

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

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## The Ministerial Office a Divine Office:

The highest order or state of a man is that of a Christian. Christians, though, like other men, by nature sinners, are saints in the sight of God, being sanctified through the blood of Jesus Christ. They are children of God, kings and priests, as they are one with Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, His King and Priest. There is within this state of Christianity no higher order, no higher or lower grade of holiness and sanctity, no Christian more a child of God, more a saint, a king, or a priest than others, but all alike participants of these divine privileges. As we read Gal. 3, 26, 28: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." And as to our relation to one another, the Lord says: "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." This being so, it must be maintained that pastors, or ministers, who are intrusted with the ministerial office, are of no higher order in the Church than the other members, called laymen. Their office does not invest them with such a priority. To grant it to them would be a violation of the words of the Master: "All ye are brethren." It would lead to the pernicious practise of the Roman Church to consider priests and bishops as having dominion over the faith of the Christians, and being mediators between God and the people.

All this, however, does not justify any one in thinking mean of, or disregarding, the *work* of the servants of the Church. It would be wrong indeed to overestimate the persons

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## Azazel.

An inquiry into Lev. 16, 5—20.

Of all the rites of Old Testament worship those performed on the Day of Atonement were no doubt the most prominent and significant. The "Yom Hakippurim," or as it was denominated in later literature, the "Yoma," was the day of the annual expiation of the sins of the people, and at no other time was the devout Israelite so impressed with the solemn glory of his cult. As the goats and bullocks were immolated before his eyes, he could not help but be overwhelmed with the awful reality of sin, which demanded for its atonement the shedding of blood and the destruction of life. Indeed, there must have been an intense realization of the need of such propitiation as the indispensable condition of a right relation with the all-holy God. Again, could there be a clearer enunciation of divine pardon than the pronouncement of absolution by word and ceremony, when the high priest transferred the guilt of the people to the head of the scapegoat and dismissed him into the wilderness? Verily, as the final acts of the impressive ceremony were produced before their startled vision, their hearts must have overflowed with abounding gratitude at the manifestation of divine mercy which stopped short of nothing in effecting their redemption.

The latter act—the culminating rite—is the particular point which we purpose to consider in this essay; for the different treatment of the goats, employed in this act, and

especially the term "Azazel," have always presented difficulties, which have not been entirely cleared away to this day. Nearly every commentator has opened his exegetical remarks on the subject with a groan of despair, as the *locus vexatissimus* defied his ingenuity and baffled his skill. Even the scholarly Bochartus is forced to the humble confession: "Me de hac voce Azazel nihil habere satis certum," and: "Prudentiores vocem Hebraeam relinquunt anhermeneuton," while Rabbis, Talmudists, and Rationalists have lost themselves in fanciful speculations and insipid vaporings. And yet, the *locus* ought not to be altogether *vexatus*, nor the term Azazel, without at least a probable signification. As we cling to the clear statements of the text, the various facts present themselves in lucid array, permitting us, as we believe, to infer both the meaning of Azazel and the purpose of sending the scapegoat into the desert.

#### I. THE RITES OF THE YOMA.

In order that the particular point to be treated may stand out in its full relief before the mind of the reader, let us first briefly advert to the leading ceremonies of that solemn festival in which the rite before us holds such a conspicuous place. The rites of the Yoma may be grouped in five stages. In the preparatory stage the high priest, after the special morning sacrifices had been offered, selected the appointed sin- and burnt-offerings for himself and his house, laid aside his usual ornate vestments, bathed, and robed himself in a simple white linen tunic and girdle. He next selected two he-goats and a ram for the people's offerings, and cast lots upon the two goats, one for Jehovah, the other for Azazel. After the completion of these preparations, the proper expiatory rites were begun, and were accomplished in three successive stages. In the first stage the high priest made atonement for himself and the priesthood. After slaying the bullock of the sin-offering, he took a censer filled with live charcoal from the altar of the burnt-offering, and a handful of incense and entered the Most Holy Place. Here he cast the incense on the coals, which pro-

duced a cloud of smoke, that hid the dwelling-place of the Most High between the cherubim from the mortal gaze. This done, he returned to the court to enter immediately, for the second time, the inner sanctuary, carrying a basin with the blood of the bullock, which he sprinkled on the front of the mercy-seat once, and seven times on the ground before the ark.

In the second stage, atonement was made in succession for the Most Holy Place and the outer court. The goat on which the lot for Jehovah had fallen, was slain by the high priest, who then entered the Most Holy Place for the third time with the blood, which he manipulated as before. On his return through the Holy Place a similar ceremony was performed, after which he proceeded to cleanse and hallow the altar of burnt-offering standing in the outer court.

The third stage was the culminating rite of the atonement. Here the high priest, placing both hands on the head of the goat allotted to Azazel, made solemn confession of the sins of the people. By this ceremony these sins were actually transferred to the head of the goat, which was then solemnly conducted to the desert. In New Testament times the goat was led to a lofty precipice in the wilderness, about twelve miles east of Jerusalem, over which it was thrown backwards to be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. This act concluded the essential part of the ceremonial of the Yoma.

In the final stage the high priest retired into the Holy Place to put off the holy garments, and, after bathing himself, to put on his ordinary priestly vestments. Returning to the court, he offered the burnt-offering for himself and the people, together with the fat of the sin-offering. (V. Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*, sub "Atonement.")

## II. THE MEANING OF "AZAZEL," THE REAL CRUX.

The chief difficulty found in this passage centers in the word Azazel and in the relation of Azazel to the goat which, having been assigned to it, was presented alive before the Lord, and then led away into the wilderness. Of the former goat,

allotted to Jehovah, the blood was to be carried within the vail, and to be sprinkled upon the mercy-seat for the atonement of the sins of Israel. This purpose is clearly stated in Lev. 16, 15. 16. The verses which refer to the goat allotted to Azazel read: "And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel," v. 8. "But the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel" (A. V., to be the scapegoat) "shall be presented alive before the Lord to make an atonement with him, and to let him go" (*la Azazel*, for a scapegoat, A. V.) "into the wilderness," v. 10. "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," v. 21. As is readily seen from the translation, the Authorized Version identifies Azazel with the live goat, coining the new term "scapegoat," that is, a goat designed to escape as opposed to the one killed and offered up as a sacrifice. The Revised Version has the marginal note "for dismissal," which shows that the translators conceived Azazel to be an abstract noun, a remarkable difference that proves that the question is indeed a mooted one.

### III. VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF AZAZEL.

Since exegetes have occupied themselves since time almost immemorial with a term so striking and puzzling, we find several explanations, both reasonable and unreasonable, by which learned men have tried to render its meaning clear. We shall quote and list them under various headings.

1. *The definition of rabbinical writers.*—Of all explanations proffered for the purpose of clarifying the strange word, that of the rabbinical writers, including the Targumists, is perhaps the most improbable, simple though it may be. Not all, but many of them conceived Azazel to stand for a definite place to which the scapegoat was conducted in the wilderness. Jonathan in his Targum on v. 10 of this chapter renders the

last clause thus: "to send him away to death in a rough and rocky place, in the desert of Tsuk." There, some of Talmudists supposed, the goat was cast down a deep precipice of Mount Azazel and dashed to pieces. This view is favored by the Arabic versions, which have for the Hebrew word Azazel everywhere "Legebel al-azaz," to the Mount of Azaz, which means, the rough mountain. Apart from other difficulties which this interpretation offers, it should seem strange that there is not a single intimation of such a mountain in the text, nor do we know of any Mount Azaz, or Azazel, either in Palestine or out of it. Had Moses intended to designate such a mountain, he surely would have employed the common term "mount," as he usually did (cf. Mount Horeb, Mount Gerizim, and so forth). On the contrary, the text fails to speak of a mountain at all, but clearly states that the goat was led "*hamidbarah*, into the wilderness." Accordingly, we must reject this explanation as both untextual and antitextual.

2. *Azazel a proper noun meaning demon.*—From very early times we find another interpretation of the term Azazel, which has retained its popularity to this day, especially among rationalistic writers. Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible* says sub "Azazel": "The name in Hebrew and R. V. of the desert spirit to whom one of the two goats was sent, laden with the sins of the people in the ritual of the Day of Atonement. Etymology, origin, and significance are still matters of conjecture. The A. V. designation 'scapegoat' (*i. e.*, the goat that is allowed to escape, which goes back to the *caper emissarius* of the Vulgate) obscures the fact that the word Azazel is a proper name in the original, and in particular, the name of a powerful spirit or demon supposed to inhabit the wilderness, or solitary land." In this sense it is held by many critics of distinguished name to mean one of that class of demons called by the Latins *dii averrunci*, or the deities who send away or avert evils from their votaries, which was done through the propitiating agency of prayers, sacrifices, and other offerings. This is the view of Gesenius ("I render it without hesitation

the Averter, Expiator, Avertunculus, Alexikakos, *i. e.*, for the Azazel, from the root azal, to remove, to separate. By this name I suppose is to be understood originally some idol that was appeased with sacrifices as Saturn and Mars; but afterwards, as the names of idols were often transferred to demons, it seems to denote an evil demon dwelling in the desert, and to be placated with victims, in accordance with this very ancient and also Gentile ritè. The name Azazel is also used by the Arabs for an evil demon"), who, like all Rationalists, views in the narrative a certain remnant of devil-worship, flourishing perhaps in pre-Mosaic times. Also the LXX seems to incline to this view, at least if we judge by the translation of v. 8. We read: *Kleron hena to Kyrio kai kleron hena to Apopompaio*—one lot to the Lord and one lot to the Apopompaio, the Sender-away. Who this Sender-away is the LXX naturally does not state. Probably the words of Josephus may throw light upon the LXX version: "The goat is sent away into a remote desert as an Averter of Ills (*Apotropiasmos*) and a satisfaction for the sins of the people." The question, however, remains whether the view of Josephus and that of the LXX coincide. From the statements of eminent Rabbis it is clear that Azazel, the Apopompaio, was not usually identified with the goat itself, but with a demon, who, having been appeased by the offering, became the Averter of Evil. Rabbi Menahem, in his commentary on Leviticus, says that Azazel was one of the four principal demons whose names he writes as Sammael, Azazel, Azael, and Mahazael. The apocryphal Book of Enoch makes mention of Azael, as the name was then written, among the fallen angels. According to the cabalists, demons and all kinds of evil spirits dwelled in burial-places and solitudes, among whom Azazel was the foremost. The New Testament seems to affirm the view that demons dwell in the wilderness. (Cf. the tempting of our Lord in the desert; the Gadarenes, etc.) It is strange, too, that these demons of the desert are identified with goats in the Old Testament Scriptures. Lev. 17, 7: "And they shall no more offer their

sacrifices unto devils" (lit., *seirim*, goats), etc. 2 Chron. 11, 15: "And he ordained him priests for the high places and for the devils" (*seirim*, goats), etc. In explanation of this, Rabbi Kimchi in his Lexicon (sub "Sair") remarks: "They, *i. e.*, the demons, were called goats because they appear in the shape of goats to their votaries."

Now let us suppose that Azazel was one of the demons of the desert, why, then, should a goat be consecrated to him? Rabbi Eliezer suggests that a gift was offered to Sammael (Azazel) on the Day of Atonement lest he should make their oblations fruitless. Another Rabbi, however, Moses Gerundinensis, suggests the apology: "Our intention when we let loose the goat is not to present him as an oblation to Sammael. God forbid; but our desire is to do the will of our Creator, who has delivered unto us such a commandment." In answer to all these attempts to put the best construction on an act, which at least closely *resembles* demon-worship, we point to Lev. 17, 7, where Moses expressly forbids the worship of devils. Furthermore we maintain that if the sending away of the goat was intended to symbolize anything that had any bearing on the demon of the desert, this certainly should have been stated in the text. But so far as we can see, the text says nothing of the kind. All it tells us is that the goat was sent into the desert by the hand of a fit man, v. 21, after Aaron had confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel. Hence we believe that even the modified view of Hengstenberg is untenable: "After the sacrifice of the one goat had atoned for, and removed the sins of the worshipers, the other goat was to return those sins in mockery to Azazel, the evil spirit regarded as their author." We know that many eminent theologians have adopted this view, but how, in the name of textual interpretation, they can take it from the cold, naked words of the text, is certainly difficult to say. To every unbiased observer it must be obvious that it is not taken out of it, but forced upon it.

3. *Azazel not the name of a demon, but of the scapegoat*

*itself*.—This has been the view of the ancient Greek writers, Theodoret, Cyril of Alexandria, and others. It was that also of Jerome, as may be inferred from his translation of the term in the Vulgate, and was adopted by Luther and the translators of the Authorized Version. The reason for this explanation is found in the etymology of the word, which is regarded as being composed of *az* or *ez*, a goat, and *azal*, to go away, to depart. This would give us the exact idea of the ceremonial use of the scapegoat, namely, that it was formally sent away into the wilderness. In accord with this view we have the translation of Symmachus: *Azazel, tragos aperchomenos*, the departing goat; of Aquila, *tragos apolelumenos*, the goat set loose; of Theodoret, *tragos apopempomenos*, the goat sent away; of Jerome, *hircus emissarius*, the emissary, or scapegoat.

However, there are certain grammatical reasons which are opposed to this explanation. The term that is used for goat in this connection is not *ez* or *az*, but *Sair*, and the word used for *to send away* in the very text is not *azal*, but *shalach*, v. 10. If the word used in place of Azazel would be *Sair meschulach*, *Seirazel*, or *something of the kind*, the meaning would be clear. However, since the text uses Azazel, we have reason to ask, Why should such a strange compound be used in this connection, especially when it is well known that, although Hebrew proper nouns are often compounded in such a way, appellatives usually are not? The genius of the Hebrew language is unquestionably in favor of the view that *Azazel* is a proper noun and nothing else, the force of which is enhanced by the fact that neither Onkelos, Jonathan, nor the Samaritan codices have attempted to translate or paraphrase the term, a thing which they no doubt would have done, had they regarded Azazel merely as an appellative.

However, there is another reason why Azazel may not be identified with the goat itself. We refer to the structure of the sentence, v. 10. The text is worded thus: "Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot [upon the goats] for the Lord (*Lajovah*), the other lot [upon the goats] for the

Azazel (*la Azazel*).” Now the obvious impression on reading this is that a personal antithesis is intended. Jehovah, certainly, the first party, is a person; and as precisely the same formula of expression is used with regard to the other, it is clear that the second party must also be a person. As we carefully study the sentence, it becomes obvious that the antithesis is not between the Lord and the goat, but between the Lord and some other party. Those who identify the scapegoat with Azazel have really failed to read the sentence in its proper relation. If Azazel is the scapegoat, why is it never called so? Why does the text always speak of *hasair hachai*, the live goat, vv. 20. 21? Moreover, there remains the particle *le*, used precisely in the same way in both members of the clause, each time denoting *appropriation* or possession. The meaning cannot be otherwise. One goat should be for the Lord, so that the Lord may do with it according to His way of doing. The other goat should be for the Azazel, so that the Azazel may do with it according to his manner of doing. If we identify Azazel with the scapegoat, then *le* in the first member of the clause would denote *appropriation*, but in the second *designation for a particular purpose*; and this we believe to be impossible as it would outrage every principle of the laws of speech.

Now, if this point is clearly settled, that is, if Azazel is a *proper noun* of *active signification* (*ho apompaios*, the Sender-away), placed side by side with Jehovah, in the culminating rite of the Yoma, what person can it denote? Why this peculiar name? Why the use of two goats? Before we proceed to answer these questions, we shall set forth various attempts at explaining the different use and treatment of the two goats.

#### IV. WHY THE TWO GOATS?

1. There are some exegetes who have referred Azazel to the children of Israel, reaching this conclusion by a rather far-fetched and whimsical interpretation. They affirm that the goat which was sent away must not be regarded as acceptable to God, but rather as the reverse. The goat, so they say, was

something that was to be put away as something obnoxious to the Lord, while the other was offered up to Him as a sweet-scenting savor. The utterly diverse treatment and disposal of the two animals compels us to recognize in each an antitypical substance which was to meet with corresponding entertainment at the hands of Jehovah. The one victim pointed to a substance which was to be preeminently pleasing to Him; the other typified one from which He would turn away with loathing. The former plainly received its realization in Christ, the beloved Son of God, in whom His soul delighted. The latter must be accomplished in something which, in comparison, He abhors. And it is in the *apostate, derelict, and reprobate race of Israel*, rejected of God, that we behold the substantiated truth of the shadow.

That this interpretation does not ring true, the reader must readily admit. The Day of Attonement, with its rites and ceremonies, evidently typified the great atonement made by Christ in the New Testament, and accordingly the goats that were dealt with on that day typified the Lamb of God which bore the sins of the world, with this difference, that the one foreshadowed His death, while the other symbolized the imputation of the guilt of the world.

2. This point is universally conceded by Christian theologians, although we again find differences of opinion as regards the disposal of the two goats. Christ is here, so many maintain, contemplated in a twofold aspect, one as dying for our sins, and the other as rising again for our justification. But to this twofold phase of the mediatorial work of Christ no single offering could suitably correspond. A double oblation, it is supposed, was made necessary by the very nature of the case. One goat *slain* could only show us a *sacrificed Savior*, while it could not show us a *living Savior*. One goat could not exhibit Him "who liveth and is alive forevermore." There must be two to convey this great truth "that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." All this, it is held, is significantly taught by the twofold symbol

of the slain and the emissary goat, the one *designed as a vicarious sacrifice for sin*, the other as a *living memorial of its benign effects*; for in the latter we see the sins of the believers carried away and removed from them as far as the east is from the west, in a word, as blotted out, and extinguished from divine remembrance forever.

While this view is very old, having been held already by Theodoret, Cyril, Augustine, and others, and while it is in full accord with the general genius of the Mosaic economy, distinguished as it was by a vast and unspeakable richness of symbolical imagery, it has nevertheless not met with universal favor. It is urged that the sins of Israel in the typical ceremony were laid upon the head of the live goat, which was then, as a figure of the *risen, justified, and justifying Savior*, to be sent away into the wilderness, while *Christ in reality bore the sins of men not as rising, but as dying*. It is claimed also that Christ does not continue after His death to sustain the same expiatory office that He did at His death. Furthermore, it is argued that the fit man who led the goat into the wilderness was to wash his clothes and bathe his body in water before coming into the camp, *as the contact with the sin-laden goat rendered him unclean*. But *no uncleanness can attach to Christ subsequent to His resurrection*, and thus it is difficult to conceive how any *ceremonial taint should cleave to His representing symbol*.

3. Accordingly, we find another explanation of the difference of treatment between the two goats. The advocates of this view assert that a *double type* had to be employed if the *character of Christ* under its twofold aspect was to be completely prefigured. Thus the goat offered up to the Lord signified that which *respected the atonement made with God* for the sins of the world, while the other goat typified that which *respected the delivering up of the Messiah to the infernal Serpent*, with the permissive power of bruising His mortal frame. Thus the two goats, which are jointly denominated a sin-offering, constitute a type of this identical description. The two

goats, in other words, or better, the goats together, present us with a perfect symbolic delineation of the Lord's official character. The one which was offered up to the lot of Jehovah was devoted as a sin-offering after the manner of any other sin-offering, while the goat which fell to the lot of Azazel was first imputatively loaded with the sins of the whole people, and then given up to the rage of the Evil Spirit by being turned loose into the wilderness, which was deemed his favorite terrestrial haunt. Thus our Savior, burdened with the sins of all mankind, and deserted for a season by His heavenly Father, was delivered into the hand of the Prince of Darkness, with full permission granted to the apostate angel of mortally bruising His heel.

As we read this view, we are wonderfully attracted by its almost perfect manner of showing the similitude between the type and the antitype, and we submit it to the reader for what he may deem it worth. However, as it rests upon the supposition that Azazel is an evil spirit, the very point which we in this essay are trying to refute, we personally cannot adopt it, for every conclusion which rests upon a false premise must of necessity be untenable, no matter how good or clear it may seem.

#### V. THE EXPLICATION OF DR. STOECKHARDT.

Dr. Stoeckhardt, in his *Biblische Geschichte*, p. 119, writes in part: "Beide Boecke trugen sinnbildlich die Suende des Volks. Das Blut des einen Bocks suchnte die Suende vor Gott. Der lebendige Bock trug die Suende Israels in die Wueste." Stoeckhardt, according to these remarks, does not try to apply the treatment of each goat to a special phase of the Savior's mediatorial work, but assigns them both to the same act of redemption. And in this, we believe, Stoeckhardt is right. To essay the application of each Old Testament rite or ceremony to some peculiar phase of Christ's redemption will only lead astray, and cause confusion rather than enlightenment. This we have found to be true with reference to that explication which refers the first goat to the *dying* and the second to the *risen* Savior. At least in the latter case the points of

comparison fail. So, too, we believe that the other view which refers the treatment of the *first goat* to Christ's *death* and that of the *second* to Christ's *deliverance into the power of the devil*, involves the interpreter only in greater difficulties. For how, we ask, can the *living goat* typify Christ, who, when delivered into the power of the devil, was slain and not kept alive? And was Christ really delivered up to the devil in the same consummated way as the goat is said to have been? And lastly, why should the live goat first be so very expressly and emphatically loaded with the sins of the people before being delivered into the power of the demon? Hence, we believe that Stoeckhardt's view: "Beide Boecke trugen sinnbildlich die Suende des Volks" is as poignant and true as it is brief.

However, it seems as if also Stoeckhardt did not comprehend the treatment of the second goat in its essential significance. We read: "Er [der ledige Bock] wurde, wie es V. 9.10 nach dem Urtext heisst, dem Azazel zugesandt, das heisst, dem boesen Geiste, der in der Wueste hauste. Die Suende wurde durch diesen sinnbildlichen Vorgang dem zurueckgegeben, der sie in die Welt gebracht hatte, dem Teufel. Der hatte jetzt, nachdem die Suende gesuehnt war, an dem Volke Gottes nichts mehr zu suchen." Stoeckhardt here follows the explication of Hengstenberg, a view which we oppose because of the *petitio principii* involved. The very point in question is whether Azazel denotes "den boesen Geist, der in der Wueste hauste." If there really is such a demon of the desert, then surely Moses would have warned against him; at least we should expect some casual reference to him. But, as it is, not the slightest mention is made of such an evil spirit in the whole Old Testament Scripture, and if all the Levitical writings, with their rich and full detail, have nothing to say of the Demon Azazel, we cannot incline to believe in his existence. At least the vaporings of Rabbinitists, Talmudists, and cabalists are no sure foundation on which to base so important a claim. At best, the assumption of a demon called Azazel is but conjecture, and to rest one's exegesis on conjecture is a

risky thing. Furthermore, all the sane and sage objections of Bachr which he raises against Hengstenberg's views on this matter, especially the one "dass im gansen mosaischen Kultus Jehovah und der Teufel nie nebeneinandergestellt werden, weil dies leicht in den Augen des Volks den Schein einer Gleichstellung beider Wesen haette haben und den Monotheismus haette verdunkeln koennen," hold also against Stoeckhardt's view. As a matter of fact, we cannot perceive in what sense or with what propriety an animal could be dedicated to some real or imaginary spirit of evil, and still be considered a type of Christ! "Satan cometh and hath nothing in Me," said Christ while on earth, and we cannot but ask on what ground a typical rite is to be referred to Him, the direct and prominent import of which expressed a peculiar appropriation to Satan (one to or for Jehovah, and the other to Azazel, the devil, v. 8). Surely, no one can be insensible to the incongruity which reigns throughout the whole transaction viewed in this light.

#### VI. POINTS THUS FAR MADE CLEAR.

Certainly, as long as the term Azazel is not cleared up, an entirely satisfactory answer as to the meaning of the text and the import of the typical act cannot be given. In the end, everything hinges on that expression and its signification. However, before attempting to point out "a more excellent way" to solve the mystery of the scapegoat, we shall state the points which so far have been made clear:—

1. Azazel cannot be identified with the scapegoat, itself.
2. Azazel cannot be an appellative noun.
3. Azazel needs must be considered a proper noun of active signification.
4. Azazel cannot designate an evil spirit or a mountain.
5. Azazel cannot stand for the reprobate people of Israel.
6. Azazel, being a proper noun, cannot mean "dismissal."
7. Both goats, the one for Jehovah and the other for Azazel, were sin-offerings and referred to Christ's act of atonement by His death.

## VII. THE MEANING OF AZAZEL.

With these points rendered clear, the question arises: What person is meant by Azazel, and why was a special goat allotted to him? Looking at the term Azazel, or rather, haAzazel, with the eye of a Hebrew scholar, we cannot fail to discern in it the root *azal*, the same root which we still find in modern Arabic. Furthermore, we cannot fail to see in it the form of accentuation—the Pealpal. With the definite article affixed to it, the root meaning *remove*, we thus have the proper noun, the Remover, *sc.*, the Remover of evil, or as Gesenius has it, the Averter, the Expiator; LXX: *Ho Apopompaios*. In this sense the verse would read (v. 8): “And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats: one lot [upon the goats] for Jehovah and the other lot [upon the goats] for the Remover.” V. 9: “And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin-offering.” V. 10: “But the goat, on which the lot fell for the Remover [the Remover’s lot fell] shall be presented alive before the Lord (Jehovah) to make an atonement with Him [lit., *lechaper alaph*, to consecrate him], so as to send him away before the Remover [laAzazel—*le* here denoting the dative] into the wilderness.” Vv. 21. 22: “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, . . . putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man—*isch itti*—into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited. And he shall let the goat go in the wilderness.”

Now we ask, Which were the thoughts that arose in the mind of the devout Israelite on reading these words or when seeing the acts commanded in these words, produced before his eyes on the great Day of Atonement? We believe that they could have been no other than those expressed by Isaiah in the 53d chapter of his prophecies. When uttering those grand and solemn words, Isaiah beheld the great New Testament Day

of Atonement. And what does he behold? He beholds the One who was typified by the two goats, performing that blessed work which symbolized by the two acts expressed in the different treatments of the goats. A goat was regarded as a despicable animal by all the ancient nations, as it is even to-day. So Isaiah beheld one "who hath no form nor comeliness, one who hath no beauty that we should desire *Him*." "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from *Him*," v. 3. Furthermore: "He was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded; He was bruised; He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter." All this was typified by the goat that was slain. Now, if that would have been all that happened on the Old Testament Day of Atonement, the Israelite might still have asked, Why this slaughter of the goat? In order clearly to show this, the high priest was to take another goat and present him alive before the Lord and transfer to his head the sins of the people, and thus send him away laden with the iniquities of Israel. Isaiah stresses that point when he says: "Surely He hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows. He was wounded for *our* transgressions, and was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon *Him*, and with *His* stripes *we* are healed." Truly, a wonderful explication of the rites of the Old Testament Day of Atonement. What the pious Israelite desired to know were two things: 1) That his sins were atoned: 2) that God should declare him absolved. And he saw it in a wonderful way: 1) the slaying of the victim; 2) the imputation of his guilt to the victim; 3) the sending away of the victim with his sins. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited," v. 22. So also Isaiah views the acts of the great New Testament Day of Atonement: "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," v. 6. "He was cut off out of the land of the living" (cf.: "He shall bear all their iniquities to a land uninhabited"); "for the trans-

gression of My people was He stricken," v. 8. When God made His only-begotten Son the victim of man's sins, He cut Him off from the land of the living together with all the remembrance of man's sins, which He thus declared fully blotted out from His memory. Our view is beautifully expressed in the following quotation of Buechner's *Handkonkordanz*, p. 691: "Es [the sending away of the live goat] war kein fuer sich bestehender Suchnacht, sondern nur ein ausserordentlicher Zusatz zu dem eigentlichen Suchnacht, um die Suendentilgung noch zu verstaerken. Der erste Bock stellte das Bedecken, der zweite das gaenzliche Wegschaffen der zugedeckten Suede in die Wueste dar, also an einem Orte der Oede und Leere, wo es an alle dem mangelt, wodurch sich Gott in seiner Herrlichkeit offenbart."

So much for the meaning of the *rite*; now for the meaning of the *terminology*. The text everywhere stresses the Lord—Jehovah. Everywhere in the whole passage we find the phrases "for the Lord," "before the Lord," "the Lord's lot," etc. In all these phrases we find the use of the blessed name of Jehovah, the Lord of mercy, the Angel of the Covenant, the *Logos asarkos*, who in the fulness of time has revealed Himself as the *Logos ensarkos*, the Savior. To Him the one goat, which was to be slain, was allotted. As Jehovah, the Christ, gave Himself into death, so the goat allotted to Him was to be slain. However, throughout the passage we sense *the presence of another being*, placed in juxtaposition with Jehovah. Isaiah observes the same distinction, although He, too, uses the same name, namely, Jehovah. The victim of whom the prophet speaks is *the Christ*, the Messiah, Jehovah; yet He appears also as a being different from Jehovah. He is called the *Abdi*, My Servant, the Servant of Jehovah. And this Servant it pleased the Lord (Jehovah) to bruise, and put to grief, v. 10. Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of all, v. 6. Once, in v. 4, Isaiah calls this other Jehovah *Elohim*, to wit, in the words: "Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God (*mukch Elohim*), and afflicted."

These passages throw valuable light upon the text in question. Here, as in Isaiah, the Lord appears as *one Lord*. And His name is *Jehovah*. Yet this same Lord appears also in *two distinct persons*. The goat that was slain properly signified Jehovah the Christ. However, there is another divine person who takes part in the act of atonement. *Him Aaron typified when He sent one goat into death, and transferred to the other the sins of the people*. A wonderful, incomprehensible name is given Him — Azazel, “the Remover of Sin.” As Aaron, standing in the place of God, appears as the *Judge, who declares all sins put away*, so *Jehovah Azazel* is properly the righteous Judge of man. As the angry Judge, He must satisfy the demands of His divine justice by the slaying of the guilty victim, upon whom He has placed the people’s sins; but as the *satisfied Judge* He must, after the sacrifice, declare the people free. “We, like sheep, had gone astray, . . . the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions, . . . the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.” That is properly Isaiah’s comment on, and explanation of, this culminating rite of the Old Testament Day of Atonement. Jehovah the Christ is slain, with the sins of the world imputed to Him; Jehovah Azazel, the satisfied Judge, declares all the sins of the world cut off forevermore, forgiven, removed as far as the east is from the west, obliterated from His remembrance.

If this view obtains, what a world of meaning was wrapped up in the culminating rite of the solemn day of the Yoma! What a world of comfort to the penitent Israelite who witnessed the killing of the victim, the imputation of guilt, and the solemn and final declaration of absolution! What blessed consolation also for the penitent sinner living in New Testament times! As the full and glorious meaning unfolds itself to him, he views the sacred rite with ever increasing delight. To him it may also seem clear why such a strange term as Azazel should be used in this connection. God Himself is incomprehensible, not only in His divine being, but also in His infinite mercy

and grace, which have given us redemption through Christ Jesus. Therefore, the name Azazel well befits the One whose unity in being and trinity in person has ever perplexed the minds of men, and who by the manifestation of His infinite love has proved Himself "the Remover of Evil." Also in other places of the Old Testament Scriptures do we find similar glimpses in which God suddenly reveals Himself in fuller measure. The prophecy in Isaiah concerning the sign of the Virgin's Son bursts upon the reader of the text with abrupt suddenness, yet it is no less genuine and glorious. Lastly, it is not too difficult to conceive how in the course of time this very name, which originally stood for God, came to signify the devil. Reprobate Israel, especially the learned and leaders among them, simply gave God's glory also in this respect to Satan, even as they finally accused the Messiah of being in league with Beelzebub.

In short, the view presented seems to satisfy every demand of etymology, text, context, and parallel readings, and is furthermore in full accord with the grand New Testament Gospel theme: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," and again: "God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." On the great New Testament Day of Atonement God gave His beloved Son into death, imputed to Him the sins of the world, and declared the world absolved from sin in the death of His beloved. In the sight of the appeased Judge, Jehovah Azazel, there were no more sins, for they had been carried by Jehovah Messiah into the wilderness (grave—oblivion). "Christ was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification," that is the glorious Gospel-theme of the Yom Hakippurim.

One more word concerning the translation of laAzazel in v. 10. The verse reads thus: "But the goat on which the lot fell for the Azazel [or the Azazel's lot] shall be presented before the Lord [the general term for God used in the whole passage] to make an atonement with him [to transfer to him

the sins of the people], v. 21, and to let him go [*laAzazel*—before the Azazel—from the bar of the imputing Judge] into the wilderness.” We believe that *le* here has the same force as the *liphne* just preceding. The live goat was brought before the Lord. There Aaron (in the name and place of the Lord) confessed over him, and thus transferred to him, all the iniquities of Israel, and then sent him away before the Azazel (before the satisfied divine Judge) into the wilderness. After Jehovah had imputed to the goat, through Aaron, the sins of the people, He stands before them in an entirely new relation, namely, as the Remover of sins, who does “not impute their trespasses unto them.” So Isaiah teaches us to view God the Father, and so Paul speaks of Him in all his epistles, namely, as the Jehovah Azazel, who declares the world free from sin by the death of Jehovah Messiah, to whom He had imputed their sins.

Lastly, we wish to state that with the foregoing interpretation of the passage in question, and particularly of Azazel, adopted, not a single consolatory conception which Christian exegesis hitherto has found in the solemn rites of the Day of Atonement is removed. Even the name “scapegoat” may be retained in its customary signification. Only in elevating the term Azazel, by applying it to God instead of perverting it into a name of the devil, each thought receives a more precious and Scriptural meaning fully borne out by Isaiah, chap. 53. And thus, as we turn from the interesting subject, which for a long time has held our most devout attention, we would commend it to the calm consideration of our readers, closing our remarks with the scholarly words of the gentle and erudite Spencer: “*Si quis lumine perspicaciore donatus, hujus instituti rationes solidiores assignaverit, me minime pertinacem experietur.*”