

SEPTEMBER

THE JEWISH HIGH HOLY DAYS – ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR

The most solemn religious days for our Jewish people are Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. These Holy Days come in September or early October. The ten days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur are days of heart searching when Jewish people throughout the world are to consider their lives before God during the past year. On the Day of Atonement, observant Jews seek God's forgiveness for their sins. Present day services are patterned after the instructions of Rabbis who set up the Day of Atonement observance after the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.

The God of Israel, through the Law given by God through Moses, gave specific instructions concerning the Day of Atonement. In the Torah, in Leviticus (the third book of Moses), chapter 16 gives us the order of service whereby our Jewish people were forgiven of their sins. They were to confess their sins before the God of Israel and ask His forgiveness. When the specified animals were slain and the blood of the sacrifice was put on the altar in the Jewish Tabernacle and later the Temple, God forgave their sins. This blood of atonement was offered once a year on Yom Kippur for the sins of the people as a nation.

In addition to the Great Day of Atonement for the people of Israel, there were daily sacrifices offered for sins to be forgiven throughout the year. In Leviticus, chapter 5, verses 5-10, we read of God's instructions for Jewish people to be forgiven of their sins during the year.

Verse 5 – ***“And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing.”***

Verse 6 – ***“And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of goats, for a sin-offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.”***

Verse 7 – ***“And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, for which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.”***

Verse 8 – ***“And he shall bring them unto the priest (the Jewish priest at the Tabernacle or Temple), who shall offer that which is for the sin-offering...”***

Verse 9 – ***“And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin-offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin-offering.”***

Verse 10 – **“And he shall offer the second for a burnt-offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.”** The person knew that his or her sins were forgiven.

In Leviticus, chapter 16, verses 15-16 and 29-30, we find the command of God concerning Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement and how it was to be observed by Israel.

Verse 15 – **“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat.”**

Verse 16 – **“And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins...”**

Verse 29 – **“And this shall be a statute forever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do not work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you.”**

Verse 30 - **“For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.”**

In Leviticus, chapter 17, verse 11 we read: **“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”**

The words of the God of Israel through Moses are very clear concerning how we are to be forgiven of our sins. There must be the blood of atonement according to God’s instructions. We all sin, for the Word of God says so in Ecclesiastes, chapter 7, verse 20: **“For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not.”** Though a person might be considered **“just”** or **“good”**, everyone has sinned in some way. We all need God’s forgiveness of our sins so that we might have His peace in this life and be assured of eternity in Heaven after death.

Where is the blood of atonement today? We do not have it on Yom Kippur and not during the year. Since the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., and there is no place to offer the blood of atonement, Judaism teaches that on Yom Kippur we are to ask for God’s forgiveness of our sins of the past year, fast for 24 hours to show our sincerity and give to charity and the place where we worship. Is this what God says we should do? No! There is no place in the Jewish Bible where the God of Israel has given men and women the right to change His law and commands. God can change them, but not people.

Since it is impossible for us to offer the blood of atonement today, how then can we be forgiven of our sins according to God's instructions?

Almighty God knew that the Jewish Temple would be destroyed in 70 A.D. In God's writings through the Jewish man of God, Daniel (Daniel, chapter 9, verses 24-27), the events of 70 A.D. were foretold along with the plan of God whereby we can be forgiven of our sins today. God would send His Messiah to earth to provide the blood of atonement for all people.

In the writings of the major Jewish prophet, Isaiah, about 700 B.C., we read in Isaiah, chapter 53, verses 5-12: ***“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he openeth not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people he was stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great...because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”*** For a detailed study of this tremendous prophecy in the Jewish Holy Scriptures, listen to my audio on Isaiah 53 or read articles on this website.

When this chapter in God's Word is understood with many other prophecies in the Jewish Bible, we know that Isaiah 53 foretells the coming of Messiah Jesus to earth to die and be resurrected to provide the blood of atonement for us to be forgiven of our sins. I know this is true, for it has been my experience for over 65 years as a Jewish Bible believer since I put my trust in God's plan for my life in Jesus our Jewish Messiah. And yes, I am still Jewish!

See God and ask Him to show you His truth for your life for today and eternity. As the Jewish man of God wrote in Jeremiah, chapter 29, verse 13: ***“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”***