

FORGIVENESS:
Will That Be One Goat Or Two?
Message 5
Date: 2/20/2011
Scripture: Leviticus 26:1-10

INTRO: In the last message we read Leviticus chapter 16 and looked at a number of key concepts to help understand this chapter. That chapter is the divinely inspired account of the instructions given to Moses regarding Israel's highest and holiest day; Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. In this great chapter, Moses is instructed regarding the keeping of this feast day. We saw that Israel had seven feasts each year. The first 4 fell in the grain harvest time and the last three in the grape harvest time. Of the first four, we still keep three.

However, of the last three of Israel's feasts we keep none. These are the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Booths. And in the last 3 feasts, the middle feast or the second to last feast is the Day of Atonement. It is Israel's highest holy day. And what we want to do, we want to go back in time over 2000 years, and in about 45 minutes, we want to spend a day in the courts of the Lord. Our day will be spent in Israel, at the temple, on the highest holy day, or feast day of Israel. It is the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26-32; Lev. 16).

Three times in the year, every Jewish male was to appear at the Lord's tabernacle. Here he would spend a day in the courts of the Lord. Before that day arrived, they began to look forward to going to the Lord's house. And then when they began to make their way to Jerusalem, they would sing the songs of Zion. I want to read one of those songs for you. Listen to Psalm 84, and enter their longing for the courts of the Lord, where we are planning to go this morning as well:

- ¹ How lovely *is* Your tabernacle, (Pic. # 1)
O LORD of hosts!
- ² My soul longs, yes, even faints (Pic. # 2)
For the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
- ³ Even the sparrow has found a home,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young—
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts,

- My King and my God.
- ⁴ Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your house;
They will still be praising You. Selah
- ⁵ Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in You,
Whose heart *is* set on pilgrimage.
- ⁶ *As they* pass through the Valley of Baca, (Pic. # 3)
They make it a spring;
The rain also covers it with pools.
- ⁷ They go from strength to strength; (Pic. # 4)
Each one appears before God in Zion.
- ⁸ O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah
- ⁹ O God, behold our shield,
And look upon the face of Your anointed.
- ¹⁰ For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand. (Pic. # 5)
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
- ¹¹ For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield;
The LORD will give grace and glory;
No good *thing* will He withhold
From those who walk uprightly.
- ¹² O LORD of hosts,
Blessed *is* the man who trusts in You!

Today in Israel, the Temple Mount Institute is remaking the instruments of the temple for the future temple that they believe will yet be built. They have put out a book that was published in 1997 and that covers the events of Israel's seven feasts which took place at the temple in Jewish practice in the courts of the Lord. (Pic. # 6) Some years ago, one of our church folk came back from Israel and gave me as a gift, the book, "The Holy Temple of Jerusalem." I am going to rewrite Yom Kippur, the day of the two goats, from that book. I have done this so we will understand the picture of forgiveness in the OT. With that introduction we now want to seek an understanding of this OT picture of forgiveness.

B. Understanding The Picture

The Day of Atonement included 15 separate sacrifices, and every part of this very special day was carried out by the High Priest. On other feast days many priests would be involved, but not on this day. Seven days before the Day of Atonement the high priest isolated himself from all other people, including his family, to minimize as much as possible becoming

defiled. He would not go home but spend his time in a holy chamber at the temple. During these seven days he carefully restudied all his responsibilities for this high and holy day.

The elders of the Sanhedrin would read to him every day from the biblical passages related to this day. On the night before the Day of Atonement he would not be allowed to sleep all night. During this night other priests would read to him from three biblical books; Job, Ezra and Chronicles. Whenever it looked like the high priest was becoming drowsy, the priests in training would snap their fingers and say, "Master! High Priest! Rise up and stand upon the floor!"

Then on the morning of this very special day, the High Priest would stand at the eastern gate and inspect all the animals that would be sacrificed that day. This would include the two goats we have mentioned already. On this day the High Priest would dress as prescribed in Leviticus 16 and then the sacrifices would begin.

(Pic. # 7) The first sacrifice was that of a bullock, and this he sacrificed for his own personal atonement and that of his family. It was a sin offering. The High Priest would come near to the animal and place both hands on the head of the animal as he stood facing the sanctuary. And then he would say, "I beseech You, O Lord; I have sinned, rebelled, and transgressed against You, I and my household; I beseech You, O Lord, Grant atonement for the sins, and for the iniquities and transgressions which I have committed against You, I, and my household. As it is written in the Torah of Your servant, Moses: For this day atonement shall be made for you, to purify you from all your sins - before the Lord you shall be purified."

And during this day, and on this day only, the High Priest would say the name, 'Jehovah' or 'Jahwey'. The book by the Temple Institute says he would utter this name 10 times on this day.

Let me now quote from the book, "All the Day of Atonement service was fraught with poignancy, tense

anticipation and deep personal stirrings of repentance, yet one of the most dramatic moments of the day was the lottery conducted by the High Priest to choose the scapegoat, which was to be cast off as an atonement for Israel's sins" (50).

The two goats were then brought and placed in preparation for the lottery (read Lev. 16:5-8). (Pic. # 8) There was a wooden lottery box. Inside the box were two lots. On one lot was written, 'For the Lord'. On the other was written 'for azazel'. Now there is some disagreement on the meaning of 'azazel'. It is translated in our Bibles as 'scapegoat'. The book I am quoting from says that the name 'azazel' is actually the name of the place to which the scapegoat was sent, a high, rocky precipice in the Judean desert from which the goat was cast to its death.

(Pic. # 9) However, the name 'azazel' comes from two Hebrew words, ez, a goat, and azal, meaning to depart or go away. This is the 'going away' or 'sending away' goat. I believe it is the 'forgiving' goat. The Hebrew word for forgiveness means 'to send away'. The Greek word 'to forgive' is 'aphiemi', also meaning 'to send away'. They both speak of the same thing. This is the scapegoat. This is the innocent goat that bears away the sin and then is killed for carrying the sins of others.

(Pic. # 10) The High Priest now mixes up the two lots in the box to make sure he does not know which one is which. He then takes one in his right hand and one in his left hand and places the one in his right hand on the head of the goat on his right. (Pic. # 11) Then he says, "For the Lord, a sin offering." And once again he pronounced the sacred name for God. Then he tied a length of wool dyed red between the horns of the scapegoat and one around the neck. It was red because of the verse, "...though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

The High Priest would then perform numerous other services required on this day. He would once again confess his own sins on the bullock and confessed as well on behalf of the other priests, reciting again

the prayer we gave earlier. At this time a lengthy ceremony followed with the slaughter of the animal and its sacrifice. The whole procedure here is lengthy and important for the Day of Atonement. And when it is all done, the priest returns once more to the two goats.

Let me just note here that this is the only day of the year that that little room called the Holy of Holies, where the ark of the covenant stood in the tabernacle was entered by man. It was only the high priest that entered. This was also the only day anyone ever uttered God's most holy name, Jehovah, or Jahweh, and that only by the high priest. I understand from the book written by the Temple Mount Institute in Israel, that the High Priest would say God's name 10 times on this day.

The priest now goes to the goat that has the lot, 'For The Lord' and slaughters it. (Pic. # 12) The priest then takes of this blood and enters the sanctuary as he had done earlier with the blood of the bullock. He carries the blood in a golden vessel called a 'mizrak'. He then sprinkles the blood between the carrying poles of the ark of the covenant. After he has done this, he mixes the blood of the bullock and that of the goat and once more sprinkles it. Then he sprinkles inside the holy of holies and then in the holy place before the curtain. After this he sprinkles the horns of the altar which is before the Lord. This is the altar that is inside the holy place, not the large altar outside. Then he exposed some of the gold surface of the altar and sprinkled there seven times. If there was still blood left, it was poured out on the western side of the outer altar's foundation.

The High Priest now returned to the scapegoat which was waiting close to the Eastern Gate, through which it would be led into the wilderness. The High Priest would now place his hands on the head of this goat between the horns and confess the sins of the entire nation of Israel. He would say, "I beseech You O Lord, Grant atonement for the sins and for the iniquities and the transgressions which the entire house of Israel has committed against You, As it is written in the Torah of Your servant, Moses: For on

this day atonement shall be made for you to purify you from all your sins - before the Lord you shall be purified." And the congregation of people would say, "Blessed be the Name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever."

When the High Priest had confessed on behalf of the children of Israel, he gave the scapegoat to an individual who had been specially designated to lead it into the desert. This was considered to be a great privilege and the picture may be that to forgive is a great privilege. This goat was then led over the special bridge that connected the temple Mount with the Mount of Anointment. The path that the goat would now take into the wilderness had a number of stations along the way. These stations had been manned since before the Day of Atonement. Here there would be someone to help the one leading this goat in any way should it become necessary and they would accompany him for a part of the way.

After arriving at the cliff a priest would take the red wool string and divide it in two. He tied the one around the horns of the animal and the other he tied to a rock. This red string was to turn to white when atonement was made. He then took the scapegoat and pushed it backwards over the cliff, where it would fall to its death. When this was done, scouts who had been placed at high points waved to each other and thus sent back a quick message to the temple that the goat had been sent to its death.

When the High Priest received this news, he continued the service. He then descended to the Women's Court and read aloud from Leviticus 16 before the congregation. What we want to do now, is what the High Priest did when he descended to the Court of Women. Now let me remind us here that the purpose of this day was to make 'atonement', that is a satisfaction for sin. As we mentioned earlier, sin has come between God and man, and that sin must be satisfactorily put away or covered. When sin is covered, it is forgiven. When that happens, reconciliation takes place. So, included in this word *atonement* is all that it takes for a relationship to be restored after it has been broken by sin. We find all these elements in these two goats.

So let us read verses 12-19 (read). There were two lots. One was for the Lord's goat and the other for the scapegoat. The word translated 'scapegoat' is *azazel*. This word comes from two Hebrew words, *ez*, a goat, and *azal*, meaning to depart or go away. This is the 'going away' or 'sending away' goat.

And now I want to point out the significance of this day. First, it deals with atonement, satisfaction. Sin brings on God's wrath. It violently divides a relationship. In order for that relationship to be restored several things have to happen. The first goat was the 'For the Lord' goat. The blood of this goat and its death pictured that which satisfied God's wrath. Every sin must be justly dealt with and this goat pictured Christ's death on man's behalf. He was our 'For the Lord' goat.

Now I want us to notice something very carefully with regard to these two goats. When the 'Lord's goat' was sacrificed, no sins were confessed. I believe it was to show the just payment of sin before God, which is death. It's blood went all the way into the holy of holies. But the second goat could not be sent away until after the first one had been sacrificed. In dealing with man's sin, the price for sin must first be paid before it can be forgiven. God paid the price for our sin while we were yet His enemies. His payment for our sin was not dependent on our recognition of our sin, or our repentance or any thing else. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

But, this day required two goats, not one. I am sometimes told that Christ's death forgave all man's sin. That is not correct theology. Christ's death does not forgive anyone's sin. However, it did pay for all sins. If His death had forgiven all sins, then the doctrine of universalism, that all will be saved, would be correct. His death paid the price for all sin, but in order to be forgiven we must repent and believe in Christ. There can be no question about that.

So let us look at the scapegoat, the *azazel*. There are two very significant things here. Let me show you

the very first thing. Let us go to Leviticus 16 (read 20-21a). The price for sin has been paid. That was the first goat. But now comes the confession of sin. Here we have repentance. This is absolutely crucial. There is no sending away of this goat, there is no forgiveness without repentance!

The second thing that is important here is that as soon as repentance has taken place, something else very important takes place. Let us read verse 21 all the way now (read). You see, here is the scapegoat, the sending away goat; or let us rather call it the forgiving goat.

So, why this sacrifice? Did they not sacrifice throughout the year? Yes, they did. But this sacrifice shows how forgiveness was achieved when man had sinned against God and against when he had sinned against his fellow man. First, it required one goat to picture the death of the sinner in Christ. The sin is paid for in Christ. This is the 'For The Lord' goat. Only now can we go to the second goat.

The second goat is the azazel, or repentance and forgiveness goat, the goat that will be sent into the wilderness. Could it be that the two horns are the horns of repentance and forgiveness? The book I have quoted from on these sacrifices says that when the High Priest came to these two goats he would tie a scarlet colored string around the two horns of the 'azazel' goat. He would also tie a scarlet colored string around the neck of the 'For The Lord' goat. This string indicated the teaching of Isaiah 1:18, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as wool." History says the priest would place his hands between the two horns of azazel and there confess in prayer, the sins of the people of the nation of Israel.

Once the sins had been confessed on the 'Sending away' goat, a person chosen for the task now led this goat away. It pictures the bearing away of sins. The person chosen for this task did not have to be a priest. It could be anybody. Maybe the picture is that anybody can forgive sins once repentance has taken place.

Once the one leading this goat away came to the cliff that was his destination he would cut the scarlet thread in two. The one piece he again tied to the two horns. Here, I believe, is a picture of the blood of Christ uniting the repentance and forgiveness to His own sacrifice for man's sin. The other piece of scarlet string was tied to a rock. I would expect the rock pictures Christ in this whole process. This string would stay here when the goat was sent to its death. When this string turned white, the messenger knew that atonement had been accomplished. Now, before this string could turn white, all the other things had to be accomplished first. Surely forgiveness could not take place with any one of the other ingredients in this service lacking.

After this, the goat was backed to the edge of the cliff, and with a push, sent to its death at the bottom of the cliff. This violent death pictures for us how God treats sin and how we are to treat sin after it is forgiven. It is to be viewed as dead, as dead as this goat. It must never be allowed to come back. To forgive a person after repentance, and then bring the sin up again as something still held against the other person is a very terrible sin in the eyes of God. And nothing but this picture of a violent death for the innocent animal is proper to show how violently we are to put away sin when someone has repented and we forgive.

Now Moses instruction regarding the 'Sending Away' goat was to lead it into the wilderness and to release it there (Lev. 16:22). So why did Israel push this goat over a cliff? According to Easton's dictionary, the scapegoat was pushed over a cliff to send it to its death because on one occasion a scapegoat returned to Jerusalem after it had been released in the wilderness. This was considered such a terrible omen, that from then on they made sure this goat would never come back. What does the return of a scapegoat indicate? I think it pictures how terrible it is to forgive someone after they have repented, and then to bring the subject up again as an outstanding account!

When a Christian repents, and his fellow Christian does not forgive him, is a crime almost above all

other crimes. To have someone repent and not to forgive that person is very, very wicked. We will see what our Lord Jesus thinks of such a person in another message. But I now ask, how can the second goat be sent away when there has been no confession of sin, no repentance? Can the goat be sent to its death without repentance and confession taking place? No! No repentance, no second goat. And no second goat, and no forgiveness! Can the blood of Christ tie the two horns of repentance and forgiveness together when there is no repentance? No! Nor can we truly forgive, that is send a wrong away, when there is no repentance!

CONCL: And now, with regard to our title for this series, "Forgiveness, will that be one goat or two?"` you know the rest of the story. You know that it must be two goats, not one. To forgive without repentance is as vain as anything could possibly be. If that can be done, God could have sent Christ to die for our sins, and we could enter heaven without ever repenting. And if that could happen God would cease to be just or holy and the devil would win.

For people to forgive one another without repentance is one goat forgiveness and it is as unbiblical as universal salvation is. The sending away can only truly happen after repentance.

WILL THAT BE ONE GOAT OR TWO?

Forgiveness with God, will that be one goat or two?
That will be two, as you see, just one will not do.
Sin must be paid for, O yes that is true,
But repentance before God, must take place too.

One goat must die for our justification,
But to bear away our every transgression,
The other must receive our sincere confession.
Only thus can these two goats bring true satisfaction.

Forgiveness with man, will that be one goat or two?
That will be two, as you see, just one will not do.
Christ paid for our sins, O yes that is true;
But repentance before man, must take place too.

One goat paid the price, for sins against man;

But to be forgiven, we must understand:
We must say, "I've sinned," and in repentance must bend;
Into the wilderness, the second goat to send.

And now, in Biblical times, when this incredible service of Yom Kippur was over the people would gather around the High Priest and accompany him to his own home, where he had been absent for seven days. This very special day, the day of atonement, Yom Kippur, was over for one more year, picturing once more how forgiveness of sin works. Maybe we need a reminder once a year so we do not forget.