

month^a you must deny yourselves^{ab} and not do any work^c— whether native-born^d or a foreigner residing among you —³⁰because on this day atonement will be made^e for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins.^f ³¹It is a day of sabbath rest, and you must deny yourselves;^g it is a lasting ordinance.^h ³²The priest who is anointed and ordainedⁱ to succeed his father as high priest is to make atonement. He is to put on the sacred linen garments^j ³³and make atonement for the Most Holy Place, for the tent of meeting and the altar, and for the priests and all the members of the community.^k

16:29^a Lev 25:9
^b ver 31;
Lev 23:27,32;
Nu 29:7; Isa 58:3
^c S Ex 31:15;
S Lev 23:28
^d Ex 12:19
16:30^e S Ex 30:10
^f Ps 51:2; Jer 33:8;
Eze 36:33;
Zec 13:1; Eph 5:26
16:31^g Ezr 8:21;
Isa 58:3,5;
Da 10:12^h Ac 27:9
16:32ⁱ S Ex 30:30
^j S ver 4;
S Ex 28:2
16:33^k S ver 11,
16-18; Eze 45:18
16:34^l S Ex 27:21
^m Heb 9:7,25

³⁴“This is to be a lasting ordinance^l for you: Atonement is to be made once a year^m for all the sins of the Israelites.”


And it was done, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Eating Blood Forbidden

17 The LORD said to Moses, ²“Speak to Aaron and his sonsⁿ and to all the Israelites and say to them: “This is what the LORD has commanded: ³Any Israelite who sacrifices an ox,^b a lamb^o or a goat^p in the

^a 29 Or *must fast*; also in verse 31 ^b 3 The Hebrew word can refer to either male or female.

17:2ⁿ Lev 10:6,12 **17:3**^o S Lev 3:7 P S Lev 7:23

 **16:30** clean from all your sins. See notes on Heb 9:12,28.
16:34 once a year. Heb 9:11—10:14 repeatedly contrasts this with Christ’s “once for all” sacrifice.

17:1—26:46 Sometimes called the “Holiness Code,” these chapters deal with regulations for holy living and holy practices in various areas of life (see Introduction: Theological Themes; Outline; see also note on 11:44).

The Day of Atonement

Lev 16:1–34



The Day of Atonement was celebrated annually on the tenth day of the month of Tishri (early autumn; see chart, pp. 200–201). Its purpose was to make atonement for the sins of the priests and of the people of Israel, as well as to purify the Most Holy Place, the tent of meeting, and the altar (Lev 16:33; cf. Heb 9:7). The Israelites were to do no work on the Day of Atonement, as it was “a day of sabbath rest” (Lev 16:31; 23:32). They were also to “deny themselves” (16:29,31; 23:27), an expression interpreted to indicate a requirement of fasting (see note on 16:29,31).

The order of tabernacle (later, temple) procedure for the Day of Atonement was as follows: (1) The high priest went to the basin in the courtyard, removed his regular garments, washed himself and went into the Holy Place to put on the special garments for the Day of Atonement (v. 4). (2) He went out to sacrifice a bull at the altar of burnt offering (see photo, p. 167) as a sin offering for himself and the other priests (v. 11). (3) He went into the Most Holy Place with some of the bull’s blood, with incense and with coals from the altar of burnt offering (vv. 12–13). The incense was placed on the burning coals, and the smoke of the incense hid the ark from view. (4) He sprinkled some of the bull’s blood on and in front of the atonement cover of the ark (v. 14). (5) He went outside the tabernacle and cast lots for two goats to see which was to be sacrificed and which was to be the scapegoat (vv. 7–8). (6) At the altar of burnt offering the high priest killed the goat for the sin offering for the people, and for a second time he went into the Most Holy Place, this time to sprinkle the goat’s blood in front of and on the atonement cover (vv. 5,9,15–16a). (7) He returned to the Holy Place (called the “tent of meeting” in v. 16) and sprinkled the goat’s blood there (v. 16b). (8) He went outside to the altar of burnt offering and sprinkled the blood of the goat and the bull on it “to consecrate it from the uncleanness of the Israelites” (with “the Israelites” here apparently including both Aaron and his household [v. 11] and all the rest of the people [v. 15]). (9) While in the courtyard, he laid both hands on the second goat, thus symbolizing the transfer of Israel’s sin, and sent it out into the wilderness (vv. 20–22). (10) A man chosen to take the goat away (v. 21), after he had done so, washed himself and his clothes outside the camp (v. 26) before rejoining the people. (11) The high priest entered the Holy Place to remove his special garments (v. 23). (12) He went out to the basin to wash and put on his regular priestly clothes (v. 24). (13) As a final sacrifice he went out to the altar and offered a ram (v. 3) as a burnt offering for himself, and another ram (v. 5) for the people (v. 24). (14) The conclusion of the entire day was the removal of the sacrifices for the sin offerings to a place outside the camp, where they were burned, and there the man who performed this ritual bathed and washed his clothes (vv. 27–28) before rejoining the people.