

INTRO: On Oct. 6, 1973, Syrian armed forces attacked Israel's defenses in the Golan Heights, at the same time that Egyptian tanks and troops and aircraft crossed the Suez Canal and attacked Israeli positions in the Sinai peninsula. This date was chosen because the Israelis were celebrating a high holy day called Yom Kippur ('yom' = day, as in Gen. 1) equally as holy as Passover. Passover was Nisan 10 (ca. our 'Easter'); Yom Kippur was 7 months and 10 days later, late Sept. or early October. (*from O.T. reading/text* v.6 "Aaron shall offer the bull for a sin offering which is for himself...v.8 Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats; one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat...v.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... 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.") In this sermon we shall study the origin of Yom Kippur, the day of atonement. The original Yom Kippur required four animals for the sins of the people, one ram and one bull for Aaron's sins, and two goats for Israel's sins.

I. AARON'S RAM AND BULL

A. First things first

1. 'Leviticus' from 'Levi', priestly tribe; Aaron was the first High Priest
2. sinful priest can hardly atone for the sins of others (Pastors face altar during Confession; face you for Absolution)
3. a ram is sacrificed to atone for Aarons sins
4. what we really need is a sinless High Priest (Heb.7:26 For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.)
5. Christ Jesus, sinless Son of God, shed His own blood for atonement of all

B. What is a mercy seat, and why put blood on it?

1. loss of too much blood results in death; blood symbolizes death
2. put blood from Aaron's ram seven times (holy #/blood) on mercy seat

3. i.e., lid of box, Ark of Covenant (lid 44"18"; gilded)
4. box contained jar of manna, Aaron's rod, and two tablets of stone
5. God's providence; His protection; and especially, His Law/Mosaic Covenant
6. for Aaron's sins of, e.g., criticism of Moses, with Miriam; building of Golden Calf; whopper lie WRT throw gold into fire and calf appeared (Ex.32:24)

C. Why a cloud of incense?

1. enough incense to make a cloud; like Grandpa's pipe or Dad's cigar
2. where there's smoke...; visible evidence of something; often prayer
3. most dramatic was 'pillar'; Shekinah at tabernacle dedication; ever present
4. God must be present and involved with Aaron's atonement

II. THE LORD'S GOAT

A. Chosen by 'lot'

1. exact method unknown; flip a coin; draw straws
2. this takes the decision out of Aaron's (man's) control
3. God initiate, dictates, decides who lives and who dies
4. 'lot' used also for Jesus' cloak, to fulfill Psalm 22 (Matthew 27)
5. tantalizing comparison, vague clues

B. Blood goes on mercy seat, again

1. atones for sins of Aaron; sins of the people
2. people sinned doubting spies; manna grumbling; golden calf
3. sevenfold sprinkling (holy #) blood to atone; goat shed blood for people's sin
4. but this poor goat never sinned; died for sins of others (hmmmm)

C. Priest must enter holiest place alone; by himself

1. this atoning business is a one-man job(My God...forsaken Me)
2. Yay! We have a High Priest without sin
3. Jesus is the fulfillment of Aaron, and every other Old Testament High Priest
4. Jesus, as High Priest, offered Himself as sacrifice as our substitute
5. Heb. 10:17 no more offering for sin, because of Christ Jesus

III. THE PEOPLE'S GOAT

A. The luck of the draw; ultimate bingo/chalupa; heavenly 50/50

1. this goat did nothing to set himself free; didn't even buy a 50/50 ticket
2. looked exactly like other goat; one sacrificed, one freed
3. it all happened outside this goat's control or activity
4. he doesn't even know what's going on

B. Aaron lays both his hands on this goat's head

1. Aaron confesses Israel's sins, putting them on the head of this goat
2. cp. Matt.27:24 Pilate washes hands; "His blood be upon us...children"
3. wait, I thought Israel's sins went on the goat that died!
4. second/different lesson: innocent goat died; goat with sins kept living
5. sinless Son of Mary died; we live w/sins sent away as far as east is from west

C. And now, one final little word (v. 'all')

1. "the goat shall bear on itself **all** their iniquities" i.e. Israel
2. Jesus bears **all** the sins of **all** people for **all** time
3. the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from **all** sins (John 1)
4. All we like sheep...God hath laid on Him the iniquity of us **all** (Is.53:6)

CONCLUSION: Ever wonder where term 'scape goat' came from? Now you know Yom Kippur, day of atonement. This ritual teaches us that Jesus is our substitute who took upon Himself the punishment for our sins. Forgiveness is ours. We are sent out from here into the world with our sins forgiven. The door to heaven is now open to us. Amen.