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Casting Lots

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Casting Lots.

Topics.

- The goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell.
- A practical example.
- The apostles and Joseph and Matthias.

THE GOAT UPON WHICH THE LORD'S LOT FELL

- **Leviticus 16:8-9:** And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel. ⁹ And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the LORD and use it as a sin offering,

The act of casting of lots was a way in which a decision was given over to the LORD. In certain situations, it is wise to cast a lot rather than make the choice oneself, when it matters not which way the lot falls. Here it did not matter which goat the lot fell on for sacrifice or to be set free, whichever way it fell it would be acceptable.

Jewish writers describe the lot in the following way:

- The priest would place one of the goats on his right-hand side and the other on his left and stand by the altar. He would then place two pieces of gold exactly similar, with the words inscribed on one, "for the LORD," and on the other for "Azazel" (the scapegoat) and place them in an urn. After shaking them together he would put both his hands into the urn and take up a lot in each hand.

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The gold nugget that was in his right hand he would place on the head of the goat which stood on his right, and the nugget in his left he placed on the goat on his left side and in this manner the fate of each goat was decided. In this way it was the LORD'S act to choose one of the goats for sacrifice and the other for carrying the sins off to Azazel.

Some describe the distinguishing of the two goats in the following way:

- Immediately after the lot decided the destiny of the two goats, they were distinguished from each other by a red thread tied around the neck of the one set aside for the LORD, and a red thread tied on the head or on the horns of the goat for Azazel.

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

Following is a practical example showing when casting lots is a good idea. Many years ago, when my building partner and I decided to end the partnership, to do other things we had a lot of tools to divide up. To avoid squabble and arguments we drew his name on one side of a square block of wood and mine on the other, we then threw the block high in the air to see who would have first choice and afterward chose alternatively which tool we would take, and in this way divided up our tools without quarrel and contentions.

- **Acts 1:21-26:** So, one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” ²³ And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” ²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

This is another example of casting lots, the apostles cast a lot to choose whether Joseph (also called Barsabbas and Justus), or Matthias would replace Judas. Since both men faithfully accompanied the apostles during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among the people, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up it mattered not which of the two the lot chose, because either one was a good choice.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
