

# SABBATH SCHOOL

Level 5 • Unit 1 • Week 3

## PLAN OF SALVATION DAY OF ATONEMENT

### OBJECTIVE:

To clearly explain the meaning of both the Old Testament and the New Testament symbols of the Day of Atonement, including fasting.

### ATTENTION GETTER:

Prepare in Advance:

Make two copies of a picture of a goat and cut the heads off of both.

Do: Choose one student and ask him or her to put the head on the goat "for the Lord." He or she should ask, "Which is which?" Show that the goats are the same. The head fits either one. (You can ask the other kids to speculate which is which.) Explain that only God knew the difference. Show that the goat was an important symbol for the Old Testament Day of Atonement.

### BIBLE LESSON:

Let's turn to Leviticus 16. This entire chapter is about the instructions that God gave Moses to give to Aaron, the High Priest, in carrying out his duties.

The Day of Atonement was very special and solemn. Notice verses 2 and 13—failure to follow these instructions would result in death!

Verse 5: Two special goats were chosen. (Rams and bulls were chosen everyday for the daily sacrifice.)

Verses 7-22: Here are the main points to cover:

- \* Two similar goats were chosen.
- \* Lots were cast. (Straws were pulled? Dice were thrown? Special marked items were arbitrarily chosen?)
- \* One for the Lord; one for Azazel. [Don't say scapegoat; you might say escape goat.] Azazel is a

name for Satan.

- \* The goat for the Lord (verse 15) was sacrificed “for the people,” just as Jesus Christ was sacrificed for our sins.
- \* The goat for Azazel/Satan (verse 21) has “all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions,” put on the head of the goat and the goat is sent “away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.”
- \* “The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness” (verse 22).

We all sin—for various reasons. But behind all sin, sometimes close and sometimes far, is Satan the devil. We learned in the last lesson that Jesus Christ is returning to earth to bring peace. But peace can never exist here when Satan, like a roaring lion, seeks to devour all humanity. On the Day of Atonement, in ancient Israel, a small drama was ritually played out in which two goats had the starring roles. One goat symbolizing Jesus Christ was sacrificed. The other symbolizing Satan was led into the uninhabited wilderness by a qualified man where it was—not killed—but released. Satan is a spirit and can not die, but he can be separated from those that God wishes to protect. That is the major unique symbol of the ancient Day of Atonement.

The second important aspect of the Day of Atonement we still keep today. It was a day of completely going without any food or water. From sunset to sunset, no one in Israel ate or drank anything. And we in God’s Church still do this to this very day (Leviticus 23:29, 31).

Notice that twice in quick succession it is stated that you will “afflict your souls.” This means to completely abstain from food and drink)

Hebrews 9:1-12 explains that much of the Old Testament ritual and symbol was leading toward Jesus Christ. He is our High Priest of the “perfect tabernacle.”

Do: Read Acts 27:9 in the New King James Version and have the kids notice the marginal reference. The apostle Paul was still keeping the Day of Atonement, “the Fast,” in his time. And so do we today.

### **LESSON APPLICATION:**

Ask the students the following questions:

1. What do you learn when you fast?
2. What do you feel like?
3. Why do you feel this way?
4. What would happen if you fasted for three days? for three weeks? for three months?

5. What does this tell us about human life?
6. Has any human ever fasted from food and water for more than three weeks? (We know of Moses and Christ fasting even longer than this.)
7. How was their life sustained? (God sustained them.)
8. How is our life sustained? (We all function through physical means—apparently—but God sustains all life, whether people give Him credit or not.)

**Music:**

Select a hymn from the United Church of God hymnal that is appropriate for the Day of Atonement, such as “O How Love I Thy Law” (p. 44) or “Seek Ye First” (p. 73) especially the second verse.

**MEMORY VERSE:**

Leviticus 23:32 “It shall be a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath.”

(Alternate memory verses: Revelation 20: 2; Matthew 4:4.)

# *family activity*

## **THE POINT:**

To clearly explain the meaning of both the Old Testament and the New Testament symbols of the Day of Atonement, including fasting.

## **FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:**

Read Leviticus 16 together. Talk about it!

Explain that sacrifices were offered every day of the year, morning and evening, but that the Day of Atonement was very special.

Note the different activities and discuss and explain them.

Explain that only the high priest went into the Holy of Holies and only on the Day of Atonement. He symbolized Christ.

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

Leviticus 23:32 "It shall be a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."