



Go for God!

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

Chapters 15 – 16

> CHAPTER 15 – “MALE AND FEMALE UNCLEANNESS & CLEANSING”

(v1-15) This deals with a disease from men, which produces an infectious discharge from the male sexual organ, the uncleanness thereof, the cleansing therefore and the offerings required.

(v16-18) Cleansing (hygienic practice) in regard to semen emission.

(v17-33) These verses deal with a woman’s menstrual period and an infectious discharge, her uncleanness, cleansing, and offerings. (Mark 5:25-34 – “*Your faith has made you well!*”)

> CHAPTER 16 – “THE DAY OF ATONEMENT”

- Here is the prophetic significance of each of the seven Levitical feasts of Israel:

1) Passover (Leviticus 23:5) – Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified during the time that the Passover was observed (Mark 14:12). Christ is a “lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Peter 1:19) because His life was completely free from sin (Hebrews 4:15). As the first Passover marked the Hebrews’ release from Egyptian slavery, so the death of Christ marks our release from the slavery of sin (Romans 8:2).

2) Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6) – Pointed to the Messiah’s sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus’ body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10) – Pointed to the Messiah’s resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in 1 Corinthians 15:20 as the “first fruits from the dead.”

4) Weeks or Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16) – Occurred fifty days after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see Acts 2). The Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter’s great

sermon and his first proclamation of the gospel.

5) **Trumpets (Leviticus 23:24)** – The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Rapture of the Church when the Messiah Jesus will appear in the heavens as He comes for His bride, the Church. The Rapture is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** and **1 Corinthians 15:52**).

6) **Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27)** – Many believe this prophetically points to the day of the Second Coming of Jesus when He will return to earth. That will be the Day of Atonement for the Jewish remnant when they "look upon Him whom they have pierced," repent of their sins, and receive Him as their Messiah (**Zechariah 12:10** and **Romans 11:1-6, 25-36**).

7) **Tabernacles or Booths (Leviticus 23:34)** – Many scholars believe that this feast day points to the Lord's promise that He will once again "tabernacle" with His people when He returns to reign over all the world (**Micah 4:1-7**).

- The "**Day of Atonement**" (Yom Kippur) was on the tenth day of the seventh month (during our September / October – Hebrew calendar - Tishri) and was set aside as a day of public fasting and humiliation. On this day the nation of Israel sought atonement for its sins (**Leviticus 23:27; 16:29; Numbers 29:7**). This was the only fasting period required by the Law (**Leviticus 16:29; 23:31**), the **Day of Atonement** was a recognition of man's inability to make any atonement for his sins. It was a solemn, holy day accompanied by elaborate ritual (**Leviticus 16; Hebrews 10:1-10**).

Dr. Henry Morris writes, "The annual **Day of Atonement** was the most important of all the Jewish festivals, with the possible exception of the **Passover**. The word "atonement" (Hebrew *kaphar*) essentially means "covering," and is first used in connection with the waterproofing of Noah's ark (Gen. 6:14). The concept was that of a temporary "covering" of sin until Christ could come as the final "**Lamb of God**" to "**(take) away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29).

~ **Chapter 16 outline:**

> **(v1-11) Atonement for the High Priest and his house**

> **(v12-19) Atonement for all the assembly of Israel**

> **(v20-34) The Scapegoat, the Cleansing, and the Everlasting Covenant**

> **(v1-11) Atonement for the High Priest and his house**

(v1-11) God tells Moses to warn Aaron not to come into the “*Most Holy Place*,” that is into God’s presence, unless he comes according to God’s prescribed manner. The penalty for such carelessness is death, which gives reference to Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron who were killed because they offered a “*profane fire*” (Lev. 10:1) before the LORD.

- Let me add two additional insights in regard to Burnt and Sin offerings:

#1 – The BURNT OFFERING was described as "that which goes up (to God)." It was termed "whole" (Lev 6:22) because the entire offering was to be burnt upon the altar. It was termed "continual" (Ex 29:38-42) to teach the nation of Israel that their sinfulness required a complete and continual atonement and consecration. This sacrifice, offered every morning and evening, pointed to Christ's atoning death for sinners (2 Cor 5:21) and His total consecration to God (Luke 2:49). The burnt offering spoke of Christ's passive obedience and His submission to the penalty required by man's sinfulness. It also refers to His perfect obedience to God's law by which He did for us what we are unable to do for ourselves.

#2 – The SIN OFFERING was part of the ceremonies on the *Day of Atonement*, as the high priest made two sin offerings: a bull for himself and a young male goat for the congregation (Leviticus 16:11, 15). The sin offering was a poignant picture of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world. Jesus' blood made atonement for the sin of any person who realizes his guilt before God and asks for that atonement to be applied to him (John 3:16; Ephesians 1:7). "Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22).

> (v12-19) Atonement for all the assembly of Israel

(v12-19) Here’s a simple summary of events in regard to the “*Day of Atonement*,”

the following sequence describes the activities of the *High-Priest* and those who assisted him on the *Day of Atonement*:

1) The *High-Priest* washed at the laver in the courtyard and dressed in the tabernacle (v. 4).

2) The *High-Priest* offered the bull as a sin offering for himself and his family (vv. 3, 6, 11).

3) The *High-Priest* entered the *Holy of Holies* with the bull’s blood, incense, and burning coals from the altar of *burnt offering* (vv. 12, 13).

- 4) The *High-Priest* sprinkled the bull's blood on the *mercy seat* seven times (v. 14).
- 5) The *High-Priest* went back to the courtyard and cast lots for the two goats (vv. 7, 8).
- 6) The *High-Priest* sacrificed one goat as a *sin offering* for the people (vv. 5, 9, 15).
- 7) The *High-Priest* reentered the *Holy of Holies* to sprinkle blood on the *mercy seat* and also the *Holy Place* (cf. Ex. 30:10; vv. 15–17).
- 8) The *High-Priest* returned to the altar of burnt offering and cleansed it with the blood of the bull and goat (vv. 11, 15, 18, 19).
- 9) Finally the scapegoat bearing the sins of the people was sent into the wilderness (Lev 16:20-22). This scapegoat symbolized the pardon for sin brought through the sacrifice (Gal 3:12; 2 Cor 5:21) (vv. 20–22).
- 10) Afterward, the goatkeeper cleansed himself (v. 26).
- 11) The *High-Priest* removed his special *Day of Atonement* clothing, rewashed, and put on the regular *High-Priest* clothing (vv. 23, 24).
- 12) The *High-Priest* offered two rams as *burnt offerings* for himself and the people (vv. 3, 5, 24).
- 13) The fat of the sin offering was burned (v. 25).
- 14) The bull-and-goat sin offerings were carried outside the camp to be burned (v. 27).
- 15) The one who burned the sin offering cleansed himself (v. 28).¹

- C.I. Scofield writes, “The Levitical offerings “covered” the sins of Israel until and in anticipation of the cross, but did not “*take away*” (Heb. 10:4) those sins. These were the sins done in Old Testament times (“*covered*” meantime by the Levitical sacrifices), which God “passed over,” for which passing over God’s righteousness was never vindicated until, in the cross, Jesus Christ was “set forth as a propitiation.” It was the cross, not the Levitical sacrifices, which made full and complete redemption. The Old Testament sacrifices enabled God to go on with a guilty people because those sacrifices typified the cross. To the offerer they were the confession of his deserving death and the expression of his

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

faith; to God they were the “shadows” of good things that were to come, of which Christ was the reality.

Paul writes in Romans 3:21-26 - But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

> (v20-34) The Scapegoat, the Cleansing, and the Everlasting Covenant

(v20-26) This act was more than a symbolic gesture; it was a picture of the ultimate “substitutionary atonement” fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ (Is. 53:5, 6; 10:12; 2 Cor. 5:21).

(v27-28) This represents the historical reality of Christ’s death outside of Jerusalem.

- In Hebrews 13:10-16 - We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

- One commentator writes, “The emphasis in this section is on separation from dead religion and identification with the Lord Jesus Christ in His reproach. The image comes from the Day of Atonement. The sin offering was taken outside the camp and burned completely (Lev 16:27). Jesus Christ, our perfect sin offering, suffered and died “outside the gate” of Jerusalem. True Christians must go out to Him spiritually speaking, to the place of reproach and rejection. “Why stay in Jerusalem when it is not your city?” asked the writer. “Why identify

with the Old Covenant Law when it has been done away with in Christ?"

(v29) The term “*afflict your souls*” speaks of fasting on the “*Day of Atonement,*” and they were “*not to work at all.*”

(v30-34) Let us read Hebrews chapter 9 and 10 and see how our Lord Jesus Christ has fulfilled all things.