

Behold! The Lamb of God!

Day of Atonement

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Well, greetings to everyone!

I'd like to start this sermon in a place when God's people come together on the holy days that we're very familiar with. Please turn over to Leviticus chapter 23. God gives us instructions regarding His holy days, His weekly Sabbath and the annual holy days. And I'm starting in verse 1 of Leviticus 23. It says:

Leviticus 23:1. *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
2) "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the LORD,
which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts. (NKJ)*

I want you to notice that God commanded Moses to teach the children of Israel about God's feasts as well as His Sabbath.

Leviticus 23:3. *'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.
4) 'These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. (NKJ)*

Just hold your finger there. There is some additional instruction that God gave regarding this, but let's go over to Matthew 24 and just pick up a scripture that ties into this. Not only was Moses commanded to teach and proclaim to them (and he was to proclaim them at their appointed times), it's very clear that God intended those that He appointed as teachers to not only teach but also to teach at the appropriate time. Matthew 24 and let's pick it up in verse 44. It says:

Matthew 24:44. *"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
45) "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? (NKJ)*

The Bible tells us that God did not call the great or the wise. How do we understand here where he talks about a faithful and wise servant?

There are a number of words (In fact, there are three distinct words.) in the New Testament that are translated "wise." This one is Strong's #5429 *phronimos* (*fron'-ee-mos*), if I can pronounce it right. And it means "thoughtful or discreet (implying a cautious character....)." And, again, that's one of them. Let me continue to quote from Strong's. It says, "while #4680 *sophos* (*sof-os*) [Not many wise... from that one.]

denotes practical skill or acumen; and #4908 indicates rather intelligence or mental acquirement); in a bad sense conceited...." So when He talks about wise here, He's not talking about in the worldly sense to have skill or acumen or to be puffed up. It just means to be cautious, to be sagacious, and to be discreet. It's the same word here that is translated here in the parable of the ten virgins as "the wise."

Matthew 24:45. *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? (NKJ)*

And notice we tie it right down to the last days.

Matthew 24:46. *"[Bless-ed] is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. (NKJ)*

So, clearly the charge was given not just to Moses, but to everyone through the ages that God has appointed to teach His flock.

Back to Leviticus 23, and let's skip down to verse 26. It says:

Leviticus 23:26. *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:*

27) *"Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.*

28) *"And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God.*

29) *"For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people.*

30) *"And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.*

31) *"You shall do no manner of work; (KJV)*

In all of the holy days, the annual holy days, prohibit what we call customary or servile work. And we understand that is production, tillage, lighting a fire for a purpose of, let's say, forging materials; in other words, the work that you would normally do other times. But those days do allow for light food preparation.

And in your own studies, you can look up Exodus 12:16, but this day of the annual holy days is unique in that it omits the adverb servile or customary. Let me just read from Matthew Henry's Commentary. It says:

Leviticus 23:23-32 p3:

1. They must on this day...

And this is the commentary on Leviticus 23.

Leviticus 23:23-32 p3:

1. They must on this day rest from all manner of work, and not only from servile works as on other annual festivals; it must be as strict a rest as that of the weekly sabbath, v. 28, 30, 31. The reason is: For it is a day of atonement. Note, The humbling of our souls for sin, and the making of our peace with God, is work that requires the whole man, and the closest application of mind imaginable, and all little enough. He that would do the work of a day of atonement in its day, as it should be done, had need lay aside the thoughts of everything else. On that day God spoke peace unto his people, and unto his saints; and therefore they must lay aside all their worldly business, that they might the more clearly and the more reverently hear that voice of joy and gladness. Fasting days should be days of rest.

I want to come back to this concept of fasting and doing no work on it because I think we're going to see that this day, the Day of Atonement, is truly a day that God does His work. And our job is not to be participating in that, but to allow God to do the work of the Day of Atonement as it should be done. So, for now, just tuck that away and we'll continue on in verse 31 of Leviticus 23.

Leviticus 23:31. *"You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.*

32) *"It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, ... (NKJ)*

And we know that when God repeats something, there is emphasis. If you look at this in the Jewish translation or the Hebrew, it's a Sabbath. And that's *shabbath* (*shab-bawth'*) #7076. And solemn rest is #7677. They're right next to one another in the Hebrew. And in the Hebrew it is *shabbath shabbathown*. It's like saying a Sabbath's Sabbath. He's making a very strong case there that it is a Sabbath's Sabbath.

Leviticus 23:32b. *...and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath." (NKJ)*

Let's just leave that alone. I want to look at another concept that might at first glance seem to be a little unrelated, but then, after we go through this, I want to tie it back to the theme of the Day of Atonement.

One of the inevitable facts of anyone living in this world is the ever increasing spiral of mankind into—and I call it—"the abyss of self-destruction." It just seems like all of our motives, all of our actions are away from God to the self and to self-destruction. From the perspective of 2012, and look back at the past twenty or thirty years, I don't think anyone can deny that this is a very dangerous, very hate-filled, very godless place that we live in.

Today, a day doesn't pass that there are not robberies, shootings, rampant crime in the cities that we all live in. In fact, just yesterday in St. Louis, there were two young women that we just murdered in their apartment. One of them had a child, an infant. And the person that did it (And they don't necessarily think it was robbery. Perhaps they knew the people.), but just murdered these two women, stole the one's car, and left. Here are two young lives that are just gone until the resurrection. And for what?

Yet, I think from our—and I'm going to put this in quotes—"our comfortable armchairs of our peaceful and civilized parts of the globe," we look at those things and they do bother us.

Already at the dawn of the twenty-first century, 40 million men, women, and children die annually. If we look back at the last one hundred years and we [ask], "What is the biggest event that was, let's say, genocide?" We think about the Holocaust. Every year seven Holocausts happen around the world to people—to men, women, and children every year—and that's from hunger, starvation, disease, malnutrition. Consider 100,000 to 150,000 every day die and about 40,000 of those are children—complete innocents.

And, again, it's hard to say how they collect the statistics. Some of the ones I said that does not include direct combat. Yet, I think some of it is related to war in that the famine and the pestilence and those things that follow that add into those numbers.

But just consider the greater St. Louis population is gone in a week. Wherever you live, consider an area that has a population of 100,000 to 150,000 and think about those dying in a single day. New York City, according to the 2011 census, population a little more than 8 million would completely be gone in slightly less than two months. Just cease to exist. In fact, from the Fourth of July of this year, we would have lost New York City and the entire state of Delaware since the Fourth of July. Los Angeles, twenty-eight days; Chicago, twenty-two days; Houston, nineteen days. And remember those do not include the 1.2 million abortions in the U.S. alone. And it just goes on and on.

I think, brethren, it's completely impossible for us to wrap our minds around it and really conceive or understand this type of destruction. I think we just become so grieved and so overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of it that we don't know how to deal with it.

Here we are September 2012. Based on the current rates, the U.S. population has perished by these means since June of 2004. Why? Why is human life so cheap as man looks at it?

Do you realize that most of the world's budgets are focused on better and more efficient ways to kill our fellow man? We expend the majority of our wealth on making machines and war to destroy our fellow man. As humans, we want to control and dominate and enslave and rule.

Look over in James chapter 4. It explains what's behind this. Again, [this is] a very familiar scripture, James 4 and I'll start in verse 1. It says:

James 4:1. *Where do wars and fights come from among you? ... (NKJ)*

And I want to add here, this was written to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. This was written to scattered Israel.

James 4:1b. *... Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?*

2) You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. (NKJ)

In other words, what they do ask is for their own carnal desires—for money or whatever it is.

Let's go back to the start of man's tenure on the earth. We know God created a beautiful earth. And even after 6,000, there are areas that it still just takes your breath away when you look at it—even here in this area, the trees and the flowers and the birds. There is still beauty. Even after all of the war of the world and after all of what man has brought on them, there is still much beauty left.

But go back 6,000 years to what God created and what He gave to man. The Garden of Eden contained everything that man could possibly need for a rich, happy, healthy, peaceful and a long life. God Himself was with man. God was their friend. He was their companion. He was their teacher. He was their instructor. And He taught them how to maintain and keep what He had given them in a beautiful pristine state.

I can imagine God said,

"Do you see all of this? This is yours. I want you to freely take of and enjoy what I have given you.

"Even," as He showed them, "this tree. And this tree is going to allow you to live forever. And it's going to allow you to have harmony with Me. And there is going to be never-ending happiness.

"So, not only are your physical needs filled, but this tree will fulfill all of your spiritual desires. Everything you could possibly want physically and spiritually is right here. And I want you to take it all.

"But there is a danger in this garden that I have to warn you about. This tree here, the fruit of it will not only bring misery and death to you, but to everyone.

Stay away from it! Don't touch it! Don't eat of it! It is poison and it will kill you!
And not only will it kill you physically, it will kill you spiritually forever."

There are some that believe that God taught Adam before Eve. And then, Adam failed to pass on the instruction. That might be true, but my opinion—and I'll just state this—and we'll look at it a little closer. 2 Corinthians 11:3 says "Eve was deceived." It doesn't say, "She was ignorant." It says, "She was deceived." And to be deceived, you would have to have understanding and knowledge of something.

Remember, this is just my opinion. It's no better or more correct. But I think there was a period of time, perhaps a period of years of teaching and of developing a relationship with God, coming to trust and value Him before God allowed Satan to have access. In my mind's eye, and that's all it is, I can picture God taking them through the garden; and showing them the trees; and saying, "This almond tree, this is good for this." Or "This cocoa plant let Me tell you about chocolate." Or "This coffee plant, you're going to really enjoy this." But I think there was a period of time that God went through there, the animals, and He talked to them about it and told them the benefits of it and how much they were going to enjoy it.

I can, again in my mind's eyes, I can picture Satan appearing before God just as we read in Job and asking for permission to tempt and test them. Brethren, God was not asleep when Satan encountered Adam and Eve.

Before we go to Genesis 3, let's make a stop in Revelation 13 on our way to Genesis. Look over in Revelation 13. God knew man's ultimate path and the need for redemption and the blood of Jesus Christ to cover their sins. Revelation 13 and let's pick it up in verse 4. Of course, this is a prophecy relating to the future but it gives us some insight. It says:

Revelation 13:4. *So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"*

5) And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

6) Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. (NKJ)

So, it wasn't just the earth that was blasphemed. Everything in the spirit realm was blasphemed. Notice in verse 7:

Revelation 13:7. *It was granted to him... (NKJ)*

And again, hearken back to Job chapter 1. I could safely add this; these are my words: It was granted to him by the Sovereign Almighty God in heaven:

Revelation 13:7b. ...to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

8) All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life... (NKJ)

And here's a point:

Revelation 13:8b. ...of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (NKJ)

Again, God knew man's course. God had already—and Jesus Christ, the one who became Jesus Christ—had already made plans for that redemption knowing the way that they [Adam and Eve] were going to go.

Now, with that in mind, let's go over and look in Genesis chapter 3. Genesis 3 and I'll just start in verse 1. It says:

Genesis 3:1. Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" (NKJ)

I was reading a deposition the other day where the defendant's lawyer was deposing the plaintiff in a case. And there is a rule among lawyers: you never ask a question that you do not already know the answer to. An interrogatory is not so that they can discover. It is really to get testimony that they can later twist and use it back against them. It is to lay the groundwork and give the defendant or in the case of if the defendant is being deposed, the plaintiff, the advantage.

Satan already knew the answer to the question before he asked. But he wanted her to say it so that he could then twist her testimony.

Genesis 3:2. And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

3) "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" (NKJ)

Now comes the twisting.

Genesis 3:4. Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. (NKJ)

"God's holding out on you!"

Genesis 3:5. "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (NKJ)

Again, let me just state my opinion. I think there was a period of time that elapsed between verse 5 and 6. I don't think that--knowing how the Bible describes how sin comes on—I think this was said, and there was a time when she was ruminating on it. I don't think she went, "Oh!"

I think she went back and thought about it, considered it, desired it and, in her own mind, came to realize, "I think he's right." Eve looked at the fruit, and I think said, "I think he's correct. I'm going to try it"—days, weeks, months. And, again, this is just my opinion, but, remember, the Bible is very compressed. I don't know.

But it started with a thought; it started with a question, a doubt, a shadow of turning from what God said. And that was allowed to take root, to fester, and to grow—just like leaven—until it led to an action and to a sin. It started with Eve coveting something that was not hers and she reasoned that she had a right to it because it satisfied her desires and her lust.

Verse 6:

Genesis 3:6. *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. ... (NKJ)*

What follows could be a complete study into man's approach to sin. When a person disobeys God and sins, one of the results is to try to get other people to participate, to participate in that sin, because somehow if more people do it, it makes it seem right.

Genesis 3:6b. *... She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.
7) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, ... (KJV)*

And, again, we know that Eve was deceived (2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:14.) It also says that Adam was not. So when it says, "Their eyes were opened," does that mean that she was no longer deceived? The New Jerusalem Bible says that "She was seduced." Perhaps I'll go into a sermon after the Feast on this. Just for the sake of time, but taking of the tree of knowledge did not allow the deception to be lifted. Frankly, what Satan promised her—he told her that she was deceived and the way forward was to take the fruit—it was a big lie. And, brethren, we, after 6,000 years, know that it was paid for by unimaginable pain and suffering and death.

The word "opened" here when it talks about their eyes is Strong's #6491—and I'm not going to try to pronounce it but—it just means they were opened. In other words, there were things (because they were innocent) it means they were to be observant. They were open.

At this point, they rejected God and they were on their own. Don't turn there but, God says about us that we walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). God intends for us to not have our eyes open in this way. In other words: for us to decide and to do

what is right in our own eyes. He expects us, as His children, to walk by faith and not by sight.

Genesis 3:7. *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made ... coverings. (NKJ)*

And do you know what, brethren? God allowed it.

If we understand this and why He allowed it, we will understand why a loving, kind, patient, merciful, humble God can allow everything we see around us today and in the future. Our collective rejection of our God and His ways results in suffering and death.

Brethren, if God stopped it, if He removed the consequences and still allowed the sin, then first we couldn't trust God to mean what He says, but also we would fail to learn the full impact of us deciding right from wrong.

And, brethren, we would be setting ourselves up to guarantee that at some point in the future all of this would repeat itself again. Brethren, God is not going to allow that to happen. God loves us too much to put us in a situation where we would live in terror of beings like Satan who want to do their own thing, to have it their way.

We look around us and we see the direct consequences of man's rejection of God. Have you ever considered that Satan has taken peace and tranquility, not only away from the physical realm, but the spirit realm as well? I think sometimes, if we're not careful, we can see God as somehow isolated from what is going on and perhaps not really affected by it because, after all, He is God. That somehow He removed Satan from the spirit realm and they're insulated from him. While on the other hand, we're feeling the full force of his wrath. Brethren, I don't believe that's true.

At sometime in the distant past, God created a being that was at the pinnacle of His creative efforts. Go over to Ezekiel 28. Let's just refresh in our minds, what God created. Ezekiel 28 and verse 12, it says:

Ezekiel 28:12. *"Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the [Eternal] GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13)" You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: ... (NKJ)*

And He goes on to mention them.

Ezekiel 28:13 continued. *... "The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.*

14) *"You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. (NKJ)*

And, if I could add, I believe just like Genesis 1, God looked and said, "It was very good." God was pleased with what He had created because this was going to add to and serve the spirit realm.

Ezekiel 28:15. *"You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you." (NKJ)*

Isaiah 14.

Can we read of the rebellion of Satan and think somehow that God is isolated from it—when God saw fully a third of the angels get caught up in Satan's rebellion? Could that happen in His realm and it not affect God? Could we read about war in heaven and God the Father somehow be unaffected by all of it?

Isaiah 14 and let's pick it up in verse 12. It says:

Isaiah 14:12. *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! ... (NKJ)*

Remember, we just read about this being, the creation of God, the one that became dark, called the Adversary, was fashioned by God's hands, that God loved in his initial state.

Isaiah 14:12b. ... *"How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!*

13) *For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north;*

14) *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like... (NKJ)*

And that means: **I will be equal to.** I will be on par with:

Isaiah 14:14b. ...*the Most High.'* (NKJ)

And, then, there is a sure prophecy relating to this day, the Day of Atonement. Verse 15:

Isaiah 14:15. *Yet you shall be [future tense] brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. (NKJ)*

Again, keep that in mind, we'll get back to it.

Isaiah 14:16. *"Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms,...'(NKJ)*

And that word *man* can also be translated as steward, or champion, or individual. It does not necessarily mean a human.

I submit to you, brethren, that this being that rebelled against God has taken peace, has taken happiness and tranquility away from the spirit realm as well as the physical realm. And there has to be a tremendous toll of the spiritual as well as the physical. Again, a third of the angels, God's creation that He loved! Remember, Satan seduced a third of the angelic realm. They bought into His arrogant, proud, lying approach.

Now, here's a question to ponder which I'm going to give an answer to. We know God created Satan as a perfect being. We know that Satan sinned and rebelled. We also know that God is still in charge. We also know that He could have, at any time, completely removed Satan from both the spiritual and the physical realms. God is sovereign. He could have done that. So the question is: Why didn't He? If He has the power and Satan has wrought so much destruction, why has God allowed that to continue? And the answer is: Love.

Somebody might say at this point—I don't remember—a child one time saying that when a parent was spanking him—"Well, I don't know how much more of this love I can handle!" But if you really understand it, God did this because of His love.

If we look at what is at the center of God's attention right now, which is the family that He's building, that He's creating, that He gave up His Son to become the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29), we're the firstfruits who are going to be added to that at the return of Christ. And we're going to put down all authority. Then, we're going to establish a government, and that government is going to be to serve mankind, to bring to them peace and justice.

God has allowed this because we need to see the other side. We need to understand what a being that rebels, a being that raises themselves up, in the spirit realm what they can do as well as we need to, as humans, feel that and understand it. And God is allowing that, brethren, because He loves us and He wants us to remember that forever!

The setting up of a government is to first remove the corrupt, deceived governments that have enslaved, the governments that have put all of mankind in bondage. But, in order to eradicate, you also have to remove the primary source of the corruption and the deception. Look over in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 3. Paul is writing and he says:

2 Corinthians 4:3. *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,*

4) whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. (NKJ)

John 1 verse 14, it says:

John 1:14. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

15) John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"

16) And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

17) For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

18) No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. (NKJ)

Skip down to verse 26.

John 1:26. John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27) "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

28) These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29) The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (NKJ)

If you want a title for today's sermon, it is:

Behold! The Lamb of God

This scripture, as we will see, has everything to do with this day, the Day of Atonement. This prophecy, which was uttered by John the Baptist, who Christ said was the Elijah to come, has its fulfillment in this day.

Turn over to Leviticus chapter 16. Let's spend some time examining this and considering this. Leviticus 16 and I'll start in verse 1. It says:

Leviticus 16:1. Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered profane fire before the LORD, and died;

2) and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come [in] at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; ...(NKJ)

Exodus 30:10 (Don't turn there.) and Hebrews 9:7 give clear instruction that he was allowed to go in there only once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16:2b. ...for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

3) "Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering.

4) "He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These are holy garments. Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on.

5) "And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.

6) "Aaron shall offer the bull, which is the ram, as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house.

7) "He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

8) "Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the [Azazel]. (NKJ)

Casting lots, as we know, was a solemn appeal to God for Him to decide a matter. These two goats, one which represented the one which was to become Jesus Christ and die as an innocent sinless lamb, and the other, which represented Satan the Adversary—God decided which one. Remember man cannot decide because Satan has deceived the entire world and no one has the ability to decide except for God.

Let me just read that Leviticus 16:8 out of the Tanakh.

Leviticus 16:8. and he shall place lots upon the two goats, one marked for the LORD and the other marked for Azazel. (TAN)

And again, some translations say "scapegoat." "The Azazel" is a better translation.

Continuing in verse 9 of Leviticus 16:

Leviticus 16:9. "And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering.

10) "But the goat on which the lot fell to be the [Azazel] shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the [Azazel] into the wilderness.

And the Tanakh again says:

Leviticus 16:10. while the goat designated by lot for the Azazel shall be left standing alive before the LORD, to make expiation with it and to send it off to the wilderness for Azazel. (TAN)

Those verses that we just read are a summary of what the High Priest was to perform, but God, again, gives more detail. And let's continue reading that. Verse 11:

Leviticus 16:11. *"And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which is for himself. (NKJ)*

As we just read in verse 5, there were three animals involved in this. The first one was the bull, which Aaron offered as an atonement. Because he was a human, he had sinned and he offered as an atonement for himself. Aaron and his family, again, were imperfect humans and they had sinned. And before he could go into the Holy of Holies as the High Priest before God, he had to first offer this sin offering to cover his sins. Else, like his sons, he would have been killed.

Verse 12:

Leviticus 16:12. *"Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, ... (NKJ)*

And we know that is talking about prayers or petitions to God to accept that sin offering. Just as we, when we sin, and we go before God, and we petition God to accept Jesus Christ as a sin offering for us.

Leviticus 16:12b. ... *"and bring it inside the veil.*

13) *"And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.*

14) *"He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. (NKJ)*

And, again, as I mentioned, this was to cover the sins of the High Priest. Verse 15:

Leviticus 16:15. *"Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.*

16) *"So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. (NKJ)*

Just set a marker there because we're going to come back. Go over to Hebrews chapter 9. This is a verse that is very pertinent during the Passover. I think this is one that I always read because I think it is so significant that it transfers perfectly and it tells us very clearly what this represents. Hebrews 9 verse 11, it says:

Hebrews 9:11. *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*

12) *Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (NKJ)*

And that redemption was for us because He never sinned.

Hebrews 9:13. *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for 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, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

15) *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJ)*

It was by His death, as an innocent sinless lamb; then, He took His own blood as our High Priest before the Father to be accepted as a sin offering for all of mankind.

Go over to Isaiah chapter 52 and let's start in verse 13. It says:

Isaiah 52:13. *Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.*

14) *Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men;*

15) *So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; for what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider.*

Isaiah 53:1. *Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*

2) *For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.*

3) *He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; he was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

4) *Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*

5) *But He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.*

6) *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

7) *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.*

8) He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. (NKJ)

Just as John prophesied when he saw Jesus Christ and he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God that takes the sins of the world," Christ was that sacrifice. He represented that [goat for the LORD that] was slain on the Day of Atonement.

Let's go back to Leviticus 16 and we'll pick it up in verse 17. It says:

Leviticus 16:17. "There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel." (NKJ)

It's interesting when Christ was resurrected, they came up to touch Him and He said not to because He had "not yet ascended to the Father." We know from the details of that that Paul was inspired to write in a book that that took place during the ascension when He appeared before the Father. And there was no man there. There were no people. It was God the Father and Jesus Christ who was accepted; His sacrifice was accepted when He presented His blood, His own blood to the Father. And He was inducted as our High Priest.

Verse 18:

Leviticus 16:18. "And he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around.
19) "Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."
(NKJ)

I think it is very significant that it was seven times.

We know that takes place on the Day of Atonement with that [goat] that was represented by that, but it doesn't end there. In ancient Israel when sin was brought into the nation, God commanded them to deal with the one that brought it in, whether it was adultery, murder, idolatry, sorcery. Whatever it was that caused Israel to sin, two things were commanded. First, there had to be a blood sacrifice to cover their sins, and second, the one that caused it had to be purged to be dealt with and purged from their midst.

Put your marker there in Leviticus 16. Let's go to Deuteronomy 13. And let's start in verse 1. It says:

Deuteronomy 13:1. *"If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,*

2) *"and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—and let us serve them,'*

3) *"you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the [Eternal] your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

4) *"You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him.*

5) *"But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."*

For the sake of time, I'm going to stop there, but God went on to say even if it was a family member that they were to do this. In the New Testament, Christ said that if a person's hand or eye caused him to sin, they were to remove it from them. It's the same principle. We have to get away from the source of sin. We have to put it away from us and remove it.

And God is consistent in His dealings with man as well. Let's go back to Leviticus 16 and verse 20.

Leviticus 16:20. *"And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat.*

21) *"Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, (NKJ)*

The Azazel represented Satan, which was to have all of the sins pronounced over it and then to have them placed on his head. Satan had a responsibility in their sins just as he did originally with Adam and Eve, when he seduced Eve to sin. And God charged him and He removed them from His presence.

Verse 21:

Leviticus 16:21. *"Aaron... (NKJ)*

And remember this is the High Priest representing Christ later.

Leviticus 16:21. *... shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat,*

*and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable [or a fit] man.
(NKJ)*

Just keep your marker there. Let's go back to John 1 and verse 29. I'm just going to reread this. It says:

John 1:29. *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (NKJ)*

That [Greek] word is Strong's #142 and it means "to lift up; ... to take up ... [To take] away; ... to raise, [to] keep in suspense ... to sail away ... [and] ... to expiate...." It means "to put away." In fact, it's translated in some places "to put away" or "to remove."

Let's just look at two places where this very same word is used. Look over in Colossians 2 and verse 13. I think it is significant that we understand the completeness of Him taking away the sin of the world in light of the Day of Atonement. Colossians 2 and verse 13, it says:

Colossians 2:13. *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all [your] trespasses,
14) having wiped out the handwriting of requirements... (NKJ)*

Again, this is a death warrant. It's not the Law that the world believes. But it is the death sentence.

Colossians 2:14b. *...that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, (NKJ)*

Again, Strong's #142. He covered it. He took it away from us. It is clearly the spiritual connotation of removing our sins and, therefore, the death sentence that we're under.

But this word also has a physical implication of removing something from someone's presence. The same word as the one used here is the one that Christ said, "If you had faith, you could say to a mountain, 'Be removed.'" It is the same word—to physically displace something from one's presence.

Look at 1 Corinthians 5. [This is] a very familiar scripture showing that physical removal from someone's presence of sin. 1 Corinthians 5 and verse 2 and I'm going to break in. You know the story of the man that was in the incestuous relationship. He said in 1 Corinthians 5:2:

1 Corinthians 5:2. *And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might... (NKJ)*

And here's the word.

1 Corinthians 5:2b. ...be taken away [Strong's #142] from among you.
3) For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. (NKJ)

On His first coming to the earth, Christ came as a sacrifice to give His life for our sins. When God calls an individual in this age or in the future, there must be a repentance and an acceptance of that blood sacrifice to cover our sins and to be brought into a relationship with God.

On His next return to this earth as a conquering King, just as God commanded Israel and Paul commanded the Corinthians to remove the source of sin, Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords will remove Satan and his influence from mankind.

Let's go back to Leviticus 16 and pick it up in verse 21. We read, but let's just reread this.

Leviticus 16:21. "Aaron... (NKJ)

And, again, the High Priest representing Christ:

Leviticus 16:21. ...shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.
23) "The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness." (NKJ)

Revelation 20.

I said earlier in the sermon that there were two loose ends that I wanted to connect later. We read previously from Isaiah 14:15 where God pronounced this fate on Satan. I'll just quote it since we've already read it. Isaiah 14:15, He said:

Isaiah 14:15. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. (NKJ)

Revelation 20 and verse 1, it says:

Revelation 20:1. Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. (NKJ)

And, of course, the key and the chain were to restrain.

Revelation 20:2. *He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; (NKJ)*

We also know that from the Book of Jude that this includes all the demons that Satan seduced into believing his lie as well.

Revelation 20:3. *and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive [so that he should seduce] the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (NKJ)*

After His return, Christ will have Satan bound, sentenced, and removed from the presence of mankind for a thousand-year period. He won't be able to deceive, to tempt, to incite man to sin. And that is predetermined by God for a thousand-year period.

[With] the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the removal of Satan from the picture, mankind as a whole can then start to form a close and personal relationship with God.

This day is unique among all the holy days—and I mentioned that before—that God has given us. Let's go back to Leviticus 16. It says:

Leviticus 16:29. *"This [is] a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you.*

30) *"For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.*

31) *"It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever.*

32) *"And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments;*

33) *"then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.*

34) *"This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses. (NKJ)*

Again, pointed on.

The second point that I want to connect is to focus on verse 29 when it said:

Leviticus 16:29. *... [you shall] do no work at all, (NKJ)*

You shall afflict your souls and do not work at all.

Exodus 14 and verse 10. There was a time when God freed His people from Egypt (And we know that represents sin.) and they walked out. Everything that was done was done for them. God's miracles, the destruction was done by God alone. Man's duty was to obey God. Exodus 14, remember they were standing at the Red Sea. Pharaoh's armies, what they had left behind, came after them to overtake them to bring them back into bondage. And they were afraid. I'll pick it up, Exodus 14:10.

Exodus 14:10. *And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. (NKJ)*

Verse 13:

Exodus 14:13. *And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. 14) "The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." (NKJ)*

We fast on this day to draw close to God, to have a close personal relationship with Him. We ask God to help us make His thoughts our thoughts and His ways our ways.

This day, brethren, is God's work. Christ, the sacrifice, Christ as the returning King to put away that sin.

Man is going to stand and hold their peace and they're going to watch God and His work just as we on this day do no work.

This is God's day and this day represents God's work and what He does. No man can ever claim any part of taking away that sin. Christ did it, both in the spiritual sense by being our sacrifice and also by having Satan bound and put away.

We're not to work on this day because this day shows the magnificence of God and His work.

Those of us that have been called look forward to this day and understand the absolute necessity of its fulfillment—a time when the Lamb's blood, slain from the foundation of the world, will be available to those who ask to cover their sins; a time when Satan will bear his part in causing man to sin and be removed from the picture; a time when man will realize that God alone provided the salvation and healed the breach that divided us; a time when that process of a relationship will start to blossom and the path for man to be at one with God can form; a time that the realizations of God's words will then take root and spread forward into the millennium and beyond.

Behold! The Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.