

Lev 05-09-04b

Let's resume our study in Leviticus chapter 16. We're looking at the principle of the Day of Atonement, and specifically now we're going to take a look at the scapegoat. We have given a glancing notice to this as we've looked at the rituals for the day.

We've concentrated up to this point on the sacrifices, and we've seen that in large dimension, in large measure, here in overview, the rituals of this day address the three elements that will be fully implemented in the work of Christ on the cross, which is redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. When you think of the cross, when you think of God's solution to the sin problem, we should always think in those three terms, because sin has a multiplied effect. This is one of the misunderstandings that leads to problems regarding salvation itself.

People say, I know that John says that he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And so the Calvinists will say, well, if whole world there means everybody in the human race, then everybody is saved, because he is the propitiation for our sins. And a Calvinist, somebody in Reformed theology will say, well, he is the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The whole world is the whole world of believers, because of course they believe in limited atonement. Limited atonement. Christ only died for the elect.

Christ did not die for the unsaved, because it would be a waste of his blood, so to speak. And if he did die for them, then they're saved. Well, this is a flattening down.

If you think that salvation is just a single issue, that sin is just a single problem, and if you do one thing to sin, it's all solved, this is the misunderstanding. Our separation from God is complex. Bob Thieme wrote a book on this called The Barrier.

And The Barrier is a wall built of several different blocks. We have the guilt of sin. We have the corruption of sin.

We have the identity as sinners. We have the penalty for sin. We have the disruption of relationship caused by sin.

We have the death that is in our members because of sin. We have the inability to please God that is because of sin, where we have negative righteousness, and all of our righteousness is like filthy rags. So, all of these are aspects and separate issues in The Barrier, in that which separates God from man.

What happened at the cross? Why does John say he's the propitiation not for ours only, but also the sins of the whole world? What is propitiation? Remember, we're talking about three aspects. Redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. What is reconciliation? Which direction does it go toward? Man.

This solves the relationship problem. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear.

What does Paul say? Be reconciled to God. We are ministers of reconciliation. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man comes to the Father but by me. This opens the avenue of relationship. Well, that doesn't happen until you're saved.

So, that's not a part of He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. And we understand that because it's reconciliation, redemption, and propitiation. How about redemption? Which direction does redemption go toward? Toward sin, oddly enough.

You'd say, well, but aren't we redeemed? Well, yes, but what does it mean to be redeemed? It means to have your sin problem addressed. What is redemption? Redemption is the purchasing out of the slave market of sin. You have been enslaved.

You belong to another master. You're in the kingdom of darkness. You're ruled by the ruler of this world.

And a purchase price has to be paid to redeem. It's like having a pawn ticket. You get short on cash.

You take your sword or you take your gold watch down to the pawn shop and say, what will you give me for this? I'll give you ten bucks. Here's your pawn ticket. Well, to get that thing back out of hock, you have to go back down there and pay something more than ten dollars and redeem that item back out.

There's a price to bring it out of that area. And it is the price that is in view. There is a price that has to be paid because of sin, and that's redemption.

Propitiation is the Godward aspect. God is the righteous judge. It is the righteousness and justice of God that are offended.

The love of God has not been interrupted by sin. God loves the world. While we are yet sinners, Christ dies for us, and he does it motivated by love.

Sin does not interrupt love. And this is a useful principle when you think about parents and children. Your children can screw up, sometimes royally, sometimes disastrously, catastrophically, but it does not and should not change a parent's love.

Friends, fellow believers, we can injure one another. We can do harm. We can sin against one another.

It should not interrupt love. The love of God is not interrupted by sin. But what is interrupted? Righteousness and justice force a distance between God and man.

This is bridged by propitiation. This involves the penalty for sin. This is not the same as the purchase price.

It's not the same as redemption. Propitiation is God's righteousness and justice demand that a penalty for sin, the wages of sin, which is death, has to be paid. So all of these different elements that are in the wall, in the barrier, are addressed in the work of Christ.

One of them is addressed for the whole world. The top block, the first block in the wall, is the penalty for sin. The penalty is addressed by propitiation.

God's righteousness, God's justice, demands that this sin not go unpunished. Sin cannot go unpunished. Where there is sin, there is penalty.

Penalty has to be paid. In the same way that we didn't ask to be born corrupt, we didn't all go back to the garden and eat the fruit and disobey God, we are conceived in iniquity and born in sin, so we did not opt in to being members of a fallen race. We were born into it.

It's a given. In the same way, we don't have to make a volitional decision for that first block in the wall to be removed. God has paid the penalty on our behalf in Christ.

Christ has removed the death penalty for sin. We do not pay it. We will never pay it.

People don't go to hell to pay the penalty for sin. That penalty has been paid. That is propitiation.

The righteousness and justice of God have been satisfied in terms of the penalty for sin. Propitiation. He is the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

So, if He has propitiated God for the whole world, then the whole world is saved, right? Wrong. What about all of the rest of the rocks in the barrier? We still have negative righteousness. We still have the guilt of sin.

We still need redemption. We still need reconciliation. We still need regeneration.

To live with God, you have to have the life of God. And having your penalty paid doesn't give you life. All of the rest of that remains.

We are still lost. We are still hell-bound, even though the penalty for sin has been paid. So, this teaches us that people do not go to hell for their sins.

Why do they go to the lake of fire? Rejecting the work of Christ that addresses all of the other elements of the barrier. We need reconciliation. We need redemption.

We need regeneration. We need positive righteousness. So, as you look at the elements of ritual on the Day of Atonement, you see that God has made provision in shadow form, in ritual

form, to demonstrate and to illustrate each of these different parts of the work of Christ on the cross for the people of God.

The people in Israel are believers. They are redeemed. They are reconciled.

And there is propitiation. How are these pictured? You have the propitiation pictured in the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat and on the altar. God is present.

You are not going to die if you are the priest going into the Holy of Holies because of this blood, because of this obedience. You have the principle of reconciliation in the ongoing sacrifices, the daily sacrifices, the occasional sacrifices, the voluntary offerings that are brought on the occasion of sin, on the occasion of trespass, known and unknown sins, and so on. This is implementing practical reconciliation.

Even though we are reconciled in the large sense and established in relationship with God, we still need to maintain that relationship. We can sin against it. In the same way that you do in a family or in a marriage or in any relationship between believers, if you give offense, then there is an apology.

There is an acknowledgment and a request for reinstatement, so to speak. You say, I'm sorry. I should not have said that.

I should not have done that. I was inconsiderate. I was whatever I was.

There is this restoration. It doesn't mean that the first time you have an argument, you get a divorce. What it does mean is that when you have an argument, at some point there has to be a restoration and an addressing of this small issue.

If you fail to address these small issues, you can ultimately, in the human realm, do damage to the larger relationship. This brings us to the principle of the scapegoat. You have the daily sacrifices that implement reconciliation.

The people were entered into covenant relationship with God at Sinai. This is sort of a picture of salvation. All that the Lord has said, we will do.

But the ongoing maintenance of that reconciled status is the daily sacrifices, the occasional sacrifices, the voluntary offerings that are brought for whatever reason. We studied those in the first five or six chapters. The olah, the minchah, the grain offering and the rest of it.

The Day of Atonement is a picture of the large-scale propitiation that has been made on behalf of and has been seized and laid hold of by the people of God. Now, the priest goes in and sprinkles the altar. He sprinkles the Holy of Holies, the mercy seat within it.

He offers up the incense. This is the demonstration of acceptability. God is able to remain.

This is the Godward side. Why is it that God can love the world and give His Son? Because Christ

is the propitiation for not only our sins but the sins of the world. God can look at the world.

God can offer salvation to the world because the penalty for the world's sins has been paid in Christ. Of course, God can look at it prospectively in the Old Testament day. But, what remains is the Godward side has been addressed.

The manward side has been addressed. What about the sinward side? What about this whole aspect of redemption? Well, this is where you have your scapegoats. You have two different sections of Leviticus 16 that talk about it.

The first begins in verse 7. He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell and offer it as a sin offering.

But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement upon it and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness. Well, you remember when we talked about the lots, when we studied the breastplate of the high priest and that, I think originally those same lots were used. It says Aaron shall cast lots.

Why would he have a different set of lots than the ones that he carries in his high priestly breastplate? But, in later Jewish tradition, of course, they forgot how the lots worked. By the time of the monarchy and the divided kingdom and so on, this began to slip away because of the disobedience and the apathy and so on. But originally, this is what the Jews believe now about those days.

They believed that there were two special lots that were used on the day of atonement, made either of wood, stone or some kind of metal. On one is written Lashem, which is the name. Shem, S-H-E-M, is the Hebrew word for name.

So, it would have a Lamed, a Sheen and a Mame on it. Of course, in Hebrew, that's right to left. So, it's Lamed, Sheen and Mame.

And this would be Lashem. This is the name. And this is the substitute for the Tetragrammaton, Yod-Heh-Wau-Heh, which would be Yahweh.

But they don't dare write the name of the Lord, so they put the name. They put Lashem. Well, you can tell this is the later rabbinical, fanciful thing.

If it was going to be the Lord's name, it would be the Tetragrammaton on this first lot. But they say, no, it said Lashem, because nobody would ever write the actual name of the Lord down. And then, on the other, is written, La-Azazel.

Azazel being the scapegoat. And this would be Lamed, followed by I-N, Z, and the rest of it. So, they put the two lots in a special vessel.

This is like when you're shaking dice. They used to give you that little cardboard cup to shake the dice and dump them out in some of the games. Well, they have a thing called the Kalpeh, which is a special vessel.

They put these two lots in and kind of stir them around. Then, they have the goats face the west. This is facing away from the east, facing the west.

Then the priest comes and the two goats stand before him, one on his right and one on his left. You have to think about this in terms of what Jesus says later on about the sheep and goats judgment. But, there are two goats.

He's going to stand. The priest is facing the east. The goats are facing the west.

He's got a goat on the right and a goat on the left. He reaches into the vessel and he grabs one lot in each hand. He pulls it out.

He lays one lot on the goat on his right. He lays the other lot on the goat on his left. Whatever is written on the lots, that determines the identity of the goat.

One of them, ideally, the right hand, would have Yahweh. This is the Lord's goat. On the other hand would be Azazel.

This is the scapegoat. This is all written down in the Mishnah. It's in tractate Yoma, the rabbinical memory of how this all works.

Based on this identification, I think in the early days, when Aaron did this year by year on the Day of Atonement, that instead of this sort of fanciful arrangement, I think he reached into his high priestly breastplate and brought out the two lots. You've seen my models. I didn't get them out this morning.

I think there is an Aleph on one side and there is a Tav, Tau on the other. The first A and Z in the Hebrew alphabet. The way those lots worked is, when you cast the lots, Aleph, Aleph means yes.

Tau, Tau means no. Aleph, Tau is indeterminate. If he reaches into the breastplate and gets those two lots and lays them on the goats, the superintending hand of the Lord would cause the lot in one hand to be an Aleph and the lot in the other hand to be a Tau.

I suppose if God wasn't superintending and didn't work out, he would just keep casting them until he gets one of each. The Aleph on one goat and the Tau on another. The Aleph is the Lord's goat and the Tau is the scapegoat.

The head and the tail. The first and the last. But it's significant, I think, to recognize the actual lots that are in use.

Because who is Jesus? He is the Alpha and the Omega in the Greek alphabet. The beginning and

the end. He is both goats.

He is the goat that is acceptable to the Lord and he is the goat that carries away the sin into the wilderness. And what a beautiful picture it is for the high priest to lay these lots on the goats and to have them come out. Both of them are the Lord Jesus, ultimately.

Both of their missions are fulfilled in Christ. One goat is identified with the other by blood, just like the dove that you find in Leviticus chapter 14 in the rituals for the leper. So, the scapegoat, azazel, is a compound word because az is the word for goat.

A-z-i-n-w-o-w-z-i-n Not z-i-o-n, like Mount Zion, but z-a-y-i-n is the z. It's a-l-f-b-a-k-i-m-l-d-o-l-t-h-e-w-o-w-z-i-n. It's right after wow. So, az, i-n-z-i-n, is how you spell goat, i-n-z-i-n, is the word for goat.

And azal, a-z-a-l, this is a-l-f-z-i-n-l-o-m-d, that's the word that means to dismiss, to send away, be gone. Azal. So, you have az, azal.

It's the send away goat. It's the dismissed goat. Az, azal.

Many ancient nations had this sort of ritual for the sins of the nation. Oddly enough, you don't find it today. What nation do you look at that says we have national sin? Other than the United States that has a national day of prayer that is encouraged by Christians.

But many ancient nations had these vicarious sacrifices and they would transfer by doing some sort of a ceremony or a religious rite the guilt of the whole community, they would put it on some animal. The Egyptians did this with a white bull, the Apis bull. And if you've done any study or reading on ancient Egypt and they've actually done some dating and some work on chronology by studying the burials of the Apis bulls.

But this was a communal riddance of guilt by sacrificing the Apis bull. They would cut the head off of the Apis bull and then they would speak all kinds of execrations on it. We found these execration texts.

And they would speak all kinds of curses and bad news on this beheaded bull. Such as if there be any evil hanging over them or the land of Egypt it may be poured out upon that head. And then they would either take the head and throw it into the Nile or they would sell it to the Greeks.

Herodotus talks about this. Another guy, another ancient historian, Petronius Arbiter says it was a custom among the ancient inhabitants of Marseilles whenever they were afflicted by any pestilence to take one of the poorer citizens who offered himself for the purpose and having fed him a whole year with the purest and best food they would adorn him with sacred vestments and special perfumes and things. They would lead him around the city.

They would load him up with execrations and having prayed that all the evils to which the city

was exposed would fall upon him then they would throw him off the top of a rock. The Hindus have a similar, the ancient Hindus have this ashumi jug. Don't ask me what that's all about.

But they would take a horse instead of a goat. I'll quote from a book called The Code of Gentoo Laws. This is part of the Hindu ritual system.

They would take in a mystic signification the sacrificer would look upon himself as typified in a horse. All of the other religious duties, the performance of which the wise and holy direct their actions by which the sincere professors of every different faith aim at perfection. The head of the unblemished horse is the symbol of the morning.

His eyes are the sun. His breath is the wind. His wide opening mouth is the Vishwena or that innate warmth which invigorates the world.

This would be like the Neshamah. His body typifies one entire year. His back is paradise.

His belly is the plains. His hoof is the earth. His sides are the four quarters of the heavens.

His bones are the intermediate spaces between the four quarters. The rest of his limbs represent distinct matter. The places where his limbs meet or his joints imply the months and halves of the months.

His feet signify night and day. Four kinds of night and day. I mean, it just goes on and on and on and on.

The rest of his bones are the constellations of the stars. His food is the sand. His tendons are the rivers.

His spleen is the liver. His urine is the rain. They prepare golden vessels before the horse that is let loose.

And the Arabian horse is the performer of the journeys of angels. I mean, this just goes on and on and on and on. But they take this sacrifice, and the Hindu man considers himself to be in the place of the horse and looks upon all of these articles as typified in himself and conceiving the Atma or divine soul to be an ocean and let all thought of self be absorbed in the Atma.

Anyway, they sacrifice this horse. They write various articles upon a scroll of paper on the horse's neck and dismiss the horse, sending along with the horse a stout and valiant person equipped with necessities and accoutrements to accompany the horse day and night wherever he chooses to go. If any creature, either man, genius, or dragon should seize the horse, the man opposes the attempt and tries to be victorious in battle and gives the horse his freedom.

And this lines up somewhat with the scapegoat, where you have a trustworthy man who is going to accompany the goat into the wilderness and turn it loose. And you get the idea that this Hindu ceremony is a sort of corruption and distortion over the years of the scapegoat ceremony. But all of this is to say that there is a recognition that the community needs its

crimes and its guilt to be carried away, whether it is the Egyptians or the Hindus or whoever.

So when you get down to verse 21, it says that Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, the one that is going to live, this is the scapegoat, the one upon whom the Azazel lot fell, confesses over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions concerning all their sins. This is going to be a general confession. You find some of the prophets of Israel making confession for the sins of the nation.

You can find Ezra and Nehemiah making this same sort of acknowledgement that there is corporate guilt in the land. Putting them on the head of the goat and then send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. Now, it says that he is going to confess their transgressions, their sins and their iniquities.

This is three different words in Hebrew. The word translated iniquities is from Awen, A-W-E-N. This is Awonot, it's the plural.

It starts with the evil I-N, just like you would expect. Awen instead of Amen. It's from Awah, A-W-A-H.

It means to pervert, to distort or to turn aside, to twist, to go awry, leave the path. That's iniquities or Awonot. The second word, transgressions, is Pashayim, from Pasha.

This is P-A-S-H-A. And that final A is also the evil I-N. All of the bad words have I-N in them.

Just like the goat, I-N-Zion. And to dismiss or turn loose that goat is to get rid of these things. So you have the iniquities, you have the transgressions.

Pashayim, Pasha, means to transgress, to rebel. This is overt, in-your-face disregard for the rules. Sins is Katahot.

Katah, which means to miss the mark, to fall short. We've talked about Katah in other contexts, about falling short of an age. We talked about the man in the millennial kingdom who falls short of a hundred, will be said to have died in his youth.

He doesn't reach the mark, reach the milestone of a hundred years. So between iniquities, transgressions and sins, this comprises everything that would be of reach of God's law. Every different kind of sin.

Did you fall short because of weakness, because of failure? Did you intentionally violate the rules? Did you twist? You shot for something, but you just hooked, you sliced, you did something and you didn't go straight. All of these are comprehended in this confession over the head of the goat. One of the great sages, one of the great rabbis in Jewish history, I believe he lived around 1100 A.D., was Maimonides, a very famous rabbi.

He gives the confession, according to him, this is what the high priest is supposed to say. O LORD, thy people, the house of Israel, have sinned and done iniquity and trespassed before

thee. Sinned, done iniquity and trespassed.

O LORD, make atonement now for the iniquities and transgressions and sins that thy people, the house of Israel, have sinned and transgressed against thee, as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant, saying that in this day he shall make atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins before the Lord and you shall be clean. If you address the sin problem, that leaves a clean, purified people in its wake. When the confession is finished, the goat is sent by a proper hand to the wilderness and let loose and nothing more is ever heard of it.

This is a reminder to us that when we become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, when we have our sins taken away, old things are passed away, all things are become new, we have sins that crop up on an ongoing basis that we address in the same way that an Israelite would bring a sin offering. Those sins are forgotten. It is a sin itself to bring up old sins.

It is a sin to assume that what is happening to you now is some sort of belated retribution for something you did back when. The scapegoat carries this stuff away to be seen no more. They would tie a piece of scarlet cloth on the head of the scapegoat.

And there was a Jewish tradition that said if God accepted the whole sacrifice, that this cloth would turn white. When the goat was led to the desert, it would supernaturally change color. This is just, of course, fantasy on their part.

But the same sort of error has been made by people in the church who believe that you'll have some sort of token from God that your sins are forgiven. And if they're not forgiven, you're going to continue to experience some sort of retribution and disaster from God. It's false.

It's wrong. We have to take God at His word. If God says they're forgiven, they're forgiven.

If God says they've been separated from us as far as the East is from the West, they are forgiven and separated and gone. The goat has carried them away. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all, and by His stripes we are healed.

There is no record of anybody that Jesus healed in the New Testament ever having a relapse. The people that He healed who were blind or deaf or lame or leprous never came back two months later and said, Lord, you know that blindness you healed? Well, I'm starting to lose my vision. My leprosy is coming back.

It's complete and it's permanent, right? If the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all, and by His stripes we are healed, you can't go dig up and reclaim old sins. You can't drag up the past. If you do, it's like a dog returning to his vomit.

It's like the swine returning to the mud pit. You're doing it to yourself, because God is not involved in that. God has made perfect provision, perfect atonement, perfect and acceptable provision for our sin.

It's perfect. It's complete. Why mess up what God has made perfect and complete? It's a big mistake.

So, we don't want to repeat the mistakes of the Jews. We don't want to repeat the mistakes of the Catholic Church. Well, it's confession plus light a bunch of candles, say a bunch of Hail Marys, pay a bunch of money.

You're still going to have to go to purgatory and so on. This is a complete distortion of the divine truth. So, the goat is sent away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.

The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land, and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. And as I mentioned last week, every time I think about the goat in the wilderness and the sins being born out there, I think about the Lord Jesus, who went out for 40 days in the wilderness to be tested. And having passed that test, by reversing the bad decisions that were made, how many tests are recorded that Jesus passed in the wilderness? Three.

How many kinds of transgression does the goat carry into the wilderness? Three. Kata, the iniquities, the sins, and the transgressions. You have kata, which is the sins.

You have peshaim, which are the transgressions. You have awain or awenot, which are the iniquities. These three things are carried by the goat into the wilderness.

You see the Lord Jesus go out and address three tests. And when he comes back, God says, this is my beloved son. This is the one that has passed those tests.

He is qualified to be the atoning sacrifice. Well, this is a statute forever. The goat having been released, Aaron will come into the tabernacle of meeting, take off his special linen garments, and leaves them in the tabernacle.

He washes his body with water in a holy place, puts on his garments, comes out and offers his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and makes atonement for himself and for the people. The fat of the sin offering is burned on the altar. He who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

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. They shall burn with fire the skins, the flesh, and the offal. This is one of the exceptions to the rule that the skin of the bull was kept by the priest.

In this case, that is also burned. He who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body. Afterward he may come into the camp.

Now, let's talk about this for a moment. There is a man who leads the goat out and is sort of associated with defilement in so doing. There is a man who carries the offal and the skin and

the rest of the bull outside the camp and burns it, and he is associated with defilement and has to be cleansed before he comes back in.

But afterward, both of these men may come into the camp. What does this represent? This, of course, is a practical provision. Somebody has to do it.

The goat is not just going to magically leave the camp and the bull offering is not going to magically go outside the camp. Somebody has to do it. The high priest does not do it.

So, in what way does this associate itself or picture the work of Christ? We know that all of these things are shadows. What does this represent? What does this man indicate? Why is it not the high priest? Well, for one thing, the high priest has other things that he needs to do while this guy takes the goat way off. And, you know, your high priest can't necessarily be the man that carries all of these bits and pieces of the sin offering outside the camp.

But it tells us that all of these represent Christ. Christ, of course, is pictured in the high priest and in the sprinkling of the blood and the offering of the sacrifice and in the carrying out of these rituals. He pictures the work of Jesus Christ in his high priestly capacity as the intermediary between God and man.

That's what the high priest represents. Jesus says, I am the way. He is the one that bridges the gap between heaven and earth, between God and man.

This other individual who takes away the scapegoat, the one who takes away these parts of the sacrifice outside the camp, is mentioned here. And he represents, each of these men, represents another aspect of the work of Christ. But the man is not said to be a high priest.

He's not even said to be a priest. He's just a suitable man. And this represents the Lord Jesus Christ with his official hats off.

He's not pictured here as the priest. He's not pictured here as a king. He's not pictured here as anything other than a faithful man.

This is a work of service, is it not? It's a servant's work to lead a goat. It's a servant's work to carry bits and pieces of a chopped up animal and set fire to them. It is the work of a servant.

It is the work of a faithful steward. And this is also an aspect of Christ's work, an aspect of his character, and an aspect of what he accomplished for us in his first advent. It is the aspect of the Lord Jesus that wraps the towel around his waist and washes the feet of the disciples.

Is Jesus prophet, priest, and king? Yes, he is. But he is also a servant. And this is an aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ that is often overlooked.

You very seldom... I couldn't find any commentary that talked about the suitable man and what his significance is. But it's mentioned in Scripture, and it counts for something. It's not just a convenient detail for the ancient Israelites.

He is a suitable man. He is a trustworthy man. He is a man who can be counted on to do this necessary work.

What if someone does not lead the goat far enough away? What if someone does not remove the elements of the sin offering outside the camp? The ritual is not complete. The whole thing collapses. It depends upon the actions of a faithful servant.

In the same way, all of the work of Christ on our behalf, his atoning work of reconciliation and redemption and propitiation, has to be implemented by the faithful man. You and I have to be willing and able and execute the duties of the good and faithful servant. And that includes acknowledging our sins.

It includes making sure, as in Hebrews chapter 10, that when we approach the throne of God, our hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our body has been washed with pure water. We have removed our sins outside the dwelling place of God, which is our soul. Those sins have to be carried outside the camp and turned loose in a wilderness from which there is no return.

And the faithful man comes back and washes himself and enters the camp. We look at our sins. We confess them before God.

We put them on the head of the Azazel goat. And we send them away. And then we purify ourselves.

We wash ourselves and we come back in the camp. We take the work of Christ, pictured in that sin offering, and we complete it. The sacrifice is accomplished at the altar, but it's not complete until the rest of that animal is burned outside the camp.

And we come back and we wash ourselves and we cleanse ourselves and we come back in the camp. In the camp is the dwelling place of God. In the camp is the place of fellowship.

In the camp is the place of blessing. We have to deal with our sins. And even in the act of dealing with it, we can get depressed, we can get upset, we can get soiled, even in the act of dealing with our sins.

And we have to wash ourselves and come back into the pristine sanctum of our soul, cleansed, heart having been sprinkled, body having been washed, and return to the place of fellowship and function with God. That's what the faithful man pictures. And it's very important that we see this aspect.

We are our own priest. We are our own servant in carrying out and fulfilling these aspects of the work of Christ. This shall be a statute, verse 29, forever for you.

In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, do no work at all. Everybody else should observe this ritual. Everyone else should be meditating on this ritual.

What does it mean to afflict your souls? As you see this ritual being carried out by the priest and by the servant, and he is pronouncing on the head of the goat and offering the sin offering, the bull, you participate as an Israelite by saying, you know, a part of what's going on in the head of that goat and a part of what's going into that bull's sin offering is what I have done. That's me. And the individual Israelite was to participate vicariously by doing nothing else but concentrating on that ritual on that day.

Well, for us, it's like we say in the Marine Corps, every day is a holiday and every meal is a feast. And we have a daily obligation, not just a yearly obligation, a daily obligation to perform those actions of the Day of Atonement that cleanse us and sanctify us and prepare us and fit us for every good work. Well, it's a beautiful picture and we've completed our study now of both the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement.

Next week, we will take a look at the Feast of Booths, which is anticipatory, looks ahead to what happens in the Day of the Lord and when the Day of the Lord is concluded. And that will conclude our study of the Levitical offerings. Let's close for this morning in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the beautiful pictures of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ that we find in the Old Testament and in particular in this section of Leviticus. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress them on our hearts, help us to understand the application and the implication for ourselves day by day as we seek to walk in the light and claim those promises and those privileges that belong to the obedient and faithful people of God. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.