

## The Day of Atonement

The 10th day of the 7th month had an elaborate ritual in Old Testament

times and continued up until the destruction of the Temple. It was a commanded fast day in which nothing was to be eaten or drunk for 24 hours, from the evening of the 9th. to the evening of the 10th. On the day itself, the sacrifice of two goats was enacted as described in detail in Leviticus 16. Two goats were selected off by drawing lots, one was chosen to represent God and the other to represent "Azazel." In later times "Azazel" was considered a name for the chief of the demons, i.e. another name for Satan (1 Enoch 9:6. 10:4). The high priest first sacrificed a bull for himself and entered into the Holy of Holies to sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat. Then, he slaughtered the goat "for the Lord" and sprinkled its' blood on the mercy seat, as he also had done with the blood of the bull. In this way the high priest was the only person to ever go into the Holy of Holies, and then only on the Day of Atonement. At all other times, no one was allowed to enter. The goat for Azazel then had the sins of the people confessed over it by the high priest. After that it was taken away live into the wilderness and turned loose, symbolically removing all the transgressions of the people away from the camp. Thus, the Day of Atonement symbolized the reconciling of the Israelites to God.

The Day of Atonement symbolizes both the reunion of God and man after Christ returns to earth, and the binding of Satan to render him inactive. The evils to be found in human nature are influenced by Satan the devil. As long as the source of evil remains active, evil will have a part in subverting the world. At this time, the sins of the world shall, correctly, be directed back to their source, as symbolized by the Azazel goat which was sent away into the wilderness. Satan shall be chained and no longer allowed to deceive the world (Rev. 20:1-3).but at the final judgement God will destroy Satan, and Satan will die! This is not to diminish our own role in sin, for the Day of Atonement also represents the reuniting of God and man through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of mankind.

The Day of Atonement is kept by a complete fast (no food or drink) from sunset to sunset. (Exceptions are of course made by the individuals themselves in cases of serious illness on prescribed medications and the like)