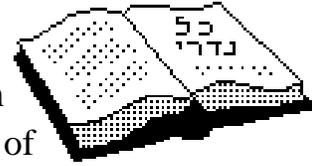


יום הכּפּוּרִים

Yom HaKippurim - Day of Atonement

Previously we looked at the first festival of the fall cycle, G-d's appointed time called Rosh HaShanah or Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah). Nine days following Rosh HaShanah is Yom Kippur, known in Hebrew as the Day of Atonement (Lev 16; 23:26-32). On this day and this day only the Cohen HaGadol (High Priest) could enter the Most Holy Place and put the blood of the sacrifice upon the HaAron HaKodesh, the Holy Ark or the Ark of the Covenant.



The nine days between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are designed to give one the necessary time to repent and ask forgiveness first of G-d, and then of those they have sinned against. It is a time appointed by HaShem Himself for us to consider how we have treated others, and to seek forgiveness.

We who believe that Yeshua is the Messiah can rest in knowing that His atoning work assures us of forgiveness of sin. His death and resurrection provided atonement once and for all, fulfilling the picture to which each and every sacrifice pointed. We know that Yeshua as our Cohen HaGadol appears before HaShem on our behalf, just as in days of old the Cohen HaGadol entered the Most Holy place on behalf of the entire nation of Israel.

Since the destruction of the Temple, traditional Judaism has substituted prayer, fasting, good deeds, and charity for sacrifice, believing that G-d accepts these deeds in the place of sacrifice. While all these are commendable, they cannot replace the need for the finished atonement of Yeshua as the Lamb of G-d.

Five traditions that have surrounded Yom Kippur are 1) Fasting—All those 13 and above fast on the ninth of Tishri (from sundown on the ninth to sundown on the tenth). 2) Kol Nidre—This phrase means “all vow.” Prayers asking for forgiveness for vows which have been broken by accident are offered to G-d. During the Kol Nidre service it is traditional to wear white and the Torah is covered in white, symbolic of purifying one's life before HaShem. 3) Yizkor—Yom Kippur, like other festivals, is a special time to honor the memory of family and friends who have died in the past year. 4) Jonah—During the afternoon service the book of Jonah is read and studied since it teaches about G-d's mercy and forgiveness (even to Gentiles). 5) The Shofar—On Yom Kippur the shofar is blown for one long blast at the close of the day. This marks the end of Yom Kippur and the fast.