

Zech. 12:10 **“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.”** (NAS)

Introductory note: the The Day of Atonement (Yom Kipper) was one of the Fall Feasts the first one being the feast of Trumpets which we have covered in a previous lesson. So the Day of Atonement followed Trumpets and following the Day of Atonement would be the Feast of Tabernacles which we will cover in a future lesson.

The Day of Atonement is the most solemn of days. The Jews call it “The Day.” This is the day that God brings to the forefront to all Jews that they must account for their sins and that Jehovah is the One who will provide complete forgiveness for them. There are two basic approaches that I wish to take regarding the Day of Atonement.



- First, we have the typical fulfillment in the ceremony of the Day of Atonement. This is where we learn more of Jesus Christ’s role in His expiation of our sins.
- Second, there is the historical fulfillment that is yet to happen. This fulfillment occurs at the end of the tribulation period when Jesus Christ comes back and there is a Day of national mourning and repentance by Israel as they realize that the one whom they have pierced is come back in both judgment *and* in salvation.

The Day of Atonement in the Time of Christ.

Actually, this was a blend of the practice by the Jews at the time of Christ along with the true Levitical observance - just so that we can get a true picture of the imagery of the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16:2 **And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.** (KJV).

The Day of Atonement was the most solemn of all the feasts. For good reason. The Day of Atonement covers the entire spectrum of the Lord’s gracious dealing with His people. All of the elements of the temple came into play during this feast. The Day of Atonement is the sixth of Jehovah’s Feasts and occurs on the tenth of the seventh month - the month of Tishri. It follows a ten day period of preparation which is initiated by the Feast of Trumpets. During this time the Jews were to examine themselves and if they were to find some

shortcoming - a sin - a trespass they were to make it right. The culmination of this period comes on the Day of Atonement. Although the tenth day of Tishri begins at 6 pm on the previous day the ceremony actually starts at dawn in the morning of the tenth. **Only the High Priest was to officiate the ceremony of the Day of Atonement.**

The culmination of the ceremony has two parts. One within the Holiest of Holies facing Jehovah - that western most part of the Tabernacle or the Temple. The other was to occur before the people at the doorway of the Tabernacle or in Jesus' time toward the court of the Israelites facing the Israelites - the eastern most part of the Tabernacle or the Temple.

After the usual sacrifices and cleansing had been accomplished that morning, the High Priest began the annual observance of the Day of Atonement. One thing of note - usually only the hands and feet were cleansed in the sacrifices. On this day the entire body of the High Priest was cleansed - several times. Another unique feature was the clothing. He wore not the usual clothing with it's color and the breastplate of gold - but of white linen:

Leviticus 16:4 **"He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on. (NAS).**

Still another unique feature was that four fires were lit on the Brazen Altar instead of three - thus lending uniqueness to these sacrifices. After the usual sacrifices were accomplished and he had donned the white linen garments, the High Priest was ready to accomplish the first of the Day of Atonement sacrifice.

The First of Three Ceremonies Within the Holiest.

Leviticus 16:30 **for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you shall be clean from all your sins before the LORD. (NAS).**

The afternoon was the main focus of the Day of Atonement observance. It was in this observance that the sins of Israel were atoned for preceding year. Within this ceremony we see rich detail of the work of Christ. Jesus Christ has stood between God and Man - He is *the* mediator between the two - propitiating God and reconciling man in one *completed* work.¹

The confessions of the High Priest and choosing of the scapegoat. A young bull and two identical goats were chosen for this part of the ceremony. The bull would be stationed between the altar and the front porch (the western side of the altar). The High Priest would press his hands on the head of the young bull and confess his sins. Next, the priest would be stationed at the eastern side of the altar where two goats were waiting for him. The goats were faced toward the temple. Two lots were placed in a container - one lot was inscribed "*for YHWH*" the other "*for asazel.*" At this point he drew the lots - one goat would be for Jehovah the other would be the scapegoat. A practice at the time of Christ had the priest tying a scarlet colored piece of cloth to the horn of the scapegoat. The scapegoat

¹ There is much more detail on a web site

<http://biblicalholidays.com/Yom-Kippur/yom-kippur-bible-times.htm>

was then turned around eastward to face the people.

Next, the priest returned to the young bull a second time to confess not only his and his household's sins but the sins of the entire priesthood. The bull was then slaughtered, the blood collected which was given to an attendant who had to keep stirring it to prevent coagulation.

The First Entrance into the Holiest.

Leviticus 16:12-13 **"And he shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the LORD, and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil. [13] "And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the ark of the testimony, lest he die. (NAS).**

The High Priest then approached the brazen altar and collected some coals. He also collected some incense and proceeded toward the temple, proper. This was to be his first entrance into the Holiest - all Israel held their collective breath while he went into the Holiest. The hem of his garment carried bells which gave out a constant reminder to the people outside that he hadn't been slain by the Lord for some oversight during the ceremony. Within the Holiest he then placed the censer before the Ark of the Covenant (during the Tabernacle and Solomon Temple times) - the Glory of God resided above the Ark. He then would pour the incense upon the coals and a cloud of smoke would then fill the room. After this he emerged from the Holiest for the next part of the ceremony.

The sprinkling of the bull's blood was the next exercise. Upon his emergence he quickly took the bowl from the attendant and reentered the Holiest. The sprinkling was accomplished by dipping his finger in the bowl and sprinkling his finger upward so that the blood fell on the mercy seat *once*. He then dipped his finger in the blood and sprinkled the blood downward *seven times* toward the mercy seat. He then emerged the Holiest for the second time. He placed the bowl of the bull on a golden stand² before the veil and returned to the court of the priests.

The goat designated "for YHWH" was then slaughtered, its blood collected and the High Priest entered the Holiest for the *third* time. The same ceremony was done - sprinkling the blood upward *once* on the Mercy Seat and downward *seven times* toward the mercy seat and then emerged from the Holiest for the *third* time. This bowl was also placed on a second golden stand before the veil.

Next came the sprinkling of the veil. Taking up the bowl of the bull's blood he sprinkled the veil in the same manner as with the Ark - once upward and seven times downward. The same procedure was repeated with the goat's blood. He then poured the bowl of the bull's blood into the goat's blood - the mixture was then stirred to assure that the two were completely mixed. This mixture was then sprinkled once on each of the four horns of the altar of incense and seven times on the top of the altar.³ This concluded *forty three*

² A practice at the time of Christ

³ [Lev 16:18](#).

sprinklings all done carefully so as not to soil his linen garments. The High Priest has met with the Lord at western most part of the Temple before the Ark of the Covenant - He has performed the proper expiatory elements of the Day of Atonement. He now emerges from the Holy Place to meet with Israel. The remainder of the mixture of the Bull's and Goats blood is poured out at the west side of the base of the Brazen Altar - the side away from the people and towards God.

The Ceremony of the Scape-goat.

Leviticus 16:20-21 **"When he finishes atoning for the holy place, and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat. [21] "Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness. (NAS).**

Israel is standing in awe - at the thought that the High Priest has just survived facing the Most High - Jehovah in making atonement (a covering) **"... for the holy sanctuary; and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly."** (Leviticus 16:33). All this is done with the shed blood of the Bull and the Goat.

He now walks eastward towards Israel for the conclusion of the ceremony of the Day of Atonement which is carried out in two parts. He approaches the live goat and places his hands on its head and confesses the sins of the people. The goat is then led into the wilderness by someone who was where it is released. An important point is that the practice of pushing the goat off a cliff so that it would die is *not biblical*. The goat was to be released into the wilderness where it was to wander and *perhaps die* - the scape-goat was to be in the hands of God, not men ([Lev 16:10](#) - **"live before the Lord"**). The point of the Scape-goat was that Israel's sins were born away from the camp to be forgotten.

Leviticus 16:27 **"But the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire. (NAS).**

The final exercise to be performed was that the rest of the body parts and refuse of the bull and goat was to be carried outside the camp and burned up in a fire.⁴ At this point the High Priest was to wash his entire body again and don his regular priestly garments and finish with various offerings, finally after another bathing he was to don his linen garments and enter the Holiest for the forth time to retrieve the golden censor. After another washing of his hands and feet he was to remove the linen garments(which was never to be used again) put on his regular golden vestments and perform the evening rituals of trimming the lamps burning the incense, lighting the candlestick for the evening. After some more rituals he donned his ordinary clothes and was escorted by the people in procession to his own house in Jerusalem where he finished the day with a feast.

⁴ Typical of Christ being a curse for us ([Gal 3:13](#)).

The Typical Fulfillment of the Day of Atonement.

The Purpose of the Day of Atonement.

Hebrews 10:1 **For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. (NAS).**

I think it is important to remind ourselves of the whole purpose of these feasts and sacrifices. When the Lord gave Moses the plans for the original Tabernacle, He made it very clear that every detail was to be carried out.

- The whole purpose of these plans which were to be carried out was so that: **"And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them."** (Exodus 25:8, NAS). It's important to note that all the detail of the Day of Atonement was to teach that God wishes to dwell with His

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people and that they be drawn near to Himself. Let us not forget that even the carrying out of these plans pointed to another time when God would, indeed, dwell with His people and that this Old Testament reality pointed to the ultimate reality: **"And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their harlotry and by the corpses of their kings when they die,"** (Ezekiel 43:7) and again, **"And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."** (Rev. 21:3).

- We need to remember that the whole purpose of the feasts of Jehovah was not the pomp and circumstances of the feasts but in the most solemn of the feasts - the Day of Atonement God was going to do a very wonderful thing. **"And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel."** Exodus 25:22

The Weakness of the Old Testament Covenant.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (NAS, Hebrews 10:4).

The Law in and of itself cannot bring man to God. Edersheim brings up the point that the very annual exercise of the Day of Atonement and the need for the repetition of the sacrifices and application of shed blood pointed to the inadequacy of the Old Testament Law. When the High Priest applied the blood of the bull and the goat to the various articles of the Tabernacle (Temple) all these exercises pointed to another shedding of Blood - another application of Blood - Christ's Blood. The old law was weak and (in and of itself)

useless - application apart from looking down through the centuries to the time when *the* Lamb of God would be killed and *His Blood* be shed. All these exercises would have been mere vain exercises without the Lamb of God and His Shed Blood.

**Even the Careful Selection of the Bull and the Goats
Pointed to the Sinless Body of Christ That Was
Prepared by God.**

Hebrews 10:5-7 **Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired, but a body thou hast prepared for me; [6] in whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast taken no pleasure. [7] "then I said, 'behold, I have come (In the roll of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.' "**

The Son of God was made incarnate for one purpose alone - to become the Lamb of God - to shed His Blood for the sins of not only Israel but for the sins of the world. Here's an interesting quote of [Psalm 40:6](#). Rather than referring to the body of Christ the Holy Spirit refers to the ***practice of piercing the ear of the bond-slave*** who wishes to remain in his master's house.⁵ When the Holy Spirit quotes this scripture in Hebrews (through the pen of the writer of Hebrews) he expands on the servant-hood of Christ and brings in the whole body of Christ. The point of this scripture is my point in the first part of this paragraph - Jesus Christ's body was prepared for one purpose alone - to be the precious Lamb of God - to be sacrificed once and for all for the sins of the world.

**The Work of the High Priest Was Never Done,
but Christ's Work Is Finished.**

Hebrews 10:2-4 **Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? [3] But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. [4] For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (NAS).**

Year after year the Day of Atonement was performed for the cleansing of the Israelite - but there was never a sense of completion. Merely a covering of Israel's sin until the next year and then the same exercise had to be performed all over again. The ceremony of the Scape-goat should have told the Jew of God's willingness to forgive *and* forget his sin.⁶ This wonderful truth of God's forgiveness was distorted by the Jewish apostate. The goat was supposed to be released to wander in the wilderness *in the sovereignty of God* so that the sins of the Jew would be carried away, to be remembered no more. No, the Jew had to *kill* the goat by pushing it over a cliff with the superstitious idea of preventing the goat from

⁵ The NIV is especially accurate on this passage.

⁶ Psalm 103:11-12 **For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. [12] As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. (KJV).**

wandering back into the camp after the ceremony as if that would negate the mercy of God. The apostate Jew, always the slave to the ceremony - not the grateful sinner whose sins had been forgiven.

“ then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO THY WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second. [10] By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. [11] And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; [12] but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,"
Hebrews 10:9-12 (NAS).

The work of our High Priest is done! Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God has shed His Blood for our sins *and* the Jews. The High Priest of the Old Covenant had to stand. He had to go through lengthy cleansing rituals *on danger of death for disobedience* in order to even stand in the presence of God at the Mercy Seat. Even the incense was there as a thick cloud to keep him from being struck down by a Holy God.

But Jesus the impeccable Christ is worthy to stand in the very presence of God as our high priest - He is now sitting at the right hand of God, indicating that His priestly work was perfect and finished - there is no more sacrifice for sin other than the sacrifice offered up by Jesus Christ Himself in our behalf.

God's People Now Have Unlimited Access into The Holiest of Holies.

Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, [20] by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, [21] and since we have a great priest over the house of God, [22] let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. [23] Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; Hebrews 10:19-23.

When the work of Jesus Christ was finished some two thousand years ago, the veil of the temple between the Holy place and the Holiest was rent in two.⁷ Every believer has the *daily* privilege of entering in the Holiest in *confidence* where the High Priest of old entered in the Holiest *once a year, in fear*. What's more, the Day of Atonement is a celebration of not just a covering of our sins but a removal of them (as the Scape-goat was supposed to teach). In addition to that our hearts, not just our bodies, are sprinkled clean by the Blood of Christ and our bodies are washed clean with the pure water of His Word.⁸

The Grace of God has truly rained down upon us in such a way that we cannot imagine. Yet there is going to be a day when God's Grace will rain down upon Israel - that we will cover next God permitting.

⁷ Mark 15:38 “ **And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.**”

⁸ Ephes. 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, Titus 3:5 **Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;**

The Day God's Grace Rains Down on Israel.

Zech. 12:10 **"And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born."** (NAS)

It is not the purpose of this lesson to detail the future events of the return of Christ and the revival of Israel as spiritual nation. However, it is the purpose to show that Jehovah loved His people so much that He has never given up on them and that they will return to Him. Yes, they rejected their Messiah at His first coming ([John 1:11](#)). But there will come a day of national mourning when the remnant Israel will see Him in His glory as the Sovereign Messiah. There will be a home-coming that day. As Paul has said:

Romans 11:25-27 **For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; [26] and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." [27] "AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."** (NAS).

Earlier in Romans 11 Paul taught that a stupor has been placed upon Israel for the sake of the gentiles. He warned the gentile believers of the day not to be arrogant towards the Jews because of their unbelief for it was because of that unbelief that the Gospel had come to them.

Look again at our passage in Zechariah. If we read the context, we see that Zechariah 12:1-6 points to that day in the tribulation when the nations gather against Jerusalem. Vs' 7-9 describe Jehovah's defense of Jerusalem (see Isa 33:20-34:8; Zech 14:1-16). The future events are approximately this: God will raise up 144,000 Jews who will evangelize the people Israel. Millions will come to Christ as their Messiah and will be saved by His Blood. These saved, in turn will evangelize millions of gentiles who will appear before the throne of God (Rev 7:3-17; 14:1-5). But I anticipate events - at some point during the Tribulation Jerusalem will be attacked by the gentiles but Jehovah will rescue the remnant.

Terrible times for the Jews but in that day they will look upon Jesus, whom they pierced and will repent nation-wide - as Paul said; Romans 9:6 **Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Romans 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:**

And so, we will see the reproach of Israel removed - we will see the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement - Israel's sin will be removed as far as the east is from the west.