

Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement

“For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute forever.” Leviticus 16:30-31

Yom Kippur or Yom HaKippurim, is the holiest day in the Jewish calendar and follows ten days after Rosh Hashanah (the Day of the Awakening Blast). Just as Passover (Pesach) was fulfilled in the death of Yeshua, so this day (Yom Kippur) is also a foreshadowing of the Lord’s sacrifice. In the Hebrew the word “kippur” literally means “covering” or “atonement”.

Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement) is also known by the following names:

☒ Face to Face

☒ The Great Day

☒ The Fast

☒ The Great Shofar (Shofar HaGadol)

☒ The Closing of the gates (Neilah)

In the Old Testament the sins of the people and the High Priest were atoned for by the blood of bulls and goats. The blood was applied to the Atonement Cover, the altar of incense, the tent of Meeting and the altar of sacrifice.

This system of atonement was temporary, as it had to be done once a year. To better understand the whole concept of atonement and how what is recorded in the Old Testament reflects the greater reality of the fulfillment of God’s eternal plan through Yeshua’s sacrifice “once and for all”, we have to understand the system that was set up as per YHVH’s specific instructions through Moses and Aaron and to be kept by the children of Israel.

“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

“And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.” Leviticus 2:28

“You shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.” Leviticus 23:31-32

The ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is called “the Days of Awe.” This time is a consecrated time when we should reflect on our walk with God and on the condition of our own heart before Him. The observant Jews see this as a time to repent of any sins committed during the past year so that on Yom Kippur (the fast day) all legal records against them will be cleared by the Judge. During this time they bless each other with the following words, “May your name be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.”

“ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelations 20:15

“Yet now, if You will forgive their sin; but if not, blot me, I pray, blot out me out of Your book which You have written.”

And the Lord said to Moses, Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.” Exodus 3:32-33

“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.” Psalm 69:28

The reality of the latter is that through Yeshua’s sacrifice, and through accepting Him as Lord and Savior, it is the only way to be assured that your name will be written in the Book of Life. The importance of Yeshua’s sacrifice and the

shedding of His blood is a much greater reality, as Holy Spirit reveals to us the importance of atonement and the shedding of innocent blood for the remission of sins. Yeshua, became our High Priest and accomplished for us what no earthly priest in Israel could accomplish. Only the blood of Yeshua could atone for man's sin. Yeshua was the perfect sacrifice and His blood brought that atonement once and for all."

"But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for sins of ignorance of the people, the Set-apart Spirit signifying this, that the way into the Most Set-apart Place was not yet made manifest while the first Tent has a standing, which was a parable for the present time in which both gifts and slaughters are offered which are unable to perfect the one serving, as to his conscience, only as to foods and drinks, and different washings, and fleshly regulations imposed until a time of setting matters straight.

But Messiah, having become a High Priest of the coming good matters, through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, entered into the Most Set-apart Place once for all, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, having obtained everlasting redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sets apart for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the everlasting Spirit offered Himself unblemished to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? And because of this He is the Mediator of a renewed covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance." Hebrews 9:7-15

THE PRIESTLY SERVICE FOR YOM KIPPUR

According to Leviticus 16 the High Priest was to conduct a special ceremony on the 10th of Tishrei. This ceremony involved the purging of defilement from the temple and from the people. The high priest had to bring a bull and two goats as a special offering. The bull was sacrificed first to purge the set-apart place (holy place) of any sins of the priest himself and of his household. The high priest (Cohen HaGadol) could only enter the Holy of Holies after he bathed his entire body. This washing of water symbolizes his desire for purification. At the same time he would also take the blood of an animal with his finger and sprinkle the blood upon the altar.

"And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron saying: This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord has commanded, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel that they bring you a red heifer without blemish, in which there is no blemish, on which no yoke ever came. And you shall give her to Eleazar the priest that he may bring her forth outside the camp. And he shall kill her before his face. And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times." Numbers 19:1-4

In the same manner this spiritual understanding is reflected in Hebrews 9 and 10:19-22,

1 Peter 2, where Yeshua, became our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1). In John 20:17, we read the following:

"Jesus said to her, Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and Your Father, and to My God and your God." John 20:17

(These same words now uttered by Yeshua, was also uttered by the High Priest before he ascended the altar.)

After this, a second goat is chosen by lot to be sacrificed to purge the holy place of any defilement brought through sin or misdeeds of the nation. The second goat is sent away, not sacrificed, to cleanse the people themselves. The goat is marked for Azazel (meaning scapegoat). The sins and punishment of the people were laid upon the scapegoat. Before the goat was sent away to wander in the wilderness, the high priest would lay both his hands upon its head and confessed over it all the iniquities and transgressions of the Israelites. In the same manner our sins were laid upon Yeshua, and He died with our sins on His head.

"And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the

scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remained among them in the midst of their uncleanness.” Leviticus 17:7-16

Yeshua carried our sins away, by His very blood He covered our sins and atoned for it. Yeshua bore it all, our shame and guilt, so that we never have to be separated from God again.

“Truly, He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains. Yet we reckoned Him stricken, smitten by Elohim, and afflicted.” Isaiah 53:4

FACE TO FACE

Yom Kippur is also known as “Face to Face”, the idiom referring to the time when the High Priest had to go behind the veil of the temple. During this moment of time, all of Israel waiting with abated breath, to see whether God would accept the sacrifice or not. It was during this time that the High Priest would “face to face” with the mercy seat of God. When he appeared before the Lord in the Holy of Holies, he saw the Lord’s presence as a brilliant cloud hovering above the mercy seat.

“And the Lord said to Moses, Speak to Aaron your brother, that he does not come at all times into the sanctuary within the veil before the mercy-seat, which is on the Ark, so that he will not die. For I will appear in the cloud on the mercy-seat. “ Leviticus 16:2

Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat

THE DAY

Yom Kippur comes on the tenth day of the month of Tishrei, and it is the last day of the Ten Days of Repentance. This day is known as the most solemn day of the year. It is believed that those whose names are not written in the Book of Life on Rosh Hashanah are given ten days to repent, pray for forgiveness until Yom Kippur, when their fate will be decided. This day is a day of fasting and repentance.

THE FAST

Fasting one of the most important commandments that leads to atonement. The Torah (the five books of Moses) says three times, “And it shall be a statute forever to you: in the seventh month, on the tenth of the month, you shall afflict your souls and do no work at all, the native and the alien who is staying among you. For on that day an atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you, so that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.” Leviticus 16:29-30

THE GREAT SHOFAR

We have already previously discussed the association of trumpets with the Jewish people and the different feast days. The First Trumpet was blown and is associated with Shavuot or Pentecost. The Last Trumpet blown and associated with Rosh HaShana and The Great Trumpet is associated with Yom Kippur. Isaiah made reference to the Great Trumpet and in Matthew 24:31 it speaks of the same trumpet.

“And it shall be, in that day the great ram's horn shall be blown, and those perishing in the land of Assyria shall come, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt shall come and shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.”
Isaiah 27:13

“ And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.” Matthew 24:31

Ultimately we are all awaiting for the sound of the great trumpet, and are reminded through the Feast of the Lord of everything God has been speaking in the Old Testament as we reflect on Israel's own journey from bondage to freedom, and so we have been grafted in through Yeshua, and are now partakers of this same promises given to Abraham by God – through Yeshua.

THE CLOSING OF THE GATES OF HEAVEN : NEILAH

According to Jewish belief they speak of the gates of Heaven that are open during the day of repentance, specifically that they are open on Rosh HaShana to let the righteous into Heaven and remain open until the service of Yom Kippur, when the final blast of the shofar is heard at the end of the service.

We have to remember and celebrate the fulfillment of Yeshua's death and resurrection in and through the Feasts given by the Lord. Yeshua paid the price for us and His blood made perfect atonement for us, the guilty, once and for all.

“For the Law which has a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of the things, appearing year by year with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually, they are never able to perfect those drawing near. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because the worshipers, when they had been once for all purged, would have had no more conscience of sin. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God." Above, when He said, "Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings and offering for sin You did not desire, neither did You have pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the Law), then He said, "Lo, I come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first so that He may establish the second. By this will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Hebrews 10:1-10

THE BLOOD OF YESHUA

1) The Blood of Yeshua speaks today still without change, as it did almost 2000 years ago. Yeshua's Blood has brought us into a New Covenant. “And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink all of it. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:27-28

2) This Blood has brought us eternal redemption and gives us eternal life. Then Jesus says to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. Whoever partakes of My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:53-54

3) The Blood of Yeshua makes atonement for us and justifies us before God. “ whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness through the passing by of the sins that had taken place before, in the forbearance of God;” Romans 3:25

“And He is the propitiation concerning our sins, and not concerning ours only, but also concerning the sins of all the world.” 1 John 2:2

“In this the love of God was revealed in us, because God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation concerning our sins.” 1 John 4:9-10

4) Yeshua’s Blood has been shed for the forgiveness of our sins and to reconcile us to God. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,” Ephesians 1:7

“But now in Christ Jesus you who were once afar off are made near by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:13

“in whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins.” Colossians 1:14

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“For it pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell. And through Him having made peace through the blood of His cross, it pleased the Father to reconcile all things to Himself through Him, whether the things on earth or the things in Heaven.” Colossians 1:19-20

5) Through the Blood of Yeshua provides cleansing for us, constantly, and it makes us over comers “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7

“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony. And they did not love their soul until death.” Revelations 12:11

Abba Father, thank you for the sacrifice of Your Son, on the tree for us, thank you, Yeshua, for becoming that sin offering and for the atonement of Your Blood, once and for all of humanity.

We know that the festivals all speak of the greater reality of what God accomplished through Yeshua, and so we pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal it to each and every heart, as we seek Him, face to face.