

**Yom HaKippurim**

*Yom HaKippurim* is the holiest day of the year. To be technically correct, Scripture does not call it the "Day of Atonement" [*Yom Kippur*], but the "Day of Atonements" [*Yom HaKippurim*]. You may wonder about that. You see, bound up in that little misnomer is some significant theological error - and some profound misreading of the Apostolic Scriptures. Because many of us have been taught well regarding the substitutionary atonement of Messiah, we can sometimes miss what is happening with regard to *Yom HaKippurim*. It is all about Messiah, but maybe not in the ways that we may have previously thought. *Yom HaKippurim* was **never** about personal atonement.

If you've studied the *korbanot* [offerings] in the Torah as every good student of the Bible should, then you already may know that **none** of offerings were **ever** about permanent personal atonement. The "personal" offerings were about worship; and about receiving an atonement for the time when you were in the Tabernacle/Temple... just to keep from dying while in the Presence of the Holy One, blessed is He. That is why we hear very few of the *korbanot* called "sin" offerings or "guilt offerings." No, instead, most of the major *korbanot* were worship offerings **only**. The *korban olah*, and the *korbat shalem* were about worship. Some of the *korbanot* were for atonement, but in a corporate sense, not for individuals. Now, if that sounds odd to you, it is because you probably do not read your Bible in Hebrew. You see, in Hebrew the "you" in most of the instructions regarding atonement are **plural**. These are about the whole House of Israel. And that is what is true about *Yom HaKippurim* as well.

*"This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before HaShem. It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the Tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." And he did as HaShem commanded Moses.*

Leviticus 16:29-34

Atonement for:

- For the High Priesthood and the Priests
- For the Holy Sanctuary
- For the Tabernacle
- For the Altar
- The assembly (the people, plural)

No personal atonement. It is **not** about "getting your sins forgiven" for the year. Notice atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, the Tabernacle, and the Altar. Did they "sin?" Of course not. Beloved, pay attention because this will help unravel 1,900 years of bias against the Temple and the *korbanot*. *Yom HaKippurim* was about keeping the Place of the Almighty's abode holy, thereby making it a place for His Presence to dwell. After all, that is what the Tabernacle and the later Temple were for. Not simply a "dwelling place" but a Place where He could dwell **among His people**. For that to happen, the Place had to be sanctified each year. It was not about taking away sin - it was about cleansing the Temple. While the statute is **eternal**, the cleansing **effect** was temporal. That is what the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches as well:

*For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies [present tense] for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Messiah, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to G-d, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living G-d?*

Hebrews 9:13-14

Notice the comparative statement? It compares the fact that the offerings **do** sanctify (make holy). They make the **outside** holy. Because that is a true statement, **how much more** is there eternal **internal** cleansing through the blood of the Perfect Offering, Messiah Himself?

*Yom HaKippurim worked*. If there was a Temple today, **it would work**. That does not diminish the atoning work of Messiah, it confirms it. Messiah's atoning work takes away sin - permanently - from the individual. *Yom HaKippurim sanctifies* and **purifies**, but does not **take away** sin from the corporate body and the Place of His abode, the Holy Temple. May it be rebuilt soon and in our days!

So, what does *Yom HaKippurim* mean for us these days, when we have no Temple? First, the commands are **eternal**. That means we cannot simply say, "Old Law - No Foul" - that is the antithesis of faith. Our G-d is unchanging, although the world around us changes. We cannot observe *Yom HaKippurim corporately* as we were commanded. There is no Temple. There is no sanctified Priesthood because there are no Ashes of the Red Heifer. HaShem's promises are clear - these we will one day have again, as we enjoy the Presence of the Almighty in His City of Jerusalem.

Until then, we have only the personal application of *Yom HaKippurim - repentance and fasting*. For twenty-five hours, beginning before sundown at the beginning of *Yom HaKippurim*, until after sundown at the end of *Yom HaKippurim*, we fast from water and food. We consider ourselves as standing before the Judge of Heaven and Earth. We forgive others who have wronged us, and we seek out those whom we have wronged. We read the Book of Jonah and consider the mercy of our G-d toward those who respond in humility and repentance. We do not bathe, nor do we put on fragrances, or wear leather. In all these things, we afflict our souls that we might consider that we are but grass before the Eternal and Holy G-d.

Beloved, we are not observing *Yom HaKippurim* to obtain forgiveness for personal sin. We are observing *Yom HaKippurim* because we have been commanded to by the Holy One of Israel. We are observing so that we may realign ourselves to the Holy G-d. We are observing in anticipation of that day when we will observe it in the Presence of Messiah in His Holy City,

Jerusalem. May it be soon, and in our days. We are observing it, because we love and fear our Creator.