

The Day of Atonement and the Jubilee Year

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When we address the meaning of the Day of Atonement -- as I'm sure you're all aware - we typically spend a lot of time going through the details of the ceremony recorded in Leviticus 16 of the two goats. Because we know that ceremony explains to us the core meaning of what this day pictures. However, there's another major concept that the Bible directly connects with the Day of Atonement that we don't as often speak about. That is the announcement of the Jubilee year. Because as we're going to see today in the sermon, in Leviticus 25 God specifically commanded the Israelites to announce the Jubilee year on the Day of Atonement. What we're going to do today in the sermon is take a look at this subject and see how it connects with the overall meaning of the Day of Atonement. So, if you'd like a title for this sermon, it's:

The Day of Atonement and the Jubilee Year

As I mentioned, we look most often on the Day of Atonement to the Leviticus 16 ceremony, and we are going to start there today. Because again, this gives us the core meaning of what this day is about. If you'll turn over to Leviticus 16, we'll briefly do an overview of this chapter. Because we'll see this is going to establish a foundation for us that as we then look at the meaning of the Jubilee year, we'll see the connections between the two. We're actually going to start in the latter part of the chapter. Because as I've mentioned in previous sermons, the beginning of the chapter just kind of jumps into all the details of the ceremony with the two goats. It doesn't give you the big picture overview that kind of helps you have a framework of how to view it all. But it really helps if you start in verse 29. Because at the very end of the chapter, it gives us the big picture overview. This is Leviticus 16 verse 29.

Lev 16:29 *"This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls..."* (NKJV)

In other words, it's a day of fasting.

"...and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. 30) For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31) It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. 32) And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; 33) then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34) This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." (NKJV)

You can see the purpose of this day is making atonement for the people to make them symbolically right before God. Now to kind of see an overview of the two goats here jump up to verse 5 of chapter 16.

Lev 16:5 *“And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.”* (NKJV)

Now, verse 5 sometimes is a stumbling block for people because they see here “two goats as a sin offering” and they assume, well then both the goats are a sin offering. But if you pay attention as you read on through this chapter, what you'll see is that once they cast the lots between the two goats, the LORD's goat is referred to as “the sin offering” and the Azazel goat is then referred to as “the live goat”. The point being, only one of them is a sin offering. In verse 6.

6) “Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. 7) He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 8) Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat.” (NKJV)

Now, the Hebrew there is a little more accurate. It's “Azazel goat”. In verse 9.

“9) And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’S lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering.” (NKJV)

Notice only one of them is a sin offering. In verse 10.

“10) 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.” (NKJV)

You can see here one is designated as a sin offering. It's actually a sacrifice, and its blood is taken into the Most Holy Place. Once a year they could actually access that and they sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat there. The other goat was just simply taken away. It's only role in atonement is being removed from the congregation if we dig into the wording of the rest of this chapter. But I just wanted to kind of give this overview.

Again, when we look later at the Jubilee year, we can kind of connect all of this. But just to show the meaning of the interpretation here. When it comes to the symbolism of the High Priest in this ceremony as well as the LORD's goat, we don't need to speculate at all. All we need to do is just turn to Hebrews 9 and read the answer right off the page because it just directly tells us exactly what these picture. Turn over to Hebrews 9, and we'll start reading in verse 1.

Heb 9:1 *“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,...” (NKJV)*

And that's on the Day of Atonement.

“...not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people’s sins committed in ignorance; 8) the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. 9) It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience— 10) concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. 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.” (NKJV)

You can see from this the ceremony that the High Priest would perform with the goats in the Old Covenant, a lot of that was picturing -- it was a symbolic atonement for the people, and it basically foreshadowed what Christ would later fulfill. When He would die for the sins of mankind and then go before the Father to fulfill the Wave Sheaf, being the sacrifice once and for all for all mankind. But if you notice here the meaning it just explained to us, this is obviously referring to the symbolism of the Day of Atonement. This chapter directly explained that to us.

But the meaning here directly parallels Passover and the Wave Sheaf. Well, the reason for that is it's the same meaning being pictured. It just applies to different groups. Because Passover and the Wave Sheaf pictures applying the sacrifice of Christ to the Firstfruits. The Day of Atonement pictures applying this same meaning to the rest of

mankind. That's why these basically mirror each other. As I've explained in other sermons, if you look at the meaning of the spring Holy Days of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, and then look at the meaning of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Eighth Day, you see the exact same meanings playing out. Again, these Holy Days are direct parallels of each other. They just apply to different groups.

Now, as you can see here in this explanation in Hebrews 9, it gave us the direct meaning. We can just read it right off the page, of what the High Priest and the LORD's goat pictured. What it didn't address is the Azazel goat. What in English it referred to as the "scapegoat" there in Leviticus 16, but again, it's more accurately the "Azazel goat". Now, what did that picture? Now again, if we understand the parallelism I just explained between the Passover and the Wave Sheaf and the Day of Atonement, what obviously sticks out at you is you have this meaning pictured by the Azazel goat. This is something we didn't see in Passover and the Wave Sheaf. So, something different is going on here. That's one of the keys in realizing that Azazel goat doesn't picture Christ or anything that He did for mankind. Because then we would have to conclude that Christ's sacrifice does something for the rest of mankind that it doesn't do for the Firstfruits. That just contradicts a whole number of scriptures.

So, obviously there's something else going on here. But if we just look at the obvious symbolism that's taking place here, this goat is not sacrificed. It doesn't get killed. It's not a sin offering. It's not taken into the Most Holy Place. What happens is this goat is just simply taken away from the people. It's taken off to a desolate area where it can't affect anybody. Well, if we just look at the very literal depiction here and how the very literal depiction of everything else played out very literally with the explanation. Like we just read here in Hebrews 9, when you look at the High Priest and the LORD's goat, this very much was a literal depiction of what Christ actually did. Well, if we take that same logic and then we look in Revelation 20, we'll see here some future events that play out that directly match the symbolism of what we see with the Azazel goat. It's the binding of Satan. This is in Revelation 20 in verse 1.

Rev 20:1 *"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2) He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3) and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while."* (NKJV)

Again, we won't cover this in this sermon, but if you just skip down to verse 7 you can read when his release happens. It's right after the millennium is over because his binding basically sets the stage for the wonderful millennium and the wonderful, peaceful environment that is created throughout the millennium. Then as soon as the thousand years are over, and we get to the end of the millennium -- the Eighth Day period -- that's when he's released again. And again, we'll cover that more on the Eighth Day this year.

But as I mentioned earlier in this sermon, in Leviticus 25 it gives us another concept that it directly attaches to the Day of Atonement that we don't as often speak about on the Day of Atonement. We're going to spend the rest of the sermon kind of exploring this concept and seeing how it connects to the core meaning of the Day of Atonement. So, turn over to Leviticus 25. We'll see here what the Bible calls the "Jubilee year". Because what we're going to read here is that God commanded for the Israelites to announce the Jubilee year. To basically blow a trumpet announcing it on the Day of Atonement.

Now to understand the full context of this, you actually need to start at the beginning of Leviticus 25. Because we first need to understand the land Sabbath year. Because we're going to see how the Jubilee year is -- how you figure when that is -- it's a cycle of the land Sabbath years. We first need to understand the land Sabbath. So, let's start in Leviticus 25 in verse 1.

Lev 25:1 *"And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, 2) 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. 3) Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; 4) but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. 5) What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. 6) And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, 7) for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food.'"* (NKJV)

See, it's obviously describing here a cycle of seven years. For six years you plant and reap your harvest as normal, and then in year seven you let the land rest. The reason why it's important to understand this is we're going to see here in tabulating the Jubilee year, it's actually year 50 after a cycle of seven of the land Sabbath cycles. You have seven years and then another seven years, and you do this seven times in a row, and then year 50 is going to be the Jubilee year. Pick up here in verse 8 to see this.

8) "And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years." (NKJV)

So again, seven cycles of the land Sabbath years. In verse 9.

"9) Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land." (NKJV)

So, see, this is directly tied to the Day of Atonement. In verse 10.

“10) And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. 11) That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. 12) For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.”
(NKJV)

Now the first thing I'd like to address here is kind of an obvious question. If this is a Jubilee “year” and we're announcing the “start of a year”, why are we doing this in the seventh month of the year? Why is it the tenth day of the seventh month that this is happening? Because we know the Biblical year, that starts in the spring. We know Passover and Unleavened Bread, that occurs during the first month of the year. Why would you be announcing this in month seven? Well, the key to understanding why you would announce it at this point is understanding the references it made that this is going to be a year where you're not sowing your crops. You're not doing your normal work of sowing and reaping your crops.

Well, if you understand the harvest seasons in Israel. The Holy Days are basically directly correlated with the harvests in Israel. During Unleavened Bread you had the Wave Sheaf offering. Well, that was the beginning of the barley harvest. You have the barley harvest and Unleavened Bread directly correlating with each other. Well, then you get to Pentecost when you're doing the firstfruits of the wheat harvest. That's the beginning of the wheat harvest. Well in the fall they would do the fall Holy Days right after wrapping up the fall harvest. That was primarily the grapes. That was the major harvest there, but there were numerous other crops as well.

Well, see, if you understand that harvesting cycle, when you're going into the fall Holy Days, you've just finished harvesting the end of the agricultural cycle in terms of farming. Now if you're going to have a year where you're not going to sow crops, you're going to have to announce that several months prior to the start of the year. Because, again, if you're going to be harvesting your barley and beginning that in the first month of the year, well, you had to plan it several months prior to that. You're going to have to know that you're going to have this and that you're not going to sow crops. You're going to have to announce that significantly ahead of the start of the year so that you know not to sow your crops. That's kind of the reason why this is taking place in the seventh month of the year and not in the first month of the year. Because again, to not have sowing of your barley crop, you had to know about this several months prior to the first month of the year so that you would be letting the land rest.

Now to kind of dig more deeply into the meaning of the Jubilee year. Not only what it meant physically for Ancient Israel, but we're going to see the parallels of how that ties into the spiritual meaning and the future prophetic meaning of the Day of Atonement. Now to see the key to this, look down at verse 10 again of Leviticus 25. We're going to kind of dig into the meaning of the words here and see kind of the core concepts of what was attached to the Jubilee year. And this is beginning in verse 10.

“10) And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants....” (NKJV)

Now, the first thing we need to understand is the meaning of the word “liberty” here. Now it has kind of the obvious connotation you’d probably think of but let me just dig into this in a little more detail. The Hebrew word here, it’s transliterated into English as “deror”. It’s Strong’s # 1865, and the meaning I’m going to read to you comes from The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament by Warren Baker and Eugene Carpenter. They define it as:

“A masculine noun denoting liberty, emancipation.”

So again, you can see the English word “liberty” here is a correct translation of it. But also, just think about emancipation and you’ll see in a minute here why I’m connecting these together. Now, if you’re from the US, you’re probably familiar that in US history in the 1860s, Abraham Lincoln basically put out a proclamation that basically outlawed slavery. It did away with the concept of slavery in the US. It had been legal prior to that. But he called that document the “Emancipation Proclamation”. Basically, he was proclaiming emancipation, and it was releasing people from slavery. It was basically doing away with the concept of slavery in the United States.

Now you’ll see later in this sermon why I’m connecting that. Because one of the concepts that people were freed from in the Jubilee year was the concept of indentured servitude. It was basically a form of slavery. It wasn’t the harsh form of slavery that we’ve seen in our modern day context -- which is very brutal -- but this was more of an indentured servitude concept. But again, there was a releasing from this in the Jubilee year that was connected with this. Now there’s two major concepts that this is connected with. We will see this in the second half of verse 10 here. If you pick up in the middle of verse 10.

“...It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.” (NKJV)

Now we need to understand the meaning of the words there for “possession” and “family” to really get into this. Particularly the word “possession”. Because if you think of the English word “possession”. You think of your “possessions”. Well, that’s kind of all your stuff. That’s everything that you own. That’s kind of how we tend to use the word “possession”. It’s kind of a generic term that we can apply to anything that we particularly own. Well, this word can mean that, but we’re going to see in this context it has a much more specific meaning. Now to share with you the Hebrew word here. It is transliterated into English as “ahuzzah”. It’s Strong’s # 272. Again, the definition I’m going to give to you comes from Baker & Carpenter. They define it as:

“A feminine noun meaning possession, literally meaning something seized. The word usually refers to the possession of land, especially of the Promised Land. Because the Promised Land is “an everlasting possession,” this word often refers

to land that is to pass down within families, never being permanently taken away.”

We're going to see that emphasis on land, and land never being permanently taken away is very much what it's referring to here. Because we'll see as we read the verses later in this chapter, it's going to kind of define the value of this land in terms of the number of years of crops. And it will refer to your “possession”, but it will measure the value in terms of the years of crops that it can produce. Well, if you're measuring the value in terms of crops, you're talking about land. You're not just talking about any generic possession you have. You're specifically talking about your land.

Now, the other word we need to define here is “family”. Again, this has more the meaning that you would expect it to have. But the Hebrew word here is transliterated into English is “mispahah”. It's Strong's # 4940. Again, from Baker & Carpenter. The definition is:

“A feminine noun meaning an extended family, a tribe, a clan. It is a group in which there is a close blood relationship.”

So, you can see, it could mean your immediate family or even your greater tribe. As we're going to see here, the Israelites were divided up in terms of where they lived and such by tribe. By their family relation. We're also going to specifically see here as we break down the different aspects of what the Jubilee year released them from. We just noticed here, it talked about returning to your “possession”, which is your land. What we're going to see is how that's really defined. And “returning to your family”, we're going to notice here as we dig into this, that “returning to your family” is really referring to a release from indentured servitude -- from slavery basically.

Now to continue on, to understand the first concept here. Which again, the returning to your “possession”, which again we're going to see is the land that they were given as part of the Promised Land. Pick up in verse 13 here.

13) “In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession.” (NKJV)

Again, previously I shared with you the meaning of this word, and notice, I shared with you the focus on land there. Now notice as we read through this, it's going to define the value of that land based upon how many years of crops it can produce. So, obviously we're talking about land. It's verse 14.

“14) And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. 15) According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you.” (NKJV)

See, obviously it's land you're referring to if you're measuring it by the years of crops it can produce. In verse 16.

"16) According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops. 17) Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God." (NKJV)

Now, I won't take the time to go through the book of Joshua on this or even the book of Ezekiel in terms of looking at the future. But what I'm referring to here is if you go through the book of Joshua, you'll see as they conquered the Promised Land the various tribes of Israel were assigned areas within the Promised Land. This section belongs to this tribe, and this section is going to be given to that tribe. They were all assigned their particular areas. Not only did this happen historically, but if you look in the book of Ezekiel it refers to the prophecies of the millennium and Israel returning back to that land. You'll see the same thing where each tribe is basically given a section of land, and it's basically awarded to a particular tribe. Well, a tribe would be given a major section of land and then individual families had their individual plots and such.

Well, what God had designed into this was basically a system that would prevent over time basically oligarchs or what we might call billionaires today. Where they wind up slowly kind of taking control of everything and then all the wealth winds up in the hands of a few billionaires and everybody else is kind of oppressed by these individuals having all the power. That's kind of what this system was designed to do. Because over time bad luck would happen to people. People would make bad choices, and other things would happen. As a result, they may sell their land basically to pay for things. Maybe they were in debt or maybe bad circumstances or bad health or other things that happen to them. Then they have to sell the land to then deal with things.

Well, in a situation like that over time you can wind up with certain individuals basically slowly seizing up everything and then everyone else is kind of freezed out of the land that they have. Then over time you have kind of like your oligarch billionaires owning all the land and then everybody else being kind of shut out. It's kind of like the game of Monopoly. If you ever played the game of Monopoly, the objective is the winner of the game at the end winds up owning the whole board. Everybody else goes bankrupt and the lucky person who wins now owns everything. Well, this was a situation that God designed this specifically to avoid. Because you see every Jubilee or every 50th year even if you had to sell your land and such. Or we're going to see later, even if you had to kind of sell yourself into indentured servitude. On the Jubilee year, this all got released and it kind of got all reset again. See, this was kind of a safety valve that kept this from over time winding up being a few rich billionaires controlling everybody else. This was kind of the system that God had designed.

But if we look at this again from a prophetic standpoint to the future fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, we're going to see some obvious parallels between the physical meanings for ancient Israel and then the prophetic meanings that are going to take place when the fall Holy Days are fulfilled in the future. Because you can see, as we discovered here, one of the things that happened in the Jubilee year is the Israelites all

got to return to their land. Even if they had to sell the land or circumstances that happened where they lost it as a result of debt or health or other situations that might have caused them to have lost it. When the Jubilee year came, they got to return to their land.

Well, if we look at the prophecies of the future, Israel returns to their land. So, turn over to Ezekiel 36 and we'll see the prophecy that foretells this. See, because if we just look at the layout of the Holy Days. As we looked at previously in Revelation 20, one of the meanings of the Day of Atonement -- the fulfillment of the Azazel goat --that's the binding of Satan. Well, that enables basically setting the stage for the millennium. Well, think of it also in terms of the Jubilee year. They're announcing everyone can return to your land. The Jubilee year is coming up. Well, everybody didn't just immediately go back to their land and do all this on the Day of Atonement. This played out over the year afterwards is when this actually would take place. Well, the Day of Atonement, that sets the stage for the millennium. But let's notice one of the promises that happens in the millennium. The Israelites return to their land. This is in Ezekiel 36, and we'll pick up in verse 24.

Ezek 36:24 *"For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25) Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26) I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27) I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. 28) Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. 29) I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. 30) And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. 31) Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. 32) Not for your sake do I do this," says the Lord GOD, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!" 33) "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. 34) The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. 35) So they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.' 36) Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the LORD, have spoken it, and I will do it." 37) "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'I will also let the house of Israel inquire of Me to do this for them: I will increase their men like a flock. 38) Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.' " " (NKJV)*

You can see here the meaning of the Jubilee year basically being announced that the Israelites can now return to their land. That's going to have a major fulfillment in the future that parallels this. On the day of Atonement, Satan will be bound basically setting the stage for the millennium to start and then Israel will be brought back to their land and take their "possession" that's meant to be theirs forever. That will be fulfilled in the future.

Well, as I mentioned previously there's another major meaning that was attached with the Jubilee year as well. That was being released from indentured servitude. Or you might think of it as a form of slavery. So, turn back over to Leviticus 25 and we'll take a look at this. In Leviticus 25, and this time we'll start in verse 39.

Lev 25:39 *"And if one of your brethren who dwells by you becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave."* (NKJV)

Now, just to explain the distinction here. Selling themselves was basically indentured servitude. But that was something that could be released again in the year of Jubilee. When it's referring to a "slave" here that's basically the permanent concept. In other words, something that you would never be released from. Now that's the distinction that's being made here. In verse 40.

"40) As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. 41) And then he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family..." (NKJV)

Notice when I read verse 10, I talked about that this was proclaiming liberty and that you could "return to your family". I said that that was attached with indentured servitude. This is where it directly says that.

"...He shall return to the possession of his fathers. 42) For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. 43) You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God." (NKJV)

Now if you look at this concept of being released from slavery, obviously there's direct connections between this and the meaning of the Day of Atonement -- actually with both goats. We're going to look at that in greater detail as to how all of that plays out. Because the spiritual application of this is being released from slavery to sin. So, to see this, turn over to John 8. We'll see here Christ explaining that we as physical, carnal human beings when we're having to deal with Satan's influence, we're absolute slaves to sin. This is in John 8, and we'll pick up in verse 33.

John 8:33 *"They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?' 34) Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.'"* (NKJV)

But now we need to ask the question, why are we slaves to sin? Why are we just drawn like magnets to it and helpless to fight against it unless we have spiritual help? Why is that the case? Why are we basically kind of set up to fail fighting sin on our own? That's because of Satan's influence. Because of Satan and his demons and the spiritual force that they use on us. That is basically them bringing a gun to the fight and we brought a knife to the fight and we're going to lose. To see that turn over to Ephesians 2. We're going to start in verse 1.

Eph 2:1 *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2) in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3) among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."* (NKJV)

Now it's referring to Satan as "the prince of the power of the air". In other words, he broadcasts his spiritual messages to us, influencing our thoughts, influencing our emotions and everything that we do. That's what makes us "children of wrath". That's what makes us hostile towards God and His law. That's why the book of Romans tells us we're not subject to the law of God and we're not capable of obeying it. It's because we have that spiritual force against us. That's what gives us a stony hard heart. That's important to understand because we're going to look here in a minute at Ezekiel 36 again and kind of dig into greater detail.

But let's first understand, why is it that we have a stony heart? What gives us that heart of stone? As we can see here, it's "the prince of the power of the air". It's Satan, and it's Satan's influence. Because we're basically fighting a spiritual battle. When we as physical carnal human beings are subject to Satan's influence, we're fighting a losing battle. If we don't have spiritual help under those circumstances, we're dead in the water. We're not going to win that battle because again, we're fighting a spiritual battle. To see that again, turned over to Ephesians 6 and verse 12.

Eph 6:12 *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."* (NKJV)

Again, it's a spiritual battle. That's what influences us. That's what sets us up to fail, makes us a slave to sin. We're basically held captive by it. That's what gives us a hard stony heart. It's important to understand that. Because we're going to look again at Ezekiel 36. You need to pay attention to this very closely as we go through the details. Again, before I cover this, let me just ask that you practice Proverbs 18:13 and you hear the matter before you answer it. Because we're going to address a couple of scriptures here that throughout my lifetime in the Church of God, we have very much misapplied and misunderstood. We've attached concepts to them that they don't actually say. Let's turn back over to Ezekiel 36. This time we're going to look at verse 26.

Ezek 36:26 *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."* (NKJV)

Now, ever since I was a child, the most common explanation in the Church of God of a "heart of flesh", well, that was conversion by the Holy Spirit. Now pay attention to the wording there, and let's just be very detailed here. Think this through. Now He's going to take the "heart of stone" out of your flesh. You were "flesh" to begin with. You had a "heart of flesh", and He took the "stone" out of your "flesh". And now what are you left with? A heart of flesh. Is He saying you were converted to start with? You had a converted heart with the Holy Spirit and He took the stone out of that, and now you're just purely converted? Is that what a "heart of flesh" is? Now a "heart of flesh" if we understand the meaning here, it means exactly what we would interpret it to mean. The Hebrew word here is transliterated into English as "basar". Strong's # 1320. Again, the meaning I'm going to give you comes from Baker & Carpenter.

"A masculine noun whose basic meaning is flesh.....It is also used of the animal body....the human body....and human frailty."

In other words, we're talking about a heart of human frailty. Now think about this. If you're a flesh and blood human being and the reason that you're a slave to sin is because of Satan's influence. That spiritual influence, powers in dark places having that influence upon you from the prince of the power of the air, and that's what gives you the heart of stone. If you removed that influence, the heart of stone would go away, and what would you be left with? A heart of flesh!! The flesh that you started off with!! Because Ephesians 6:12 told us we don't battle against flesh and blood because it's a spiritual battle. Well, if you took away the "heart of stone", which again is caused by Satan's influence. If that's taken away, what do you have? You have a heart of flesh, is what you would have. Just to see this, let me show you a couple other references that also use this same Hebrew word here -- "basar" -- to refer to flesh. Turn over to Jeremiah 17 in verse 5.

Jer 17:5 *"Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. 6) For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited."* (NKJV)

Now where you see that he "makes flesh his strength" they're in verse 5, that's "basar". That's, he makes "human frailty" his strength. Again, if we're depending on that physical flesh to fight Satan's influence, we're set up to fail. But again, if you removed that spiritual influence that pulls us in the wrong direction, what would you have left? A heart of flesh. It would be just a heart of human frailty is what you would have. Now to see another reference of this, turn over to Psalms 78. We'll start in verse 38.

“38) But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, And did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath; 39) For He remembered that they were but flesh...” (NKJV)

That's “basar”. It's the same Hebrew word.

“...A breath that passes away and does not come again.” (NKJV)

See the binding of Satan alone removes that spiritual force -- that prince of the power of the air that gives us the hard stony heart -- that removes the heart of stone. And what would you have left? A heart of flesh. That's what would logically be left.

Now there's one other verse that we need to address here. Because this further confuses this. We'll see here, there's a translation error if we dig in a little deeper. Turn back over to Ezekiel 36. And this time we need to look at verse 27. Because the way that this is worded in English, it makes you think, well, obviously we're talking about the Holy Spirit here. But let's dig a little deeper, and again, look at all of this in context. This is Ezekiel 36 in verse 27.

Ezek 36:27 *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (NKJV)*

Well, the way this is written here, you go, okay, well He says He's going to put His Spirit in them. Doesn't that obviously mean conversion? Well, no. Let's dig a little bit deeper here. Because where it says “within you”, if you look in Young's Literal Translation of this same verse, it says “in your midst”. What we're about to look at here is several verses where God's presence through His Spirit was “in the midst” of ancient Israel. Where we know when Moses was leading them and that salvation was not being offered to them. The New Covenant was not on the table. But He talks about His Spirit and His presence being “in their midst”. And yes, He was their present with them and He's working with them. But He wasn't dwelling inside them as He does with us in the New Covenant Church where it's conversion and you're being offered salvation. That wasn't the meaning.

Let me share with you the meaning of the Hebrew word here that's translated into English here in my New King James as “within you”. It's “qereb”. It's Strong's # 7130. Again, the meaning I'm going to give you comes from Baker & Carpenter.

“A masculine noun meaning midst, middle, interior, inner part, inner organs, bowels, inner being.”

So, you can see “in their midst” is very much a translation that would be correct for this. Let me give you an example where it words it exactly the way that the New King James just worded this verse, but the context tells us it's obviously not talking about conversion. Turn over to Isaiah 63. And we're going to see here a verse that again in English it says putting His Holy Spirit “within them”. We're going to see here, when we

read the context, the “them” it’s referring to is the ancient Israelites being led by Moses in the Exodus when we know that they weren’t offered salvation. That wasn’t on the table for them. Now let’s pick up here in Isaiah 63 in verse 11.

Is 63:11 *“Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: “Where is He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them,” (NKJV)*

Again, this is “qereb”. This is the same Hebrew word. But let’s just notice who the “them” is. Let’s just keep reading the context here. He’s talking about the ancient Israelites. We know for a fact that they were not offered salvation. The New Covenant was not on the table for them. But what He meant by His Holy Spirit was “in their midst” -- He was leading them. He was inspiring events here and leading them and instructing them and protecting them. It didn’t mean they were being offered the New Covenant. But just pick up in verse 12.

“12) Who led them by the right hand of Moses, With His glorious arm, Dividing the water before them To make for Himself an everlasting name, 13) Who led them through the deep, As a horse in the wilderness, That they might not stumble?” (NKJV)

He’s talking about leading them through the Exodus, parting the Red Sea, and their journey to the Promised Land. That’s the context here. That’s who the “them” is. He’s referring to having His Holy Spirit “within them”. Now that’s how it’s worded here in English, in the New King James. Obviously, it means “within their midst”. In other words, His presence is there. He’s working with them. He’s inspiring events. He’s protecting them. He’s giving them instructions and leading them. They’re not being offered the New Covenant. We know that that wasn’t on the table for them.

But now let’s look at a couple other examples where again, this same Hebrew word is used, and we obviously know from the context it’s referring to God’s presence being there and working and leading the people. It’s not talking about offering conversion in the New Covenant. This is in Exodus 8 in verse 22. This is while they’re still in Egypt and the plagues are playing out before they actually even have the Exodus. But pick up in verse 22 here.

Ex 8:22 *“And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land.” (NKJV)*

“In the midst” there, that’s “qereb”. That’s the same Hebrew word. But notice obviously He’s saying His presence is there. He’s working with the Israelites. He’s protecting them from the plagues. He’s about to lead them out of Egypt. He’s very much involved. He’s not talking about offering them salvation in the New Covenant. His Spirit, His presence is there working with them. That’s definitely true. He’s not offering them salvation. Notice another example here in Numbers 14 and we’ll start reading in verse 11.

Num 14:11 *“Then the LORD said to Moses: “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? 12) I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” 13) And Moses said to the LORD: “Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them,” (NKJV)*

That's “qereb”. It's again the same Hebrew word here. He's “among them”. Was He offering them salvation? No. Was He leading them and protecting them and working with them? Yes. And then pick up again in verse 14.

“14) and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among these people; that You, LORD, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.” (NKJV)

So, you can see here, we have to consider when we look at Ezekiel 36:27. Again, consider the full context and you'll understand that in just a second here. When it talks about putting His Holy Spirit “within them”, it's more accurately “in their midst” or “among them”. That He'll be working with them in the exact same way He was working with ancient Israel. But in this case, Satan's not in the equation. So, they don't have a “heart of stone” because they don't have that spiritual influence to have to deal with.

When I mentioned before, “dealing with the context”. Because remember, the millennium is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles. But then after the Feast of Tabernacles you have the Eighth Day. You have a whole other time period that's in addition to this. Now, when we consider both of these -- now let's also consider when did Christ Himself say that salvation and the New Covenant would be offered to the rest of mankind who will be called after His return? Because Christ made a very big deal out of announcing it. The verse we're about to turn to, the Church has always interpreted it the way I'm going to lay it out to you as well. We just typically don't think through the ramifications of it. Turn with me over to John 7. It's John chapter 7 in verse 37.

John 7:37 *“On the last day, that great day of the feast,...” (NKJV)*

Notice this is where we get the term “Last Great Day”. We oftentimes refer to the Eighth Day as also the “Last Great Day”. This is the verse that we pull that meaning from.

“...Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38) He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” (NKJV)

Now, we don't need to speculate in any way whatsoever as to what He's talking about, because John tells us in verse 39 exactly what He's referring to.

“39) But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (NKJV)

John tells us what Christ is announcing. He was announcing specifically now everyone can come to Me and receive the Holy Spirit. Take note of the fact He made this announcement on the Eighth Day, on the Last Great Day. He skipped the entire Feast of Tabernacles. Now if you read through the earlier part of John 7 here, I won't take the time to read through the first part of the chapter. But if you read through that, you'll see that Christ is in Jerusalem at the Temple throughout the Feast of Tabernacles that year. He's even teaching people, and it talks about that. So, in other words, He had ample opportunity to have made this announcement during the Feast of Tabernacles and He chose not to. Why?

If salvation was going to be offered to everyone during the millennium pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, why did Christ choose to totally omit saying this during that time, and then wait till the Eighth Day? Don't we think that there was a reason for that? This observation is why I like to kind of sarcastically joke about this and refer to these verses here in John 7 verse 37 through 39, as “the radical notion that Jesus Christ understands the Holy Days”. The reason I say that is because my entire life since I was a child growing up in the Church of God, the Church has always taught that these verses are Christ making an announcement that now the rest of mankind can receive salvation. We just didn't think it through and go, wait a minute, why did He do it on the Eighth Day and He entirely skipped the Feast of Tabernacles?

See, this is the context we have to consider when we look at Ezekiel 36 verse 27. Because we saw in verse 26, the “heart of stone”. It doesn't make sense to say, well, a “heart of flesh” is conversion because He says, “I'll take out of your flesh the heart of stone and then you'll have a heart of flesh.” They didn't start off converted and then have a heart of stone taken away and then now they're just super converted. That's not what He's talking about. He's saying they had a “heart of flesh”. They were physical human beings, but they're held captive to sin by Satan's influence, and Satan will be bound, and he'll be taken out of the equation. That removes slavery to sin during the millennium. But then after the millennium -- as we saw earlier -- Christ announces now salvation is offered to everyone.

As I pointed out before, if you read Revelation 20 verse 7 through 10, you see there that that's when Satan is released again. That's why in verse 3 there, in Revelation 20, it says at the end of a thousand years, “he must be released again”. That's because the path to salvation is difficult. You have to endure through it. You have to overcome temptation. We build God's character enduring through the trials that we have. We have to have a bad guy to face that. See, that's when salvation is offered to everyone.

See, what you see here is the reason that you have the two different goats and you have the parallelism between the LORD's goat and the High Priest that directly matches Passover and the Wave Sheaf. Because again, we're just applying the same meaning

to different groups. But then you have the Azazel goat picturing this totally different symbolism that we don't see in Passover and the Wave Sheaf. That's because it refers to the binding of Satan. But see, both of these deal with slavery to sin and being released from it. Because during the millennium, Satan being bound, taking away that spiritual influence. Mankind will still be capable of sinning. You can read in Zechariah that some of the nations will refuse to come and keep the Holy Days even during the millennium. There will still be stubborn people that can sin, but they're not a slave to sin. They're not bound by that spiritual force that they can't overcome by themselves. They just have to deal with their own free moral agency and their own choices.

But then during the Eighth Day, that's when you get the full application of the LORD's goat. That's when the forgiveness of sin is offered. The New Covenant is being offered. Because see, that offers a whole new definition of being freed from slavery to sin because sin also comes with the death penalty. It requires the death penalty. This not only allows us the spiritual ability to resist Satan's forces. This also offers the forgiveness of sin and being able to escape death. To be able to have the opportunity for eternal life. Because if you turn over to Romans 6 here, you can see where Paul explained this. And how the sacrifice of Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit is the ultimate being released from slavery to sin. This is Romans 6 and verse 15.

Rom 6:15 *"What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16) Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17) But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18) And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19) I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. 20) For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21) What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22) But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (NKJV)

See, accepting the sacrifice of Christ and having that applied to us in the New Covenant. The forgiveness of sin, the offering of salvation. That enables us to escape the death penalty. That's the ultimate being released from slavery to sin. So, you can see what the Day of Atonement pictures here is the rest of mankind basically having two different applications that free them from slavery to sin.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, during the millennium that's pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, Satan is bound. That basically takes away the "heart of stone" and gives them a "heart of flesh". Again, that's not a heart with the 10 Commandments written on

it. That's a *heart of flesh*. That's a heart of human frailty that just has human frailty and doesn't have to overcome the prince of the power of the air. But, again, after that, after the millennium, in the Eighth Day then salvation is offered. Just like Christ Himself announced. Again, all we have to do is take Christ's word for it. As I love to joke, just consider "the radical notion that Christ understands the Holy Days". That He understood exactly when to make the announcement because He understood perfectly the meaning of the Holy Days. Because He did that for a reason.

When we understand these applications, then we can also understand why the Jubilee year was announced on the Day of Atonement. Because Israel returns to their land just like they did with the Jubilee year back in the physical application in history. There's a future fulfillment of that as well. Where after Satan is bound then Israel returns to their land. They return to the Promised Land, to forever have that land.

Then later after that, all of mankind then can receive the New Covenant and be released from slavery to sin. During the millennium, again, with Satan being bound, they're released from that influence in having a "heart of stone" even during that timeframe. So, we can see here looking at this, the ultimate meaning of the Day of Atonement and what it pictures for us in the future. Brethren as we continue to keep this Sabbath, now we can look forward with great joy to the release of slavery from sin for mankind during both the millennial period and ultimately during the Eighth Day when salvation will be offered to the rest of mankind.