

Commentary on Hebrews

Review

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DAY OF ATONEMENT

- I. **Name: Day of Atonement** - "Yom Kippur" in Hebrew. Literally: "the day of covering" – for there were global coverings accomplished on that day.
 - A. The word: "atonement" appears 16 times in chapter 16.
 - B. Yom Kippur literally means "the day of covering"
 - C. Therefore it is richly symbolic and prophetic of the work of Jesus Christ.
- II. **It Is Basically National in Thrust**
 - A. So called because both the individual and the whole nation receive the highest symbolic expression of expiation, reconciliation and atonement.

THE OBJECT, PURPOSE AND NECESSITY FOR THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

- I. **To Present Atonement for Sin as God Accounts Sin** – Not as man records his wrongs.
 - A. Man's ignorance of the Law caused many violations.
 - B. Often the sinner was not even conscious of his sin (Leviticus 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:15, 17).
 - C. Did not change the need for atonement.
 - D. Reveals in man the lack of devotion our God deserves.
- II. **To Reveal the Inadequacies of the Sacrificial System and the Insufficiency of the Daily Sacrifices** – To convince Israel their sacrificial system was not really dealing with the sin problem at all.
 - A. Utter insufficiency of daily sacrifices to cover daily sins.
 - B. Aggravated by lack of knowledge of Law, poor memory, good intentions, neglect or indifference to sin.
 - C. Not enough animals or priests to cover everyone.
 - D. Establishing a "systematic prophecy of Christ" who would adequately take care of their sins.
 - E. Built in evidence of their ineffective sacrifices.
- III. **The Holiness of God Vindicated and Defended**
 - A. Every sin must be atoned for before the worshiper is accepted by God.
 - B. And God's "residence among sinful men" must be cleared of any contamination by association – Leviticus 16:16, 19.
- IV. **The Whole System Foreshadowed Christ** – Stresses the total dependence of God's people upon the finished work of Calvary – yet in the future as to time, but very visible in these ceremonies in prophecy.
 - A. The sacrifices will foreshadow that work of Christ.
 - B. For both Aaron and the multiple sacrifices of that day only foreshadowed the total ministry and sacrifice of Christ.
 - C. So does the High Priest foreshadow the Christ.
- V. **To Send the Accumulation of a Year of Sins to the Cross**
 - A. This was symbolized by the scapegoat.
 - B. Symbolized the sin-bearing mission of Christ.

Continuation

The Day of Atonement

CONCEPT OF THEIR SINS BEING “ROLLED FORWARD” IS WRONG

- I. The idea of "rolling forward" the sins of the people for another year is totally foreign to both Leviticus and the book of Hebrews.
- II. **Implications of “Rolling Forward”** – This would imply their daily Sin Offering DID have some power to forgive TEMPORARILY, and that the Day of Atonement sacrifices DID move those sins one year closer to the cross.
- III. **Refutation of This Concept** – Hebrews 10:1 in reference to their “*sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year*” could not “*make perfect.*”
 - A. Hebrews 9:9-10 says those sacrifices of the Day of Atonement did not “*clear the conscience of the worshiper*” for they were only “*a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings--external regulations applying until the time of the new order*”
 - B. Besides Hebrews 10:4 assures us animal blood cannot remove sin:
[Hebrews 10:4 NIV](#) *It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*
 - C. Those sacrifices could only “*sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean*” (Hebrews 9:13).
 - D. Those sacrifices “*are an annual reminder of sins*” not their removal even for a temporary period of time (Hebrews 10:3).
 - E. All those sacrifices were merely “*SHADOWS*” of the future reality sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 10:1).
 1. Shadow sacrifices can only give shadow forgiveness.
 2. Christ’s sacrifice alone can “*make perfect forever*” (Hebrews 9:14).
 - F. The Hebrews only symbolically transferred their sins to their victims.

THE NECESSITY OF BLOOD FOR ATONEMENT

Hebrews 9:22 says, “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. And that ‘ACCORDING TO THE LAW’ of Moses.”

- I. **Those Sacrifices Were Necessary for Forgiveness, but Not the Source of Their Forgiveness**
 - A. In the same way “*baptism now saves us*” (1 Peter 3:21).
 - B. We are not saved by a tub of water – but cannot be saved without it.
 - C. It is at the baptistery that we come into contact with the blood of Christ that cleanses our sins. We get into Christ and are united with Him... Romans 6:3, 5; Ephesians 1:7
 - D. In the same way the Hebrew, through his sacrifices, came into contact with the blood of Christ.
 - E. It was not the shedding of the animals blood that granted forgiveness.
- II. **Forgiveness Under the Old Law** – When God forgave their sins it was in view of the Cross.
 - A. He wrote a promissory note, an IOU against Calvary. Hebrews 9:15 says, “*Christ died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*”
 - B. Christ’s death redeemed those IOU’s for God. In the cross, God showed he was right in passing over sins committed back then and today (Romans 3:25).

- III. **Omniscience of God Is Seen in Forgiveness** – In both the Old Testament and the New Testament.
 - A. In His foreknowledge of the cross, He forgave them before the cross.
 - B. In His foreknowledge of our sins afterward, He sent Jesus to the cross. Our sins: past, present, and future were covered at Calvary.
- IV. **The Timelessness of God’s Grace** – There was as much grace and mercy available under the Old Testament times as there is under New Testament times.
 - A. But for them it was not through the Law – so states Romans 1:17 and 3:21 – such "righteousness" was "apart from the law"
 - B. **Romans 10:4 NIV** Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be **righteousness for everyone who believes.**
 - 1. But the law of justification by faith did not begin with the New Covenant
 - 2. Habakkuk 2:4 stated that "the righteous shall live by faith"
 - 3. Romans 4:2 says that even Abraham was made righteous by the law of faith
 - 4. And David pronounced the same blessing upon men under the Law who live by faith – Romans 4:6-8; Psalm 32:1-3
 - C. And that grace has the same source – the Cross of Christ. Jesus was foreknown as “*the lamb of God before the foundation of the world*” (1 Peter 1:20).
 - D. Calvary has always been available to God, whether in God’s mind before it happened or in fact after.
 - E. They in Old Testament times just did not have the information we now have – but they acted on faith, just as we!

THE AWARENESS OF FORGIVENESS UNDER THE LAW

- I. **The Hebrews Knew They Were Forgiven, and Enjoyed it as We Do**
(Leviticus 1:4; 4:20, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, etc.)
 - A. Even before the Law. “*Abraham believed God, and was justified by his faith*” (Genesis 15:6).
 - B. God does not record the sin of His people who are faithful to Him (Psalms 32:1-11).
 - C. In 2 Samuel 12:13 - Nathan informs sinful, penitent David - "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die", even if other dire consequences were to happen to David and his family.
 - D. Psalm 51 – a Psalm of repentance and assured forgiveness
 - E. All this Psalm is praise for forgiveness (Psalm 103).
 - 1. **Psalms 103:10 NIV** ...he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
 - 2. **Psalms 103:12 NIV** ...as far as the east is from the west, so far has he **removed our transgressions** from us.
 - F. **Micah 7:19 NIV** You will again have compassion on us; you will **tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.** (Micah 7:18-20).
 - G. As will be seen at the end of this study on the Day of Atonement – Israel knew its sins were placed on the head of the Goat for *Azazel* (scape goat – the goat of removal) and sent "out of the camp" – Leviticus 16:22