

Barabbas and the Scapegoat (Day of Atonement and the Sacrifice of Jesus)

A “type” in the Bible is picture in the Old Testament that foreshadows a fulfillment in the New Testament.

THE TYPE: Two Goats

The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34), also known as Yom Kippur, was a day when the sins of Israel were covered for one year. Yom means “the day” and Kippur means “to cover.”



The High Priest offered a sacrifice for his own sins and then selected two young male goats which he presented to the Lord. He drew lots, and one lot determined which one would be “the Lord’s goat” that would be killed, and the other would become “the scapegoat” that would be set free. (Leviticus 16:7-10)

The High Priest tied a scarlet rope made of wool around the neck of the Lord’s goat and another scarlet rope around the horns of the scapegoat.

Isaiah 1:18 explains, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.”



The High Priest killed the Lord’s goat, caught its blood in a bowl, and took the blood into the Holy of Holies in the Temple where he sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat, which was the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. (Leviticus 16:15-20)



He then went to the scapegoat, laid his hands on its head, and confessed the sins of the people. A designated person led the scapegoat out of the temple and into the wilderness where it was released (Leviticus 16:21-22).

The scapegoat represented escaping punishment for sins. Because “the Lord’s goat” was killed as a sacrifice for sins, the “scapegoat” was set free.

There were two goats, but just one offering. It takes both goats to understand what God wants us to see. Killing a goat meant that someone or something had to die for their sins. The death of the Lord’s goat meant that God will accept a substitute for our sins.

The second goat demonstrated the need to remove guilt. The High Priest laid his bloody hands on the scapegoat and confessed the people’s sins, which the goat carried into the wilderness where they were forgotten.

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