

The Old Testament Tabernacle : Lesson #6

The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34)

This is the last lesson in the study on the Old Testament Tabernacle. Now we have already seen on the items in the Tabernacle and discussed the Tabernacle itself in detail. In this lesson we are going to look at the Day of Atonement and what the High Priest was to do in regards to the atoning for the sins of Israel. As we will see in this lesson the reason that this day is so special is not just because it cleansed Israel from their sins for the year but because it pictures what the Lord Jesus Christ did for us in becoming the ultimate sacrifice for us once and for all and obtaining eternal redemption for us through his sacrifice.

On the Day of Atonement the High Priest, which in the section of scripture we are studying is Aaron, was to offer sacrifices for himself and for the children of Israel to make atonement for their sins. This was done once a year and as we will see had to be done in a special way to please God.

The Day of Atonement would become a special day for Israel as a matter of fact it is said to be a sabbath of rest unto Israel and they were to do no work on this day and were to afflict their souls. The day in which this is done is the 10th day of the Seventh month (Leviticus 16:29-31).

The first thing we see in the text is that this Day of Atonement is connected with the Most Holy Place and that Aaron or the High Priest was not to go in the Most Holy Place at all times but on this day (Leviticus 16:2). Note that in this verse it is called the Holy Place but we know that it is referring to the Most Holy Place because the verse says “within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark”.

What were the animals involved in the offerings for the Day of Atonement?

First Aaron or the High Priest was to have a sin offering for himself and a burnt offering for himself. He was to bring a young bullock for his sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. (Leviticus 16:3)

In regards to the animals for the whole congregation of Israel he was to have two goats, one would be the Lord's for a sin offering and the other would become the scapegoat. He was also to have a burnt offering for Israel and we assume it would be the same as his which was a ram. (Leviticus 16:5-10 & 24)

How were the sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement?

First the High Priest was to kill the young bullock that would be the sin offering for him. Then he was to take the censer from off the altar with coals in it and put incense upon the fire and go into the Most Holy Place with the blood from his sacrifice. He then took the blood and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat east ward 7 times. (Leviticus 16:11-13)

Then he was to take the two goats that were for the nation of Israel and cast lots upon them and kill the goat that was the Lord's for the sin offering. He then did with the blood as he did with the

blood for his sin offering. But he also took the blood from the goat and cleansed the tabernacle. He was to then take the blood of the sin offering of Israel and put it on the horns of the Brazen Altar and sprinkle the altar 7 times with blood. After that he was to take his hands and put them on the head of the goat that was to be the scapegoat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat. Then a fit man was to take the goat into the wilderness and let him go. Last Aaron or the High Priest was to take of the linen clothes and was his flesh in water then he was to offer the burnt offerings for himself and for the children of Israel. (**Leviticus 16:15-26**)

What are some types that we see in the Day of Atonement?

- 1) The Day of Atonement required 5 animals. This pictures sin and death.
 - The main result of sin is death (**James 1:14-15**). The number 5 is associated with death all throughout the Bible. Note also that it is the number of wounds that Jesus when he died on the cross.
- 2) The two goats picture the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - In the Old Testament it took 2 goats to do what Jesus Christ did at Calvary. They had to kill 1 goat for a sin offering and then needed another live goat to be the scapegoat and carry away their sins.
 - Jesus was able to do this by himself because he both died and rose again and is alive ever more.
- 3) The “fit” man of verse 21 also pictures the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - It could not be just anyone that led the scapegoat into the wilderness it had to be a fit man. Jesus is the only man who could have paid the price for our sins and bore them at Calvary. (**John 14:6** ; **1 Peter 2:24**)
- 4) All this pictured what Jesus would do for us and he only had to do it once. (**Hebrews 9:11-15**)
- 5) Note that Aaron had to first offer a sacrifice for himself before he could offer the sacrifice for Israel. Jesus did not have to do this because he was sinless and could be the perfect sacrifice. (**Hebrews 7:27**)

The sacrifices all point to the Lord Jesus Christ and how when he would come that he would redeem the world. To show Israel that the sacrifices were over after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God ripped the Vail in to which was in the temple. This Vail divided between the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place. Dividing this Vail in to showed Israel that there was now a new way to get to God and it would be through the Lord Jesus Christ (**Matthew 27:51-53** ; **Hebrews 10:19-25**).

This is why we do not need a priest to go to God for us because we have a High Priest in Heaven the Lord Jesus Christ to intercede for us. (**Hebrews 4:14-16** ; **7:22-27** ; **10:19-23**)

