

The Day of Atonement

Key Verses: *“In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all: ... For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.”*
—Leviticus 16:29,30

Selected Scripture:
Leviticus 16:2-9,11-19,27-34

usual “garments of glory and beauty,” but in garments of sacrifice, which were of white linen.—Exod. 28:2-39; Lev. 16:4

Aaron was instructed to procure a bullock and a goat for the atonement sacrifices. The bullock was provided by Aaron himself and was to be slain in the Court of the Tabernacle as a sin-offering for himself and his house. The fat of the bullock was to be burned upon the Brazen Altar. Due to a bullock’s large amount of fat, it must have burned furiously and produced a dense cloud of

TODAY’S LESSON PERTAINS to the services of the Tabernacle that were conducted on Israel’s annual Day of Atonement, as recorded in the 16th chapter of Leviticus. This all important service occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish religious year. It was considered the most solemn occasion of the entire year, the day on which the high priest entered the Most Holy—the innermost compartment of the Tabernacle—to make atonement for the sins of the nation. To conduct the services of this special day, the high priest, Aaron, was not clothed in his

smoke that arose in the sight of those outside.—Lev. 16:3,5,6,25

Aaron was to then fill a censer with burning coals taken from the fire on the Brazen Altar and bring it, together with sweet incense, into the Holy, the first compartment of the Tabernacle. The censer was to be set on top of the Golden Altar and the incense sprinkled upon it to produce a smoke of sweet perfume, which penetrated beyond the second veil into the Most Holy. When this had been performed meticulously, Aaron could safely enter the Most Holy and proceed with the final act of atonement. There he was to sprinkle the blood of the bullock on top of and in front of the mercy seat.—vss. 12-14

Outside of the Tabernacle, beyond the camp surrounding it, there was to be another fire. There the vile parts of the bullock—the skin, the flesh, and the dung—were to be burned. This scene was open to the view of all of the Israelites encamped about the Tabernacle and distinguished it sharply from the other sacrificial rites of the Day of Atonement, which were obscured by the linen curtains surrounding the Tabernacle Court and the enclosed nature of the Holy and Most Holy. Thus was completed the offering of the bullock.—vs. 27

The goat for a sin offering was next offered. It was to be taken from among the people of Israel for this purpose and presented before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle. The Lord's goat was slain in the Tabernacle Court, and its blood was brought into the Most Holy and sprinkled in the same manner as had been done with the blood of the bullock. Its skin, flesh, and dung were likewise burned outside the camp of Israel.—vss. 15,27

Paul wrote that “all these things happened unto them [the Israelites] for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition.” They were a “shadow of good things to come” and of “better sacrifices,” centered in Jesus.—I Cor. 10:11; Heb. 10:1; 9:23 ■