

Sunday, January 12, 2014

“For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.” (Leviticus 16:30)

One of the ways that the Holy Spirit speaks to us and teaches us spiritual truths is through the use of types, figures and shadows. The Law of Moses is full of these types, with the Lord Jesus Christ being the antitype in many cases (i.e., something that is foreshadowed by a type). For example, at any given time under the Mosaic Code, there was a high priest. This high priest was a type of Christ, and Christ would be called the “antitype.” Although we are not bound to follow the ceremonial, typical laws of Moses, they are still instructive to us, and can give us more spiritual insight into our Savior and His doctrines than we otherwise would have. William Tyndale said “though sacrifices and ceremonies can be no ground or foundation to build upon – that is, though we can prove nothing with them – yet, when we have once found out Christ and His mysteries, then we may borrow figures, that is to say, allegories, similitudes and examples to open Christ, and the secrets of God hid in Christ, even to the quick. Then we can declare them more lively and sensibly, using all the words of the world. For similitudes have more virtue and power with them than bare words. They lead a man’s understanding further into the pith and marrow and spiritual understanding of the thing better than all the words that can be imagined.”

So, today, I would like to go over some of these types as they surround the Day of Atonement which we can read about in Leviticus 16, and keep in mind that often times a single type can symbolize multiple things. I’m not going to read all of Leviticus 16 to you, but I can give you the big picture. The Day of Atonement happened one time per year, on the 10th day of the 7th month. Inside of the tabernacle or the temple, there was the holy place, and the holy of holies. The holy place contained the golden candlestick, the table of showbread, and the golden altar of incense, and the priests went into the holy place on a daily basis. In between the holy place and the holy of holies was a veil, which was rent in twain when Jesus died. The holy of holies contained the ark of the covenant, and

the high priest was only allowed to enter the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement. The high priest would wash himself and change into linen garments. He would then gather the animals that he was going to offer up as sin and burnt offerings. The sin offering for the congregation involved two goats – one that was to be killed, and one that was to be kept alive (called the scapegoat), which were chosen by lot. He offered a bullock as a sin offering for the sins of him and his house, after which he would enter the holy of holies with the bullock's blood and a censer filled with incense, and then sprinkle the blood on and before the mercy seat. Then for the congregation's sin offering, he would kill the goat, and likewise sprinkle the blood. Nobody was allowed in the tabernacle while the high priest was doing this. He then mixed the bullock's blood and the goat's blood, and continued by sprinkling the altar, the holy place, and the tabernacle. When he was done, he would lay his hands on the scapegoat, confess their sins, and then send the goat into the wilderness with a fit man. He would then remove his linen garments, wash himself, and change back into his glorious priestly garments. He would complete the atonement by offering up burnt offerings for him and the people and burning the fat of the sin offerings. The carcasses of the sin offerings were carried outside the camp and burned there. The people involved in leading the scapegoat into the wilderness and burning the sin offerings were required to wash their clothes and bathe before returning into the camp.

Christ's Death

According to the commentators, there were 15 animal sacrifices done on the Day of Atonement, if you take into account the daily sacrifices, and the description of the Day of Atonement given in Numbers 29. Some of these were sin offerings, where blood was shed to atone for sins. Some of these were burnt offerings, which sent up a sweet savor to God showing that the sacrifice had been accepted and reconciliation had been made with Him. I'm not going to go over each one of these offerings, but I will take the sin offering of the goat as an example. Goats were clean animals and could be eaten, but as Gill notes, they are unsavory and offensive. Christ had no sin and He said that we are to eat His flesh, but came to earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, and had sin imputed to Him. About this very Day of Atonement, Paul says:

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?... And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It *was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9:11-14, 22-26)

Christ's Resurrection

There are a few types of this that we can find on the Day of Atonement. Normally, the high priest's garments were glorious and beautiful, and consisted of a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a coat, a mitre, and a girdle. These garments were made of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would shed these garments and replace them with a coat, breeches, a girdle, and a mitre, all made of linen. Later in the day, he would switch back to his glorious garments again. What we see here is Christ leaving the glory of heaven, putting on the lowly robes of human flesh when it was time for the sin offering, and then resurrecting into a glorious body.

Also, two goats were required for a single sin offering for the congregation, because one goat was not sufficient to send the message. One goat was killed to show satisfaction for our sins. His blood was sprinkled, sight unseen by the

congregation, in the holy of holies. The other goat (the scapegoat) was seen by all, leaving no doubt that their sins were forgiven. Likewise, the resurrection of Christ openly showed that His atoning sacrifice was accepted by God and that He was victorious over sin, death, Satan, and the world.

Prayer and Intercession

“And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not.” (Leviticus 6:12-13)

The burning coals are an emblem of the wrath of God and the sufferings of Christ, and the removing of them from the altar show that His sufferings have ceased. This incense being burned on the coals shows that the intercession of Christ has its foundation on His suffering, and the resulting cloud shows that there is no approaching the throne of God except through Christ and His intercession.

There is no doubt that the prayers of the saints and the intercession of Christ are associated with this incense.

“Let my prayer be set forth before thee *as* incense; and the lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.” (Psalm 141:2)

“And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.” (Revelation 8:3-4)

Salvation by Christ Alone

“And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.” (Leviticus 16:17)

The congregation was not allowed near during this time to show that all of their hope for atonement would be in this one man. They would understand that this was their only remedy, and they had no part in that remedy.

Just as Christ was left alone to do His work. He was treated as a criminal, and made a curse for us. He was left to suffer and die, forsaken by even His disciples.

“I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.” (Psalm 142:4)

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Limited Atonement

This atonement on the Day of Atonement was limited to the congregation of Israel, who are themselves a type of the elect of God. It did not extend to the whole world, and neither did the atonement of Christ.

Making Sin Exceeding Sinful

One of the main messages on the Day of Atonement was to show just how wicked sin is in the eyes of God.

“And he shall make an atonement for the holy *place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.” (Leviticus 16:16)

The most holy place itself had to have atonement made for it because the sins of the people had reached to the presence of God, and cried for wrath and vengeance.

The golden altar of incense had to have atonement made for it, showing that even our prayers are attended with sin which must be forgiven.

Just touching the animals that were involved in the sin offerings rendered those who touched them so unclean that they were not even allowed back into the camp until they were cleansed.

This was a day when they were supposed to afflict their souls (Leviticus 16:31).

Complete removal of sin

“And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.” (Leviticus 16:22)

The sins of the congregation were transferred to the scapegoat who was taken to the wilderness, never to be seen again.

The relics of the sin offerings were taken outside the camp and burned, signifying a total removal of sin.

“I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” (Zechariah 3:9)

“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” (Psalm 103:12)

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.” (Jeremiah 50:20)

**“For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”
(Hebrews 13:11-13)**

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.” (Colossians 1:21-22)

I love you. Amen.