

The Sin Offering and the Live Goat

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As we all know, the Day of Atonement, the core meaning of it, is found in Leviticus 16. It's revealed through a rather unique ceremony that involves two goats. We typically talk about those two goats on this day and today will be no exception. But generally speaking, when you get to the Lord's goat there is a wide agreement on what the meaning of it is. Not only in church of God circles but even if you look at most Protestant commentaries, most everyone agrees on what that one pictures. However, when you get to the Azazel goat there tends to be a lot of debate in regards to what that one means.

There are two major arguments as far as what that goat pictures. The standard church of God interpretation of this is that the Azazel goat pictures the binding of Satan which takes place during the 1000-year millennial period. What you'll find more commonly discussed in Protestant commentaries and even some church of God groups is the idea that the Azazel goat is a picture of Jesus Christ as well.

What we're going to do today is look at the Day of Atonement as a whole and what the day pictures. We're going to look at some of the arguments that are used to put forward this idea that *the Azazel goat* also pictures Christ, because that is a common argument that is addressed when this day comes up. If you would like a title for this sermon it's:

The Sin Offering and the Live Goat

We'll see as we go through this sermon, there are additional titles of how these goats are distinguished, one from the other. I think we're all familiar with referring to *the Lord's goat* and *the Azazel goat*. But the "sin offering" and the "live goat" is another way they are distinguished one from the other. To being looking at this subject, turn to Leviticus 23, which is typically where we start Holy Day sermons and today is no exception.

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; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.*

32) It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.” (NKJV)

It clearly tells us that this is a solemn Sabbath to keep. It tells us two major things:

You do now work on this day; it's a solemn Sabbath and you afflict your souls.

It doesn't tell you exactly what *afflict your soul* means and we're going to look later at how we know that *afflicting your soul* is a reference to fasting. We're going to see that directly from the Bible a little later today. Just notice those two particular issues. You'll see these issues mentioned in Leviticus 16 as well. Turn to Leviticus 16. This is the chapter we spend a lot of time in on the Day of Atonement and today won't be any exception. As I mentioned last year when I addressed this subject on the Day of Atonement, when we look at a chapter addressing a subject you always want to start at the beginning. You start at the beginning of the story. In this case it's actually more helpful if you start at the end of the chapter. The reason I say that is, if you start at the beginning it goes into this detailed ceremony and all the finer details of it, but it doesn't start off giving you the overview of this subject and how to look at all the details. It's more helpful with a detailed subject like this to get a general overview of what it's about before you dive into all the details so you have the context of how to interpret all the details. So, this is one of the exceptions where I always recommend to start at the end rather than the beginning because it gives you that overview so you have the greater context of how to interpret all the details.

If we start off in verse 29, it's the end that gives you the big picture overview and then you know how to interpret all the details.

Leviticus 16:29 *This shall be 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. (NKJV)*

Notice it just mentions the 10th day of the 7th month, the same thing mentioned in Leviticus 23. The reason I point that out is, if you start at the beginning of this chapter, it makes the point of not going into the Most Holy place just any time, only do it on the specific day but it doesn't tell you when the specific day is. If you read the last couple of verses first, now you know what day you are talking about, you have the overview and you know how to interpret the details.

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. (NKJV)

This also tells you exactly what this day is about. You'll go through the details of this ceremony and you can see he's atoning for all these different objects and all the things that are taking place. If you read this overview first, you'll understand what this day is

primarily about; it's about cleansing the people of their sins, making them symbolically right before God—that's the point of this day. All the rest of it is just details a part of that greater picture.

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. (NKJV)*

Notice he is making atonement for all these other objects as part of the greater picture, but what's the main focus? Making atonement for the people to symbolically atone for the people's sins, to make them right before God. That's the purpose of this day.

34) *This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year.” [We have emphasized what the greater picture is here] And he did as the LORD commanded Moses. (NKJV)*

As I mentioned when we went through Leviticus 23, I said notice it says this is a solemn Sabbath. You do no work on it and it makes this point that you must *afflict your souls*, but it doesn't explain what *afflicting your soul* is. These verses say the same thing. This is a solemn Sabbath; you do no work and you afflict your souls. How do we know that afflicting your soul is a reference to fasting. Keep your finger in Leviticus 16 because we're going to come back to this but turn to Isaiah 58 and we're going to see where the Bible itself directly tells us that afflicting your souls is a reference to fasting. This isn't something we made up; we get this directly from scripture.

Isaiah 58:1 *“Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.*

2) *Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God.*

3) *‘Why have we fasted, they say, ‘and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?’ (NKJV)*

Notice it's equating *afflicting your souls* with fasting. That's how we know that when you read *afflicting your souls*, it's talking about fasting.

3 continued) *... “In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers.*

4) *Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high.*

5) *Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? [Again, the equating fasting with *afflicting your soul*] Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the LORD? (NKJV)*

You can see the Bible directly tells us that when it refers to *afflicting your soul*, it's talking about fasting. That's why we fast on the Day of Atonement because the references we read in Leviticus 23 and 16, told us specifically on this day you *afflict your soul* and that's referring to fasting.

Now turn back to Leviticus 16 and we'll go through the details of the chapter. As I mentioned, it is a very detailed, unique ceremony that was played out every year on the Day of Atonement. It involves two unique goats and we're going to go through this to understand the meaning of what this is talking about. It reveals for us what this day pictures and what we are to learn from this day.

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 at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat. (NKJV)*

As I mentioned before when we were at the latter part of the chapter, it says *don't just come at any time*, there is a specific time, but it doesn't tell you when the specific time is unless you read the end of the chapter—that gives you the overview and places it in context.

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 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 scapegoat. (NKJV)*

I'm reading from the New King James translation, which unfortunately translates this as *scapegoat* which obscures the meaning. In Hebrew the original word is *azazel* and that's a more accurate way of looking at it and why we refer to it as the "azazel goat". Just keep in mind I'm reading from the New King James so when you hear me say *scapegoat*, it's referring to the *azazel goat*.

9) *And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. (NKJV)*

Notice when it was referring to the Lord's goat or Yehovah's goat, it refers to it as a *sin offering*. We're going to notice that when we jump down in this verse it's going to start referring to this goat as the *goat of the sin offering*. We're going to come back a little later here and explore verse 5. That often trips people up because it talks about bringing these two goats as a sin offering and people argue that they are together, a unified sin offering. But if you pay attention to the language, it's going to refer to the Lord's goat as *the goat of the sin offering* and the azazel goat as *the live goat*. These are terms that distinguish one from the other. Go down to verse 15 because we're going to follow the logic of what happens with the Lord's goat and we'll address them individually.

15) *Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering ... (NKJV)*

Notice that is a unique descriptor that describes the Lord's goat, *the goat of the sin offering*.

15 continued) *... 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.*

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. (NKJV)*

What's the whole focus here? It's the atoning for the sins of the people to make them right before God.

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. (NKJV)*

As I mentioned before, when it comes to the meaning of *the Lord's goat* there is a wide agreement, not only among church of God circles, but if you look at most Protestant commentaries, most everybody gets this one right. The reason being is because the Bible directly tells us exactly what is pictured. We don't have to guess or speculate at all. All we have to do is turn to Hebrews 9 and read it off the page. So, let's turn to Hebrews 9:1.

Hebrews 9:1 *Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.*

2) For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;

3) and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All,

4) which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

5) and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.

6) Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services.

7) But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;

8) the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. (NKJV)

Notice it mentions specifically the one day of the year when they could go into the Most Holy place, we are obviously talking about the Day of Atonement. As we've already read, that's the only time you could actually do this. We are obviously addressing the context of the Day of Atonement.

9) It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—

10) concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. (NKJV)

As we read through verse 11-15, it's going to directly tell us what all of this pictured.

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.

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. (NKJV)

Just reading this, we now know what was pictured in this ceremony with the High Priest picturing the role of Jesus Christ, but so was also *the Lord's goat*. It's telling you that what it's playing out here is a very literal depiction of what took place when Christ fulfilled the wave sheaf. Where He is going before the throne of God the Father as the sacrifice, He is our High Priest and our atoning sacrifice. He presents Himself before the Father to atone for the sins of mankind to enable us the opportunity for salvation.

I'll only briefly address this because I covered this in more detail last year when I addressed the Day of Atonement, I mentioned that Passover and the wave sheaf basically picture this same meaning but specifically for the Firstfruits. The Day of Atonement addresses this for the rest of mankind. Christ died once for all—He only had to do this one time for all of mankind, but it's a question of when it's applied. The Firstfruits are offered salvation at this time while the rest of mankind don't get offered their chance of salvation until after Christ returns. That is something in the future. That is why this is pictured twice throughout God's Holy Day plan.

If we look at this, now we understand what is pictured by the High Priest and what is pictured by *the Lord's goat*. What we don't have is *the azazel goat*. What does that picture? There's not a Hebrews 9 that explains to us what *the azazel goat* pictures, that's why there is a lot of debate about this subject. There isn't a chapter we can just turn to and read it right off the page and say, there's the answer, it's really straightforward and easy.

Now let's take a look at *the azazel goat* in more detail. Turn to Leviticus 16 and this time start in verse 10.

Leviticus 16:10 *But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat [azazel] shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness. (NKJV)*

Go down to verse 20. Notice how verse 10 talked about the goat that is left *alive* and when we read the next couple of verses, this goat is now referred to as *the live goat* as a title. This is in contrast to how the Lord's goat was referred to as *the sin offering*. This is an important clue later.

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, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.*

22) *The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness. (NKJV)*

We can see, this goat is never killed. This goat has the sins placed upon Him and taken away from the people and basically released out into an uninhabited area where he

can't affect anybody. We're going to see later in this sermon, even the guy who takes him out and releases this goat, has to take a bath before he comes back. It's not because of having sacrificed an animal, it's that this goat is viewed as a source of contamination.

As I mentioned, there is a common argument that you'll see in Protestant commentaries and even in some church of God organizations that will argue this, based up on verse 5. Let's go to verse 5.

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. (NKJV)

They look at this and say, it says he's taking two goats as a sin offering so both goats have to picture the same thing—that's how the logic goes—and then they'll make the statement, both goats together are a single sacrifice and a single sin offering. You'll typically always see those two phrases put together to make an argument. Then they will use that as the basis to then argue it has to be Jesus Christ. What I want you to see is, just by biblical definition, both of these statements are 100% false. The azazel goat does not meet the definition of *a sacrifice* or *a sin offering*. To claim both of these is simply a false argument. Let me illustrate that for you.

When you think of a sacrifice, whenever you see the English word "sacrifice" in the Old Testament, the overwhelming majority of the time that's going to be translated from one of three different Hebrew terms. There are a few other exceptions depending on the context where the word has a different meaning that is translated in the English word *sacrifice* but the majority of the time, you'll see it's always translated from one of three different Hebrew terms. The first Hebrew term is a generic term that can literally refer to an animal that is killed for a religious sacrifice purpose or just for food. What I want you to see, to meet the definition, the animal has to be killed. There's no such thing as meeting the definition when the animal is left alive. I'm going to cover the definition of all three terms. The definition I'm going to give you for all three of them comes from the same source. Just to make this easier, all come from The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament by Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter.

The first term is this generic term that can be used in both contexts. It's transliterated into English as *zabab* and Strong's #2076 and Baker and Carpenter define it as this:

A verb meaning to slaughter, to kill, to offer, to sacrifice. The word is used in its broadest sense to indicate the slaughtering of various animals. It indicates the slaughter of animals for food or for sacrifice with strong political implications.

The biggest point I want you to see is that the animal has to be killed. There's no such thing as calling an animal a sacrifice and it remains alive.

There are two other terms that are also used in Hebrew to refer to sacrifices. Basically, what they are used for is to distinguish between sacrifices that are completely burnt

offerings, that are just offered to God. If you study the sacrifices in Leviticus, there are some—particularly the burnt offering—where no one can consume any part of it. The animal is completely burned and offered as a sweet savor—the smoke goes up to God. Whereas other sacrifices, parts may be burned, other parts may be eaten by the priesthood or by the person who offered it or maybe both. There are various details. These terms are used to distinguish between these two; that which is a “burnt offering” and what can be eaten by humans.

The second term is transliterated into English as *olah*, Strong's #5930 and the definition comes from Baker and Carpenter.

A feminine noun meaning a whole burnt offering, that which goes up. The primary discussion of this offering is found in Leviticus 1. The noun is a feminine participle form of the verb meaning to go up, to ascend. The offering was voluntary. The Israelites understood the animal or fowl was being sacrificed as a gift to God and thus ascending to God as smoke from the altar, hence its name. The sacrifice was a pleasing odor acceptable to the Lord.

That's the second term I mentioned.

Now I'm going to read to you the definition of the third term. This is used to refer to sacrifices where it's not just completely burned or part of it can be consumed by human beings. Notice the fact that every single definition, you have to kill the animal. There's no such thing as a sacrifice that is left alive—that's the point I want you to see. The third term is *zebah*, Strong's #2077 and again the definition from The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament by Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter.

A masculine noun meaning sacrifice. This word refers to a kind of flesh sacrifice the offeror ate after it was given to God. Parts of the flesh went to God and the priest as well. This practice was ancient and did not solely apply to sacrifices of the true God of Israel. Other sacrifices of this type included the covenant between Jacob and Laban, the Passover feast, the thank offering, the annual sacrifice, the sacrifice of a covenant with God.

The main point—I know I'm hammering this to death—but I want you to see that there is no such thing as calling something “a sacrifice” and the animal remains alive. To say that the azazel goat is a sacrifice is not understanding what the term “sacrifice” means and any of the Hebrew words that are translated as “sacrifice”—it's just a false concept.

The same thing applies to calling it a “sin offering”. As I pointed out, as we go further into Leviticus 16, initially we see both goats being brought up and it says they are both brought as a *sin offering*—that's true. Later we refer to *the goat of the sin offering* and *the live goat*. The reason is, by definition a *sin offering* has to be killed as well. There is no such thing as an animal brought as a *sin offering* that remains alive. Turn to Leviticus 6 and we'll read what the Bible directly calls the “law of the sin offering”. Defining what a *sin offering* is and how you do a *sin offering*. If you have a New King James translation

of the Bible like I'm going to read out of, right before Leviticus 6:24, which is where we are going to start, the subheading is "The Law of the Sin Offering".

Leviticus 6:24 *Also the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
25) "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed, the sin offering shall be killed before the LORD. It is most holy. (NKJV)*

An animal that is a *sin offering*, you kill it, you don't leave it alive.

*26) The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. In a holy place it shall be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of meeting.
27) Everyone who touches its flesh must be holy. And when its blood is sprinkled on any garment, you shall wash that on which it was sprinkled, in a holy place.
28) But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken. And if it is boiled in a bronze pot, it shall be both scoured and rinsed in water.
29) All the males among the priests may eat it. It is most holy.
30) But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten. It shall be burned in the fire. (NKJV)*

A *sacrifice* and a *sin offering* both have to be killed. Why then does verse 5 refer to bringing both goats together for a *sin offering*? Just think about it in context. Yes, both of these goats are being brought up for the purpose of a *sin offering*, because one of them is going to be a *sin offering*. At that point in the story, he hasn't cast the lots yet to determine which goat is *the goat of the sin offering* and which one is *the live goat*. What trips people up in this one is just focusing on verse 5 and ignoring everything else that the Bible has to say about the subject. There's a very simple explanation to verse 5. At that point, yes, they brought both goats and the purpose of this is to make a *sin offering* to God. But you haven't cast the lots yet to identify *the goat of the sin offering*—the one that is going to be a sin offering. Because the other one is not going to be a sin offering—that's the point. What trips people up is focusing on one verse and ignoring everything else that the Bible says about it. Realize just a simple point of logic. If you start with a false foundation and use that as a basis for building an argument, where are you going to wind up? You're going to wind up with a flawed conclusion. Just think that one through.

As we know, *the azazel goat* isn't a sacrifice, it isn't *the sin offering* but yet it's connected with making atonement with the people. How does that work and what is its role in making atonement? How are we to explain that? We need to start off understanding one thing. We've already determined it isn't killed—it's not a *sin offering* or a *sacrifice* so it can't have anything to do with the forgiveness of sin. Let's turn to Hebrews 9 to verify that.

Hebrews 9:22 *And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. (NKJV)*

In other words, there is no forgiveness of sin. As I've pounded to death here, the idea that if you have an animal and it's sacrificed to symbolically atone for sin, you kill it and its blood is used for atoning sin. It's facing the death penalty basically. So, by virtue of the fact that it was left alive, it can't have anything to do with the forgiveness of sin. So, what is its role then in terms of making atonement and affecting the relationship between the people and God? How are we to understand that? The key of that is found in Leviticus 16:10. I'll read this to you out of the Complete Jewish Bible because it translates a little more clearly and we can see exactly what the azazel goat's role is in atoning for the people.

Leviticus 16:10 *But the goat whose lot fell to 'Az'azel is to be presented alive to Adonai to be used for making atonement over it by sending it away into the desert for 'Az'azel. (CJB)*

What is its role in making atonement? By sending it away, in other words, removing it, getting it out of the camp, getting it away from the people. As I mentioned, we'll see later how the Bible makes it clear that even the guy who carries it away, he has to be cleansed before he can come back into the camp because this goat is a source of contamination. Its role has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sin or the cleansing of sin. Its role is being removed and taken away from the people, viewed as a source of contamination and kept away from them. That in itself is a big clue that this can't be referring to Jesus Christ. What about everything we know about Jesus Christ would say, "We want to keep Him as far away from the people as possible?" No, He is the cleansing of us. What did the Lord's goat do? We took his blood and took it into the sanctuary before the Most Holy place and it cleansed everything it touched. You want Christ as close as possible. There is nothing about Christ that we want Him away from the people, as far away as possible.

Also notice that the way this played out with the High Priest and the Lord's goat as we saw; we read directly from Hebrews 9 exactly what it pictures. It's a very literal depiction of what takes place. If we looked at how Christ fulfilled the wave sheaf, what did He do? He goes in as our High Priest before the Father's throne, pictured by the Most Holy Place with His own blood—it's a very literal depiction of what took place. The Bible gives us an example of a source of sin being completely taken away from the people, very literally depicted just like we see with the azazel goat. Turn to Revelation 20:1.

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.*

2) He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

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

We have this future binding of Satan that takes place during the millennial period. This matches, if we look at it from a literal depiction standpoint. We have Satan being taken away and bound away from the people, having no impact and not able to affect them. That matches symbolically what we see with the azazel goat because, what happens? He's taken away by a fit man, away from the camp, away from the people where he can't have any interaction with the people. We see that literal depiction tends to match. How would this make a role in atoning with the people? How would this affect the relationship between God and His people? We have to understand Satan's role because He is the originator of sin, he is the one who has deceived all of mankind and it's his influence and the influence of the demons that make our whole battle a spiritual battle. It's the one that sets up us human beings, for failure. We're not fighting against flesh and blood; we're fighting a spiritual battle with a spiritual enemy. Turn to John 8:42.

John 8:42 *Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.*

43) Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

44) You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (NKJV)

He is the originator of rebellion and sin. He is the original source of sin. Notice in Revelation 12, he's responsible for having misled all of mankind.

Revelation 12:7 *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*
8) but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.
9) So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (NKJV)

What this is telling us is, it's Satan's influence that has caused mankind to be so prone to sin and so drawn in that direction. You can see removing that source would have a major impact on the relationship between God and mankind. That's just the magnet that naturally wants to pull us in the wrong direction towards self destruction. It's that spiritual influence. That is what has blinded us and has blinded mankind from being able to see the truth. We can see this over in 2 Corinthians 4:3.

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. (NKJV)

What it's telling us is it's because of Satan's influence, it's because of that deception. It's set up mankind for failure. If you just look at the example of Ancient Israel, one of the great lessons of that is, you can take a nation of people, set them up for success, set them in a land flowing with milk and honey where they have all the resources, give them intact cities with infrastructures already developed for them. They don't have to start from nothing and develop a civilization, they can literally take over an area where there is infrastructure already there. You can give them freedom to not be oppressed by anybody and to do things the way they want. Give them the law and instructions of the right way to go and set them up for success and what happens? They repeatedly fail again, and again, and again. What's taking place is carnal human beings without God's spirit—we brought a knife to a gun fight because you're fighting a spiritual battle. That's why we don't wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities—powers of dark forces. Removing that makes it an even playing field. If you bind Satan and take that influence away, you go from a spiritual battle to just a flesh and blood battle. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, if you take away that spiritual influence, then you just have a heart of flesh. Now it's just a fleshly battle and you're just having to overcome your own natural tendencies and not be fighting that spiritual deception.

A lot of what atoning is, it's not just the forgiveness of sin—that is certainly a big part of atonement—but it's also about the reconciling of relationships. We have to understand the whole role that sin itself plays in separating a relationship with God. Removing Satan has nothing to do with forgiveness of sin, but removing that influence and the source of sin just by itself, naturally takes away the separation between us and God. That influence to want to constantly sin is removed. Notice this in Isaiah 59:1.

Isaiah 59:1 *Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.*

2) But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

3) For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity. (NKJV)

Just removing the influence of Satan, all by itself will make a huge impact, certainly on a physical level of reconciling the relationship between God and man. We're not so naturally pulled to constantly want to sin and go in the other direction because you don't have that constant spiritual force wanting to pull you towards rebellion and sin. Then it's just a physical battle. Now it's a physical thing and wrestling against flesh and blood, it's just the heart of flesh that you are dealing with and trying to overcome.

Now there's another argument I would like to address that often comes up with the subject—if you try to mention to people that the azazel goat is a picture of Satan and Satan being bound—there is an objection that comes up quite often. People say you can't have anything in a festival of God that would picture Satan. People take great offense to that. There's no way that something that is fundamental to a Holy Day could

have anything to do with Satan. They just rejected that whole concept. Let's take a closer look at that idea.

I'll only briefly mention this because I built the foundation for this in my sermon for Atonement last year. I spent a good bit of time last year developing the direct connection between Passover and the wave sheaf offering and what it pictures and what we read directly in Hebrews 9 pictured but the Atonement ceremony. That the meaning here is very much parallel because Passover and the wave sheaf is about the sacrifice of Christ and Christ going before the Father to atone for the sin of mankind. It's very fundamental to the meaning of it. What did we read in Hebrews 9 about the Day of Atonement? The exact same thing, so obviously what you have is Passover and the wave sheaf referring to the Firstfruits, Atonement referring to the rest of mankind. In terms of developing that in detail I'll refer you to last year's sermon on Atonement. The reason I point to all of that is, since we know that Passover is the direct parallel to the Day of Atonement, let's ask the question: Does Satan have anything to do with the meaning of Passover? Does that have anything to do directly with its meaning with protecting people from the influence of Satan? Could that be built into the meaning of Passover? Just hear me out on this one. Turn to Exodus 12 and let's explore this concept. I think you might find something surprising that you might not have noticed in the past.

Exodus 12:21 *Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb. (NKJV)*

Notice the word *lamb* in the New King James is in italics because it's not in the original. The word *Passover* which comes from the Hebrew *Pesach* refers to "a sacrifice". *Passover* means *the lamb*. It means "a sacrifice", you don't need the word *lamb* added.

22) And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

23) For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

24) And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.

25) It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

26) And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'

27) that you shall say, It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households. " So the people bowed their heads and worshiped. (NKJV)

The first thing we need to notice is there is a translation error that unfortunately causes a great deal of confusion in these verses. If you ask the average person, “The term Passover refers to the sacrifice—referring to the English terms—where does this come from? They will say it comes from “passing over” and “pass over”, two words—so the meanings are the same. It is a completely false idea that is simply a misunderstanding in English. It comes from two uniquely different Hebrew terms. In fact, the Hebrew term that is translated into English as *pass over*—two words—is pasach, whereas the term that refers to the *passover* sacrifice is pesach. One has an E and one has an A, so it’s one letter difference but the meanings are quite different. Pasach is translated as *pass over* in English—two words—can mean “to leap over or jump over” but unfortunately, they translated it like that here in these verses. It can also mean to “spare or protect”. I want you to notice the context and logically think this through. Read through verse 23 and logically think this through.

23) For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over [pasach in Hebrew] the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. (NKJV)

Pay attention to the fact that who is this who is carrying out the striking of the firstborn—it’s “the destroyer”. We’re going to read from the Bible later who the Bible itself refers to as “the destroyer”. That’s who actually kills the firstborn. Logically think through what’s described here. It says, Yehovah and unfortunately it says in English will pass over the door, if he’s jumping over the door—that’s how we think of this, that he just leaps over the door—how does that stop the destroyer from coming into the house? Doesn’t make sense, does it? If we understand that the word can mean “to spare or protect”, if he’s protecting the door or sparing them, he’s barring the doors that have the blood on them and not allowing “the destroyer” to come in to kill any firstborn.

To show you how this can be translated in that way, I’m going to give you an example in Isaiah 31:5. This is from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible because it translates this a little clearer. I want you to notice the whole context is not about *jumping over*, it’s about *sparing and protecting*.

Isaiah 31:5 *Like birds hovering overhead, so the Lord of hosts will protect Jerusalem; he will protect and deliver it: he will spare and rescue it.” (NRSV)*

If you look this up in an interlinear, you’ll see the word *spare* in English is translated from the Hebrew word *pasach*. It’s the same Hebrew word that we see in Exodus 12 as *pass over*—two words that we think of as “jumping over”. Notice, the meaning of “jumping over” makes no sense in this verse. He’s not talking about “jumping over” Jerusalem, he’s talking about *sparing and protecting* it. What’s happening here in Exodus 12, He’s not “jumping over the door”, He’s “barring the door” and not allowing the destroyer to come in and kill the firstborn. We get an accurate picture of that. Unfortunately, people get confused when they see the English terms here of Passover—one word, which refers to the sacrifice—and *pass over*, an unfortunate

English translation. We think, Passover the sacrifice comes from “passing over”—no, it does not. That is a fallacious argument that unfortunately has caused confusion because of a poor English translation. He’s not jumping over the door, He’s barring and protecting the door, He’s stopping the destroyer from coming in.

Now let’s pay attention to who does the Bible identify as the destroyer? Turn to Revelation 9 and we’ll see who the Bible refers to as “the destroyer”.

Revelation 9:1 *Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.*

2) *And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.*

3) *Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

4) *They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.*

5) *And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.*

6) *In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.*

7) *The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.*

8) *They had hair like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ teeth.*

9) *And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle.*

10) *They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. (NKJV)*

Notice in particular verse 11.

11) *And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. (NKJV)*

I’m reading out of a New King James translation of the Bible and if you have a New King James, next to *Abaddon* it has a 1 and next to *Apollyon* it has a 2. If you look in the margin, for *Abaddon* it gives the meaning “destruction” and *Apollyon* it gives the meaning “destroyer”. It’s referring to Satan as “the destroyer”. To further back this up, if you look up the Greek terms used in a lexicon, for example [The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament](#) by Spiros Zodhiates, what you’ll find is these definitions in the margin are consistent with the definitions of the Greek terms that were used in this chapter. It’s directly telling us what Satan is known as—“the destroyer”. Think about this. When I started off, I asked the question, “Could the meaning of Passover have anything to do with being connected to protecting people from Satan?”

What was the Old Covenant Passover meal about? It was a memorial of God protecting the firstborn of Israel from being killed by “the destroyer”. What did Exodus 12 tell us? It was a memorial of God coming and sparing and protecting the door—not jumping over it—and stopping “the destroyer” from coming in. It was a direct memorial of protecting the people from being killed by Satan, by protecting them from his influence. That’s what the Old Covenant Passover is about. Satan has something to do with the meaning of it all.

Now let’s ask the question, what about the New Covenant Passover? We know the Old Covenant Passover and the New Covenant Passover are different things. The Old Covenant Passover was specifically about the death physically of the firstborn in Israel, the New Covenant Passover is all about the sacrifice of Christ and what that does for mankind. Let’s turn to Hebrews 2 and see if that has anything to do with protecting people specifically from Satan.

Hebrews 2:14 *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself [this is referring to Christ because it’s capitalized and if you read the verse prior to this, it’s obvious the context is talking about Christ] likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15) and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (NKJV)*

So, what is the New Covenant Passover about? It’s about the death and suffering of Jesus Christ and what it has done for us. What is one of the big things it protects us from? It protects us from death and bondage from Satan. Could Satan be involved directly in a festival of God and its meaning? Obviously, he can. It’s not in any way praising Satan. Satan being the *azazel goat* is not in any way glorifying him, it’s showing you that he is a source of contamination and needs to be taken away from the people and it’s a benefit to the people by getting rid of this guy and having him barred from having any influence on them. That’s what is being pictured.

I want you to see this argument that Satan can’t have anything to do with that, so we have to take it off the table; it is just a false concept. It comes from not clearly understanding even what the Passover is about.

There’s another argument that is often brought up with the issue that *the azazel goat* has to picture Christ. They will bring up the issue,

“You’re saying this goat that was brought up just like the Lord’s goat—perfect and flawless—why in the world would you picture Satan with a flawless goat? Shouldn’t this be some hideously deformed goat that would be picturing Satan?”

We have to understand, Satan didn’t start out being this evil, maniacal being. He started out as perfect and righteous before God and then later when sin enters the equation, that’s when everything gets ugly and he changes. Turn to Ezekiel 28:11.

Ezekiel 28:11 *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
12) Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord 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: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. 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.
15) You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. (NKJV)*

He doesn't start off as this evil enemy of God, who is perverted and trying to pervert anyone he can have influence on. He starts off as a righteous servant of God, perfect in every way. So, he is flawless initially. It's when iniquity and sin enter into the equation that he decides to rebel and everything turns ugly. That's the same thing we see in the atonement ceremony. Initially it's this flawless goat that comes out and they have to cast lots to determine which one is the Lord's goat and which one is going to be the azazel goat, to distinguish between them. Realize, with the Lord's goat, he is killed and the blood is a source of purification. It's brought into the Most Holy place; it cleanses everything it touches. We see the exact opposite with the azazel goat. Yes, he is flawless initially, then the High Priest lays hands upon him and places the sins upon him and now he's a source of contamination. Turn back to Leviticus 16:26. The way this story plays out, after he has all the sins placed upon him, then he's carried away by a fit man, taken off into the wilderness where he can't have any influence on the people. He's not killed, he's not sacrificed so it's not like the guy who took him out has blood and body fluids on him and he needs to take a bath to be cleansed. He just walked the animal out, released him and came back. He doesn't have a reason to have become defiled by any of this. But yet he has to be cleansed to come back because he's been around a source of contamination.

Leviticus 16:26 *And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. (NKJV)*

He's not allowed to come back until he is cleansed from having been around this goat that all the sins have been placed upon. He's not washing because he got dirty sacrificing an animal. It's symbolically telling us that he's been around a source of contamination, and that is why he has to be cleaned. That's why if you understand this whole picture, you understand why *the azazel goat* starts off being flawless, because Satan originally was when he was created. He wasn't an evil, rebellious being but later he becomes the source of sin and then tries to deceive all of mankind. That's why it's pictured the way it is. After the sins are placed upon him, anyone just being around him needs to take a bath because they've been defiled by being in his presence. Once you

understand all the details of this ceremony, you can see it perfectly pictures what it is symbolizing. The answer to this is very clear and what the church of God has always taught. *The Lord's goat* and the High Priest are clearly explained in Hebrews 9. Both are picturing Jesus Christ and the role He plays. *The azazel goat* is picturing the binding of Satan.

As we continue to keep this Day of Atonement, we can look forward to the wonderful meaning of this day. It shows us the time that Satan will be bound and taken away from all of mankind and his influence removed. But he is not killed because after the millennium, what happens? He is released again because mankind has to deal with his temptation to receive salvation. It also tells us the wonderful future to look forward to, when the sacrifice of Christ can be applied to all of mankind and all of mankind can have their opportunity to receive salvation.