**

**Jim Rickard Bible Ministries**

**Sunday, October 13, 20****24**

**The Feast of Atonement – YOM KIPPUR**

The Feast of Atonement was a day of solemn celebration given to Israel from our Lord when they came out of the captivity of Egypt, in the recognition of the payment of the penalty for sins through a sacrifice provided for all the people. This feast was given to Israel in **Lev 16:29-34; 23:26-32**. Cf. **Lev 16:6-10; 17:1-16; 25:9; Num 29:7-11; Ex 30:10**.

The Feast of Atonement is called in the Hebrew language, YOM KIPPUR, or “Day of Atonement.” As you can see, the Hebrew word YOM means, “day,” and KIPPUR means, “atonement.” In the Hebrew it is the plural use of KIPPUR or KIPPURIM.

“Atonement” means, “a reparation for a wrong or injury,” that is our sins. In addition, in the OT, “atonement” was presented through the Hebrew verb KAPHAR, which means first, “to smear, coat with pitch, or cover,” and also “to atone, make an atonement, to make reconciliation, to atone by offering a substitute, and to appease.”

A related word is the Noun KOPHER meaning “redemption.” KAPHORETH is the word for “the place of atonement” or “the mercy seat” that was on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies.

In the ancient ritual worship of God, the blood of an animal sacrifice covered the KAPHORETH satisfying God, thus portraying atonement. Animal sacrifices and their blood were used to cover sin and to communicate the eventual saving work of Jesus Christ before it actually occurred. These sacrifices were the shadows pointing to the cross, **Heb 9**. Interestingly, the Jews knew, even back in that day, that atonement applied to all members of the human race.

Now, atonement in the OT refers to the use of animal sacrifices to portray the saving work of Christ on the Cross. Atonement in the NT refers to the actual saving work of Christ: propitiation, redemption, reconciliation, imputation, and justification. “Blood” is used to indicate the entire saving work and to identify it with the Jewish illustration when an animal was sacrificed.

On the Feast of Atonement (Yom Kippur), once a year an animal sacrifice was made at the Brazen Altar outside of the Tabernacle or Temple in the court of the Temple. The Brazen Altar represented the cross. The high priest would take the blood of the animal sacrificed in a basin and carry it into the Holy of Holies where atonement was accomplished by sprinkling the blood over the top of the Mercy Seat. Over the Ark was a throne, flanked by two cherubs representing the holiness of God. One cherub represented God’s righteousness; the other God’s justice. The two cherubs looked down and were satisfied with that sacrifice. This represented the doctrine of propitiation, or how God the Father was satisfied with the work of God the Son on the cross. As such, atonement refers to the needed reconciliation between sinful mankind and the holy God. In **Rom 3:21-26** and **Heb 9**, Jesus Christ is portrayed as the Mercy Seat.

Interestingly, “atonement” is uniquely an OT word, as it is not used anywhere in the NT except for **Rom 5:11**, in the KJV. There we have the Greek Noun KATALLEGE, which literally means, “reconciliation or restoration of favor.” It is used four times, **Rom 5:11, 19; 2 Cor 5:18-19**, and is translated “reconciliation.” It comes from the Verb KATALLASSO that means, “to reconcile,” used in **Rom 5:10; 1 Cor 7:11; 2 Cor 5:18-20**, and the root Verb ALLASSO that means, “to change, exchange, and transform.”

This reconciliation was ultimately made possible through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross, as expressed in **Rom 3:21-26; 5:11, 19**. Atonement is the Bible’s central message.

**Rom 5:11, “And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the atonement *(reconciliation)*.”**

This passage states that believers are justified and reconciled to God by the atonement of Christ. Atonement is the means of reconciliation between God and man, the basis for Divine propitiation, and the portrayal of Divine judgment for our sins. Unlimited atonement is the means of reconciliation, the means of removing the barrier between God and man, the basis for Divine propitiation.

While animal blood was the shadow which communicated this judgment, the true basis for atonement is the actual saving work of Christ in redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation.

**1 Peter 2:24, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”**

**1 Cor 11:24, “…This is my body which is given for you…”**

**2 Cor 5:21, “He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

Jesus’ atoning work upon the cross removed the barrier for the entire human race. God also did something for believers only in reconciliation: the imputation of Divine perfect righteousness resulting in justification.

To prefigure / foreshadow this, our Lord gave the Israelites the Feast of Yom Kippur, a day of celebration to commemorate the atonement provided to them by the Lord. It was to be celebrated in the 10th day of the seventh month, Tishri, on the religious calendar that began with the month of Nisan, our spring time. The Civil calendar began for Israel on Tishri with the Feast of Rosh Hashanah, “the beginning of the year.” The Israelites had two “New Year’s Day,” celebrations: One for the religious year that began in the Spring with the month of Nisan, and the other in the Fall in the month of Tishri.

The month of Tishri was also called the “Sabbath month.” It typically falls around the 15th of September to the 15th of October. It is related to every blessing concept of grace. Remember, the Jews had thirty-day months and twelve-months per year, with a leap year that added a full month.

The month of Tishri had seven feasts, three of which were emphasized by God to be celebrated as foreshadows of the Christ / Messiah.

1) The first day of the month was the Feast of Trumpets and the new moon.

2) The third day of the month was a special commemoration for the murder of Gedaliah, **Kings 25:22f; 1 Chor 25:3f; Jer 41:4f**.

3) The seventh day of the month was a fast for the golden calf incident.

4) The tenth day was the Feast of Atonement.

5) On days 15‑21 was the Feast of Tabernacles.

6) The twenty-second day was the solemn assembly and the prayer for rain.

7) On the twenty-third day, the Jews celebrated the dedication of the first temple.

As noted in **Lev 16**, this Feast was accompanied by the ritual of the Scape Goat. The Scape Goat ritual commemorate both the payment for sin and the removal of sin, as seen in the Person of Jesus Christ on the cross, and portrayed by Pilate in the releasing of Barabbas. This ritual especially portrayed atonement and redemption. In addition, they were to fast for the whole day of this festival. This was the only fast day God required of his people in the Bible; one day a year. Cf. **Acts 27:9**.

**Acts 27:9, “When considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous,** *(time of the year, Fall)***, since even the fast** *(Yom Kippur)* **was already over, Paul began to admonish them.”**

We see various fasting in the Bible both OT and NT, but remember, fasting is not magical or something we du to try to manipulate God. He does not have to have his heart softened toward us. Fasting was used as a focus point to intensely seek the Lord. The point of its requirement here is that it is a serious matter to show the proper attitude toward the Lord’s gracious salvation. The reason for this is because, without His gift of atonement, Israel (and us) would be as good as dead. We are all utterly dependent on His grace. Therefore, such intensity of worship or prayer before the Lord will at times motivate us to go without eating while seeking the Lord. When we do, it shows the seriousness of our sense of need and a true repentance like a deep grieving.

As such, for Israel to show anything less on the Day of Atonement was to take God’s atonement too lightly, with the result of forfeiting it. God would cut off such a person. In addition, the sabbath rest, a day without working, also should the solemnness of this day and intensity of relationship with God. If a person worked on that day, they took their relationship with the Lord too lightly; they too would be destroyed by Him, **Lev 23:30**.

Adam’s, and subsequently all man’s, choice to sin makes everyone guilty before God, without hope. But then, Christ stepped in, making atonement for sin. Christ, the sinless lamb, took upon Himself the sins of many, that they might receive the atonement for sins and be reconciled to God.

**Rom 5:19, “For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”**

To accept Christ’s atonement for sin is to acknowledge one’s sin and receive His sacrifice. And not only that but to live a grace-filled life. There is no more barrier between the believer and God, for we have received Christ’s atoning power and God’s satisfaction and acceptance through Jesus’ atoning work upon the cross and thus, reconciliation.

When atonement is talked about in the Bible, it means that a price has been paid for our sins that has the result of bringing sinful man together with our Holy God. We have been reconciled to God. Therefore, we understand that Christ made an atonement. Christ made an atonement for our sins. He paid a price, His own life, that God accepted for us on our behalf, and we are now brought back to God.

**Prov 16:6, “By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.”**

In **Dan 9:24a**, using the Noun KAPHAR, “to atone,” God gave us the prophecy of Christ’s atoning sacrifice for our sin.

**Dan 9:24, “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, …”**

The second half of that verse speaks to His 2nd Advent, when He will destroy the author of sin, Satan and his anti-christ, to establish His millennial Kingdom on earth.

**Dan 9:24b, “…to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place.*”**

As such, we now anticipate that Jesus Christ will return to earth on the Day of Atonement to conclude the 7-year Tribulation, at which time He will establish His millennial Kingdom that will begin on the following Feast of Tabernacles.

As noted, God gave Israel 7 Feasts throughout their year, four in the Spring and three in the Fall. Jesus fulfilled the four Spring Feasts in His First Advent, therefore it follows that He will fulfill the three Fall Feast in His Second Advent.

Between the Spring and Fall Feasts is an interim called summer, approximately 4 months. We understand this interim to represent the Mystery Age of the Church / the Church Age / Age of Grace / Age of the Gentiles, which we are currently in. At the Conclusion of this Age, the Resurrection and Rapture of the Church will occur corresponding to the Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah, followed by the 7 Year Tribulation. The time gap we are currently living in is called “Intercalation” and means, “insertion.” It is called the intercalation because the Church Age was inserted into the Jewish Age, which was then temporarily place on hold. The new dispensation, the **church age**, was inserted into history. The Church Age is the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict. The intercalated dispensation was unknown to any OT writer, **Rom 16:25-26; Eph 3:1-6; Col 1:25-26**.