

## Yom Kippur – Jesus and Barabbas

The connection between the Yom Kippur ritual and the trial of Jesus and Barabbas is remarkable.

On Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, a unique ceremony took place. The high priest would stand before the people with two goats at his side.

Each goat had to be identical in appearance to the other. The high priest would then reach into the URN and pull out two lots, one in each hand.

Each lot had a different Hebrew word inscribed on it. He then placed one lot on the head of the goat to his right, and the other on the head of the goat to his left.

One stone identified the goat that would die as a sacrifice for the sins of the people, and the other identified the goat that would be let go.

So before there could be a sacrifice, there had to be the presentation of the two goats before the people, and the determining of the two lots and the two destinies.

The two goats or lives had to be identical.

*Leviticus 16:7-10 “He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord’s lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.”*

The parallel between the two goats and Jesus and Barabbas is striking; one is chosen to die, while the other is set free.

Barabbas comes from two Hebrew words, BAR, which means son, and ABBA, which means father, the son of the father.

Jesus, the true Son of the Father, was the sacrificial lamb, taking upon Himself the sins of the people, just as the goat designated “*for the Lord*” was offered as a sin offering. Meanwhile, Barabbas, whose name means “son of the father,” was the one set free, just as the scapegoat was released into the wilderness.

This moment at Jesus' trial is a perfect picture of substitutionary atonement; Jesus, the innocent one, takes the punishment that the guilty one (Barabbas, representing all of humanity) deserved.

*Matthew 27:15-24 "Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. You see to it."*

Just as the high priest cast lots to determine the fate of the goats, Pilate presented the people with a choice, and they unwittingly fulfilled the pattern of Yom Kippur.

It's incredible how the foreshadowing in the Old Testament finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

Jesus became just like us. Remember in Leviticus chapter 16, each goat had to be identical in appearance to the other, so Jesus became just like us, flesh and blood, and in the likeness of sinful flesh. He was the perfect sinless sacrifice; He made a way for anyone who believes in Him to not perish and have everlasting life.

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."*

What an amazing story!!!