

Leviticus Chapter 16

- This chapter addresses the most holy day of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur – the day of Atonement.
- On this day, once a year the high priest would enter into the most holy place, the Holy of Holies, to make atonement for the nation.
- Atonement (16X's), “at-one-ment”, is the Hebrew word “kofar” which means literally “covering” – as we go through this, the word atonement is used frequently and it refers to God’s covering which was considered temporary until the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world would be sacrificed for their sin, for our sin – which imparted justification, total cleansing – permanent cleansing. (Propitiation)

Hosea 3:4-5 “⁴For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and with an ephod, and without teraphim: ⁵afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.”

- Because the Jews wouldn’t have their Temple, altar, or priests for sacrifices, Israel cannot presently celebrate or observe Yom Kippur in the appointed way.
- Those of us who have received Jesus can see in this ancient ritual a picture of what Jesus did for us on the cross.
- Three sections:
 - V: 1-6 The preparation of the priest.
 - V: 7-19 The preparation of the tabernacle.
 - V: 20-34 The preparation of the people

V: 1-2 God speaks to Moses after the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, giving clarification or further instruction regarding Aaron, the High Priest, entering into the Holy of Holies – limiting it to the day of atonement.

- The sacrilege of Nadab and Abihu forms the back drop here, in a sense stating “don’t make the same mistake” implying the same fate for those who do.

Exodus 25:22 “*And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.*”

- They couldn’t just go into the presence of God whenever they felt like it, only at certain times. As we’ll see, two times on the one day in the year – lest they die.

- This is the Old Testament dispensation, the Law by which we are no longer bound because of the blood of Jesus.
- We are blessed that Jesus paved the way for us, removing the veil that separates the true believer from the very presence of God.

Hebrews 10:19-20 ¹⁹Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.”

- This is of course speaking of believers, those who have received Jesus as Lord and Savior.

[Access to the presence of God is limited to those who go through Jesus:](#)

John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.”

V: 3-5 The high priest would normally wear the full uniform: the ornate robe, the ephod, the mitre / hat with the placard “Holiness Unto The Lord”, etc.

- Normally the high priest was very distinguishable, easily recognized, perhaps even looking like a king. On this day he removed all that appearance, and looked more like a simple servant as he approached God.

1 Corinthians 1:29 “That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

- Here he sets his glory aside, washes himself, and takes on the basic uniform of the regular priests, yet it is holy.

Philippians 2:6-8 ⁶Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

- When the High Priest set aside his robes it was a model of what Jesus would later do, Jesus set aside His glory to be robed in humanity, then He became that priest, and the offering, He did it all.
- Respective offerings: sin offering & burnt offering for the priest, then the same for the people.

V: 6 Aaron offers “his” bullock for a sin offering – for himself and for his household, meaning the priesthood.

Hebrews 5:1-3 ¹For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices

for sins: ²Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. ³And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.”

- To minister effectively before the Lord or for others, we must deal with our own sin.
- If we are to worship God in spirit and in truth as Jesus exhorts us in **John 4:24**, how can we do that if there is un-dealt with sin in our own hearts?
- How can we intercede for others if God won't hear us?

Psalm 66:18 “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

V: 7-10 Casting lots, gambling? No, here there is nothing to be gained or lost by those performing this task.

- Why cast lots? Why not just pick one? It eliminates our wisdom, our will; it incorporates God into the decision making process.

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death...”

- So the one goat would be killed.

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

- So the other goat would be spared.

V: 11 We go from describing what they were to do, to actually doing it.

V: 12 Instruction regarding the proper way of bringing incense before the Lord with coals of fire from off the altar.

- Significant direction in light of Nadab and Abihu's fate.

V: 13 We know that incense represents the prayers of the saints. (Ps. 141:2, Rev. 8:3-4)

- Here we see that entering into the presence of God starts with cleansing & confession, but it culminates in prayer.
- The Holy Place was lighted by the candlestick or menorah with the 7 lamps, but the Holy of Holies was lighted by the presence of God.
- There would also be the faint glow from the burning coals.

- God places a protection for the priest. Even though the sacrifices have been made and all the preparations in terms of ceremonial cleanliness – we are all still sinful creatures.
- Part of the purpose of the incense is to create a cloud that would cover or obscure the mercy seat, preventing him from seeing clearly – so that the High Priest would not die.

Moses wanted to see God, to see His glory:

Exodus 33:20 “And He said, thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live.”

V: 14 The High Priest was to take the blood upon his finger and sprinkle it towards the east onto the mercy seat 7 times. ([Describe the mercy seat, angels, blood](#))

- 7 is the number of completeness, or perfection.

Isaiah 53:4-5 “⁴Surely He hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. ⁵But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”

- Jesus bled from 7 different point on his body:

1	He bled from His head due to the crown of thorns.
2	He bled from His back, having been flogged with a cat of nine tails.
3-4	He bled from His left and right hands.
5-6	He bled from His left and right feet.
7	He bled from His precious bleeding side, having been pierced through with a spear.

V: 15-17 Aaron was to act or work alone, there shall be no man, no other man in the Tabernacle when all of this is going on.

- Normally there would be several priests working together to examine, butcher, and offer the sacrifices. At this time the High Priest was to do all the work.

1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

- As this priest is by himself, he alone is doing the necessary work, offering the sacrifice for sin that would lead to atonement – it is a picture of our Lord Jesus who alone bore our sin, who alone suffered and died for our sin – and who alone is glorified above all things.

V: 18-19 The altar of sacrifice is to be atoned for again, in a sense re-sanctified because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

- There were precautions in place to ensure that no one with leprosy or some other defilement had come into the Tabernacle courtyard, that everyone and everything had been “clean” – this leads to the conclusion that man, even at his best is a defiling influence.
- Re-iterating the “depravity” of man.

V: 20-21 As Aaron lays both his hands upon the head of the goat and confesses the sins of the nation, along with their transgressions.

1. Iniquity: covers all sins and transgressions.
2. Sin: inadvertent, un-intentionally falling short, not measuring up to the standard.
3. Transgression: willful sin, knowingly, purposefully.

Confessing:

- I can't think for the nation of Israel what that would have been given what we've read already – perhaps the golden calf incident, or not wanting to go into the promise land, doubting God about provision.
- For our nation it would be a long list starting with abortion.
- Allowing and promoting homosexuality, condoning and encouraging adultery and fornication.
- Removing God from our legal system, and from our schools.
- Denying our creator and His power, giving His glory to the god of chance and human intellect, worshipping every other false god and profane idol that comes along.

V: 22 The scapegoat, along with the sin offering both being a model of the substitutionary sacrifice, the one who would bear the consequence of another's sin.

- Sent out to a lonely and desolate place; a model of hell in a way, but also that our sins are forever gone, never to be seen or heard about again.

Psalm 103:12 “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.”

- There was a tradition that there were actually several priests that would accompany the scapegoat out of the camp, or later out of the city. As they would move over the crest of one mountain they would leave a priest behind, then another as they crossed over the mountains.

- As the last priest released the scapegoat, and it was chased off and disappeared into the wilderness he would turn and signal to the last priest, who would signal to the one behind him and so on until the signal had reached back to Mt. Moriah and that last priest would inform the people who would then begin a great celebration, knowing that their sin was gone away from them.
- The forgiveness of sins is an integral part of our faith. We know academically at times that we're forgiven, but sometimes the reality of that is difficult to grasp – that God truly forgives.
- This may in part be due to the fact that others brings up our past sins, even though God never does. We need to decide who's word we're going to take on this issue.

Jeremiah speaking of the New Covenant to come:

Jeremiah 31:34 “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying “know the Lord”: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Isaiah 38:17 “Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou has cast all my sins behind thy back.”

Isaiah 44:22 “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.”

Job 14:17 My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.”

Micah 7:18-19 “¹⁸Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. ¹⁹He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”

- I'm going to take God's word on the matter, and I'd encourage you to do the same.

V: 23-24 Once the main task had been accomplished, having dealt with the sin. The priest would again wash himself, set aside the regular priestly garments and once again put on the garments of the high priest.

- Jesus; once He had made Himself an offering for sin, ascended back to heaven, wherein He was once again clothed in His glory!

V: 25 The fat is burned on the altar and rises as a sweet aroma to God.

V: 26 That fit man who had taken the scapegoat out to the un-inhabited wilderness had become unclean because of his attachment or association with the scapegoat which had become sin for the people.

- An emphasis on how the goat had taken on the sin of the people.

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

V: 27 The sin offering itself was to be burned outside the camp. (Different)

V: 28 After the scapegoat had carried the nation’s sins away, it was important that the camp and sanctuary not be immediately re-contaminated, thus the washing and bathing prior to re-entry.

V: 29-31 10th day of the 7th month they shall “afflict” their souls.

7th month – Tishri - (mid September-mid October) on the 10th day.

- On the first day of the 7th month trumpets were blown to announce the beginning of a *new year* – *Rosh Hashanah*.
- The 10th day was the Day of Atonement – *Yom Kippur*. Trumpet / shofar / Abraham & Isaac.
- Then came the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths which started on the 15th day of the month.
- The blowing of trumpets announced the new year, but only the shedding of blood could give the people forgiveness and a new beginning, and it is the same for us.

Hebrews 9:22 “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

Leviticus 17:11 “For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”

- Afflict: (H6031). 'anah, aw-naw'; to humble, to trouble, to weaken, to deny, to afflict – often a reference to fasting.

Psalms 35:13 “... I humbled / afflicted my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.”

- **This was a call to get serious about sin:**

James 4:8-10 “⁸Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. ⁹Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning,

and your joy to heaviness. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.”

- A day of fasting, where no work is to be done; a day to focus on the Lord.
- A Sabbath day, a day of rest.

V: 34 An everlasting statute. Yom Kippur, the day of atonement – very specific instruction on what exactly to do.

- Today the Yom Kippur holiday looks very different.
- There is no Temple or altar of sacrifice on which to make the offerings described, it is still a holy day, but the Jews have changed it from a day of atonement to a day of reflection, and a day of reckoning.
- They reflect on the good and on the evil that they have done over the last year, hoping of course that the good outweighs the bad.
- Often times in the weeks leading up to this holy day, they can be seen going around doing good or charitable deeds so that when this day comes around they can reflect satisfactorily that the good does outweigh the bad, and they can feel good about themselves.
- Mistakenly, they are seeking to approach God on the basis of their good works, on their righteousness – which is the essence of all religions.
- When the Tabernacle was there, and the priests and the altar was present – who was doing the work that lead to forgiveness? It was just the high priest – the people didn't do anything except believe and receive!

Ephesians 2:8-9 “⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹not of works, lest any man should boast.”

- The only way that we can approach God is on the basis of His good work, His sacrifice on the cross, paying the penalty for our sin.
- The whole point in the day of atonement was to make possible God's continued presence among His people. There had to be that cleansing, that purification.

7 feasts or celebrations in the Jewish calendar:

1. Passover: Jesus is the Passover Lamb.
2. Un-leavened bread: Jesus is the bread of life.
3. First fruits: Jesus is the first fruit, the first born from the dead.
4. Shavot / Pentecost: The church was born.
5. Trumpets / Rosh Hoshana: With the sound of a trumpet, the rapture of the church.
6. Yom Kippur: God's wrath being fulfilled, the great tribulation.
7. Tabernacles / booths: The millennial reign of Jesus.