



The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

The Collect.

O GOD, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: 22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. 23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: 24 And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. 25 And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. 26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp. 27 And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. 28 And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. (Leviticus 16:20-28)

How often do we hear, in contemporary parlance, the term 'SACPEGOAT' tossed about lightly and without any understanding as to the real meaning of the term? It is used in politics, in war, in society, and in every venue of popular comment. Knowing the origin and meaning of terms aid in our education and understanding of the art of language. Let us look at the SACPEGOAT and what it represents to us in Christ.

First of all, the scapegoat, of tender years, was guilty of no sin. It was randomly selected as a living sacrifice rather than a bloody one. "...he shall bring the live goat: 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness" The scapegoat, having been sacramentally burdened with all of the sins of the Children of Israel, was left in the wilderness to die. Christ, too, bore our sins, and was sacrificed *without the gates of the city*. In the time of Christ, the scapegoat was not let go in the desert wilderness, but was led to a large rock twelve

miles away from the gates of Jerusalem and thrust down. *Surely he hath borne our greifs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth* (Isaiah 53:4-7)

You will further observe that Aaron, after the sacrifice, removed the linen garments of the sacrifice just as the linen grave clothes of Christ were folded neatly and left in the tomb.

In reading this entire chapter of Leviticus 16, we learn that there were TWO goats – one was sacrificed, the other set free to fend for itself in the wilderness. At any rate, there was a bloody sacrifice followed by the scapegoat being set free in the Wilderness. That goat left in the Wilderness was left to God for its hope, or to die there. Jesus Christ bore both ordeals of the bloody sacrifice, and was left to die according to the will of God. He both died AND survived the desert Wilderness of our sins. He died for our sins, but lives for our Salvation!

That Scapegoat, bearing our sins, was sent out into the wilderness – out of sight and out of mind. So are our past sins to God. He has promised that *He will remember them no more*, and will *cast them from us as far as the East is from the West*.

You will note that Aaron laid his hands upon the head of the Scapegoat and confessed all sins. *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat* If we shall be privileged to have Christ bear our sins, our sins must be confessed in transferring them upon the Head that is able to bear them and to absolve us. Only God can forgive sin.

It doesn't seem fair that an innocent animal should bear the sins of so many others, does it? Well, it is NOT fair. It is **GRACE!**. Christ died for us even while we were yet sinners at enmity with God the Father. He loved us before He made us. He was willing to become our Scapegoat – to bear our sins alone – to be cast down and beaten – to die the bloody sacrifice – and to bear up our sins alone in wilderness places. Do you owe this Lord your Heart and Soul?