

I WANT TO KNOW MY BIBLE

Journey to Abundant Life

The Way of the Journey

Reading: Lev. 11-27, Num. 1-5

Text: Lev. 16

INTRODUCTION: As we read through Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers we are examining The **Journey to Abundant Life** because Israel's Journey to the Promised Land is an example of our journey to the abundant life offered to us in Christ Jesus.

Thus far we have seen

- **The beginning of the journey is through faith in the Lord Jesus.**
- **The reason for the journey is to make us a missionary people.**

Today we examine

- **The way of the journey: How can we come to the place of abundant life Christ offers?**

Leviticus 16 is an exceedingly important chapter in the Book of the Law because its verses describe the Day of Atonement. And it is in what God prescribed as the way that Israel was to make atonement for its sins once a year that we find the example of the way for our journey to abundant life.

What was done on that day was summarized in the Book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 9:1-7 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;

Consider with me that Great Day.

I. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

On this day once a year, the High Priest stood alone in the courtyard of the tabernacle. Every other day of the year the courtyard of the tabernacle was a busy place, but on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest alone could offer the sacrifice needed. He was normally attired in royal garments reflecting the majesty of the deity he served, but on this day, he removed the clothes of royalty and set them aside, retaining only his white linen clothing, making him look like any other priest.

The first offering to be made was of a bull, to be sacrificed for his own sin. First he would wash at the Laver of Cleansing, and then he would slay the bull, collecting its blood in a golden bowl. After killing the bull, he would wash again before entering into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle.

Inside the Holy Place, the High Priest burned incense and prayed. As he prayed inside, the people of Israel prayed outside the gate to the courtyard. His prayers for himself complete, the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies carrying the blood of the bull. With the Shekinah Glory of the Lord obscured by the smoke of the incense, he sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat once and before the Ark of the Covenant seven times, to make atonement for his own sin.

The High Priest left the Tabernacle, but his work was far from done. Now he had to make atonement for the sins of the people. First he had to wash, because cleanliness was of utmost importance. Next he would go to where two young goats were tied, selected to be the sacrifice for the sins of Israel. He would cast lots for the goats, selecting one to kill and the other to be led into the wilderness.

The goat chosen for sacrifice was killed and its blood put in another golden bowl. Once again, the High Priest went to the laver to wash. When he was clean, he carried the blood through the Holy Place and again into the smoke filled Holy of Holies. He sprinkled the blood of the goat on the Mercy Seat once and before the Ark of the Covenant seven times, this time to make atonement for the sins of the people of Israel. Then he left the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place.

Returning to the laver, the High Priest again washed himself. Taking the two bowls, containing the blood of the bull and the goat, he poured them together. Next he took the mixed blood and anointed the horns of the Altar of Sacrifice in order to cleanse it. Then he poured the remaining blood on the ground beside the altar.

The blood sacrifices complete, the High Priest went to the remaining goat. He laid his hands upon its head, signifying the transfer of the sins of Israel to the animal. Aloud he confessed the sins of the nation. Then he led the goat to the gate of the courtyard and passed the rope that served as a leash to a suitable man, who led the goat outside the camp into the wilderness, demonstrating to all Israel that God would remove their sins as far as the east is from the west.

Only this last act could be witnessed by the people, but when it was done they knew that their part in the Day of Atonement was approaching. The High Priest redressed himself in his royal robes, and when he was done, the people came back into the

courtyard. On behalf of the people, the High Priest took a ram and offered it as a burnt offering to the Lord.

This was an offering, not of atonement, but of consecration and commitment. It was an offering that expressed the faith and belief of the people in God's atonement for their sins. It expressed their commitment to follow the Lord, Who had so graciously provided forgiveness from sin and fellowship with their God.

II. THE EXAMPLE PROVIDED

Heb. 9:11-15 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.

A. Jesus alone is the real High Priest.

1. That is the meaning behind the High Priest being alone on the Day of Atonement.
2. Christ alone could make atonement for our sins.
3. To do so, He laid aside the robes of His glory and came to earth looking like any other man.

B. Jesus also is the sacrifice.

1. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "The Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world."
2. As the unblemished goat was slain for the sin of Israel, Jesus, the Lamb of God was slain for the sin of each of us.
3. Where is the bull? There was no need. The bull was for the sin of the High Priest, and Jesus had no sin.
4. Jesus took His own blood into the Heavenly Holy of Holies and secured the eternal redemption, the atonement, for all who would believe and trust in Him. And He carries our sin far away, as far as the east is from the west.
5. But as there was a commitment of the people in response to the sacrifice for sin on the Day of Atonement, so there must be a commitment on our part to Jesus death on the cross.

Jesus Himself explained it so clearly in John 3:16-18.

John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might

be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

You may ask, how do I do that?

Rom. 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

III. WHAT IS THE WAY TO ABUNDANT LIFE?

- A. **Trust Christ** Who once for all made atonement for your sins by His death upon the cross.
- B. **Confess Jesus** with your mouth **as both Lord and Savior**. When we do this, we receive eternal life.

But not all who have received eternal life live in abundant life!

To live the abundant life, we must also

- C. **Live in the Lordship of Jesus.**
 - 1. **In holy living**
 - a. **Through obedience**
 - b. **Through repentance and confession when sin occurs**
 - 2. **In being a priest to others, being a missionary.**

I do not know any place in the world where you have a better opportunity to do that than right here at SABC in Panama City, FL.

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