**YOM KIPPUR**

**THE DAY OF ATONEMENT**

29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in **the seventh month, on the tenth day** of the month, ye shall **afflict your souls**, and **do no work** at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: 30 For on that day shall **the priest make an atonement for you,** to cleanse you, that ye may be **clean from all your sins before the Lord.** 31 It shall be a **sabbath of rest unto you**, and ye shall **afflict your souls**, by a statute for ever. 32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: 33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, **to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.** And he did as the Lord commanded Moses. (Leviticus 16:29-34, also reference Leviticus 23:27-32 and Numbers 29:7-11)

**INTRODUCTION**

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the most solemn day in the Jewish calendar. The Bible prescribes Yom Kippur as a day of affliction (Lev 16; 23:26-32). In the ancient world, the High Priest woke up early, donned his priestly garments, and sacrificed a bull for both himself and his family. He then cast lots over two goats, choosing one for the Lord and designating the other as the goat to remove sin. **Only on this day did the High Priest enter into the Holy of Holies in the Temple to offer incense and sprinkle blood on the Ark of the Covenant.** Before concluding the sacrifices by burning both the bull and the goat, the High Priest placed blood from the Lord's goat onto the second goat. He then cast the second goat into the wilderness, thus symbolically removing Israel's sin.

In modern observance, Yom Kippur involves a **fast** from both food and drink. Many spend the entire day praying in the synagogue. During the Ten Days of Awe preceding Yom Kippur, many Jewish people give tzedakah (charity) which some consider a replacement for the animal sacrifice. A small segment of the Orthodox Jewish community practices kapparot, a ceremony in which a person waves a chicken over his head, before killing the chicken as a symbolic transfer of sin. According to tradition, the Book of Life and the Book of the Dead are closed on Yom Kippur, and the fates of those within the books are sealed for the coming year.

**Followers of Jesus the Messiah confidently look forward to eternal life,** **because our names are written in the Book of Life.** When Jesus died, the veil of the Holy of Holies ripped in two, symbolically breaking a barrier between humans and the presence of God. Previously, only the High Priest had access to this room, and he only entered it once a year on Yom Kippur (Matt. 27:51). However, **Jesus' death gives believers access to God, because He entered into the Heavenly Holy of Holies to offer His blood for our redemption (Heb 9:11-12).** Unlike the Israelites' annual sacrifices on Yom Kippur, Jesus' one sacrifice continues to provide atonement to this day. Yom Kippur, for followers of Jesus, reminds us of the **certainty of our redemption through the blood of our Messiah and High Priest, Jesus.**

Yom Kippur also reminds us of the ultimate salvation of the Jewish people. The prophet Zechariah speaks of a day when the nation of Israel will recognize her Messiah and "they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son" (Zech. 12:10). When the Jewish people recognize Messiah, as Paul writes, "All Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). The Day of Atonement thus reminds us of our own salvation and also looks forward to the salvation of Israel.

**ELEMENTS OF YOM KIPPUR**

**1) Afflicting your soul**

The word in Hebrew is “anah” (http://www.godsholydays.com/images/content/image046.gifhttp://www.godsholydays.com/images/content/image014.gifhttp://www.godsholydays.com/images/content/image004.gif) and means “to afflict, oppress, humble, be afflicted, be bowed down”.  This occurs through fasting.  God requires a fast to be humbled and afflicted on the Day of Atonement.

a) Prayer

b) Confession

c) Repentance

d) Renewal

The picture is of a lost sinner, searching for the Messiah, Jesus, finding Him, confessing and repenting their sin before Him.

**2) Sabbath**

No work is to be done on this day. There was a penalty for working on this day. “And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.” (Leviticus 23:30) The day was to be completely dedicated to God.

This is a picture of the rest we have in the Messiah.

**3) Atonement**

“To cover, purge, make reconciliation”**.** The atonement was a reconciliation of the children of Israel to their God. This happened through the blood sacrifice of the bullock and goat. The scapegoat was a picture of the sins of Israel being taken by the scapegoat.

This pictures what Jesus did on the cross. He paid the sin debt for all mankind through his blood sacrifice on the cross at Calvary. No more need for animal sacrifices.

**CONCLUSION**

Yom Kippur is:

* A day of reflection
* A day of rest
* A day of fasting
* A day of renewal
* A day of confession of sin
* A day of repentance of sin
* A day of reconciliation between man and God
* A day of atonement
* **A day of salvation**