

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

BIBLE TEXT : Leviticus 16 :1-34; 23:26-32

LESSON 86 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Leviticus 16:1-34 (KJV)

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;

² And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy *place* within the vail before the mercy seat, which *is* upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.

³ Thus shall Aaron come into the holy *place*: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

⁴ He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these *are* holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and *so* put them on.

⁵ And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

⁶ And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

⁷ And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

⁸ And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

⁹ And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him *for* a sin offering.

¹⁰ But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

¹¹ And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which *is* for himself:

¹² And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I God's Proclamation Concerning the Day of Atonement

1 God ordained that there should be a time of self-examination and sacrifice, to occur between the joyous feasts of Trumpets and Tabernacles, in the seventh month, Leviticus 23:1, 2, 4, 26, 27;

Numbers 29:7-11 (KJV)

⁷ And ye shall have on the tenth *day* of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work *therein*:

⁸ But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD *for* a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, *and* seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish:

⁹ And their meat offering *shall be of* flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals to a bullock, *and* two tenth deals to one ram, ¹⁰ A several tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

¹¹ One kid of the goats *for* a sin offering; beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering of it, and their drink offerings.

Hebrews 10:1-4 (KJV)

¹ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

³ But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made of* sins every year.

⁴ For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

2 No work was to be done in any part of the day, Leviticus 23:28-32

II The Events of the Day

1 God's presence in the Holy of Holies made it impossible for any but the high priest to go beyond the vail, and he only on the Day of Atonement, Leviticus 16:1, 2;

Hebrews 8:3 (KJV)

³ For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

2 The high priest entered the Holy of Holies only after washing with water, putting on his linen robes, and taking with him the blood of a sin offering, a censer with burning coals, and incense to be burned before the Lord, Leviticus 16: 3, 4, 11-15;

Ezekiel 44:17-18 (KJV)

¹⁷ And it shall come to pass, *that* when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.

¹⁸ They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird *themselves* with any thing that causeth sweat.

Hebrews 9:6-14 (KJV)

⁶ Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of* God.

⁷ But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

⁸ The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the vail:

¹³ And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not:

¹⁴ And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

¹⁵ Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

¹⁶ And he shall make an atonement for the holy *place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

¹⁷ And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

¹⁸ And he shall go out unto the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about.

¹⁹ And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

²⁰ And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy *place*, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

²¹ 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, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

²² And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

²³ And Aaron shall come into the

⁹ Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

¹⁰ Which *stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation.

¹¹ But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

¹³ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

3 No one could be in the Tabernacle but the high priest while atonement was being made, Leviticus 16:17

4 Lots were cast upon the two goats, brought as a sin offering for the people, to determine which was for the Lord and which was to be the scapegoat, Leviticus 16:5, 7-10

5 Aaron killed the sin offering for himself and his family, taking its blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkling it upon and before the Mercy Seat, which was covered by the cloud of incense, Leviticus 16:6, 11, 14;

Leviticus 17:11 (KJV)

¹¹ For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Hebrews 7:27-28 (KJV)

²⁷ Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

²⁸ For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

6 The goat brought as a sin offering for the people, by lot determined for the Lord, was killed and the blood sprinkled in the Holy of Holies, Leviticus 16:15

7 Atonement was made for the Tabernacle as a whole, Leviticus 16:16, 17;

Exodus 30:10 (KJV)

¹⁰ And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it *is* most holy unto the LORD.

8 The brazen altar was sprinkled with the blood of both sin offerings, atonement thereby being made for the people's uncleanness that was upon it, Leviticus 16:18, 19

9 The scapegoat was sent away into the wilderness after the people's iniquities, transgressions, and sins were confessed over it, to set forth a type of Christ bearing away our sins in His own body, Leviticus 16:20-22;

Isaiah 53:6 (KJV)

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:12 (KJV)

¹² Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

1 Peter 2:24 (KJV)

²⁴ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 John 3:4-5 (KJV)

⁴ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin *is* the transgression of the law.

⁵ And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins;

tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy *place*, and shall leave them there:

²⁴ And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.

²⁵ And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar.

²⁶ And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

²⁷ And the bullock *for* the sin offering, and the goat *for* the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy *place*, shall *one* carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

²⁸ And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

²⁹ 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 your souls, and do no work at all, *whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:

³⁰ 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.

³¹ It *shall be* a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

³² And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, *even* the holy garments:

³³ And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

³⁴ And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Leviticus 23:26-32 (KJV)

and in him is no sin.

Jeremiah 31:34 (KJV)

³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

10 Aaron washed himself again and offered the burnt offering for himself and the people, Leviticus 16:23, 24;

Ezekiel 44:19 (KJV)

¹⁹ And when they go forth into the utter court, *even* into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments.

11 The bodies of the slain sin offerings were disposed of, and other ceremonial details taken care of, according to God's instructions, Leviticus 16:25-28;

Leviticus 6:30 (KJV)

³⁰ And no sin offering, whereof *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile *withal* in the holy *place*, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire.

Leviticus 10:17-18 (KJV)

¹⁷ Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?

¹⁸ Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy *place*: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy *place*, as I commanded.

III The Perpetuating Statute

1 Atonement for sin was the basis for the solemnity of the day, which was to be continued throughout their generations, Leviticus 16: 29-31

2 The high priests who succeeded Aaron were to serve as Aaron had served, Leviticus 16:32-34;

Hebrews 5:1-4 (KJV)

¹ For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

² Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

³ And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.

⁴ And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron.

NOTES:

A Kingdom of Priests

From the time of the giving of the promise to Abraham that a great nation would rise from his descendants, it was the intention of God that that nation should be a peculiar treasure to Him. When the people stood before Mt. Sinai God told them, through Moses, that if they would obey His commandments and hearken to His voice He would make them a kingdom of priests and an holy nation (**Exodus 19:5-6 (KJV)** ⁵ Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: ⁶ And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel). It is true that Israel drew back from the way God had planned for them and would not wholly follow God, but God's purpose and plan for them still stood. in the New Testament we are given an eternal truth that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29) ; and because of 'this divine principle God kept dealing with the Israelites even after their failure at Sinai.

God ordained a system of sacrifices that pointed to the coming of the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, to help the Israelites draw near to Him. Its elaborate ritual centered around the shedding of the blood of an innocent victim for a guilty sinner; all a

²⁶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

²⁷ Also on the tenth *day* of this seventh month *there shall be* a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

²⁸ And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it *is* a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.

²⁹ For whatsoever soul *it be* that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.

³⁰ And whatsoever soul *it be* that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

³¹ Ye shall do no manner of work: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

³² It *shall be* unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth *day* of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

picture, or type, of the Innocent One who someday would die in order that repentant sinners might be made free from the condemnation of their sin, and that divine justice should be satisfied.

This sacrificial system included morning and evening burnt offerings, trespass offerings, sin offerings, peace offerings, thank offerings, and meat offerings of various kinds. Every offering had its place in God's plan as it was taught to the people by Moses and those under him who were appointed to do that work. But, in addition, several times a year special feasts or ceremonies were carried out that also pointed to specific provisions of the atoning death of Christ and the benefits we receive from God through and because of that Atonement. We have already studied about the Passover and will soon take up the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles and the offerings that were made at those times. Another great time of rejoicing was the Feast of Trumpets, which took place on the first day of their civil year. This was also the first day of the seventh month of the religious year that began the first of the month when the Passover was eaten.

The Great Day of Atonement

Between two of these joyous feasts, on the tenth day of the seventh month, one of the greatest days of the whole Jewish religious year was celebrated. This was called the Day of Atonement. It was a day of great importance to the nation, a time of great solemnity; a day set aside as a memorial of the perfect Atonement that was to come. The Lord gave strict commandment which halted work of all kinds on this day and called the entire nation to prayer and self-examination, that His great plan of Redemption might be brought to them with greater force and deeper meaning. *On* this day the idea of atonement rose to its highest Old Testament expression in the grand comprehensive series of events. It gives a better representation of the complete and perfect atonement of Christ than can be found in any of the individual sacrifices, even though the offerings on that day were general in nature and the benefits they brought had respect to the entire nation as a whole more than to the individual person.

This fact teaches *us* a great evangelical truth, that Jesus "died for all" — "gave himself a ransom for all" — tasted death for every man — and is "the propitiation" for the sins of the "whole world." It denies any theory of an atonement limited to a few set aside by God to receive its benefits.

There was a variety of offerings made on the day (**Numbers 29:8 (KJV)** ⁸ But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD for a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, *and* seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish), but these were not ordained by God to show that Christ would suffer more than once, or that there was another offering besides His. Their purpose was to show that His one offering was for all kinds of sin and uncleanness. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).. **Hebrews 9:24-28 (KJV)** ²⁴ For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: ²⁵ Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; ²⁶ For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: ²⁸ So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. **Hebrews 10:1-14 (KJV)** ¹ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. ² For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. ³ But in those *sacrifices* *there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. ⁴ For *it is* not possible

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why did God inaugurate the Day of Atonement for Israel?
- 2 What great truth does it teach us?
- 3 Who performed the ritual of the day, and where was it centered?
- 4 Why must only one person perform the service?
- 5 What did the Israelites do on that day?
- 6 If any of the Israelites failed in their duty what penalty was imposed upon them?
- 7 Describe the different sin offerings offered on that day, and tell what was intended and typified in each one.
- 8 How often was the Day of Atonement observed?
- 9 It was a day of solemnity, and was preceded and succeeded by days of joy and feasting. What lesson should we get from its position between these days of joy and feasting?
- 10 Who is our High Priest now, and why do we not have a regular Day of Atonement as Israel did?

that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. ⁵ Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: ⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. ⁷ Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. ⁸ Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; ⁹ Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. ¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. ¹¹ And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: ¹² But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; ¹³ From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

What the Atonement of Christ Gave Them

An individual who transgressed against the law of God obtained forgiveness whenever he came in sincere repentance and faith, bringing a trespass offering which was killed to show, in type, the fact that the Innocent One would someday die for his sins. The seeker after heart-cleansing came with his appropriate sin offering when he sought the experience of sanctification — which we know was given to Old Testament people as well as to us. Other offerings were brought by individuals for thanksgiving and praise, or when deeper consecrations were being made. All these were individual and personal sacrifices and pointed to the coming of Christ and were necessary because they were a part of God's plan.

But on the Day of Atonement they were reminded again of the fact that Christ would someday come and die in their stead to take away their sins cleanse them from all their uncleanness, and fulfill all the typical offerings. It was a memorial to them, a reminder of God's love and of the blessings He had provided for them through His great Sacrifice, Jesus Christ. They looked forward to this great Sacrifice, as today we look back to Calvary.

What It Means to Us

All our hopes are based upon the great Atonement. Everything that we receive from God in this life, especially from the time we are born again and become children of God, is made possible by that great price paid on Calvary. Our spiritual needs are amply provided for; our bodies are healed, strengthened, and renewed; our spirits are revived in the hour of trial and test; and many of our temporal needs supplied by and through that precious Blood. And it is comforting to consider the fact that God has given this great provision of His love and grace that men and women of every clime and nation might have an opportunity to come under its benefiting influence. To aid those who lived in the period of time before the promised Seed came to die as the perfect Sacrifice for sin, the tabernacle worship, as well as the sacrifices offered since the very beginning of the world's history, have been pictures or representations of the coming Atonement that was to be made. Wonderful are the ways of Almighty God!