



WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Leviticus 16

(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.

Leviticus 16.

THIS ENTIRE CHAPTER IS FOCUSED ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Topics.

- Moses warns Aaron not to enter the Most Holy Place, or he would die.
- Aaron was to enter the Holy Place in the holy linen garments.
- Aaron is to make atonement for himself and for his house.
- Aaron was to cast Lots over two goats, one for the LORD one for Azazel.
- Aaron is to put the blood on the horns of the altar to make atonement.
- Aaron confesses the sins of the people over the goat and sends it away.
- Aaron is to offer his and the peoples burnt offering to make atonement.
- The bull and goat for the sin offering, is to be burned outside the camp.
- In the seventh month, on the tenth day atonement is made for Israel.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Leviticus is about ceremonial rules and civil laws that God gave to Moses after He had given him the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

- These are the statutes and rules and laws that the LORD made between him and the people of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai. (Lev. 26:46).

1

Either on Mount Sinai or when he met with him in the Tabernacle (also called the tent of meeting) when they were in the wilderness near the Mountain. Moses was to give these ceremonial laws to the Levitical priesthood, they embrace rules concerning sacrifices, offerings and worship; the ordination of Aaron and his sons and their ceremonial cleanness; the Day of Atonement; feasts and holy days and the Year of Jubilee. The civil and social laws and laws of justice he was to give to the government of Israel to implement within their society.

The ceremonial and civil laws were not given to the secular world but are laws God gave to the nation of Israel. The central message is that God is holy and requires His people to be holy. The book also shows that God graciously provides atonement for sin through the shedding of blood. Most Jews and Christians recognise Moses as the author, writing sometime after the giving of the Law (about 1445 B.C.).

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

The previous chapter: covers laws for a man who has a discharge from his body and who has an emission of semen, and laws for a woman during her menstrual cycle and for a man and woman who lie together.

LEVITICUS 16:1-2

Moses warns Aaron Not to Enter the Most Holy Place.

- **Leviticus 16:1-2:** The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the LORD and died, ²and the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may not die. For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.

The Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat: (Heb. 9:2) refers to the Most Holy Place inside the tabernacle of Moses. The tabernacle was divided into two sections the first section was called the Holy Place the second section was called the Most Holy Place and the court surrounding the tabernacle was called the outer court. The entry into the outer court and the entry into the tabernacle faced east. When the people of Israel entered the gate into the outer court the first thing, they would see was the brazen altar for burning sacrifices and burnt offerings, behind this was the large brazen basin for the priests to wash their hands and feet before ministering and behind the basin was the tabernacle itself. Behind the first curtain of the tabernacle (the entry into the Holy place) on the left was the golden lampstand and on the right the table of shewbread. The altar of incense was also in the Holy Place in front of the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy place and the Ark of the Covenant was behind this curtain in the Most Holy Place. The sweet-smelling aroma of the incense would drift over the curtain and into the Most Holy Place.

The Ark of the covenant: (v2) was a symbol of God's holiness, mercy and the place of His presence.

The mercy seat that is on the ark: (Heb. 9:2) refers to the lid of the Ark of the Covenant and is associated with the Day of Atonement, it is mentioned more than twenty times in the Old Testament. The following verses are the first mention of the mercy seat:

- You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. 18And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. 19Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. 20The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. 21And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. 22There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel. (Exod. 25:17-22).

Hebrews chapter nine verse four tells us that the Ark of the Covenant contained the following three things:

1. A golden jar holding the manna.
2. Aaron's rod which budded.
3. The two tablets of law and covenant, known as the Ten Commandments.

The Ark and its mercy seat (a type of lid or covering) represented the presence of Israel's Holy God. The Ark was kept behind a veil in the tabernacle (and later the temple) in a room known as the Holy of Holies (also called the Most Holy Place), and could only be visited by the high priest once a year, on the Day of Atonement. The high priest was required to follow very specific rules prior to entering the Most Holy Place, if he broke any of these rules, he would be struck dead for disrespecting the holiness of God.

The Mercy Seat: was made of pure gold, so it was financially highly valuable, but more importantly, its connection with the Ark as well as serving as a cover over the Ten Commandments, gave the Mercy Seat the highest level of importance to the People of Israel. The gold came from the people of Israel (Exod. 35), it was built by skilful craftsman, artists,

metal-workers, and carpenters who worked under the leadership of Bezalel and Oholiab who constructed it as God had dictated to Moses upon Mount Sinai. (Exod. 35:10-12) (Exod. 35:30-34) (Exod. 36:1-2). The Mercy Seat is also mentioned in the following verses of the New Testament:

- Above it (the Ark) were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (Heb. 9:5).
- But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹²he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. (Heb. 9:11-12).

The mercy seat served as an important part of Jewish worship during the tabernacle and temple era's, but it is no longer an essential part of atonement. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ brought with him a new covenant by which each person can find atonement and forgiveness and payment for their sins through faith in Jesus Christ as God's risen Son. He is our great and perfect eternal and heavenly High Priest who atones for our sin.

- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).
- For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephes. 2:8-9).

The word tabernacle means: testimony and witness, it can refer to the tabernacle itself and to Moses who was a witness and testimony of God before the people. Through the book of Exodus, "The LORD went before the people of Israel by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. (Exod. 13:21-22), but there was no tabernacle built until Exodus chapter seventeen. It was given the following titles:

- The tent of meeting (Num. 18:4, 6, 21, 22).
- The tent of the testimony. (Num. 17:2, 7, 8).
- The sanctuary (Num. 18:1, 3, 5).

The Tent of Meeting, is the Holy Place not the Most Holy Place (Exod. 27:21). Moses would pitch the tent outside the camp and a long way from it, he called it the tent of meeting, because everyone who sought the LORD would go outside the camp to the tent of meeting. Whenever Moses went to the tent all the people would stand at their tent door and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent, when he entered the tent the pillar of cloud would descend and at the entrance of it, then the LORD would speak with Moses face to face (from the pillar of cloud) as a man speaks to his friend. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, they would stand at their tent door and worship and when Moses came back to the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would remain at the tent of meeting. (Exod. 33:1-23). Verse thirty-three clearly states that the entire focus of this chapter is upon:

- Atonement for the holy sanctuary and the tent of meeting.
- Atonement for the altar, the priests and people of Israel.

Moses was to warn his brother Aaron, the high priest, that if he wishes to escape the same fate as his two brothers (Nadab and Abihu who were struck down by fire from the LORD) (Lev. 10:1-2) he is not to assume that he can enter the Most Holy Place whenever he chose, but only on one day of the year, the Day of Atonement. Aaron here stands for all high priests who succeed him, and all the principals taught in this chapter apply to all future high priests.

Aarons two eldest sons were Nadab and Abihu: (v1) the following verses speak of their untimely death.

- Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them. ²And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. (Lev. 10:1-2).

Nadab and Abihu died, because they presumptuously entered the Most Holy Place without being authorised to do so. This is no doubt mentioned here to impact upon Aarons mind and give emphasis to the warning given in verse two never to enter the Most Holy Place except on the day of atonement or if the LORD gave him a direct command to do so. Ponder for a moment, Aarons mixed emotions of holy awe, mindful fear and emotional excitement as he passed through the Holy Place and placed his hand upon the heavy vail, ready to enter the Most Holy Place where the divine manifested presence of God rested above the mercy seat upon the ark. It is almost certain that the beat of his heart would have increased as he drew nearer and caught the first gleam of the manifested light of the Shekinah glory of God.

Inside the vail (within the vail in KJV): (v2) the words, "inside the vail," refers to the Most Holy Place (also called the Holy of Holies). It was here that the mercy seat stood, which was the lid or covering to the top of the Ark of the Covenant. A Cherub stood at each end the of the Mercy Seat and between these two was the seat of the divine Majesty, the habitation of the invisible God, which was a type of heaven for its holiness. However, in the following verses of chapter sixteen the expression "Holy Place" is used for "the Most Holy Place." (v3, 16-17, 20, 27).

- But in this way Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull from the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. (Lev. 16:3).
- Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. ¹⁷No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. (Lev. 16:16-17).
- "And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. (Lev. 16:20).
- And the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. Their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be burned up with fire. (Lev. 16:27).

The common priests, went every morning and evening into the Holy Place to offer incense, but the Old Testament makes it crystal clear that absolutely no one was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies except God's anointed High Priest and Mediator for the people and even he can only go in once a year on the Day of Atonement, and even when he entered, he had to carry burning incense with him so that the cloudy smoke served as a protective covering that shielded him from the danger of death since he was so close to the PURE HOLINESS of the Most High. Our anointed High Priest today is the Lord Jesus Christ who entered the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple this, is why we are to pray before the Father in Jesus Name.

I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat: (v2) on the great Day of Atonement the LORD would appear over the mercy seat between the cherubim in a bright luminous cloud which represented the symbol of His Divine presence and for this reason the high priest was not to approach the mercy seat except on the day of Atonement.

- You (Moses) shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. ¹⁸And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹Make one

cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. ²⁰The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. ²¹And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²²There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel. (Exod. 25:17-22).

The high priest was to look upon this sacred room as the place of the LORD's special residence and unique place of His divine glory. The smoke of the incense which the high priest burnt on hot coals formed a cloud as he entered-into the Most Holy Place and covered the mercy seat so that when the LORD's Shekinah, (or divine Majesty), appeared visibly and gloriously over it the high priest would not clearly see the full glory of God and be struck dead, because the LORD's glory was covered in a thick dark cloud and therefore there was no danger for the high priest to enter, when he entered according to the manner God prescribed.

Aaron foreshadows Christ: (v2) Aaron entering behind the veil into the Most Holy Place, where the Ark of the Covenant stood, and the glory of God shone was a faint shadow of Christ the Lamb of God without blemish who has no need to make atonement for His own sins.

- When Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹²he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. (Heb. 9:11-12).

The ark and mercy seat can be taken to be a type of the glory of Christ, through who God's mercy is granted to us while the invisible presence of God, signifies the unseen spirit, love and grace of Christ in the inner most being of the redeemed, which is not yet seen, but beheld by faith.

The mercy seat and Moses: (v2) following are the two most common thoughts amongst commentators concerning Moses and the Most Holy Place.

1. Based upon the LORD's following words to Moses:

- You shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²²There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel. (Exod. 25:21-22).

Many suppose that to consult with the LORD Moses was able to enter the Most Holy Place, this is a reasonable assumption, since it was:

- Moses who the LORD called up into the cloud on Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments.
- Moses who spent forty days with the LORD on Mount Sinai, receiving instructions for Israel.
- Moses who the LORD chose to give all the laws, concerning entering the Most Holy Place and who was told to teach them to Aaron (chapter 16).
- Moses was the man who God appointed to give the Law to the nation of Israel.

With these five facts in mind, it makes sense that Moses could at any time enter the Most Holy Place and consult with the LORD on behalf of the people, prior to Aaron being anointed as the high priest. However, should this be the case, the LORD would have had to appear in a cloud as He often does since there is no mention of Moses entering the Most Holy Place with incense burning on hot coals.

2. Moses never entered the Most Holy Place but entered the Tabernacle and stood in the Holy Place while the LORD communicated with him from the Most Holy Place behind the veil. This idea solves the problem of Moses needing any covering.

It is not necessary to debate over which of these two scenarios is the correct one since all we need to know, is that the LORD intimately communicated with Moses.

LEVITICUS 16:3-4

Aaron was to Enter the Holy Place in the Holy Linen Garments.

- **Leviticus 16:3-4:** But in this way Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull (bullock in KJV) from the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.⁴He shall put on the holy linen coat and shall have the linen undergarment on his body, and he shall tie the linen sash around his waist, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on.

The Hebrew meaning of bull (bullock in KJV): (v3) bullock in KJV comes from the Hebrew word (*par and parar*). Par refers to a young bull, calf or ox, it carries the idea of breaking forth in wild strength, or perhaps as dividing the hoof). Parar means to break up, to violate, frustrate in any way, to cast off, to cause to cease, to clean, defeat, disannul, dissolve, make of no effect, fail, to bring or come to nothing and utterly make void.

Aaron offered a young bullock for a sin offering: (v3) and a ram for a burnt offering, for himself and his house, because of his and his household weakness, imperfection, and insufficiency He was first commanded to offer sacrifices for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. The bullock had to be the high priests' own property, because it was to expiate (i.e., compensate and recompense) his own sins, since he, like all sinners, required God's divine mercy and forgiveness and because he held the highest office he had to bring a more-costly sacrifice.

6

NOTE: the title, Holy Place as used in verse four embraces the whole enclosure of the tabernacle with its surrounding outer court.

He shall put on holy linen garments: (v4) Aaron was dressed in white linen robes, signifying purity. During ancient times white linen garments were only worn by those of the highest rank, such as priests, kings and their highest officials. To show royal favour in the East it was usual to adorn those favoured with finely woven linen garments to indicate that they were admitted into the royal ruling class of the king. Throughout the year Aaron had himself offered, sacrifices and was ceremonially pure as far as one could be clean ceremonially, and yet at the same time so stained with sin that he dared not enter-into the Most Holy Place where God's divine presence dwelt without the safeguard of both the incense and the blood. The high priest who cleanses others was himself unclean, and because of this the tabernacle and all the furniture within it and the brazen altar of burnt offerings in the outer court were tainted by the very services that were designed to atone, cleanse and purify. The truth taught here is that even though every priest taken from among men had the ceremonial authority to purify worshippers they were not free from sin themselves, and that no matter how noble or how high a believer's position in the church maybe God cannot count them righteous without the shedding of blood.

- Under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

Two sets of Garments: the high priest had two sets of holy garments: the "golden garments" that he wore all year around, and a set of "white linen garments," which he only wore on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) (Leviticus 16:4). These two sets of holy garments are as follows:

Garments worn all year around: the garments the high priest wore all year round consisted of eight separated garments, called the "golden garments," as follows:

1. Breastplate.
2. The ephod.
3. A coat of checker work (Robe in KJV).
4. Tunic (a braided coat in KJV).
5. Turban (a mitre in KJV).
6. Sash (girdle in KJV).
7. A crown of pure gold engraved with HOLINESS TO THE LORD.
8. Linen undergarments (breeches in KJV) to cover their nakedness.

These are the holy garments for Aaron and his descendants chosen to succeed him as future high priests to serve the LORD as the following verses show.

- These are the garments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash. They shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons to serve me as priests. (Exod. 28:4).
- "You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the LORD.' (Exod. 28:36).
- You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh. They shall reach from the hips to the thighs. (Exod. 28:42).

7

Garments worn on the Day of Atonement: the garments the high priest was to wear on the Day of Atonement were called white garments, they consisted of the following four garments:

1. The holy linen coat.
2. The linen undergarment (linen breeches upon his flesh in KJV).
3. The linen sash around his waist (linen girdle in KJV).
4. The linen turban (linen mitre in KJV).

These are the holy garments the high priest was to wear on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:4). On the Day of Atonement Aaron was not to cloth himself in the spectacular regular garments that he daily wore when ministering in the sacred office of high priest but was to cloth himself in plain white linen robes, much like the common Levites, because he was making atonement for his own sins and the sins of the people. For this reason, he was to appear in far more-lowly garments which highlights the truth that when it comes to sinners the highest and lowest are all on the same level, and that when it comes to sin there is no distinction of persons before God.

- So, Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34).

ATONEMENT FOR AARON AND HIMSELF

LEVITICUS 16:5-6

Aaron is to Make Atonement for Himself and for His House.

- **Leviticus 16:5-6:** And he shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. ⁶"Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make atonement for himself and for his house.

After Aaron had offered the daily morning sacrifice and performed the ordinary daily service (Num. 29:7-11), and after washing his body and dressing himself in the white linen holy garments, and after offering the following two sacrifices on behalf of himself and his family:

1. **A bull (bullock in KJV) for a sin-offering:** (no other sacrifice was permitted for the sin of a high-priest), and confessing his own infirmities and transgressions, and those of his family, which would have engraved upon his mind that though he was appointed high priest he was but an imperfect intercessor with God and needed pardon himself and take the blood of the bull into the Most Holy Place and burn its fat upon the brazen altar of burnt offering in the court. (Lev. 16:25).
2. **A ram for a burnt offering:** in token of the high priest dedicating himself wholly to God, with a promise of obedience.

The bull and goat for the sin offering, whose blood was taken in to the Most Holy Place to make atonement was carried outside the camp, with their skin, their flesh (meat) and their dung and burned. (Lev. 16:27). The sin offering was for sin and pictures Christ who was made sin for us and endured the judgment and wrath of God against sin in our stead as our substitute.

- For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:21).

The awfulness of sin is brought out in the innocent bull being entirely burnt up outside the camp on the ground (not the altar). This sin offering pictures Christ the innocent Lamb of God, forsaken of God, as our sin-bearer spoken of as being afflicted, forsaken and given in Psalm twenty-two. Except for the skin of the animal, the whole offering was burnt upon the altar and all went up to God as a sweet saviour, which signifies the following three things:

1. Jesus offering himself fully up to God to do His will even unto death.
2. Christ giving himself as a sweet-smelling savour on our behalf (Eph. 5:2), so that all who come to him could be saved by grace and by faith in him.
3. The Son of God perfectly accomplishing the Father's will.

Jesus himself said:

- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).

Aaron shall take from the people two male goats for a sin offering: (v5) during all the time Aaron was in the tabernacle the two goats were standing at its entrance (i.e., before the LORD). One animal could not represent the two parts of the one whole truth which they symbolise. One goat was sacrificed as a sin offering, and the other goat led away into a solitary land in the wilderness. The first goat is a sin offering for the people, the second goat symbolises the sinner being set free from sin and for these reasons the two goats are to be counted as one sacrifice. Perfectly symbolising the Lord Jesus Christ who laid down his life for all sinners and by his blood, washes them whiter than snow setting them free from the condemnation of sin.

Aaron shall make atonement for himself and for his house: (v6), the word Atonement comes from the Hebrew word (*kaphar*), it means to cover over and figuratively, to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel to appease, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon and make

reconciliation. A bull was the only sacrifice for the sin of a high-priest, he was not permitted to offer any other animal, when making atonement for himself and his own household. Offering the bull and confessing his sin, would imprint upon his mind that he was an imperfect intercessor with God who needed pardon, unlike Christ who had no need to:

- Offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. (Heb. 7:27).

He shall take two male goats for a sin offering: (v5) though there are two goats together they formed a single sin-offering. To bring out the full meaning of the sacrifice it was necessary that after death there should be living life, which naturally could not be visibly manifested with a single sacrifice. This, is why two sacrifices were used as in the case of the two birds used for the healed leper, spoken of in the following verses:

- The priest shall command them to take for him who is to be cleansed two live clean birds and cedarwood and scarlet yarn and hyssop. ⁵And the priest shall command them to kill one of the birds in an earthenware vessel over fresh water. ⁶He shall take the live bird with the cedarwood and the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, and dip them and the live bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water. (Lev. 14:4-6).

The slain goat and bird signify the Lord dying for us while the goat and the bird that was set free signifies our iniquity being laid on him who carried upon himself the iniquity of us all:

- Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4).
- All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6).

God laid on His most beloved Son the iniquity of us all so that we might become a sanctified church, not having spot or wrinkle.

9

- That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:26-27).
- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Here the amazing Gospel and revelation of God's grace and Christ's love toward us is manifested. To save us to eternal life, God sacrificed His most beloved Son, to redeem us Jesus willingly obeyed the will of his heavenly Father and laid his life down for us. When talking to his disciples Jesus said: "Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down their life for their friends." (John 15:13). In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed, saying:

- Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done. (Luke 22:42).

In these words, the love toward those who come to Christ is beautifully manifested. Jesus knew what he was about to suffer, but his love for his friends was greater than the mocking and brutal and cruel suffering he was about to face. Some in churches today judge whether God loves them or not, by their good or bad circumstances, but the foundation of this type of faith is superstition, true Christians look to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and see the enormous love God has toward them and the tremendous price their Saviour paid to redeem them.

LEVITICUS 16:7-10

Aaron Casts Lots over Two Goats, One for the LORD One for Azazel.

- **Leviticus 16:7-10:** Then he shall take the two goats and set them before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting. ⁸And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel (scapegoat in KJV). ⁹And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the LORD and use it as a sin offering, ¹⁰but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel (scapegoat in KJV) shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel (scapegoat in KJV).

Azazel and Scapegoat are only mentioned in the following three verses of this chapter:

- Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel (scapegoat in KJV). (Lev. 16:8)
- The goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel (scapegoat in KJV). (Lev. 16:10)
- He who lets the goat go to Azazel (scapegoat in KJV) shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. (Lev. 16:26)

We have no help from any other Scriptures to discover the meaning of Azazel (scapegoat in KJV), but we do know that the word Azazel, comes from the Hebrew word (‘ez and ‘azal), and means goat of departure; the scapegoat, to go away, to disappear, to be gone. Based upon this and the context of the chapter we can safely suppose that Azazel in this context carries the idea of the removal, dismissal and carrying away of sin and signifies Christ who bore away our sins.

- Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4).
- He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24).

Two goats one offering: the two goats should be regarded as one sin sacrifice and offering for the LORD, one goat being destined to be sacrificed, and the other destined to be set free. While the first goat was being slain, the other goat stood before the entrance of the tabernacle, showing that both goats are parts of one whole sin offering before the LORD. The only reason two goats are used here for this offering is because it would be impossible to present the two halves of the one truth to be symbolised in one animal.

The symbolism of the two goats: (v7) no symbol could so plainly signify the completeness of LORD’s acceptance of the repentant sinner, as this sin offering of two goats. The two goats taken together as making one whole, perfectly symbolise Jesus an innocent man being sacrificed before God on the altar of the cross for our atonement, and by his blood washing us clean of all sin, never to be seen again before God. Obviously, the same goat that was sacrificed could not have been sent into the wilderness, which manifest the beauty of this ceremony in that the two goats represent the one sacrifice.

The sacrificed goat: the life of an innocent animal was sacrificed before the LORD upon the altar, the fact the sacrificed goat was offered first for a sin offering, indicates that sacrifice came first. The death of this goat offered for sin manifests the truth that before God’s forgiveness and pardon could be granted the root and power of sin must firstly be destroyed. This slain goat signifies the Lord the Lamb of God who takes away sin dying for us.

The living goat: signifies that though the power and root of sin is destroyed the sinner is not. This goat, commonly called the scapegoat, highlights the truth that the sacrificial offering was not fully effective until the high priest had ceremonially laid his hands on the head of the live goat and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel and

put them on the head of the innocent goat and sent him away to carry away all sin and uncleanness of the people into the wilderness. Signifying our iniquities being laid on him who carried the iniquity of us all.

- Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4).
- All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:6).

The ceremony of this goat bought about the complete removal of all the iniquities, transgressions and sins of Israel which were confessed over this living goat. The goat being sent into the wilderness never to be heard of again signifies the sins and transgressions of the pardoned sinner being removed as far as the east is from the west. The image of the goat going further and further away never to be heard of again, signifies the truth that there is full, free and everlasting forgiveness.

- Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. (Isaiah 1:18).
- He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:10-12).

The symbolism of the sacrificed goat: the purpose of Christ's blood being shed was fully accomplished on the bloodstained cross of Calvary in that it provided the way by which all sin could be forgiven and clearly points forward to the following words:

- Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

However, in the same way that the goat that was slain did not accomplish the pardon or removal of the people's sins but made it possible that their sins and transgressions could be pardoned and forgiven. Likewise, though the shedding of Christ's blood made it possible for the sins and transgressions of the world to be forgiven, the granting of God's forgiveness and pardon depends upon whether a person has by faith laid their hand on Christ, for without faith there is no pardon and salvation for ceremony without faith simply remains ceremony, it is only when it is mixed with faith that pardon and salvation are granted, for faith is the only path to forgiveness. Without being mixed with faith the act of the high priest laying his hands on the head of the goat would be nothing more than a mere physical act. Likewise, to say one believes Christ is who he claims to be is nothing more than head knowledge until the confession is mixed with faith. The living goat being set free teaches that the sins of the pardoned sinner are cast aside and that the LORD no longer counts them against the redeemed. What was symbolised in the symbol of the two goats has been done in reality by the Lamb of God without blemish in the one sacrifice, firstly, offering himself to his heavenly Father as a sacrifice for all mankind on the bloodstained cross of Calvary, and secondly, by rising from the dead and ascending into God's heavenly Holy Place, by these two events he in one sacrifice firstly, destroyed the root and power of sin and secondly, carried away the sin of all who come to him by faith.

The foundation of forgiveness: is God's love and mercy that He has toward us, which He manifested in giving His Most Beloved Son as our sacrifice, and the love Christ has which he manifested in laying down his life to redeem us.

- God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).
- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8).

Though God has made atonement available to all, and His pardon is freely open for all to receive, to receive His pardon a sinner must choose to believe on the Son of God.

- Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29).
- This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matt. 26:28).
- Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38).

The two goats perfectly symbolise the removal of all sin and the means of atonement, pardon and salvation.

CASTING THE LOT

The goat upon which the LORD's lot fell: (v9) 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. Another example of this is when 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. (Acts 1:21-26). Following is a good 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 and in this way divided up our tools without quarrel and contentions. Jewish writers describe the lot it 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. 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.

ATONEMENT FOR AARON AND HIS HOUSEHOLD

LEVITICUS 16:11-14

Aaron is to make Atonement for Himself and for His Household.

- **Leviticus 16:11-14:** "Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall kill the bull as a sin offering for himself. ¹²And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the LORD,

and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it inside the veil ¹³and put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, so that he does not die. ¹⁴And 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.

Here we are told that Aaron was to:

- Kill the bull as a sin offering for himself.
- Make atonement for himself and his household.
- Take some burning coals from the altar of burnt offering in the outer court and place them in a censer (container), then crush two handfuls of sweet-smelling incense and take both the censer with the hot coals and the incense inside the veil. Once inside the veil the incense was placed on the hot coals so that a cloud from the sweet-smelling burning incense would drift over the veil into the Most Holy Place and over the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat.
- Take some of the blood of the bull and with his finger sprinkle it seven times in front of the mercy seat and seven times on the east side of it.

In Scripture the number seven is, considered to be the sacred number indicating completeness and perfections. Seven times carries the idea of great magnification of the truth that is being taught, which in this case is the complete cleansing and removal of all sin and guilt by blood.

Aaron shall make an atonement for himself: (v11) Aarons own sins and the other priests, called "his house," in the following verse:

- House of Israel, bless the LORD! O house of Aaron, bless the LORD! (Psalm 135:19).

13

Had to firstly be atoned for before he could offer the atoning sacrifices for the people.

- Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. (Heb. 5:3).
- But into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. (Heb. 9:7).

Aaron like any layman could not delegate the killing of the bull to anyone else, he had to slaughter the animal himself, while others were catching the draining blood into a vessel. These sacrifices for sin would not only have imprinted upon the mind of Aaron and the people the seriousness of sin, but also pointed forward to the perfect Lamb of God to come without blemish.

Aaron shall kill the bull (bullock in KJV) as a sin offering for himself: (v11) being a sacrifice offered up for himself the high priest, like any layman, had to slaughter the victim himself, he could not delegate this work to anyone else.

- Then he shall kill the bull before the LORD, and Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and throw the blood against the sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. (Lev. 1:5).

Some Jewish writers say that he received the blood in the bowl used for sprinkling, which he handed over to a priest to stir so that it would not coagulate while he burnt the incense on the hot coals in the Most Holy Place. Aaron by his own hand (and all future high priest) killed the bull for a sin offering and the ram for a burnt offering themselves in the outer court. (v3, 6, 11). Some might think this was a very messy and bloody process, but quite the contrary, it was a very clean procedure because

the high priest was very skilled in his work, since he was trained from childhood to cleanly cut the animals throat while others appointed for the work captured the draining blood in a bowl. In ancient times this was the most humane way to kill an animal since death is almost instant, today many modern abattoirs still cut the throat of the animal so that the blood is drained, others use a bolt gun, which stabs the animal in a weak spot in the animals' heads right between their eyes with a metal rod. This procedure instantly stuns the animal and then they finish it off by cutting the throat with a knife.

The cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat: (v13) the high priest now in the Most Holy Place (also called the Holy of Holies) threw the incense upon the coals in the censer, so that it burned before the LORD, whose seat was between the cherubim taking special care that the mercy seat and the cherubim would be enveloped in the cloud.

Some say the cloud of the incense was:

1. To prevent the high priest from seeing the ark and being struck with the glory issuing from between the cherubim, where the Shekinah of God dwelt (i.e., the glorious majesty of God) covering the two tablets of the law,
2. To prevent the high priest from offending the LORD by curiously gazing on the symbols of the divine glory. The Jews say he entered sideways, so as not to look directly on the full and clearly visible glory of the mercy seat, and that, after having filled the sanctuary with a cloud of thick smoke, he went out backward, having his face directed toward the now dimly seen mercy-seat, in reverence for the divine majesty, which it represented. Both, of these contain elements of truth since we know that no one can see the full light of God and live, even when the LORD appeared to Moses and on Mount Sinai and at the tent of meeting, He covered himself in a cloud for the full glory and majesty of God was not to be seen in full brilliance. This highlights the truth that there is no access to God without a covering, which for us today is the Lord Jesus Christ.

That he does not die: (v13) as Aarons two eldest sons Nadab and Abihu did, because they boldly, irreverently and presumptuously entered the tabernacle and did what they were not appointed to do. (Lev. 10:1-2). No one can see the full glory of God and live, even the faithful in Christ only draw near to God and see His character and nature in the life of their Lord and Saviour.

NOTE (v14): it is interesting to notice that the burning of the incense (an emblem of prayer) preceded the sprinkling of the blood, which signifies that the high priest was to be prepared by prayer prior to entering the Most Holy Place so that when he did enter it he would be entering it in a spirit of prayer (signified by the sweet-smelling incense). This immediately takes our mind to Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to his death on the bloodstained cross of Calvary and his ascension into the heavenly and eternal Holy Place of God

He shall sprinkle the blood on the east side of the mercy seat: (v14) the tabernacle faced east, which means when Aaron stood in the Most Holy Place sprinkling the blood toward the east he was sprinkling it toward the outer court which was the most western part of the tabernacle where the people gathered signifying that the high priest in this act represented the people, and that God accepted the sacrifice on their behalf. Sprinkling the blood on the mercy-seat teaches us, that God is merciful to sinners only through the blood of Christ.

The symbolism is of the mercy of God and the blood of Christ, working together to bring about perfect justice, purification, forgiveness and atonement of sinners. Without God's mercy and Christ's blood there is no remission of sin, no justification and no salvation.

The cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat: (v13) the high priest now threw the incense upon the coals in the censer (a sacred pan), in the Most Holy Place (also called the Holy of Holies) and stayed there until the whole place was filled with a cloud of smoke, taking special care that the mercy seat and the cherubim covering the two tablets of the law, would be enveloped in the cloud.

Some say the cloud of smoke was:

1. To prevent him from seeing the ark and being struck with the glory issuing from between the cherubim, where the Shekinah presence (i.e., the glorious majesty of God) resided for the full light, glory and majesty of God was not to be seen in full brilliance.
2. To prevent the high priest from offending the LORD by curiously gazing on the symbols of the divine glory. The Jews say he entered sideways, so as not to look directly on the full and clearly visible glory of the mercy seat, and that, after having filled the sanctuary with a cloud of thick smoke, he went out backward, having his face directed toward the now dimly seen mercy-seat, in reverence for the divine majesty, which it represented. No one can see the full glory of God and live, even the faithful in Christ only draw near to God and see His character and nature in the life of their Lord and Saviour.

Aaron sprinkling the blood seven times: (v14-16) Aaron sprinkles the blood seven times with his finger in front of the mercy seat (on the east side) to make atonement for himself and for his house. In Scripture the number seven is, considered to be the sacred number indicating completeness and perfections. Seven times carries the idea of great magnification of the truth that is being taught, which in this case is the complete cleansing and removal of all sin and guilt by blood.

The high priest taking the blood into the most holy place symbolises the following three things:

15

1. True atonement can only be accomplished by one who could enter-into the presence of God, and afterward leave the entrance wide open for all others to enter.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ the true High Priest entering the heavenly tabernacle of God.
3. God is merciful to sinners only through the shedding of blood foreshadowing the shed blood of Christ.

In the book of Hebrews, we read:

- Under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

ATONEMENT FOR THE HOLY PLACE

LEVITICUS 16:15-17

The Sin Offering is Killed to Make Atonement for the Holy Place.

- **Leviticus 16:15-17:** "Then he (Aaron) 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. ¹⁶Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. ¹⁷No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel.

During this ceremony Aaron goes in and out of the tabernacle a few times. This ends the atoning for the Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the altar. (v20). In this way Aaron made atonement for the Holy Place, because of the sin and transgressions of the people and made atonement for the Tent of Meeting, which dwelt in the midst of their uncleanness. During the time the high priest was ministering in the outer court the censer of incense would have been left smoking behind the veil within the Most Holy Place which meant he could return without any fear of being struck dead.

The slain goat: was a type of Christ dying for our sin, the innocent dying for the guilty.

The blood of the bull and goat: the blood of the bull (the sin offering for the high priest) and the blood of the goat (the sin offering for the people) this teaches us that whether a person is the head of the largest church in the world or the lowest of the congregation none can be saved without the shedding of blood.

NOTE: from the time Aaron entered the Holy Place, to make atonement for himself, his house and all the assembly of Israel to the time he came out no one was to enter the Tent of Meeting.

ATONEMENT FOR THE BRAZEN ALTAR

LEVITICUS 16:18-19

Aaron puts Blood on the Horns of the Altar to make Atonement.

- **Leviticus 16:18-19:** 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 some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. ¹⁹And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.

16

Aaron shall make atonement for the altar: (v18) since the golden altar of incense in the Holy Place, and the brazen altar of burnt offering in the outer court both had four horns on each corner, some suppose this to be the golden altar of incense, while others take it to be the brazen altar of burnt offering. For this reason, we will look at both.

1. The golden altar of incense in the Holy Place: in the book of Exodus it is written.

- Aaron shall make atonement on its (the altar of incense) (v1) horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD." (Exod. 30:10).
- The priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the LORD that is in the tent of meeting, and all the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. (Lev. 4:7).

The altar of incense is correctly said to be before the LORD, for it is in the Holy Place against the veil behind which the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat between the two Cherubim sat and where God in special and unique manner dwelt. Based on the two verses above many suppose that the altar in focus here is the golden altar of incense in the Holy Place. They reason that the words, "he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD" (Lev. 16:18), refers to Aaron going out of the Most Holy Place and into the Holy Place where the altar of incense stood. To support this idea those who hold to this view point out that the last account of the high priest was, that he was in the Most Holy Place (v17), and therefore his coming out of it must mean he enters-into the Holy Place, where the altar of incense was. The problem with this idea is that the Holy Place spoken of in (Lev. 16:17) is the Most Holy Place,

we know this because (v15-16), speaks of Aaron sprinkling the blood over the mercy seat which we all know is in the Most Holy Place. However, it is certain that the words, "And so he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting" (Lev. 16:16), includes making atonement for the altar of incense as the LORD in the book of Exodus commanded him to do once a year. (Exod. 30:10).

2. **The brazen altar of burnt offering in the outer court:** those who hold to this view, are of the opinion the high priest's going out signifies his going out from the tent of meeting where the golden altar of incense stood. Though it is not specifically stated that the Holy Place was cleansed, we are told that Aaron made atonement for the tent of meeting (v16), which would include the cleansing of the Holy Place. Those who hold to the view that it is the brazen altar of burnt offering in the outer court that is in focus, reason that if it does not refer to this altar then no atonement and cleansing has been made for it. This would be totally contrary to the Day of Atonement, since the brazen altar of burnt offerings was a most holy part of the tabernacle, and therefore would need atonement made for it as Aaron, his house, the priests and all the people of the congregation, the mercy seat upon the ark, the holy sanctuary and the tabernacle did. The following verses speak of the blood being placed upon the four horns of the brazen altar of burnt offering in the outer court.

- Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. (Lev. 4:25).
- The priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. (Lev. 4:30).
- Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. (Lev. 4:34).

17

Verse eighteen and nineteen show that this altar had to be cleansed from the uncleanness of the people, so it is more likely that the altar in focus is the altar that the people brought their sacrifices and offering to which was the brazen altar of burnt offering in the outer court, especially since the people never came near the golden altar of incense. However, whichever view one wishes to hold to matters little since verse thirty-three tells us that the high priest was to make atonement for the entire sanctuary and the tent of meeting which would include everything in it, and for the altar which would refer to the brazen altar for burnt offerings in the outer court.

He shall take of the blood of the bullock, and goat: (v18-19) it is difficult to know if Aaron mixed the blood of the bull and goat together into one bowl at this stage or took both the bowl with the blood of the bull and the bowl with the blood of the lamb to the altar to make atonement for it and put the blood of both animals on the four horns of the altar and with his finger sprinkle the blood seven times, to cleanse the altar from the uncleanness of the people. In Scripture the number seven is, considered to be the sacred number indicating completeness and perfections. Seven times carries the idea of great magnification of the truth that is being taught, which in this case is the complete cleansing and removal of all sin and guilt by blood.

ATONEMENT FOR THE PEOPLE

LEVITICUS 16:20-22

Aaron is to Confess the Sins of the People Over the Goat.

- **Leviticus 16:20-22:** "And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. ²¹And Aaron shall lay

both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. ²²The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.

He shall present the live goat: (v20) after the live goat had been presented before the LORD (v10) it was now brought to Aaron, who by placing both his hands upon its head, and confessing over it ceremonially transferred the iniquities and sins of the people of Israel to the goat as their substitute. Though this was only a ceremony, it clearly pointed forward to Christ, upon whom our iniquities and punishments were laid:

- He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:5-6).

Some may think that Christ blood cleanses only those who are saved after Christ's death and resurrection, but this is not so the power of Christ's cleansing blood flows back to the foundation of the earth so that the faithful of the Old and New Testament are saved by the same Saviour and Redeemer. In the book of Revelation, it is written:

- All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8).

And Peter wrote:

- You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God's eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind's salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn't just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like a spiritual invisible river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who by faith looked to the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ. This shines a glorious spotlight on the truth that whether a man or woman is of the Old or New Testament we are all saved by the same cleansing power, the same cleansing blood and the same Deliverer, King and Saviour. This is because God in his eternal mind planned and purposed before time began that His Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of all mankind for all eternity. Truly, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat: (v21) the statement "with both his hands," only occurs in this ceremony, by confession and the act of using both hands the high priest in the strongest manner possible showed that the goat was intended for both the priesthood and for the people. Tradition says the high priest then turned around and declared, "Ye shall be clean."

Confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel: (v21) confess all the iniquities, transgressions, both the greater and lesser sins and sins of ignorance and presumption. Obviously, the priest could not confess every sin in detail, many commentators say that the form of confession used during these early times went something like the following:

- O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have done perversely, have transgressed sinned berate thee, O Lord, expiate now the iniquities, transgressions, and sins, in which thy people, the house of Israel, have done perversely, transgressed, and sinned before thee, as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant. (Lev. 16:30.)

- Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed, they have rebelled, they have sinned before Thee. I beseech Thee now absolve their transgressions, their rebellion, and their sin that they have sinned against Thee, as it is written in the law of Moses Thy servant, that on this day he shall make atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins, and ye shall be clean.

Send the goat into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness: (v21) (by the hand of a fit man in KJV). The expression, "a fit man," occurs nowhere else in the Bible, here it carries the idea of a faithful man, a man that could be trusted who was previously appointed to send the live goat away to the wilderness which may signify the following two things:

1. In the wilderness the goat would be neglected by all men, and exposed to many dangers and wild beasts, which may signify Christ being forsaken by God and by his own disciples and the many dangers and sufferings he endured.
2. The goat carrying the sins of the people into the wilderness may signify the removal of the peoples sins far away from God and out of His sight.

The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area: (v22) (a land not inhabited in KJV) a desert land remote from human habitation through which none travelled. Sending the goat that the sins of the people had been figuratively transferred to, away to such a remote land signifies that God would no longer remember the sins and iniquities of those who put their trust in His Saviour.

The atonement is said to be completed: by putting the sins of Israel upon the head of the scapegoat, which was sent away into a wilderness, a land not inhabited. The sending away of the goat represented the free and full remission of the peoples' sins. The scapegoat was a type of Christ rising again for our justification and taking away our sin. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said:

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

The high priest's entrance into the Most Holy Place typified our entrance into heaven, which Christ our heavenly High Priest made for us. The high priest was to come out of the Most Holy Place again; but the Lord Jesus Christ forever dwells in the presence of God to make intercession for us. By faith we put our hands upon the head of the Lamb of God without blemish, trusting in Christ who is the Lord of our righteousness, as only he atones for our sins and pardons us before God. By repentance we inwardly sorrow over sin and do all we can to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, all the while being confident, that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

AARON PREPARES HIMSELF FOR THE SIN OFFERINGS

Sixteen stages to complete atonement: (v22) these verses show that during the Day of Atonement, Aaron would have been going in and out of the Most Holy Place, while the solemn anxious assembled multitude watched and prayed. Following are the sixteen stages Aaron would have gone through to complete the ceremony required to make atonement for himself and the people:

1. Firstly, Aaron brought a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering for himself and his house before the entrance of the tabernacle ready to be sacrificed.
2. He would wash his body (v4) (i.e., his hands and feet). All we are told is that Aaron was to wash himself in a holy place (the holy place in KJV), this would refer to the basin of bronze in the outer court.

- The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸"You shall also make a basin of bronze (a laver of brass in KJV), with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, ¹⁹with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. ²⁰When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. ²¹They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations." (Exod. 30:17-21).
3. He dressed himself in his white holy linen garments (v4) (most likely in the Holy Place were the altar of incense, the table of shewbread and the seven-branched lampstand stood).
 4. Dressed in his white priestly garments he would then go out to the outer court and have the people bring to him two goats for their sin offering and a ram for their burnt offering and place them before the entrance of the tabernacle ready to be offered.
 5. He sacrificed the bullock for himself and his family (v6, 11).
 6. He enters the Most Holy Place (also called (the holy of holies) for the first time with hot coals and incense, and the Most Holy Place is filled with a cloud of smoke from the incense. (v12).
 7. He went out to the outer court, to get some of the blood of the bullock. (v14), leaving the censer smoking in the Most Holy Place.
 8. For a second time he enters the Most Holy Place and standing before the Ark sprinkled the blood of the bullock once on the front of the mercy-seat and seven times before it (i.e., in front of it on the east side). (v14).

The ashes of the altar of burnt offering were placed at the east side of the brazen altar of burnt offerings. The most likely reason for this was because the tabernacle faced east which means that the east side was the furthest side away from the entrance to the tabernacle and the Most Holy Place which was at the west end of the outer court. The Most Holy Place signifies the cleanness and purity of Christ which means that the symbolism here is that sinners should not presume to approach God, except through His way of salvation, should anyone attempt to do so they will be banished from His presence (i.e., placed on the ash heap).

9. He returned to the outer court and killed the goat for the peoples' sin offering on which the lot for sacrifice had fallen. (v15). (the fat of the sin offerings was burnt on the altar). (v25). Men previously appointed take the skin the flesh and the dung of the sacrificed sin offerings outside the camp and burn them (v27). (It would not be right to leave the dead bodies lying in the outer court, so they were removed).
10. He enters the Most Holy Place a third time to perform the same process with the goat's blood as with the bullock's blood and finishes making atonement for the Most Holy Place and tent of meeting (this embraces the Holy Place). (v15-16).
 - Aaron shall make atonement on its (the golden altar of incense in the Holy Place) horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD." (Exodus 30:10).
11. He returned to the outer court and makes atonement for the brazen altar of burnt offerings by placing the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat upon the horns of the brazen altar and sprinkled it seven times. (v16:18).

This ends the ceremony for the bull offered as a sin offering for Aaron and his house the and the ceremony for the goat offered as sin offering for the people. It also ends the atoning for the Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the brazen altar of burnt offerings. (v16:20).

12. Now Aaron lays his hands on the head of the live goat, confesses over it all the sins of the people and sends it away into the wilderness by a man appointed for the task. (v20-21).

NOW AARON PREPARES HIMSELF FOR THE BURNT OFFERINGS

13. Aaron returned to the tent of meeting, took off his linen garments that he put on when he first went into the tabernacle and left them there. (v23).
14. He returned to the outer court and washed himself again in the laver. (v24).
15. He again entered the tent of meeting and put on his holy linen garments that he left in the tabernacle. (v24).
16. He returns to the brazen altar in the outer court and offers the ram for his burnt offering (Lev. 16:3) and the ram for the peoples burnt offering (Lev. 16:3) and makes atonement for himself and for the people. (v24).

NOTE: these do not include the sacrifices that the high priest performed for the Morning and Evening sacrifices. (Num. 29:7-11).

The purpose and reason for this solemn ceremonial ritual on the Day of Atonement was to impress upon the minds of the Israelites the conviction that the whole tabernacle was stained by the sins of a guilty people, and that by their sins they had forfeited the privileges of the LORD's divine presence and therefore for God to remain with them an atonement had to be made. During the year the sins and shortcomings of the priests and the people polluted the sacred tabernacle and therefore this ritual of atonement was required to be carried out once every year. The blood of the bull for sin offering for the high priest, and the blood of the goat for the people's sin offering being sprinkled on the four horns of the altar indicated that the priests and the people equally needed an atonement for their sins. After the tabernacle had been ceremonially purified, and the people of Israel reconciled by the blood of the sin sacrifices and offerings, the LORD's gracious presence continued to dwell amongst them.

21

ATONEMENT FOR AARON AND THE PEOPLE

LEVITICUS 16:23-24

Aaron Offers the Peoples Burnt Offering to Make Atonement.

- **Leviticus 16:23-24:** "Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and shall take off the linen garments that he put on when he went into the Holy Place and shall leave them there. ²⁴And he shall bathe his body in water in a holy place and put on his garments and come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.

Here we are told that Aaron was to:

- Go back into the Tent of Meeting; take off his holy priestly linen garments; leave them there; bathe his body in water; put on his holy garments back on and go out into the outer court and offer his and the peoples burnt offering and make atonement for himself and for the people.

He shall bathe his body (his flesh in KJV) in water in a holy place: (v24) referring to the sacred bronze laver in the outer court of the tabernacle. After Aaron had touched the goat which bore the iniquities of the people, he was to wash himself. This ceremony signified that the creature was made so polluted and abominable by being a substitute for sinners, that none could touch it without contracting some pollution.

He shall bathe his body in water (wash his flesh with water in KJV): (v24) on the Day of Atonement Aaron washed himself twice (i.e., his hands and feet) (Exod. 30:17-21). He firstly, washed and put on the white holy linen garments prior to making the sin offerings. (Lev. 16:4). Secondly, prior to making the burnt offerings he took off his garments, washed himself a second time and afterward put on the white holy linen garments he had taken off. (Lev. 16:23).

He shall put on his garments: (v24) some believe the garments Aaron put on were the holy white linen garments that he put on at the beginning (v4), while others believe the garments he put on were the spectacular high priest garments with its breastplate and twelve precious stones etc., that he regularly officiated in on other days. There are good reasons for both these ideas, so we will look at them both separately.

1. **The spectacular high priest garments:** those who hold to the view that Aaron put on the spectacular high priest garments with its breastplate and twelve precious stones etc., reason that the holy white linen garments he put on at first were fitting for the earlier part of the ceremony which was to appear before the LORD in the Most Holy Place to make atonement for his own sins and for the sins of the peoples, and therefore the holy white linen garments were most fitting for this part of the ceremony. But since the second part of his ministry was of a different nature, in that he now begins to offer the sacrifices and burnt offerings for the people the spectacular high-priestly garments were more suited.
2. **The holy white linen garments:** since the LORD in (v23-24) tells Aaron to go into the tent of meeting and take off the white linen garments that he put on when he first went into the Holy Place and leave them in the Holy Place and after washing his body put on his garments. Those who hold to the view Aaron put on the holy white linen garments reason that after washing he returned to the Holy Place and put on the garments that he had left there, since there is no mention of any other garments.

The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar: (v25) the fat was to be burnt upon the brazen altar of burnt offerings in the outer court, the rest of the carcasses was to be given to some priestly attendants to burn outside the camp, according to the general law for the sin offerings.

- All the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails ⁹and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys ¹⁰(just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. ¹¹But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— ¹²all the rest of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up. (Leviticus 4:8-12) (Leviticus 8:14-17).

BULL AND GOAT BURNED OUTSIDE THE CAMP

LEVITICUS 16:25-28

The Bull and Goat for the Sin Offering, is Burned Outside the Camp.

- **Leviticus 16:25-28:** And the fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. ²⁶And he who lets the goat go to Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. ²⁷And the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. Their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be burned up with fire. ²⁸And he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

Here we are told that Aaron was to:

- Burn the fat of the sin offering (the bull and goat) on the brazen altar in the outer court.
- Before the man who let the goat go to Azazel could enter the camp, he was to wash his clothes and bathe his body in water.
- The bull and the goat whose blood was taken into the Holy Place for the sin offering to make atonement was to be carried outside the camp and their skin flesh and dung was to be burned up with fire.
- Before the man who burned the bull and goat could enter the camp, he was to wash his clothes and bathe his body in water.

The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar: (v25) the fat of the animals sacrificed for sin was to be burnt upon the brazen altar of burnt offering, the remainder of their carcasses were to be cut down and given to priestly attendants who had been appointed to burn them outside the camp in conformity with the general law for the sin offerings.

- All the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails ⁹and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys ¹⁰(just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. ¹¹But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— ¹²all the rest of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up. (Lev. 4:8-12).
- 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. ¹⁵And he killed it, and Moses took the blood, and with his finger put it on the horns of the altar around it and purified the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it to make atonement for it. ¹⁶And he took all the fat that was on the entrails and the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with their fat, and Moses burned them on the altar. ¹⁷But the bull and its skin and its flesh and its dung he burned up with fire outside the camp, as the LORD commanded Moses. (Lev. 8:14-17).

Their skin, flesh and dung shall be burned up with fire: (v27) the men appointed to burn the bodies of the dead animals were to wash themselves and their clothes before they were permitted to return to the camp. Since they carried the remains of the animals (perhaps on wagons) outside the tabernacle to burn them they would not have washed themselves in the sacred bronze laver, because that was in the tabernacle which was in the camp, it is more likely they washed themselves and their clothes in some available water outside the camp, and then returned to the camp.

He who lets the goat go to Azazel shall bathe his body in water: (v26) the man who lead the sin-laden animal to the wilderness (Âzazel in v10), became defiled by the impurity of the goat he carried away, and therefore had to wash his body and clothes in water before he could return to the camp.

The bull and goat for the sin offering shall be burned up with fire: (v27) the bullock offered as a sin offering for Aaron and his house (6, 11), and the goat offered for the peoples' sin offering (v5, 9), whose blood was taken into the Most Holy Place where it was sprinkled (v14) to make atonement was to be completely burned. Whenever the blood of a sacrifice was taken into the tabernacle that animal was not to be eaten.

The bull and goat shall be carried outside the camp: (v27) perhaps, more than one was employed to carry out the carcasses, since they were too large for one man to carry, or the carcasses may have been cut up into smaller pieces and carried out, or placed on a wagon pulled by oxen, or carried out on two staves with animal skins forming a mat between the two and one man at each end of each pole carrying the bullock and the

goat upon the skins to a place outside the camp that was set aside for sacrifices that were commanded to be burnt. They were to be burnt according to the general law for the sin offerings spoken of in the following verses:

- The bull and its skin and its flesh and its dung he burned up with fire outside the camp, as the LORD commanded Moses. (Lev. 8:17).

The burning of these carcasses was done in a place called the ash heap; it was the place where the ashes of the brazen altar of burnt offering were placed.

- The skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung—¹²all the rest of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up. (Leviticus 4:11-12).

The men employed in burning the carcasses, as well as the man of the scapegoat, were commanded to wash their clothes and bathe their bodies in water before they were permitted to return to the camp. The carrying out of the bodies of the sin offerings whose blood had been taken into the Holy Place, foreshadows the place of Christ's sufferings, as expressed by the writer of Hebrews in the following verses:

- The bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. (Hebrews 13:11-12).

AZAZEL AND SCAPEGOAT

Azazel (scapegoat in KJV): (v8, 10, 26) Azazel and Scapegoat are only mentioned in the following three verses of this chapter:

24

- Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel (scapegoat in KJV). (Lev. 16:8).
- The goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel (scapegoat in KJV). (Lev. 16:10).
- He who lets the goat go to Azazel (scapegoat in KJV) shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. (Lev. 16:26).

Scapegoat comes from the Hebrew word (aza'zel), and means goat of departure, to go away, to disappear and go about to and fro. In the context of these verses the scapegoat signifies Christ who bore away our sins.

- For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Heb. 10:4).
- You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. (1 John 3:5).
- They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah 53:9).

We have no help from any other Scriptures to discover the meaning of Azazel (scapegoat in KJV), but we do know that the word Azazel, comes from the Hebrew word (ez and 'azal), and means goat of departure; the scapegoat, to go away, to disappear, to be gone. Based upon this and the context of the chapter we can safely suppose that Azazel in this context carries the idea of the removal, dismissal and carrying away of sin. The two goats should be regarded as one sin sacrifice and offering for the LORD, one goat being destined to be sacrificed, and the other destined to be set free. While the first goat was being slain, the other goat stood before the entrance of the tabernacle, showing that both goats are parts

of one whole sin offering before the LORD. The only reason two goats are used here for this offering is because it would be impossible to present the two halves of the one truth to be symbolised in one animal. The slain goat signifies the Lamb of God who takes away sin, while the goat sent into the wilderness never to be heard of again signifies the sins and transgressions of the pardoned sinner being removed as far as the east is from the west. In this manner the two goats perfectly symbolise the removal of all sin and the means of atonement, pardon and salvation. The image of the goat going further and further away never to be heard of again, signifies the truth that there is full, free and everlasting forgiveness.

- Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. (Isaiah 1:18).
- He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:10-12).

DAY OF ATONEMENT

LEVITICUS 16:29-30

In the Seventh Month, on the Tenth Day Atonement is for Israel.

- **Leviticus 16:29-30:** "And it shall be a statute to you forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves and shall do no work, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you. ³⁰For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins.

In the seventh month on the tenth day: (29) this seventh month of the Jewish year, is called Tishri, and corresponds to our September and partly to our October. It has been called the sabbatical month and the month of great festivals for the following three reasons:

1. The Feast of Trumpets is celebrated on the first day (Lev. 23:24).
2. The day of Atonement is held on the tenth day.
3. The Feast of tabernacles begins on the fourteenth day and lasts eight days.

At the time of this month they had gathered in all their fruits and were most at leisure for God's service. Based upon the following verse some sceptics claim that the Bible contradicts itself, because it claims that the Day of Atonement was on the ninth day.

- It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath." (Leviticus 23:32).

This may seem to be a contradiction to some, but it is easily explained since the day began in the evening of the ninth day and continued until the evening of the tenth day.

You shall afflict yourselves: (v29) this does not mean they were to go around beating themselves with sticks or whips or crawl on their knees until they are blood red to pray as some do today. The word afflict comes from the Hebrew word (*`anah*) and carries the idea of looking down or browbeating one-self, abasing-self, afflicting-self, chastening-self, humbling-self and submitting-self. The following verses show that the expression, "You shall afflict yourselves," refers to fasting:

- But I, when they were sick—I wore sackcloth; I afflicted myself with fasting; I prayed with head bowed on my chest. (Psalm 35:13).

- Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it? Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers. (Isaiah 58:3).
- Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD? (Isaiah 58:5).
- If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. (Isaiah 58:10).

The fast (the abstinence of food, humbling oneself, submitting to God and grieving over sin) lasted from the evening of the ninth day to the evening of the tenth day. It is rigorously kept by Jews to this day, exception was and still is made in the case of pregnant women, invalids, and children. The following verses show that the ancient term, "You shall afflict yourselves," (v29) not only embraces abstinence from food, but also means an abstinence from all kinds of secular and worldly work, it means that all places of business, trading, markets and any other practise or work that is intended to make money must be shut down for the entire day.

- Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the LORD. ²⁸And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. (Lev. 23:27-31).
- On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation and afflict yourselves. You shall do no work. (Num. 29:7).

They were to prepare their food the day before and not to plant or plough their fields or prune their vineyards, nor do any secular work for the day was to be a complete day of rest. The idea was to ccess from all worldly and secular labour and worldly work, so that they would be able to give complete focus to the worship of God and diligent attendance to His service. The Old Testament command, "to ccess from work," for Christians today, perfectly signifies the message of the Gospel of grace that proclaims:

- For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."
¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." (Gal. 3:10-11).

For sinners to be saved, they must cease from dependance and trust in their own works of righteousness and by faith trust in Christ's righteousness. In this same chapter Paul tells us that the Old Testament ceremonial laws were:

- A guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus we are all sons of God, through faith. (Gal. 3:24-25).

The repeating of the sacrifices (v29) showed the following three things:

1. The body and blood of animals was insufficient in making permanent atonement.
2. As, long as we dwell in our fallen sinful body we will continually need atonement until we arrive where all tears, even those of repentance, will be wiped from our eyes.
3. Such atonement could only be achieved by offering up the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ²Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? ³But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year. ⁴For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Heb. 10:1-4).

These verses show that the sacrifices of bulls and goats etc., could not take away sin, or cleanse the conscience from it, but acted as a shadow of the perfect sacrifice to come, the Lamb of God without blemish, the Saviour of the world the Lord Jesus Christ.

- The next day he (John the Baptist) saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29).

Punishment for defiling the Day of Atonement: the following verses show that the penalty for any Israelite to do any work on the Day of Atonement was that the LORD would cut them off and destroy them from among their people.

- The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁷"Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the LORD. ²⁸And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. (Lev. 23:26-29).

The native or the stranger who sojourns among you: (v29) refers to foreigners who are of non-Jewish descent who had renounced idolatry and false gods, and voluntarily accepted the God and the faith of the Israelites and as such were under the blessing and protection of the nation of Israel and bound to obey the LORD's statutes, laws and commands.

DAY OF ATONEMENT IS TO BE A SABBATH DAY

LEVITICUS 16:31-34

The Day of Atonement is a Sabbath Day Once Every Year, Forever.

- **Leviticus 16:31-34:** It is a Sabbath of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict yourselves; it is a statute forever. ³²And the priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments. ³³He shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. ³⁴And this shall be a statute forever for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins." And Moses did as the LORD commanded him.

Here we are told that:

- The Day of Atonement was a Sabbath of solemn rest
- The people were to afflict themselves (i.e., fast and cease from all worldly work)

The priest who is anointed and consecrated in his father's place was to make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments and to make atonement for the:

- The holy sanctuary and the tent of meeting (i.e., the entire tabernacle and all that was in it).
- The brazen altar of burn offering in the court, and the priests and the people.

This day of atonement was to be a statute forever for the people of Israel once every year, because of all Israel's sins. The order of the ceremony required that atonement should first be made for:

1. The high priest.
2. The Most Holy Place with the mercy-seat.
3. The Holy Place with the golden altar of incense.
4. The brazen altar of burnt offerings in the outer court. (v20, 33).
5. The people.

It is said that at the end of this ceremony the high priest in the presence of all the congregation would pronounce the following eight benedictions:

1. Blessings on God's divine law.
2. Blessings on Jerusalem.
3. Blessings on the Temple.
4. Blessings on the nation of Israel.
5. Blessings on the confession of the high priest.
6. Blessings on the priesthood.
7. Blessings on the people.
8. Blessings on the forgiveness of sins.

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.
