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FROM THE MERCY SEAT TO THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT

LEVITICUS 16 • REVELATION 20



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From the Mercy Seat to the Great White Throne

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT

A Sermon by Terrell Powell

Scripture is from the King James Version. The words of Jesus are printed in red, the way Terrell wrote them.

Sermon Title: From the Mercy Seat to the Great White Throne: The Day of Atonement and the Final Judgment

Text: Leviticus 16 (The Day of Atonement) and Revelation 20:11-15 (The Final Judgment)

Central Theme: The Old Testament Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) serves as a prophetic "type" or dress rehearsal for the ultimate accounting of sin and the final separation of the righteous from the unrighteous at the end of time.

I. Introduction

* **The Hook:** Imagine a day where every person in a nation stands in silence, holding their breath, waiting for a single man to emerge from a room. If he lives, they live. If he dies, they are lost. This was the tension of the Day of Atonement.

* **The Context:** In the wilderness, God gave Israel the Tabernacle. It was the place of His dwelling, but also a place of strict boundaries. Leviticus 16 outlines the most solemn day of the year—the only day the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies.

* **The Theology of Shadows:** Colossians 2:17 tells us these laws are a "shadow of things to come." Today, we look at the shadow (Leviticus 16) to understand the reality of the coming Judgment (Revelation 20).

II. Point 1: The Necessity of a Mediator

* **Scripture:** Leviticus 16:2-3, Hebrews 9:7

* **Sub-points:**

* The High Priest had to wash and put on holy linen garments—representing purity.

* No one else could enter; he stood as the sole representative between a Holy God and a sinful people.

* He entered with blood—the "life of the flesh" given to satisfy the debt of sin (Leviticus 17:11).

* **The Reality:** On the Day of Judgment, we cannot represent ourselves. We need a Mediator. In the "Type," it was Aaron. In the "Antitype" (fulfillment), it is Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16).

* **Application:** Are you trying to enter God’s presence based on your own "garments" (works), or are you covered by the linen of Christ's righteousness?

III. Point 2: The Two Goats – Substitution and Separation

* **Scripture:** Leviticus 16:7-10, 21-22

* **Sub-points:**

* **The Lord’s Goat:** This goat was sacrificed. It represents **Propitiation**—the satisfying of God’s justice. God's wrath against sin is real and must be poured out.

* **The Scapegoat (Azazel):** The priest confessed the sins of the people over its head, and it was led into the wilderness, never to be seen again. This represents **Expiation**—the removal of sin.

* **The Transition:** These two goats show us what happens at the Cross, but they also point to the Judgment.

* **Illustration:** As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions (Psalm 103:12). At the Final Judgment, those in Christ will have their sins forgotten, but those outside of Christ will bear their own "wilderness" of eternal separation.

IV. Point 3: The Opening of the Books and the Records of Sin

* **Scripture:** Revelation 20:11-12, Leviticus 16:30

* **Sub-points:**

* On Yom Kippur, the purpose was "to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord."

* At the White Throne Judgment, the "books were opened." Every thought, word, and deed is recorded.

* The Day of Atonement was a day of *afflicting one's soul* (Leviticus 16:29). It was a day of mourning over sin.

* **The Connection:** If we mourn and repent now during this "day of grace," our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. If we refuse to acknowledge sin now, we will face the records of the "books" later.

* **Application:** Modern man wants a God without judgment. But a God without judgment is a God who does not care about justice. The Day of Atonement proves God takes sin seriously.

V. Point 4: The Finality of the Veil

* **Scripture:** Hebrews 9:27-28, Revelation 21:1-3

* **Sub-points:**

* When the High Priest finished his work and came out of the Tabernacle, the people rejoiced because they were accepted for another year.

* When Jesus comes again (the Second Advent), He appears "apart from sin, for salvation" (Hebrews 9:28).

* The "Final Judgment" is the permanent closing of the Tabernacle door. Once the judgment is rendered, the state of the soul is fixed for eternity (Revelation 22:11).

* **Transition:** The High Priest only stayed in the Holy of Holies for a short time. We are currently living in that "short time" where Christ is interceding. But the day is coming when He shall emerge as King and Judge.

VI. Conclusion & Call to Action

* **Summary:** The shadow of Leviticus told Israel that sin requires blood, a mediator, and a day of accounting. The reality of Revelation tells us that the Day of Atonement is coming for the whole world.

* **Call to Action:**

1. **For the Unbeliever:** Do not wait for the Great White Throne to deal with your sin. Deal with it now at the Mercy Seat of the Cross. Repent and believe the Gospel.

2. **For the Believer:** Live with "blessed assurance." Because Christ, our High Priest, has entered the heavenly veil with His own blood, we do not fear the Judgment—we look forward to the reward.

* **The Altar Call:** Invite those who feel the weight of their "records" to come and find cleansing in the blood of the Lamb, the ultimate Atonement.

Closing Prayer Suggestion

"Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the types and shadows of Thy Holy Word that point us to the majesty of Jesus Christ. We acknowledge that Thou art a Holy God and we are a sinful people. We thank Thee that Jesus is both our Sacrifice and our Priest. May no one in this room face the Great White Throne alone, but may we all be found in Christ, whose blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

ABOUT THIS BOOK

From the mercy seat in Leviticus 16 to the great white throne of Revelation 20 — a sermon on atonement and the final judgment.

A SERMON BY TERRELL POWELL

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."
PSALM 119:105 — KJV

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