

DAY OF ATONEMENT

1. The Day of Atonement occurs on the tenth day of the seventh month.

- a. **Le 16:29** 29 ...It shall be a statute to you [Israel] forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month....
- b. **Le 23:27** 27 ...On the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement.
- c. **Le 23:32** 32 On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath.
- d. **Nu 29:7** 7 On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation and afflict yourselves.
- e. It follows the Feast of Trumpets by ten days and precedes the Feast of Booths by four days.

2. On this day, Israel is to afflict herself and do no work.

- a. **Le 16:29-31** 29 ...It shall be a statute to you [Israel] forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves and shall do no work, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you. ...31 It is a Sabbath of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict yourselves. It is a statute forever.
- b. **Le 23:27-32** 27 [The Day of Atonement] shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to Yahweh. 28 And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before Yahweh your God. 29 For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. 30 And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. 31 You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. 32 It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves.
- c. **Nu 29:7** 7 On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation and afflict yourselves. You shall do no work....

3. The high priest first offers a bull to atone for himself and his house.

- a. The high priest first bathes in water and puts on his holy garments.
 - (1) **Le 16:4** 4 He shall put on the holy linen coat and shall have the linen undergarment on his body. And he shall tie the linen sash around his waist and wear the linen turban. These are the holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on.
 - (2) **Le 16:32** 32 ...The priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments.
- b. Then he comes into the Holy Place with a bull and ram.
 - (1) **Le 16:3** 3 ...In this way Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull from the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.
- c. The offering of the bull atones for the high priest and his house.
 - (1) **Le 16:6** 6 Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make atonement for himself and for his house.
 - (2) **Le 16:11** 11 Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall kill the bull as a sin offering for himself.

- d. He sprinkles the blood of the bull on the front of the mercy seat seven times.
 - (1) **Le 16:12-14** 12 ...[Aaron] shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before Yahweh, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small. And he shall bring it inside the veil 13 and put the incense on the fire before Yahweh, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is over the testimony, so that he does not die. 14 And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat on the east side. And in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.
- e. Only the high priest goes.
 - (1) **He 9:7** 7 ...Into the second [section of the tent, the Most Holy Place] only the high priest goes, and he but once a year [on the Day of Atonement], and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.

4. The high priest then offers one of two goats to atone for Israel.

- a. The high priest casts lots over two goats, one for Yahweh and one for Azazel.
 - (1) **Le 16:5-8** 5 And he shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. ...7 Then he shall take the two goats and set them before Yahweh at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for Yahweh and the other lot for Azazel.
- b. The goat for Yahweh is used as a sin offering.
 - (1) **Le 16:9** 9 And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for Yahweh and use it as a sin offering.
- c. The offering of this goat atones for the people of Israel.
 - (1) **Le 16:15** 15 Then [Aaron] shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.
 - (2) **He 9:6-25** 7 ...Into the second [section of the tent, the Most Holy Place] only the high priest goes, and he but once a year [on the Day of Atonement], and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.
- d. Additional offerings are necessary.
 - (1) **Nu 29:8-11** 8 ...You shall offer a burnt offering to Yahweh, a pleasing aroma: one bull from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old—see that they are without blemish. 9 And their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah for the bull, two tenths for the one ram, 10 a tenth for each of the seven lambs: 11 also one male goat for a sin offering, besides the sin offering of atonement, the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

5. The goat for Azazel is sent away into the wilderness.

- a. **Le 16:10** 10 ...The goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before Yahweh to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.
- b. This goat bears Israel's sins to a remote area.

- (1) **Le 16:20-22** 20 ... When [Aaron] has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he shall present the live goat. 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. 22 The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.
 - (a) This action depicts a transfer of sin.
- c. Who or what is Azazel?
 - (1) אַזַּזֵּל: “a demon of the wilderness” (*HALOT*, 806).
 - (a) Enoch 8:1; 9:6
 - (2) A Second Temple tradition (m. Yoma 6:6) suggests the goat was pushed over a cliff or led to a mountain where it was destroyed.¹
- 6. The purpose is to cleanse Israel from all her sins for another year.**
 - a. **Le 16:30** 30 On this day shall atonement be made for you [Israel] to cleanse you. You shall be clean before Yahweh from all your sins.
 - (1) **Le 23:28** 28 ... It is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before Yahweh your God.
 - b. The bull and goat offerings make atonement for the Holy Place, the tent of meeting, and the altar.
 - (1) **Le 16:16-19** 16 ... [Aaron] shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. 17 No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out and has made atonement for himself, for his house, and for all the assembly of Israel. 18 Then he shall go out to the altar that is before Yahweh and make atonement for it. And shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. 19 And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.
 - c. It is a national fresh start for Israel every year.
 - (1) **Le 16:33-34** 33 [The high priest] shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34 And this shall be a statute forever for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins.
 - d. The Day of Atonement sacrifices remind Israel of sins every year.
 - (1) **He 10:1-14** 1 ... Because the Torah has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers,

¹ *The Moody Bible Commentary*, 200.

having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? 3
But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

7. Israel's holy jubilee occurs every fiftieth year on the Day of Atonement.

- a. **Le 25:8-13** 8 You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. 9 Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you. In it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. 12 For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field. 13 In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property.

8. The Day of Atonement is Israel-centric. It signifies the day when she will recognise Jesus as the Messiah and be restored to her place as chief of the nations.

- a. A fountain will cleanse Israel from sin and uncleanness.
(1) **Zec 13:1** 1 On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.
- b. In this way all Israel will be saved.
(1) **Ro 11:25-27** 25 A partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, The Deliverer [Jesus] will come from Zion. He will banish ungodliness from Jacob. 27 And this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.
- c. Israel will come near to Jesus on that day.
(1) **Ge 45:1-15** 1 ...Joseph [typifying Jesus] could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, Make everyone go out from me. So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers [typifying Israel]. 2 And he wept aloud [a day of affliction, typifying the Day of Atonement], so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. 3 And Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph! Is my father still alive? But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. 4 So Joseph said to his brothers, Come near to me, please. And they came near. And he said, I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt [typifying the earth]. 9 Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me. Do not tarry. 10 You shall dwell in the land of Goshen [typifying the Feast of Booths and the land of Israel], and you shall be near me,

you, your children, your children's children, your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 11 There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty. 12 And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. 13 You must tell my father of all my honour in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here. 14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15 And he [typifying Jesus] kissed all his brothers [typifying Israel] and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

9. Observing the annual Day of Atonement is optional for Gentile believers.

- a. Jesus' redemption of us is once for all and eternal.
 - (1) As high priest he entered once for all into the holy places by his own blood.
 - (a) **He 9:11-15** 11 ...When Messiah appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. 15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
- b. Jesus has appeared once for all to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
 - (1) **He 9:25-26** ...25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then [Messiah Jesus] would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
- c. Ultimately, it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
 - (1) **He 10:4** 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Consequently, when Messiah came into the world, he said, Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me. 6 In burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.
- d. We have been set apart once for all through the offering of Jesus' body.
 - (1) **He 10:10-14** 10 ...We have been set apart through the offering of the body of Jesus Messiah once for all. ...14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being set apart.
- e. Our hearts are already sprinkled clean, and our bodies are already washed.
 - (1) **He 10:19-22** 19 ...Brothers and sisters, because we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and because we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full

assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

10. Very likely, Jesus' second coming will occur on a future Day of Atonement.

- a. During the seven-year tribulation, the nations will gather against Jerusalem.
 - (1) **Zec 12:2-3** 2 Behold, I [Yahweh] am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. 3 On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.
- b. But Yahweh himself will protect Jerusalem.
 - (1) **Zec 12:4-8** 4 On that day, declares Yahweh, I will strike every horse with panic, and its rider with madness. But for the sake of the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, when I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5 Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through Yahweh of hosts, their God. 6 On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem. 7 And Yahweh will give salvation to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah. 8 On that day Yahweh will protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of Yahweh, going before them.
- c. He will destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem.
 - (1) **Zec 12:9** 9 ...On that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.
 - (2) **Re 19:19-21** 19 ...I [John] saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against [Jesus] who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.
- d. At that time, Israel will mourn on Jesus, whom they have pierced.
 - (1) **Zec 12:10-14** 10 ...I [Yahweh] will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me [Jesus], on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. 11 On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12 The land shall mourn, each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; 13 the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by

themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves; 14 and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.

- e. Israel will acknowledge her guilt and earnestly seek Yahweh.
 - (1) **Hos 5:15** 15 I [Yahweh] will return again to my place, until they [Israel] acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me.
- f. Jerusalem will say, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
 - (1) **Mt 23:37-39** 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I [Jesus] have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

11. Observing Yom Kippur Today.²

- a. Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year, when Jews believe they are closest to G-d and to the essence of their souls.
 - (1) It take place on the 10th day of Tishrei (in **2022**, from several minutes before sunset on **Tuesday, Oct. 4**, until after nightfall on **Wednesday, Oct. 5**).
 - (2) It comes after Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year, which is on the first and second days of Tishrei).
- b. Before Yom Kippur.
 - (1) **Forty days before Yom Kippur**, on the first of Elul, Jews begin blowing the *shofar* every morning and reciting Psalm 27 after the morning and afternoon prayers.
 - (2) For **the week before Yom Kippur** (known as the 10 Days of Repentance), special additions are made to prayers, and Jews are particularly careful with their mitzvah observance. If they have offended or hurt someone, they are to go and **ask for forgiveness**. If they are carrying any grudges, they are to sincerely and wholeheartedly let them go.
 - (3) Many have the custom to immerse in a *mikvah* on this day.
 - (4) Extra charity is given. Special charity trays are set up at the synagogue before the afternoon service.
 - (5) Just before the fast begins, the children are blessed with the priestly blessing.
- c. On Yom Kippur.
 - (1) For nearly 26 hours Jews “afflict their souls” by avoiding the following five actions:
 - (a) **Eating** or **drinking**.
 - (b) Wearing **leather** shoes.
 - (c) Applying **lotions** or creams.
 - (d) **Washing** or bathing.
 - (e) Engaging in conjugal relations.
 - (2) Like Shabbat, no work is to be done.
 - (3) Special holiday candles are lit before the onset of the holy day.

² See Chabad.org, “How to Celebrate Yom Kippur.”

- (a) All women and girls light candles at least 18 minutes before sunset and recite the following blessings:
 - 1) Blessed are You, L-rd, our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the light of Yom Kippur.
 - 2) Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.
 - (4) The day is spent in the synagogue, where Jews hold five prayer services:
 - (a) **Maariv**, with its solemn Kol Nidrei service, on the eve of Yom Kippur.
 - (b) **Shacharit**, the morning prayer, which includes a reading from Leviticus followed by the Yizkor memorial service.
 - (c) **Musaf**, which includes a detailed account of the Yom Kippur Temple service.
 - (d) **Minchah**, which includes the reading of the Book of Jonah.
 - (e) **Neilah**, the “closing of the gates” service at sunset, followed by the shofar blast marking the end of the fast.
 - (5) Beyond specific actions, Yom Kippur is dedicated to introspection, prayer and asking G-d for forgiveness. Even during the breaks between services, it is appropriate to recite Psalms at every available moment.
- d. After Yom Kippur.
- (1) After Yom Kippur, after night has fallen, a service ends with the resounding cries of the Shema prayer: “Hear O Israel: G-d is our L-rd, G-d is one.”
 - (2) Then the congregants erupt in joyous song and dance, after which a single blast is blown on the shofar, followed by the proclamation, “Next year in Jerusalem.”
 - (3) Jews then partake of a festive meal, making the evening after Yom Kippur a *yom tov* (festival).
 - (4) Although Yom Kippur is the most solemn day of the year, it is suffused with an undercurrent of joy. It expresses confidence that G-d will accept the Jews’ repentance, forgive their sins, and seal the verdict for a year of life, health, and happiness.
 - (5) After Yom Kippur, Jews immediately begin planning construction of the sukkah, which they will use for the holiday of Sukkot, which follows just five days later.

