Nu 5:7, 1Ki 8:33, 35), God's character and works, or man's character. **Yadah** is also frequently rendered "**praise**" (1Chr 16:4) or "**give thanks**." (2Sa 22:50 - partially quoted in Ro 15:9; 1Chr 16:7, 8, 34, 35, 41, 23:30, 25:3, 29:13, Ps 7:17) At first glance, the meanings may appear unrelated. But upon closer inspection, it becomes evident that each sense profoundly illumines and interprets the other. Yadah overlaps in meaning with a number of other Hebrew words implying "praise," such as *halal* (whence *halleluyah*).

Transgressions (rebellion) (06588) **pesha'** from **pasha** [06586] = to rebel, transgress) means transgression, rebellion or revolt against authority (rising up in clear defiance of authority), guilt (incurred by transgressing). **Pesha'** is derived from a root describing the breach of relationship between two parties (civil or religious). The idea of this noun is that the individual makes a willful choice to reject God's authority and hence to deviate from the path of godly living. Defection from God's standard. **Pesha'** is "a stepping aside from the (correct) path." **Pesha'** speaks of willful sin.

This ritual provided Israel with a dramatic twofold picture of God's provision for sin. First, the slain goat portrayed **substitutionary atonement**—sin's guilt paid for by the death of another in the sinner's place. Second, the live goat portrayed **separation of sin**—the complete removal of guilt and transgression, carried far away and never to return. Together, these two acts impressed upon Israel that God not only satisfies His justice through a substitute but also grants His people freedom from the continuing burden of sin's presence. Ultimately, both aspects converge perfectly in Christ, who both died for our sins (1 Cor 15:3) and removed them from us "as far as the east is from the west" (Ps 103:12).

*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"](#)

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](#))

Allen Ross on Confessing or acknowledging sin

The basic idea of "acknowledge" for the verb works well because it can apply both to praise and to confession of sin. It means to say the same thing that God says--here about sin. The fact that one word can be used for both ideas is not that difficult to understand: to confess sin properly will necessarily praise God for His provision of forgiveness, and to praise God properly will necessarily include the acknowledgment of our sin and need. Both can be understood as an acknowledgment. But whereas the use for praise was most often in the sanctuary as a public declaration, the confession of sin was more private, even if made in the sanctuary. Only when the sin is known in the congregation, or involves the congregation, was public confession necessary--and then also and always with a sacrifice, a sin offering.

In Job 40:14 the meaning of "acknowledge" occurs with the sense of conceding a point: God says, "Then I will acknowledge that your own right hand can save you."

But the idea of acknowledging sin to God is more commonly the emphasis.

Psalm 32:5 has "I said, I will confess ('odeh again) my transgression to the LORD." Here it basically means to admit to the sin, to agree with God about it.

Leviticus 16:21 has the word for the High Priest's confession of the sins, when he confessed all the sins of the people over the goat. In Leviticus the form of the verb may occur in the hithpael stem.

So in contexts dealing with sin the same verb will have the sense of "acknowledge" with the connotation of confessing sin.

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.

John Bennett - Day by Day - Leviticus 16:5–28 THE GOAT SHALL BEAR ... ALL THEIR INIQUITIES

Like the sheep, the goat was an animal utilized for sacrifice, especially for sin offerings. The ceremony of the scapegoat was performed by Aaron on the Day of Atonement, and involved one of two goats, chosen by lot, to carry away Israel's sins. Aaron had to, 'confess over him (the goat) all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat', v. 21. This living goat was taken into the wilderness, bearing 'upon him all their iniquities unto a land not

inhabited', v. 22, where it died out of sight in 'a waste howling wilderness', Deut. 32:10.

The scapegoat typifies the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross in both bearing and taking away our sins from before a holy God. For instance, Peter wrote that Christ, 'his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree', 1 Pet. 2:24; see also Isa. 53:6, 11, 12; Heb. 9:28. John added that He was, 'manifested to take away our sins', 1 John 3:5.

Every iniquity had to be borne, either by the person who had committed it, Lev. 5:1, 17, which often meant death, or it could be borne by an offering, Lev. 10:17, as prescribed by God.

Laying hands on the head of a sacrifice was a means of identifying with it. In most of the offerings, the offerer laid just one of his hands on the animal's head before killing it, Lev. 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4; e.g., the elder of the congregation with a bullock, Lev. 4:15; the ruler with a goat, Lev. 4:24, or even a common man with a female kid or lamb, Lev. 4:29; 4:33. However, on the Day of Atonement, Aaron had to lay both his hands on the head of the scapegoat, and confess over the goat, 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat', Lev. 16:21.

The idea of sin being removed was taken up by the psalmist who wrote, 'as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us', Ps. 103:12.

Last of all, we think of the fact that all Israel's sins and iniquities were borne and carried away, and we remember that the Lord Jesus, 'gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity', Titus 2:14.

Transferring of Sins

"And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat."—
Lev. 16:21

Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, thus speaks of his attaining peace in believing:

"In passion week," he tells, "as I was reading 'Bishop Wilson on the LORD's Supper,' I met with an expression to this effect, That the Jews knew what they did when they transferred their sin to the head of their offering. The thought rushed into my mind, What! may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an Offering for me, that I may lay my sins on his Head? Then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer. Accordingly I sought to lay my sins upon the sacred head of Jesus, and on the Wednesday began to have a hope of mercy; on the Thursday that hope increased; on the Friday and Saturday it became more strong; and on Easter Sunday (April 4) I awoke early with these words upon my heart and lips, 'Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia! Alleluia!' From that hour peace flowed in rich abundance into my soul."

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](#)

SIN SENT AWAY FELLOWSHIP RESTORED

The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities ('avon; Lxx = [adikia](#)) to a solitary land; and he shall release ([shalach](#); Lxx = [exapostello](#)) the goat in the wilderness. - Here Moses describes the climax of the scapegoat ritual on the Day of Atonement. After the high priest confessed the sins of Israel over the living goat, it was sent away into the wilderness, symbolically carrying the nation's sins far from them. This vivid picture impressed upon (or should have impressed upon) Israel the seriousness of sin, the need for substitution, and the mercy of God in providing a means for sins to be removed. Yet, as powerful as the symbol was, the goat only represented what Christ Himself would one day accomplish. In Him, the reality surpasses the shadow: the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6), and through His sacrifice our sins are taken away forever.

The Hebrew verb for **bear** (נָסָא – nasa') means to lift up, carry, or take away. The scapegoat symbolically carried away the sins of the people. **Iniquities** (יָוֹן – 'avon) referred not just to their sinful acts but the guilt and twisted consequences of sin. In Greek (Lxx),

this is rendered [adikia](#) (δίκια), meaning unrighteousness, injustice, wrongdoing.

The Symbolism - Transfer of Sin – Through confession and the laying on of hands, Israel's sins were symbolically placed on the head of the scapegoat. **Removal of Sin** – The goat carried these sins far away into a land cut off, demonstrating that God not only forgives but also removes sin from His people (cf. Ps 103:12 – "as far as the east is from the west"). **Finality** – The goat never came back. Once carried away, the sins were gone from the camp.

Christ carried not only our sins but also the guilt, shame, and penalty of them into the "wilderness" of the cross

Fulfillment in Christ - This scapegoat points directly to Jesus, the true Sin-bearer: Isaiah 53:6 says "The LORD has caused the iniquity of us all **to fall on Him**." John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God who **takes away** the sin of the world!" Hebrews 9:28 "So Christ also, having been offered once **to bear** the sins of many, will appear a second time..." 1 Peter 2:24 – "He Himself **bore our sins** in His body on the tree." Christ carried not only our sins but also the **guilt, shame, and penalty** of them into the "wilderness" of the cross, removed from God's people forever.

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. This pictured removal and separation of sin, far away from the people of God.

[Leon Hyatt](#) - Someone was to lead the goat away into the wilderness and let it go, far enough away so that it would not be able to return. Taking the goat away was to symbolize that, when Jehovah removes the burden of sin, He removes it completely forever. Removing the effects of sin was not pictured so graphically in the normal sin-offering. That truth is so important that the sin-offering of the congregation on The Day of Coverings was enlarged to emphasize it. This ceremony can be compared with the releasing of one of the birds in the cleansing ceremony for tsaraath (see comments on Lev. 14:6-7 in [MESSAGE 17](#) and on Lev. 14:53+). The lesson in each is the same. Jehovah takes away the effects of sin from the sinner's life and removes them completely.

Illustration - Imagine someone carrying a massive bag of garbage—rotting, stinking, unbearable—taken far outside the city and dumped where it will never be seen again. That's what the scapegoat pictured. Jesus carried the full stench of our sin to the cross, where it was judged once for all. Amazing grace indeed!

Iniquities (punishment, guilt) ([05771](#)) **'avon** from verb **'avah** = to bend, twist, distort) describes the iniquity, evil, punishment or guilt which is associated with a twisting of the standard or deviation from it. Since there is a deliberate twisting or perverting, 'avon describes sin that is particularly evil. It may also describe the punishment or disaster that befalls those who practice wickedness.

'Avon also describes a conscious twisting or distorting as implied by the fact that David says "I kept myself from my iniquity." (2Sa 22:24) Israel made a choice to return to the sins of her ancestors (Jer. 11:10; 13:22). The punishment that goes with this deliberate act as a consequence is indicated by the word also (Ge 4:13; Isa 53:11).

This word for sin can also indicate the guilt that results from the act of sin as implied in Moses' prayer in Nu 14:19.

Release (send away) ([07971](#)) **shalach** means to send, to send forth, to send away, to let go, to put, to expel (cf Ge 3:23). The first use in Ge 3:22 describes Adam as he **stretched** out his hand to take of the forbidden fruit. The second use in Ge 3:23 describes God's punishment - "God **sent** him **out** (shalach) from the Garden." In Ge 8:7 Noah "sent out a raven" then "a dove" (Ge 8:8, 10, 12). In Ge 18:16 Abraham **sent** the visitors (one of which was the LORD!) on their way, thus sending off in a friendly sense. Of the angels who "**reached out** (shalach) their hands and brought Lot into the house." The LORD...**sent** (shalach) us (the angels) to destroy" Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19:13). In Ge 19:29 "when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and **sent** Lot **out** of the midst of the overthrow." Of Hagar and Ishmael "sent...away" into the wilderness of Beersheba (Ge 21:14). In Ge 22:10 "Abraham **stretched out** his hand" as he prepared to sacrifice Isaac. God told him "do not **stretch out** your hand against the lad." (Ge 22:12) We could continue working through the verses which gives us a good sense of what this verb shalach means. In Malachi 3:1 God says He will **send** "My messenger" (Elijah) (cf Mal 4:5). In Malachi 2:16 God says "I hate **divorce**" and the word in Hebrew is **shalach**. Shalach is used to mean - Send fire (Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, Amos 2:2,5), a plague (Amos 4:10) or a famine (Amos 8:11). For various lexicon discussions [click here](#).

SHALACH IN LEVITICUS - Lev. 14:7; Lev. 14:53; Lev. 16:10; Lev. 16:21; Lev. 16:22; Lev. 16:26; Lev. 18:24; Lev. 20:23; Lev. 26:22; Lev. 26:25

Parallel with Christ - The scapegoat bore the confessed sins of Israel into the wilderness, but Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness (1 Peter 2:24+). The goat was led away into a solitary land, symbolizing separation, while Jesus was led outside the Holy City to die in disgrace (Hebrews 13:12+, Jn 19:17+, Mt 27:33+, Mk 15:22+). The goat removed the sins of the people for a year, but Christ's sacrifice removes sin forever (Hebrews 10:12, 14+). The goat's release signified sins carried far away, and in Christ God promises to remember our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34+). What the scapegoat pictured temporarily, Christ fulfilled eternally—He is the true Sin-Bearer Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29+). HALLELUJAH! THANK YOU JESUS!

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+

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. Egnor ([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 distressed,
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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 9:28+ 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.

AARON'S SECOND WASHING

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 After completing the solemn duties within the Holy of Holies, Aaron was commanded to remove the simple linen garments he had worn to enter God's presence. These special clothes, set apart for the work of atonement, were to be left in the holy place and not worn again for ordinary service. The change of garments signified the completion of the atoning work for that day, the temporary nature of the priest's ministry, and the separation between the sacred and the common. It foreshadowed Christ, our Great High Priest, Who laid aside the "garments" of His earthly humiliation after His finished work on the cross and was clothed again with glory and majesty at the Father's right hand (cf. John 17:5; Philippians 2:9–11).

Leon Hyatt A second washing of Aaron took place next. It is possible that the first washing (v. 4) represented ceasing to sin, whereas this washing represented removing the effects of sin. In both cases, washing symbolized removing sins through the effort of the person himself, a concept with which the Israelites were now familiar after the revelations concerning the cleansing ceremonies (see comments on Lev. 11:25,28,31-38,40 in MESSAGE 14, on Lev. 12:4 in MESSAGE 15, on Lev. 14:2-9 in MESSAGE 17, on Lev. 14:49-53 in MESSAGE 18, and Lev. 15:11- 27 in MESSAGE 19). In preparation for the washing, Aaron was to enter The Tent of Meeting and remove his clothes with the exception of his breeches (see comments on Lev. 8:6 in MESSAGE 10). He was to leave his clothes there, so obviously he was to leave the Tent.

ILLUSTRATIONS -

1. Changing Clothes After a Great Task

Picture a firefighter who, after battling flames, removes the smoke-soaked uniform and lays it aside. The uniform served its purpose in the crisis, but once the work is done, it is left behind. So Aaron laid aside his linen garments once the work of atonement was complete—pointing to Christ, who laid aside His humiliation

garments when His saving work was finished.

2. Graduation Robes

A student wears special robes on graduation day—symbolizing a solemn occasion. Once the ceremony is over, those robes are no longer needed and are removed. Aaron's linen garments were like those robes: unique for the Day of Atonement. Christ, however, after finishing His "ceremony" of sacrifice, did not just remove His robes but was clothed with eternal glory.

3. Courtroom Advocate

An attorney puts on a robe when stepping before a judge. The robe represents a role for that moment in court. When the case is settled, the robe is taken off. Aaron's linen garments represented his role as mediator on that solemn day. Christ, in contrast, remains our eternal Advocate at God's right hand—He never steps away from His priesthood (Heb 7:25).

4. Work Clothes vs. Glory Clothes

Think of a king who puts on simple work clothes to walk among his people in disguise. Once the work is accomplished, he puts on his royal robes again. Aaron's linen garments were "work clothes" of humility. Christ put on the "work clothes" of human flesh, then after His finished work, He was clothed in majesty and honor once more (Phil 2:9–11).

5. Painter's Coveralls

A painter wears simple, plain coveralls while laboring on a project. Once the work is done, the coveralls are discarded and he appears again in clean attire. Aaron's garments functioned like coveralls for a sacred task. Jesus, by contrast, never "puts away" His priestly role, but He does exchange the garments of humility for the shining robes of eternal glory.

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](#)



Possibly Puts These On

CLEANSSED AND CLOTHED FOR SERVICE

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 ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) **for himself and for the people** - After completing the inner work of atonement with the blood sacrifices, the high priest was required to wash himself with water in a holy place and put back on his regular priestly garments, although some think these were still the linen garments. Only then could he come forth and present the burnt offerings for himself and for the people. This ritual underscored the necessity of personal cleansing, priestly readiness, and public sacrifice. The washing emphasized that fellowship with God demanded purity, while the

burnt offerings symbolized total consecration to God. Both priest and people alike needed atonement—reminding us that no one stood above the need for God's mercy. Ultimately, this pointed to Christ, the sinless High Priest, Who needed no cleansing Himself but offered one perfect sacrifice, fully consecrated to God, to secure atonement for His people forever.

David Guzik feels that "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."

Lindsey - After the high priest removed and left his linen garments in the Tent of Meeting, he bathed (to assure ceremonial purity) and put on his regular garments of **high priestly splendor** for the incineration ritual. He then sacrificed the burnt offering of a ram (Lev 16:3) for himself and the burnt offering of a second ram (Lev 16:5) for the people along with the fat of the sin offering (apparently referring to both the bull of the high priest and the goat of the people). It is noteworthy that it was now the burnt offerings that made atonement for himself and the people (cf. Lev 1:4). (See [Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament - Page 198](#))

What Happens in Lev 16:23–24? After finishing the atoning sacrifices inside the Most Holy Place, Aaron returns to the tent of meeting and removes the linen garments he had worn inside (Lev 16:23). Then comes Lev 16:24: "He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes." **Question:** Which clothes? The phrase "his clothes" here most naturally refers to his regular high priestly garments (the "golden garments"). **Reason:** once his unique work in the Holy of Holies was finished, he resumed his normal priestly identity before the people, which involved putting back on his full, glorious vestments.

Leon Hyatt does not agree with Guzik and Lindsey - Aaron was to wash himself at the laver in the courtyard and then return again to the outer room of The Tabernacle and dress himself again in his special clothes. Most commentators have tried to explain how the second clothes were different from the ones Aaron took off. This effort is unnecessary. Aaron did not remove his clothes in order to dress himself in different clothing. He did in order to wash himself and then put back on the same clothes he had removed. The sequence of events makes that procedure plain. The place of removing his outer clothing was The Tent of Meeting. He was to leave his clothes there, a strange procedure unless he was to go back to put them on again. The place of washing was "Holy Place." This expression is the same term used in Leviticus 10:17 (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 13 under the heading Why have you not eaten the sin-offering in The Place of Holiness), except that here the article is omitted. Even though the article is missing here, it is obvious that the term was meant to refer to **The Holy Place or the courtyard**, because the laver was located there. After washing his hands and feet, Aaron was to go back into the Tent and put on his holy clothing. Then he was to "come forth" to offer rededication-offerings. The offerings were offered in the courtyard, so he had to reenter the tent portion of The Tabernacle in order to "come forth" to offer them. It should be obvious that the reason he reentered The Holy [Place] was to put back on the clothes he had left there.

Next, Aaron was to offer the rededication offering for himself and the rededication-offering for the people, even though the ceremonies of the sin-offerings were not finished. Offering the rededication-offerings in the midst of the ceremony of the sin-offerings shows that the meanings of the two offerings closely resembled each other, a fact that had previously been shown in Leviticus 5:7-10 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 2). The rededication-offerings were offered to symbolize complete surrender of the whole life to Jehovah. This same surrender of the worshiper's life was symbolized in the sin-offering by splattering of the blood of the sin-offering, so the rededication-offerings were offered here in the midst of the ceremony of the rededication-offerings to expand on the importance of total surrender in connection with the sin-offering, just as the blood ceremony in the most holy room of The Tabernacle and sending away the goat of complete removal had expanded on other aspects of the sin-offering.

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](#)

THE RICHEST PART BELONGS TO GOD

Then he shall offer up in smoke the fat of the sin offering([chattat/chattath](#)) **on the altar.** In Levitical law, the fat—the best and richest portion—was always reserved for the LORD, never to be eaten by man (Lev 3:16-17). Its complete consumption by fire symbolized total devotion to God and the acceptance of the offering. Its complete consumption by fire symbolized total devotion to God and the acceptance of the offering. On the Day of Atonement, this final act demonstrated that the sin offering was fully given to

God. Spiritually, it points to Christ, who wholly offered Himself up to God in perfect obedience, and whose sacrifice was a “pleasing aroma” (Eph 5:2) accepted by the Father on behalf of sinners.

Leon Hyatt Then the fat of the sin-offerings was to be roasted on the altar. Though the words “fat” and “sin-offering” are in the singular, they undoubtedly referred to the fat from both the sin-offering of the priests and the sin-offering of the congregation. Offering the fat on the altar symbolized surrendering the best that was in their lives to God (see comments on Lev. 3:3-5 in MESSAGE 1 and on Lev. 4:8-10 in MESSAGE 2).

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](#)

Related Passages:

Heb 7:19+ (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.

PURIFICATION OF THE GOAT BEARER

The one who released ([shalach](#); Lxx = [exapostello](#)) the goat as the scapegoat (['aza'zel](#)) shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water; then afterward he shall come into the camp This verse addresses the uncleanness of the man who led the live goat (the scapegoat) into the wilderness on the Day of Atonement. After releasing the goat, he was required to wash his clothes and bathe his body before re-entering the camp. This washing emphasized that contact with the goat, which bore away the people's sins, rendered the man ceremonially unclean. Before he could return to fellowship with the community, purification was necessary.

Leon Hyatt The man who carried the goat of removal into the wilderness was to wash his clothes and bathe himself and then reenter the camp. The reason this instruction is mentioned here is that verses 27-28 say that a priest was to carry the meat of the sinoffering outside the camp, wash himself, and return to the camp. Thus, the return of both men to the camp are appropriately mentioned together. The meat of the sin-offering was to be carried outside the camp by a priest (see comments on Lev. 4:11- 12,21 in MESSAGE 2). Most likely the task of leading away the goat of complete removal also was to be carried out by a priest. They were to return to the camp together (**ED**: THIS LATTER IS CONJECTURE).

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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 13:11-14+ 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.

SIN BEARER REMOVED OUTSIDE THE CAMP

But the bull of the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)), and the goat of the sin offering ([chattat/chattath](#)), whose blood was brought

in to make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire. After the high priest finished sprinkling the blood of the bull and the goat in the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement, their carcasses were taken outside the camp and burned completely. This act symbolized the total removal of sin from the community. Nothing associated with these sin offerings could remain among God's people, for they represented the guilt and defilement of Israel. By being carried "outside the camp," the offerings pointed forward to Christ, Who suffered outside the gate to take away sin once and for all (SEE ABOVE FOR Hebrews 13:11–12). In this way, the ritual underscored both the seriousness of sin and the completeness of God's provision in the ultimate sin-bearer.

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

Outside the camp (this exact phrase 28x in 27v in NAS) - Ex 29:14; 33:7; Lev 4:12, 21+; Lev 6:11+.; Lev 8:17+.; Lev 9:11; Lev 13:46+.; Lev 16:27+.; Lev 17:3+.; Lev 24:14, 23+.; 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+ Heb 13:13+. and "outside the gate" in Heb 13:12+.

Gordon 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 [The Book of Leviticus - Page 238](#))

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+).

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+). 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-+). 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](#))

[Leon Hyatt](#) The meat of the sin-offerings was to be incinerated outside the camp, in accordance with instructions given in Leviticus 4:11-12, 21 (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 2). This portion of the ceremony symbolized Jehovah's acceptance of the sinner back into His service after his sins were forgiven. In a sin-offering for a ruler and a sin-offering for an ordinary citizen, those portions of the sin-offering were given to the priests for their support. In a sin-offering for a priest and in a sin-offering for the congregation, of which the priest was a part, those portions were incinerated in a clean place outside the camp. That practice was commanded for sin-offerings that were in any way in behalf of the priests so the priests would not benefit from their own offerings. The meaning was the same whether the meat was given to the priests or incinerated in a clean place outside the camp. It meant that the forgiven person was accepted back by God for use in His service after he was forgiven and covered (see comments on Lev. 4:11-12, 21; in MESSAGE 2 and on Lev. 6:26 in MESSAGE 7).

OUTSIDE THE CAMP: SHADOW & SUBSTANCE
Leviticus 16:27 ⇌ Hebrews 13:11–12

Leviticus 16:27 (Shadow)	Hebrews 13:11–12 (Substance in Christ)
The bull and goat of the sin offering (their blood brought into the holy place)	Jesus, the true sin offering whose blood secures sanctification
Carcasses taken outside the camp	Jesus suffered outside the gate (outside Jerusalem)
Hides, flesh, and refuse burned completely	Christ's once-for-all sacrifice completely removes sin's guilt
Removal of what is unclean from the camp	Christ bears our reproach/uncleanness away from the people
Priest carries the sin offering away from the people	Believers are called to go to Him outside the camp , bearing His reproach
Purpose: atonement ; sin symbolically removed	Purpose: sanctify the people through His own blood —real, final cleansing

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](#)

**UNDERSCORING THE
CONTAGIOUS NATURE OF SIN**

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

The one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water, then afterward he shall come into the camp - This shows that even those who disposed of the remains of the sin offering on the Day of Atonement were unclean and required to wash themselves before reentering the camp. This regulation underscored the seriousness of sin and the contagious nature of defilement under the old covenant. Contact with what had borne the guilt of the people made one ceremonially unclean, and cleansing was necessary before fellowship could be restored. In this way, God impressed upon His people both His holiness and the need for continual purification, pointing ahead to the perfect cleansing accomplished through Christ's once-for-all sacrifice.

The priest who carried the remains outside the camp was required to wash his clothes and bathe his body. This act symbolized the removal of any defilement that might have been incurred through contact with sin while outside the camp of God's people. It did not imply that the meat itself, which was taken out and burned, was sinful or unclean. Interestingly, such a washing is not mentioned in Leviticus 4 in connection with the regular sin offerings. It is possible, however, that this detail was intended to apply to all sin offerings of both priest and congregation. If not, then it represents an expansion of the ritual on the Day of Atonement, providing a fuller picture of the complete removal of sin for the repentant believer.

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;

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:

- **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](#)

Related Passages:

Leviticus 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.

Leviticus 23:32 "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.**"

INTERPRETATION OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

This shall be a permanent statute ([chuqqah](#)) for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble ([humble](#)) your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you- God now lays down the Day of Atonement as a permanent statute for His people. Every year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, Israel was to stop ALL work and humble themselves before the Lord. This humbling meant not only fasting and physical self-denial, but most importantly repentance and contrition of heart. Whether native-born Israelite or foreigner living among them, all alike were called to participate. By this solemn ordinance, God emphasized that atonement and cleansing come not through human effort or labor, but only by His appointed sacrifice.

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**) and **the alien who sojourns among you** -

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

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).

Mishnah Yoma 8:1 opens the final chapter of Yoma with a list of what "affliction/humbling" (innui nefesh) meant on Yom Kippur:

"On the Day of Atonement it is forbidden to eat, to drink, to bathe, to anoint oneself, to wear sandals, and

to engage in marital relations. But the king and the bride may wash their faces, and a woman after childbirth may wear sandals.”* (Mishnah Yoma 8:1)

David 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.

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.

Leon Hyatt The Day of Coverings was to be held on the tenth day of the seventh month of every year. At that time, the seventh month was called by the name “Ethanin” (1 Kings 8:2), though later in Jewish history it came to be called by the name “Tisri”. It corresponded to the latter part of September and the first part of October. Since the Hebrews began their months with the new moon, the days of their months varied in relation to our calendars. No reason is given for setting the observance for that time of the year; however, it is logical that the date was chosen because it fell just as the grape and olive harvests were ending and before the planting of the grain crops that were to be harvested the next spring (see comments on Lev. 23:34 in MESSAGE 34). Thus, it was a time of relaxation when farmers were relatively free of labor and would have time to participate wholeheartedly in the observance. Jehovah gave the commandments for the Day of Coverings on the eighteenth day of the first month of the year (see comments on v. 1 above). The first Day of Atonement was to occur just a few days short of six months later. **You must afflict yourselves, and you must not do any work.** The day was to be a day of sincere repentance, not just symbolizing repentance. The Israelites were to agonize over their sinfulness and refrain from any kind of work so they could concentrate on repenting. The point was that the mere performance of the ceremonies of the day was not sufficient to bring covering and cleansing from their sins. The ceremonies symbolized the cleansing, but repentance in their hearts made the cleansing possible. **[including] the native and the sojourner who sojourns among you.** Mourning and repentance was to be practiced by persons who were born Israelites and by sojourners among them. This statement contains the first reference in Leviticus to “sojourners,” though such persons had been referred to several times in previous messages at Sinai (Ex. 12:19,48,49; 20:10; 22:21; 23:9,12). It is important to know exactly who was designated by the term “sojourner.” Exodus 12:48 shows that a person so designated was one who had been circumcised and who was entitled to participate in the Passover Feast. This verse shows that sojourners were permitted to participate in the observance of the Day of Coverings. Leviticus 17:8-9 shows that they were allowed to stand before The Tent of Meeting at the altar of re-dedication-offering and present fire-offerings to Jehovah (see comments on those verses in MESSAGE 21). It is obvious from these references that a “sojourner” was a person who worshiped Jehovah. He was not a worshiper of another god. He was a person who had accepted Jehovah as his God and who had been accepted into the privileges and responsibilities of Israelite life. Thus, from the point of view of Jehovah worship, he was a proselyte; while from the point of view of the nation, he was a naturalized citizen. The words “stranger” or “foreigner” are not good translations of this Hebrew word, though it has been rendered in that way in many English translations.¹ The person was not a stranger or a foreigner but a person from another nation who had been accepted as a Jehovah worshiper and an Israelite.

Statute (02708) (chuqqah from **chaqah** = to cut in, inscribe, decree) means something prescribed, an enactment, statute. An ordinance, statute, prescribed requirement, regulation. Often paired with mishpat (judgment) and torah (law), but carries the nuance of a fixed, binding regulation. In sum, **statute (chuqqāh)** refers to a fixed, engraved ordinance or regulation established by God, binding on His people as a permanent requirement.”

From the root *chāqah* = “to engrave/inscribe” the picture of a *chuqqāh* is like something **cut into stone**, fixed and unalterable. *Chuqqāh* emphasizes permanence and divine authority — a regulation established by God, not to be altered by man. **Statutes** highlight the binding, non-negotiable nature of God’s commands for Israel. It is distinct from: *Mitsvah* = commandment (focus on what is commanded). *Torah* = law/instruction (broader teaching). *Mishpat* = judgment/decision (legal ruling).

Feasts and sacrifices (Passover, Day of Atonement, etc.) are called *chuqqim* because they were God’s appointed patterns, not subject to human innovation.

Chuqqah - 104x - 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

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. (Borrow [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

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

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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 9:13-14+ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, **how much more** (see argument of [Qal wahomer](#)) **will the blood of Christ**, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, **cleanse** (katharizo - used in the Septuagint of Lev 16:19, 20, 30) your conscience from **dead works** (cp the stipulation here in Lev 16:29 to abstain from work!) to serve the living God?)

THE GLORIOUS DAY OF FULL CLEANSING

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.

This verse sums up the heart of the Day of Atonement. On this day, God graciously provided a means for the entire nation to be cleansed from sin through the blood sacrifices offered by the high priest. The cleansing was not merely symbolic washing but a God-ordained covering of sin that allowed Israel to continue in covenant fellowship with Him. The promise was stunning: "you will be clean from all your sins before the LORD." Yet this cleansing was temporary and had to be repeated year after year, pointing forward to the greater cleansing that Christ would bring. In Him, the shadows of the Day of Atonement find their substance, for by His one offering He has made His people forever clean.

It is on this day that atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) **shall be made for you to cleanse** ([taher](#); Lxx = [katharizo](#)) **you** - The blood ritual provided a covering (atonement) before God's holiness so that sinners would not be consumed.

You will be clean from all your sins ([chattat/chattath](#)) **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. 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.

As noted above the Day of Atonement meant that, on a national, ceremonial level, the people were ritually cleansed and covenant fellowship with God was preserved. In that sense, all Israel benefited, regardless of individual belief. What About the Individual Jew? For the individual, the ritual only had real value when joined with personal repentance and faith in God. Many OT passages stress that God despised sacrifices offered without true repentance: Isa 1:11-17 – "Bring your worthless offerings no longer..." Ps 51:16-17 – "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart..." Lev 23:29 – warns that anyone who did not "humble himself" on the Day of Atonement would be "cut off from his people." So the ceremony was effective ritually for all, but spiritually only for those who humbled themselves in repentance and faith.

[Leon Hyatt](#) **For on this day you must be covered to cleanse you from all your sins. At Jehovah's face, you must be clean.** Jehovah required those who were His people to be covered from their sins on the Day of Coverings. They were His people, but they still had sin in their lives. On this day, all of them needed to be forgiven of their sins so they could serve Him more fully.

The **Day of Atonement** (Yom Kippur), occurring on the 10th day of the seventh month, (Tishri, Sept-Oct) has eschatological significance for it prefigures **the national repentance of Israel**, at the end of the time of Jacob's Distress, the 3.5 year period known as the Great Tribulation when 2/3's the Jews alive at that time will be killed (Zech 13:8-9+). One third of Israel will be a believing remnant of Jews (See study of "Remnant") who will turn to the Messiah and be forgiven (Zech 3:9, Zech 12:10+; Zech 13:1+).

On the Day of Atonement, God commanded that no work be done. The only person permitted to act was the high priest. God underscored this command with a warning of destruction for anyone who violated it. This restriction served as a shadow of the greater reality: salvation is not achieved by human effort but by the finished work of Christ, our Great High Priest. As Titus 3:5+ reminds us, it is "not on the basis of deeds which we have done" but solely through God's mercy. Just as Israel was forbidden from contributing to the atoning work on that day, so too no human works can contribute to the cleansing of our sins. Christ's work, and His alone, is the source of eternal salvation.

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⁺)

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⁺)

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⁺ ("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**.

COMPARISON OF SHADOW OF OT ATONEMENT WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF CHRIST - On the Day of Atonement, atonement was made once every year, but Christ offered Himself once for all, never needing to repeat His sacrifice (Hebrews 9:12; 10:10). The high priest entered the Most Holy Place with the blood of animals, but Jesus entered the heavenly sanctuary with His own precious blood (Hebrews 9:12). The people of Israel were cleansed outwardly from ritual impurity, but through Christ believers are cleansed inwardly, with hearts and consciences made pure (Hebrews 9:14; 10:22). The yearly ritual brought only a temporary covering of sin, but Christ's offering brings a permanent and complete cleansing (Hebrews 10:14, 17-18). On that day Israel was declared clean before the LORD, but in Christ we are made righteous forever, standing blameless in His presence (Colossians 1:22; Jude 24).

[David 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](#)

Related Passages:

Numbers 29:7+ 'Then on the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall humble yourselves; you shall not do any work.

A SABBATH OF SOLEMN REST CALL TO AFFLICT THE SOUL

It is to be a sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble([anah](#); Lxx - [tapeinoo](#)) your souls ([nephesh](#)); it is a permanent statute ([chuqqah](#)): Literally a "Sabbath of Sabbaths" = more sacred and more strictly observed than the normal weekly Sabbath. It called for total cessation of work (cf Lev 23:27-32; Nu 29:7). 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).

Humble your souls is the Hebrew verb ([anah](#) - אָנָה) which means to afflict, humble, oppress, deny. The noun "soul" ([nephesh](#)) often refers to the whole person—the inner life, appetite, and self. Together, the phrase conveys the idea of self-denial and humbling oneself before God. Jewish tradition (and the Mishnah, m. Yoma 8:1) interprets this as abstaining from food, drink, and other comforts.

The Day of Atonement was not merely another holy day; it was set apart as a sabbath of solemn rest. On this day, Israel was commanded to humble themselves before the Lord in repentance and dependence. Unlike other ceremonies that might fade with time, this command was declared a permanent statute, emphasizing the enduring seriousness of sin and the continual need for God's atonement.

David 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.

Leon Hyatt **a sabbath of a sabbath it must be to you, and you shall afflict yourselves** They also needed to turn aside from secular activities so they could concentrate on repenting and seeking forgiveness. The word "sabbath" is a transliteration of a Hebrew word which means "a ceasing" or "a time of ceasing." It was not applied only to the seventh day in the week but also to a number of different times set aside for ceasing from work in order to worship Jehovah (see comments on Lev. 19:3 in MESSAGE 23 and on Lev. 23:11 in MESSAGE 31). The "ceasing" or "rest" did not imply idleness but ceasing from regular labors in order to be busy worshiping and serving Jehovah. This emphasis becomes obvious from the activities prescribed for the sabbath day that is described in this chapter, that is, The Day of Coverings. The Sabbath was not an idle day but a busy day of worship. The second word translated "sabbath" in this verse is almost identical in form to the first word translated "sabbath." The two words are identical in meaning. The closest translation of the whole phrase into English is "a sabbath of a sabbath," that is, a day of special emphasis on ceasing from work. It is similar to the expression "a holiness of holinesses," which means an object of special holiness. "A sabbath of a sabbath" was a special time of extra ceasing from secular activities in order to concentrate completely on worshiping and serving God. On an ordinary "sabbath," only cessation from occupational labor was required (Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:7,8,21,25,35,36; Num. 28:18,25,26; 29:1,12,35). On "a sabbath of a sabbath," cessation from all kinds of work was required, including household chores (Ex. 20:10; 31:4; 35:2,3; Lev. 23:3,30,31; see comments on Lev. 23:3 in MESSAGE 30). The term "a sabbath of a sabbath" was applied to only three occasions: the weekly Sabbath (Ex. 16:23; 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 23:3; see comments on Lev. 23:3 in MESSAGE 30), the Day of Coverings (Lev. 16:31; 23:32; see comments on Lev. 23:32 in MESSAGE 30), and the sabbatical year (Lev. 25:4; see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 37). On the Day of Coverings, the Israelites were to refrain from all forms of secular activity, including household chores, in order to give themselves completely to repenting.

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!'

Why No Work Was Allowed

In Leviticus 16 (and repeated in Lev 23:27–32; Num 29:7), God repeatedly commanded that the people must do no work at all. The only one “working” was the high priest, and even his activity was strictly prescribed. The people were instead to rest, fast, and humble themselves before God.

What It Pictured - The restriction against work was a shadow pointing forward to Christ: Salvation is God's work, not man's. Just as Israel could contribute nothing to the atonement ritual, we can contribute nothing to our salvation.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
but according to His mercy He saved us”
-- Titus 3:5

Only the Levitical High Priest worked on this day - The solitary role of the high priest pictured Christ's unique, unrepeatable role. No one else could step in. “When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3).

Atonement was accomplished by one alone. On that day, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place alone (Lev 16:17). This foreshadowed Christ's “once-for-all” entrance into heaven's holy place with His own blood (Heb 9:11–12).

New Covenant Fulfillment in Jesus - Christ is the only Worker of salvation. His cry, “It is finished” (John 19:30), parallels the people's absolute rest from labor. We cease from our works and rest in His. Hebrews 4:9–10 ties Sabbath rest to the believer's rest in Christ's finished work. Christ entered alone, once for all. Hebrews 9:24–26 shows He entered the heavenly sanctuary to appear in God's presence on our behalf.

ILLUSTRATION - There is a well known story of an evangelist named **Alexander Wooten** who related a story from the days when he held tent meetings. On one occasion after a series of meetings was over, he was pulling up his tent stakes when a young man approached him and asked what he had to do to be saved. The evangelist answered responded, “Sorry, it's too late” which caused the young man to cry out “Oh no! Do you mean it's too late because the services are over?” The evangelist explained that it was “too late” because it had already been done. In other words as he explained “Everything that could be done for your salvation has already been done.” After explaining Christ's finished work to the young man, he led him to saving faith. Our salvation is based on the covenant whose redeeming work is finished-on a sacrifice that has been offered once and for all, that is complete and perfect and eternal. ([Quoted by Warren Wiersbe in his comments on Dead John 19:28–30](#))

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](#)

So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement([kaphar](#)) he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments,

[Leon Hyatt](#) Its purpose (16:32-33) The covering ceremonies were to be conducted by the high priest. “Who is anointed” and “wears linen clothes, holy clothes” could be applied to all the priests. However, “who is filled in his father's place” can only mean a son or descendant of Aaron who assumed the position of high priest after Aaron's death. When Aaron died and one of his descendants was anointed and his hands filled with the responsibilities and privileges of the high priest's office, the new high priest was to conduct the ceremonies just like Aaron would.

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](#)



THE "RIPPLE EFFECT" OF SIN

ATONEMENT FOR ALL SANCTUARY, PRIESTHOOD, PEOPLE

And make atonement (kaphar; Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for the holy sanctuary (שְׁכֵנֶת הַקֹּדֶשׁ ha-qōdesh), and he shall make atonement (kaphar; Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement (kaphar; Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for the priests and for all the people of the assembly - This verse summarizes the sweeping scope of the Day of Atonement because the high priest's work extended beyond his own sins to cover the entire worship system of Israel - the **holy sanctuary** (holy of holies), the **tent of meeting**, the **altar**, the **priests**, and the **people**. Even the sacred objects of worship required cleansing, for they were continually exposed to the defilement of a sinful people. This verse underscores the pervasive reach of sin and the necessity of comprehensive atonement. Nothing in Israel's life—whether people, priests, or the very instruments of worship—was untouched by sin or exempt from purification. Yet this thorough cleansing points forward to the fuller and final work of Christ, who not only purifies His people but also reconciles "all things" to Himself through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20).

THOUGHT - When we commit sin, willful or otherwise, **do we truly realize how far-reaching the consequences are?** Most of the time, I certainly do not. I tend to think of sin as a private matter, a single act, an isolated failure. But Leviticus 16:33 reminds us that sin's reach is broader, deeper, and more pervasive than we can easily grasp. Sin not only defiles the sinner, it pollutes relationships, damages community, corrupts the ministry of God's servants, and—astonishingly—contaminates even the place of worship itself. That is why atonement had to be made for the holy sanctuary, for the tent of meeting, for the altar, for the priests, and for all the people of the assembly. The defilement of sin is like a highly contagious, deadly, virulent contagion that spreads in every direction, staining and defiling everything it touches, whether we are conscious of it or not! **WOE!** This truth should shake us and humble us and cause us to realize our sin is never as small as we think. It is never contained, never harmless, never without ripple effects (SEE PICTURE ABOVE). It offends a holy God, grieves His Spirit, defiles His sanctuary, and requires cleansing by blood (1Jn 1:7+)

Sin is never contained, never clean, never consequence-free.

Sin is never hidden, never harmless, never hopelessly small.

Sin is never silent, never safe, never simple.

Sin is never private, never powerless, never painless.

Sin is never trivial, never tame, never temporary.

Sin is never isolated, never innocent, never inconsequential.

Sin is never dormant, never dull, never disconnected.

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."

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest's work was comprehensive: He purified the sanctuary, polluted by the sins of the people. He cleansed the altar, defiled by continual sacrifices. He made atonement for the priests and for all the people. This showed that sin contaminates everything it touches—people, priests, even the place of worship itself—and that only blood could provide cleansing.

Leviticus 16:33 foreshadows the all-encompassing work of Christ: He purified the heavenly sanctuary, replaced the altar with His cross, sanctifies His priestly people, and redeems the assembly of believers forever.

Old Covenant shadow: repeated cleansing by blood of animals.

New Covenant reality: once-for-all cleansing by the blood of Christ.

Leon Hyatt The purpose of the Day of Coverings was for the nation to obtain covering from the effects of its sins. This verse shows that covering was to extend to the Holiness of Holinesses, that is, to the inner room of The Tabernacle. It was also to extend to the whole Tent of Meeting, to the altar where offerings were offered, to the priests, and to all the people. The Day of Coverings was a day in which the effects of sin were to be removed from everyone and everything in Israel. The whole nation was to be restored to full harmony with Jehovah and with each other. On that day, the nation and the people who already belonged to Jehovah were to be renewed in their commitment to Him and in their relationship with Him. **the Holiness of the Holiness**. This exact expression is used only here in the whole Old Testament, though the similar expression "Holiness of Holinesses" is used often to describe objects of special holiness. The expression in this verse must have the same meaning. In Exodus 26:33,34 "holiness of holinesses" is used to describe the inner room of The Tabernacle. In Leviticus 12:4, "The Holiness" is used to refer to the whole Tabernacle (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 15 under the heading The Holiness). The additional word "of the Holiness" must mean that it applies to a place of special holiness within The Tabernacle. It must refer to the inner room of The Tabernacle, where God's presence was symbolized by the Ark, The Covering, and the Glory Cloud. The whole Tabernacle was a holy place. The inner room was a place of special holiness.

The Spreading Stain of Sin (Leviticus 16:33 → Fulfilled in Christ)

1. Sin Spreads

Like leaven, sin infiltrates everything it touches (1 Cor 5:6).

Israel's sanctuary, altar, priests, and people all had to be cleansed because the defilement of sin reached everywhere.

Application: Never underestimate the ripple effect of your sin—it always goes farther than you think.

2. Sin Stains

Sin leaves a mark that cannot be scrubbed away by human effort (Jer 2:22).

Even the holiest places were polluted and required blood to purify.

Application: Sin is not cosmetic—it corrupts the heart, the community, and even worship itself.

3. Sin Slays

"The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). The very reason for sacrifice was that sin demanded life.

Atonement by blood was required annually, pointing to the seriousness of sin's penalty.

Application: Left unchecked, sin always destroys.

Christ the Sin Killer and Sin Cleanser

Christ bore the spread of sin: He carried the defilement of His people outside the camp (Heb 13:12).

Christ removed the stain of sin: His blood purifies the conscience once for all (Heb 9:14).

Christ conquered the slaying power of sin: By His death and resurrection He abolished death and brought life (2 Tim 1:10, Ro 6:11).

Sin slays, but Christ saves.

Sin stains, but Christ sanctifies.

Sin shackles, but Christ sets free.

Sin separates, but Christ secures.

Sin spoils, but Christ supplies.

**Sin spreads, sin stains, sin slays
—but Christ saves!**

Sin's Nature

- Sin spreads – it never stays contained.
- Sin stains – it leaves a mark nothing human can erase.
- Sin stifles – it suffocates spiritual life.
- Sin shames – it leaves us guilty before God.
- Sin separates – it drives a wedge between us and God.
- Sin shackles – it enslaves the will.
- Sin seduces – it lures with lies and empty promises.
- Sin spoils – it corrupts the good gifts of God.
- Sin starves – it robs joy, peace, and fellowship.
- Sin slays – its final wage is death.

Contrast with Christ

- Christ saves – He delivers from sin's penalty and power.
- Christ sanctifies – He cleanses and sets apart.
- Christ strengthens – He empowers us to walk in holiness.
- Christ secures – He guarantees eternal redemption.

The Deep Clean

Every spring, some people set aside a day for a deep clean of their homes. It isn't just dusting the shelves or sweeping the floors—it's pulling furniture away from the walls, scrubbing forgotten corners, washing windowsills, and cleansing areas no one normally sees. Why? Because over time, dirt accumulates everywhere, even in hidden places.

*Sin defiles everything
it touches.*

Leviticus 16:33 shows us that sin works the same way. Its stain reaches not only into our personal lives but also into our worship, our leaders, and even the very instruments we use to serve God. That's why the high priest had to make atonement not just for himself and the people, but for the sanctuary, the tent, and the altar. Sin defiles everything it touches.

But here's the hope (hope sure, not hope so). As Paul wrote in Romans 5:20KJV+ "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." And so we see that our Great High Priest's atonement reaches every corner and crevices of our sin. His blood doesn't just cleanse the surface—it purifies the conscience (Hebrews 9:14), reconciles us to God (Ro 5:10-11+), and reconciles "all things to Himself" through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20+). The Day of Atonement was like a yearly deep clean of Israel's worship, but Christ's once-for-all sacrifice cleanses us fully and forever. And in 1Jn 1:7+ John adds that "if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son (continually) **cleanses** ([katharizo](#) - present tense) us from all (HOW MUCH?) sin."

So we must ask ourselves: Have we allowed hidden sins or secret sins to accumulate in the corners of our lives? The good news is that Christ is not just willing but able to cleanse every part—heart, mind, soul, and even the places we’ve long ignored. His atonement reaches all. And remember does not pay to sweep our sin under the rug, but to put it under the blood. Proverbs 28:13 says "He who conceals (hides) his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Illustrations of Leviticus 16:33 -

1. The Hospital Sterilization Room

In hospitals, even the cleanest-looking instruments must be sterilized before surgery. A scalpel used just once can carry unseen bacteria that would endanger life if not purified. Similarly, even the holy objects in God’s tabernacle required atonement because sin’s defilement was pervasive, whether seen or unseen.

2. Pollution in the Air

We breathe it every day without realizing it. Over time, smog settles on cars, windows, and lungs alike. Sin functions in the same way—pervading life, worship, leaders, and people. Just as an air purifier cleanses what is invisible but real, the Day of Atonement addressed the unseen pollution of sin.

3. The Annual Servicing of Machinery ☸

Complex machines, like airplanes, must undergo regular full inspections. Even if nothing seems wrong, the check is essential because small, hidden cracks can become catastrophic failures. In Leviticus 16:33, God commanded a full “service” of His sanctuary and people, for sin wears down everything—even what seems strong.

4. The Leaking Dye in Water

If you put a drop of ink into clear water, it eventually colors every part. Sin is like that—it spreads and stains everything it touches, from the sanctuary itself to the hearts of the people. Only a greater cleansing can restore purity, pointing to Christ’s all-encompassing work.

5. The Deep-Clean Reset

Hotels may clean rooms daily, but occasionally they require a “deep clean”—steam-cleaning carpets, sanitizing bedding, polishing hidden corners. The Day of Atonement was Israel’s yearly “deep clean.” But Christ has done what no yearly ritual could—He has cleansed once for all, not only our worship space but our very souls.

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 .

Paraphrase God established this as a lasting ordinance for Israel, requiring that year after year atonement be made for the people’s sins. The day stood as a continual reminder of their need for cleansing and renewal before a holy God. Moses and Aaron obeyed every instruction just as the LORD had given.

- **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](#)

Related Passages:

Hebrews 10:12 but He (CHRIST), having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

A YEARLY COVERING FOR SIN BUT NEVER ENOUGH

Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement ([kaphar](#); Lxx = [exilaskomai](#)) for the sons of Israel for all their sins ([chattat/chattath](#)) once every year." And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did . Every year

- Leviticus 16 concludes with a solemn reminder that the Day of Atonement was not a one-time event but a **permanent statute** for Israel. Year after year, atonement had to be made for all the sins of the people. This annual repetition underscored both the seriousness of sin and the inadequacy of animal sacrifices to bring lasting forgiveness. Yet it also pointed forward to the **greater fulfillment in Christ**, Who by One offering made atonement for sins forever and sat down at the right hand of God (Heb 10:12). What had to be done repeatedly under the Law has now been accomplished once-for-all through the cross.

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.

[Leon Hyatt](#) Its perpetuity (16:34) **And this [day] shall be to you a statute for an age.** The practice of the Day of Coverings was to be continued on and on indefinitely. The words translated "statute for an age" are the same words found in Leviticus 3:17 (see comments on that verse in MESSAGE 1 under the headings Here is a statute and for an age). The observance of this day was established for an indefinitely long period of time, but not necessarily without ever an end. The expression leaves room for God to eventual abolish the observance of the Day of Coverings, which indeed He did in Christ. **To cover over the people of Israel from all their sins once in a year.** The Day of Coverings emphasized that even people who were set apart and hallowed to God needed to be covered from their sins regularly. The Israelites were God's people. If they truly accepted Him in their hearts, they belonged to Him forever. However, they were still weak toward sin. Their sins interfered with their fellowship with God. They need to be forgiven and covered or protected from the effects of their sins again and again. The Day of Coverings called the whole nation to renew their commitment to God and to be cleansed anew regularly every year. **And he did as Jehovah commanded Moses.** Aaron carried out the commands just as God gave them to Moses. Carrying out those commands involved the whole nation. Aaron and the Israelites obeyed God's commands about the Day of Coverings when the day came that God had specified for their observance, which was six months after these commandments were given (see comments on vs. 1 and 29a above).

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 remember the seriousness of the Day of Atonement and not grow careless in guarding our hearts against the subtle snares of sin—especially the lie that, because we are under the New Covenant of grace, we can be less vigilant than Israel. This is precisely the deception our adversary would have us "bite" on. The enemy whispers that vigilance is no longer necessary, that sin is no longer dangerous. But this is the very lie that ensnares countless hearts. Scripture warns us, "Let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall" (1 Cor 10:12) and urges us to "be sober, be vigilant" because our adversary prowls like a roaring lion (1 Pet 5:8).

And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did - Moses and Aaron's obedience was complete, just as Jesus' obedience was complete, and so too should ours be as priests unto the Lord (1 Pet 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)

"Once Every Year, Yet Once for All"

Once every year the priest drew near,
With blood before the throne;
Yet Christ has come, God's only Son,
To make our sin His own.

The law ordained, the rite remained,
A shadow pointing true;

But now we see, at Calvary,
The work that makes us new.

The statute sealed with sprinkled blood,
Foretold redeeming grace;
In time fulfilled, as God had willed,
Christ took the sinner's place.

No more each year must men appear
To seek what cannot stay;
The cross proclaims, through Christ's own Name,
Our guilt is washed away.

Illustrations

1. The Annual Appointment

Imagine a calendar with one day circled in bold red ink every year. No matter what else was happening in Israel's life—war, harvest, personal matters—this day could not be missed. It highlights that atonement was not optional, but a divine appointment, recurring every year.

2. The Reset Button

Think of a computer system that accumulates errors, slows down, and crashes unless it's regularly reset. The Day of Atonement acted like a national "reset," temporarily clearing the record of Israel's sins and restoring covenant fellowship. Yet it had to be repeated annually, showing it was not the ultimate solution.

3. The Endless Mortgage Payment

Consider someone making monthly payments on a large mortgage. The debt never goes away; it only stays current by regular payment. That's what Israel experienced with the annual Day of Atonement—sin was covered year by year, but never fully canceled until Christ came (Heb 10:1–4, 11–14).

4. The Shadow Before the Sunrise

Picture standing in the dark of early dawn. The shadow of a mountain lies before you, but as the sun rises, the shadow disappears. The annual Day of Atonement was a shadow cast ahead of the true sunrise—the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, who fully and finally takes away sin.

5. Annual Check-Up

Like an annual physical exam that reveals the state of one's health, the Day of Atonement revealed Israel's ongoing condition before God. Each year reminded them of the seriousness of sin and their need for cleansing—until Christ came as the true physician of souls.

These illustrations all underscore two truths:

1. The repetition of the Day of Atonement showed its incompleteness.
 2. Its very repetition pointed forward to the once-for-all work of Christ (Heb 9:12, 26; 10:12).
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A Statute Fulfilled

Once every year, the altar burned,
A solemn day, the people learned,
That sin demands a cleansing flood,
Atonement sealed by sprinkled blood.

But deeper still the meaning lay,
A whisper of a brighter day;
When Christ, the holy Lamb, was slain,
He carried all our guilt and shame.

No longer yearly rites remain,

For Christ has broken every chain.
The statute stands, yet finds its end—
In Christ, our Priest, our truest Friend.

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)

Leon Hyatt - APPLICATION - Christians need regular forgiveness for our sins just as much as the Israelites did. Periodic renewal is needed by a whole church, which will result in strengthened fellowship with God and heightened spiritual power. Sin in the life of a Christian does not cause him to lose his salvation, but it does interfere with his fellowship with God. He needs to confess his sins and be restored to full fellowship with God on a regular basis. However, more is also needed. Periodically, the whole church needs to renew itself as a unit. Otherwise, individual rededications are drowned in the midst of a church that is growing steadily colder.

Christians have traditionally sought this periodic renewal through revivals. Some today disparage revivals, saying that they do not last. It is obvious that they do not last indefinitely, because the world constantly presses on the church and drags down its spiritual vitality. The fact that the good effects of renewal and revival do not last indefinitely is a reason for having more revivals, not a reason for discontinuing them. A revival, the effects of which last only for months, is much better than no revival at all. Periodic revival and renewal helps to keep a church free of serious sin and helps keep the congregation close to the Lord. The church that does not seek revival periodically is subject to dying permanently. However, real renewal and revival in a church is accomplished only through genuine repentance and recommitment, not simply through holding services. They come from "afflicting the soul" and through prayer. They require turning aside from our regular routine in order to concentrate on seeking God and yielding to Him.

Not only do churches need spiritual renewing. Nations also need it. In the Middle Ages, European nations that had strongly embraced and served Jesus became sinful and rebellious. Their Christianity became mere cold ritual and a means of political control. The Reformation brought strong tides of revival and renewal into many of those nations, and the history of Western Civilization was changed for the better. In the early days of America, revival fires twice burned brightly when the spiritual life of the nation had become stained and hard. As a result of those times of revival, America experienced advance in all aspects of its life. In the years since, many in America have begun to accept as normal sinful deeds that God has forbidden. Among those deeds are drunkenness, recreational drug use, abortion, euthanasia, and homosexuality. In addition, corruption, dishonesty, and immorality have invaded high places of government, and ordinary citizens are guilty of heinous deeds that once were considered unthinkable. America is in need of another time of sweeping revival and renewal. The lessons of the Day of Coverings need to be learned in our beloved land. It is time for committed Christians to pray that repentance of sin and commitment to righteousness will again take hold of American life. The problems of America do not primarily grow out of economic issues. They grow out of spiritual decay in the lives of our people. Let us pray that a time of spiritual refreshing will sweep over America in our time, like God wanted it to happen yearly in ancient Israel.

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 vail 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).

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 one 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' one 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, 1 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. (ED: THERE WAS NO ROPE STATED IN SCRIPTURE. AS FOR THE BELLS, THERE IS DISAGREEMENT BECAUSE HE WAS NOT TO WEAR HIS NORMAL ORNATE OUTFIT ON THIS DAY OF HUMBLING).

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

Summary - Parallels Between Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9

Lev 16:1–2 – Aaron could only enter the Most Holy Place once a year, under strict conditions.

Heb 9:7–8 – The Holy Spirit showed that access to God was still restricted.

Connection: In the Old Covenant, only the high priest could approach God, and only once a year.

Fulfillment in Christ: Through Jesus' torn flesh (the veil), believers now have full and permanent access to God (Heb 10:19–20).

Lev 16:3–4 – Aaron had to bring a bull for a sin offering and put on special garments.

Heb 9:6–7 – Priests served regularly in the outer tent, but the high priest alone entered the inner tent with blood.

Connection: The priest needed sacrifice for himself, but Christ, the perfect High Priest, did not.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus, clothed in His own perfect righteousness, needed no sacrifice for Himself. He entered God's presence in His own merit.

Lev 16:5–6 – Aaron made atonement for himself and his household with the bull.

Heb 9:7 – The high priest offered for his own sins and the people's sins done in ignorance.

Connection: Christ never needed to offer for His own sins—He was sinless.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus is sinless and did not need to atone for Himself—He offered Himself for us alone (Heb 7:27).

Lev 16:7–10 – Two goats were chosen: one for the LORD, the other as the scapegoat.

Heb 9:12, 26 – Christ entered once for all with His own blood, not the blood of animals.

Connection: The two goats symbolized substitution and removal of sin—fulfilled completely in Christ.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus is both the offering (bearing God's wrath) and the scapegoat (removing our sin "as far as the east is from the west").

Lev 16:11–14 – Blood of the bull was sprinkled on the mercy seat.

Heb 9:21–22 – Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.

Connection: Blood was required to cover sin before God; Christ's blood actually cleanses the conscience.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus sprinkled His own blood in the heavenly sanctuary, securing eternal redemption (Heb 9:12).

Lev 16:15–19 – Blood of the goat cleansed the people, the holy place, and the altar.

Heb 9:23–24 – Earthly things were cleansed with animal blood, but heavenly things with a better sacrifice.

Connection: Old rituals cleansed symbols on earth; Christ's blood purified the true heavenly reality.

Lev 16:20–22 – The scapegoat carried Israel's sins into the wilderness.

Heb 9:26, 28 – Christ bore sins once for all and took them away by His sacrifice.

Connection: The scapegoat pictured removal of guilt; Christ truly takes away sin.

Fulfillment in Christ: Our sins were laid on Him; He removed them forever, never to return (Isa 53:6; John 1:29).

Lev 16:23–25 – Aaron washed, changed clothes, and offered burnt offerings.

Heb 9:11–12 – Christ, as High Priest of the good things to come, entered the greater tabernacle once for all.

Connection: Aaron's rituals of purity pointed to Christ's perfect holiness.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus, perfectly pure, rose in glory and offered Himself without spot, accepted eternally.

Lev 16:26–28 – Those who handled the carcasses had to wash; the bodies were burned.

Heb 9:13–14 – Animal blood sanctified outwardly, but Christ’s blood cleanses the conscience.

Connection: The Old Covenant dealt with outward defilement; Christ deals with inward cleansing.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus suffered “outside the gate” (Heb 13:11–12), bearing reproach, to cleanse us inwardly.

Lev 16:29–31 – The Day of Atonement was a lasting statute, a day of rest and self-denial.

Heb 9:9–10 – These were regulations about food, drink, and washings, imposed until the time of reformation.

Connection: The rituals were temporary, pointing ahead to Christ’s once-for-all rest and renewal.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus provides the true Sabbath rest (Heb 4:9–10), and His once-for-all work brings eternal renewal.

Lev 16:32–34 – The high priest made atonement every year for all Israel.

Heb 9:25–28 – Christ did not offer Himself yearly but once for all, at the end of the ages, to put away sin.

Connection: The Old Covenant required repetition; Christ’s sacrifice was final and complete.

Fulfillment in Christ: Jesus’ one sacrifice is final, complete, and never needs repeating—eternal salvation secured.

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

Parallels Between Leviticus 16, Hebrews 9, and Christ		
Leviticus 16 (Type)	Hebrews 9 (Explanation)	Fulfillment in Christ (Reality)
Lev 16:1–2 — Only Aaron could enter the Most Holy Place once a year under strict conditions.	Heb 9:7–8 — The Spirit signified that access to God was still restricted; only the high priest once a year, not without blood.	Heb 10:19–20 — Through Jesus' torn flesh (the veil), believers have full and permanent access to God.
Lev 16:3–4 — Aaron brings a bull for his own sin; wears holy linen garments.	Heb 9:6–7 — Priests serve continually; the high priest alone enters the inner tent with blood for himself and the people.	Heb 7:26–27 — Jesus, perfectly holy, needed no sacrifice for Himself; He offered Himself for us.
Lev 16:5–6 — Atonement for Aaron and his household with the bull.	Heb 9:7 — The high priest offers for his own sins and for the people's sins of ignorance.	Heb 4:15; 7:27 — Christ is sinless; His offering was solely for sinners, not Himself.
Lev 16:7–10 — Two goats chosen: one for the LORD (sacrifice), one as the scapegoat (removal).	Heb 9:12, 26 — Christ entered once for all with His own blood, not that of animals.	Isa 53:6; Jn 1:29; Heb 9:12 — Jesus bears wrath as the offering and removes sin as the true "scapegoat."
Lev 16:11–14 — Blood of the bull sprinkled on/before the mercy seat.	Heb 9:21–22 — Without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.	Heb 9:12 — Jesus presents His own blood in the heavenly sanctuary, securing eternal redemption.
Lev 16:15–19 — Goat's blood makes atonement for the people, holy place, tent, and altar.	Heb 9:23–24 — Earthly copies cleansed with animal blood; heavenly realities require a better sacrifice.	Heb 9:24 — Jesus purifies the true heavenly dwelling and fully reconciles us to God.
Lev 16:20–22 — Scapegoat bears sins and is sent away into the wilderness.	Heb 9:26, 28 — Christ bore sins once for all to put away sin by His sacrifice.	Ps 103:12; Heb 10:17–18 — Our sins are removed forever; God remembers them no more.
Lev 16:23–25 — Aaron washes, changes garments, and offers burnt offerings.	Heb 9:11–12 — Christ, High Priest of the good things, entered the greater tabernacle once for all.	1 Pet 1:19; Heb 9:14 — Jesus, spotless and pure, offers Himself once, accepted eternally.

Parallels Between Leviticus 16, Hebrews 9, and Christ		
Leviticus 16 (Type)	Hebrews 9 (Explanation)	Fulfillment in Christ (Reality)
Lev 16:26–28 — Carcasses burned outside the camp; handlers must wash.	Heb 9:13–14 — Animal blood sanctifies outwardly; Christ’s blood cleanses the conscience.	Heb 13:11–12 — Jesus suffers “outside the gate,” bearing reproach to cleanse us inwardly.
Lev 16:29–31 — A lasting statute: afflict your souls; a Sabbath of solemn rest.	Heb 9:9–10 — Regulations about food, drink, washings, imposed until the time of reformation.	Heb 4:9–10; 10:14 — Christ brings true Sabbath rest and once-for-all perfection for His people.
Lev 16:32–34 — The high priest makes atonement yearly for all Israel.	Heb 9:25–28 — Not yearly, but once for all at the end of the ages; He appeared to put away sin.	Heb 10:12–14 — Jesus’ single sacrifice is final and complete; eternal salvation secured.