

Sermon #60 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title: **THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT**

Text: Leviticus 23:26-32

Subject: *The Typical Significance of The
 Feast of Atonement*

Date: Sunday Morning — August 4, 2019

Reading: *Leviticus 16:1-34*

Introduction:

LEVITICUS 16

For our Scripture reading we read Leviticus 16 and the instructions given in that great chapter about the day of atonement in Old Testament worship. Everything relating to that great day was typical, portraying the sin-atonement work of our Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary. The picture of atonement given in that chapter involved many, many things; but there are **six principle things** that I want to remind you of, while you are turning to our text in Leviticus 23.

1. **Aaron, God's High Priest, was the only one who could make atonement for the sins of the people.**

— None but Christ, our great High Priest, of whom Aaron was but a type, could make atonement for us.

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

2. **Atonement was made for Israel (God's chosen people) alone.** — Christ died for and redeemed God's elect alone. — The Book of God universally teaches the sweet and blessed gospel doctrine of Limited Atonement, Particular and Effectual Redemption!
3. **The sins of the people were ceremonially imputed to two goats: the Lord's goat and the scapegoat.**
4. **The Lord's goat was slain, and his blood was sprinkled upon the mercy-seat in the holy of holies.** — *“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”* (Hebrews 9:12)
5. **The scapegoat was carried away by a fit man (Christ) and forever lost.** — Our sins were forever put away by the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

6. **All for whom atonement was made were blessed of God.** — All for whom Christ died and made atonement are blessed of God with all the blessings of grace and salvation. — Effectual Redemption.

LEVITICUS 23

Now, let's look at the instructions given about this great day in Leviticus 23. Verses 26-32 describe **THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT**. That is my subject — **THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT**. My text is Leviticus 23:26-32.

(Leviticus 23:26-32) “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 27 Also on the tenth *day* of this seventh month *there shall be* a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it *is* a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29 For whatsoever soul *it be* that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

shall be cut off from among his people. 30 And whatsoever soul *it be* that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 Ye shall do no manner of work: *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 *It shall be* unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth *day* of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.”

Now listen carefully. — It is a very great mistake to think that when we have instructions given about a matter in one portion of Holy Scripture given again in another that one is merely a repetition of the other. That is not the case at all. When instructions are given about something more than once, there is a reason. The passage before us here in Leviticus is a very clear example of what I am saying.

- **Leviticus 16** describes the day of atonement for the purpose of showing in type how the Lord

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption by the sacrifice of himself at Calvary.

- **Leviticus 23** sets before us the feast of atonement (the feast of expiation) as one of Israel's annual holy convocations.

Notice that this feast, the feast of atonement, follows the feasts of passover, unleavened bread, firstfruits, Pentecost, and trumpets. Those are all feasts that portray our experience of grace and salvation by Christ.

The redemption of our souls was accomplished for us altogether outside our experience, long before we were born, when the Son of God died in our room and stead upon the cursed tree. That accomplished redemption is what Leviticus 16 portrays.

Leviticus 23:26-32 portrays **the believer's experience of grace in receiving the atonement by faith in Christ.** The ceremony, the holy assembly for

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

worship, described in Leviticus 23:26-32 is not talking about what Christ did, but about what goes on in our souls when God the Holy Ghost reveals Christ in us and gives us a saving interest in what he did for us at Calvary (Romans 5:6-11; 2 Timothy 1:9-10).

(Romans 5:6-11) “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) God “hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, *10* But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

When God the Holy Spirit comes to chosen, redeemed sinners in the saving operations of his grace, when he sprinkles the conscience with the blood of Christ, when he gives us faith in Christ, he convinces us of Christ’s glorious, effectual redemption accomplished for us (Hebrews 9:11-14; John 16:7-11).

(Hebrews 9:11-14) “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. (13) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: (14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

(John 16:7-11) “I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”

Proposition: The feast of atonement was Israel’s annual day of repentance, portraying God’s gift of

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

repentance wrought in our souls by his almighty grace.

REPENTANCE

I have read countless sermons and articles on repentance. I have read a good many books on the subject. But I have never read anything that explains what repentance is like Leviticus 23:26-32. If one picture is worth a thousand words, here is a picture that is worth ten thousand words!

The feast of atonement was intended to show us the character of true repentance. It was, in fact, a call to the whole congregation to repent and be reconciled to God. **There are several different words translated “repent” and “repentance” in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and in the Greek text of the New Testament.**

- There are two words translated “repent” in the Old Testament and two in the New. The one means to “sigh,” “be sorry,” or “regret bitterly.”

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

The other means “retreat,” “turn back,” or “return.”

- There are also two different words in the New Testament which are translated “*repent*.” The one means “think differently,” “reconsider,” or “change your mind.” The other means “regret.”
- The one time the word “*repentance*” is found in the Old Testament (Hosea 13:14), the word used means “to deeply regret.”
- In the New Testament, the word translated “*repentance*” also means “to deeply regret.”
- Repentance is sorrow and contrition before God because of sin (Zechariah 12:10).
- Repentance is returning to God, being reconciled to God by faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).
- Repentance is a change of mind about yourself and God, about sin and righteousness, about redemption and grace. — Repentance is having the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:12-16).

I repeat — The feast of atonement was Israel’s annual day of repentance, portraying God’s gift of

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

repentance wrought in our souls by his almighty grace.

THE NUMBERS

As I have said many times, I do not place great importance upon numbers used in the Bible because the Scriptures do not give us explicit, clear reason for doing so. However, I am certain that the numbers (numerals) used in the Word of God have significance far beyond what I have yet seen. **A few examples will suffice to show you what I mean.**

- 1 seems clearly to represent unity (Ephesians 4:4-6; John 10:30).
- 2 division (Genesis 1:6-8).
- 3 God, The Trinity, Resurrection.
- 4 Creation (Revelation 7:1 Four Corners, Four Winds).
- 5 Grace (Five Burnt Offerings)
- 6 Man (6th Day, Revelation 13:8)

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

- 7 Completeness, Perfection (7th Day, Seven Spirits, Seven Churches)
- 8 The New Birth, New Beginning, New Creation
- 9 Fruitfulness (Fruit of the Spirit 9 and Gifts of the Spirit 9 and 9 Beatitudes)
- 10 Bounty, Wealth, Riches, Fulness

This feast of atonement began on the 10th day of the 7th month and was consummated with a sabbath observance on the 9th day of the month. The number seven represents completion and perfection (complete in Christ!). The number nine represents fruitfulness (the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit). And the number ten represents all the bounty, wealth and riches of grace that are ours in Christ. The Hebrew word for “*ten*” is also the word used for riches (Pulpit Commentary, vol. 2. pg. 361).

As I said, I do not know just how much weight should, or should not be placed upon these numbers. But I do know this — **When God gives sinners faith in Christ, he gives us all the fulness, completion and perfection of his grace, all the fulness of his**

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

Spirit, and all the treasure of heaven. It is written,
“*All things are yours, for ye are Christ’s!*”

SIX THINGS

Now, let’s look at our text. I want you to see six things that are involved in repentance, six characteristics of true faith, as they are portrayed in the feast of atonement.

WORSHIP

1st — Verse 27 — “*It shall be an holy convocation unto you.*” — The feast of atonement was a holy convocation, an assembly of divine worship. — And **the very first characteristic of repentance toward God and faith in Christ is worship.**

Saved sinners worship God. We call upon the name of the Lord. We worship toward his holy hill of Zion, gather on Zion’s hill with the general assembly and church of the firstborn.

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

(Philippians 3:3) “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

To call upon the name of the Lord is to worship God as he is, as he makes himself known in the person and work of Christ (Genesis 4:26; Romans 10:8-13).

(Romans 10:8-13) “The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; (9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (12) For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (13) For

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

AFFLICTION

2nd — Verse 27 — “*Ye shall afflict your souls.*” — This feast of atonement was a time of soul affliction. — And **as soon as a sinner has Christ revealed in him, he is broken, contrite, and afflicted in his soul** (Job 42:5-6; Isaiah 6:5; 66:1-2; Zechariah 12:10-12; 13:1; Matthew 3-4).

(Job 42:5-6) “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. 6 Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.”

(Isaiah 6:5) “Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

(Isaiah 66:1-2) “Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest? 2 For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”

(Zechariah 12:10-11) “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn. 11 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.”

(Zechariah 13:1) “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”

(Matthew 5:3-4) “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

BURNT-OFFERING

3rd _ Verse 27 — “*Ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.*” — The feast of atonement involved burnt offerings of consecration to God. — And **true repentance and faith, arising from the revelation and knowledge of Christ, compels every saved sinner to consecrate himself to God** (Romans 11:33-12:2; Colossians 3:1-3).

(Romans 11:33-36) “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.”

(Romans 12:1-2) “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

(Colossians 3:1-3) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

EXPIATIONS

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

4th — Verse 28 — “*It is a day of atonement (atonements, expiations) to make and atonement for you before the Lord your God.*” — **When the Lord God gives you faith in Christ, it shall be for you the day of atonements, expiations, full, free, everlasting forgiveness of all sin.** — The word “*atonement*” means expiate, cover, cancel, placate, appease, pacify, purge, put away, forgive, reconcile (Isaiah 43:25; 1 John 1:9).

(Isaiah 43:25) “*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*”

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

Look at the text again.

(Leviticus 23:28-32) “*And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to*

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT*Leviticus 23:26-32*

make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29 For whatsoever soul *it be* that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. 30 And whatsoever soul *it be* that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 Ye shall do no manner of work: *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 *It shall be* unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth *day* of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.”

SABBATH REST

5th — Verses 28-32 — During the feast of atonements the children of Israel were to cease from all work of any kind and keep a sabbath of rest unto the Lord. — And **true repentance and faith involves a total cessation of works of any kind for acceptance with God, a keeping of sabbath rest before him, a continual affliction of our souls.**

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

- For Justification
- For Sanctification
- For Assurance
- For Heavenly Reward

(Galatians 5:1-4) “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (2) Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (3) For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (4) Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

Now, look at verse 32 again and watch this.

CELEBRATION

6th — Verse 32 — “*Ye shall celebrate your sabbath!*”
— This affliction of soul during the feast of

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

atonement was a time of celebration. — And **true repentance and faith in Christ brings us into the blessed celebration of grace.**

I know the word “celebrate” has the connotation of keeping a ceremony. But the life God gives us in Christ is a life of celebration. Faith celebrates!

- The Character of God — His Attributes!
- The Salvation He Bestows!
- The Peace He Gives!
- The Pardon of Sin!
- The Hope of Eternal Life — Heavenly Glory!

The Lord my God has sent me here to preach to you “*repentance and remission of sins*” by the blood of Christ, calling upon you to be reconciled to God by faith in his dear Son (Luke 24:47; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

(18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (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.”

Oh, may God Holy Spirit be pleased this day to bring you into this blessed celebration of grace. — “*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish!*”

- Worship Him.
- Afflict your souls.
- Consecrate yourself to God.
- May this be for you a day of expiations, atonements, forgiveness!
- Come to Christ and rest.

THE FEAST OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32

- Celebrate the grace of God! — Join the celebration!

Illustration: *A. J. Gordon Two Snowbirds*

“Redeemed! How I love to proclaim it,
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb,
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child and forever I am!”

Amen.