



Daily Verse and Comment

Leviticus 16:21-22

(21) Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. (22) The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

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The Bible does not say that a demon is responsible for all [sin](#), an idea that comes from the apocryphal *Book of Enoch*. Certainly, [Satan](#) will bear the penalty for *his* sins, but they are nowhere in view in Leviticus 16. What is in view are the nation's sins confessed onto the *azazel*—sins that the people committed, for which they are responsible.

Our sins are our responsibility, and we bear them unless a substitute is provided to bear them for us, which [Jesus Christ](#) did. Eve tried to blame Satan for her sin, yet [God](#) punished her because *she* disobeyed God. Similarly, God's curse on Satan in Eden comes because of *his* sin of deception—what *he* did ([Genesis 3:14](#))—but not for Eve's sin.

Jesus teaches that our own faculties cause us to sin; the Son of God puts the genesis of sin in each individual's heart ([Matthew 5:29-30](#); [12:34-35](#); [15:18-19](#); [18:8-9](#); [Mark 7:20-23](#); [9:43-47](#)). James says that temptation would be powerless against us if we were not drawn away by our own desires, which gives birth to sin ([James 2:14-15](#)). Satan sins when he amplifies those desires through his broadcast, but what we choose to do after listening to him is on *us*, not on him. God will judge Satan, not because God has ascribed all human sins to him, but because Satan has sinned.

[The gospel](#) of the [Kingdom of God](#) teaches that God's ultimate solution to sin does not hinge on anything involving Satan. His solution is to create sons and daughters in His image who *will not* sin—who will not be drawn away by their desires.

Certainly, Satan influences and deceives; these are his sins. We should downplay neither his power nor his guilt. But as part of God's plan, He has given mankind the responsibility to choose, which is why Scripture warns us so frequently about Satan's deceptions and wiles. We should take those warnings very seriously so we are not deceived. We are warned so we can consider our choices, such as what sources we use to interpret Scripture. But if Satan is responsible for our sins, then we are blameless before God without Christ's sacrifice. Jesus Christ and His incredible work get edged out of the picture, and Satan's power gets magnified.

— David C. Grabbe

To learn more, see:
[Azazel: Endings](#)



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