

The Sanctuary –Day of Atonement

ST Series 27

DOA – (Leviticus 16)

“The Day of Atonement was the great day in Israel. It was peculiarly holy, and on it no work was to be done. The Jews called it *Yoma*, The Day. It was the keystone of the sacrificial system. Whoever did not on that day afflict his soul was cut off from Israel. (Lev 23:29)

The Day of Atonement occurred on the tenth of the seventh month, Tishri, which corresponds to our September-October. The special preparation for this day began on the first day of Tishri.

Before we focus specifically on the activities of the most important Day in Israel, let us re-examine the daily service bringing us to the DOA.

Daily Service

As we’ve learned from the sanctuary study, that the ‘Daily Service’ is the activities of the priests and the repentant Israelites who brought their sacrifice to the temple. The daily service involved the transfer of sin from sinner to the innocent sacrifice and “the **blood** representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose quilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil (of the Most Holy)...By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, _____ in figure to the Sanctuary.” (GC 418) [emphasis supplied]

The Lord’s purpose was that **these crimson records** of sins should remain untouched in the Tabernacle throughout the year. It was final and irrefutable testimony that the sins registered on the veil in the holy place had been _____ and stood forever _____ before Him.

This evidence was safely guarded in the very presence of God in case “the accuser of the brethren” (Rev 12:10; Zech 3:1, margin) ever brought them up.

But God also considered that these **blood** records, defiled the Sanctuary. Thus, God designed that this **purification** should be carried out on the Day of Atonement. On the DOA, the “annual reminder” of these sins were to be blotted out. (Heb 10:3 Moffatt tr.) The Apostle Paul’s “reminder” is used to describe the purpose of:

- 1 –The Breastplate of Judgment (Ex.28:29)
- 2 –the Two Onyx stones on the high priest’s shoulders (Ex.28:12)
- 3 –the Book of Remembrance employed by the Judge (Mal 3:16)
(when completing his collection of jewels)

This is an allusion to the classes of persons represented by the gems on the high priest’s breastplate.

The overruling idea in this term has to do with **supplying evidence** on which the judgment might be based.

As we are beginning to discern, significant theological and practical truths come to focus through the rites and ceremonies performed on the Day of Atonement.

These complicated Day of Atonement rites "**cleansed**" (Lev 16:19, 30) both the Sanctuary and God's people, while all *who refused to participate* were "**cut off**" (Lev 23:29) from His covenant people. These twin decisions are of **vital importance**, for they were juridical and final:

The first vindicated the conduct of the worshipers whose sins had been registered as forgiven, "open beforehand, going before to judgment" (1 Tim 5:24), and which were covered by the blood of the daily sacrifice, while

The second validated the **just** doom of the indifferent and finally rebellious, *{remember these are those who also claimed to be the people of God}* but whose sins were not confessed, and not forsaken and consequently unforgiven and unable to be cleansed.

The first group was "**cleansed**," while the second was "cut off." These sentences were symbolically pronounced by the *specific acts* of the **high priest** who played the role of both the mediator and the judge during the Day of Atonement.

Preparation – The Feast of Trumpets

On the first day of Tishri the Lord established the Feast of Trumpets. As its name suggests, the blare of the shofar, or ram's horn, started by the priests and swelled on the lips of every Israelite who chose to make the call, alerted the people to the approaching crisis on Yom Kippur, the Jewish name for the Day of Atonement.

Israel was taught that ten days later, on "Cover-up Day," the meaning of Yom Kippur (Rosh Hashanah 1:2), the Divine Judge, having scrutinized each case as a shepherd examines his sheep, would pass sentence. During these "ten days of penitence" "many pious Jews prepared themselves for these moving ceremonies by _____, and _____ (cf. Lev 23:27; Num 29:7)

The Lord's precise dating of Israel's judgment on the Day of Atonement in the ritual calendar was the concept which alerted later students of prophecy to the equally precise announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come" (Rev 14:7). This moment occurred on the antitypical Day of Atonement which fell at the end of the 2300th prophetic "evening morning" Sanctuary cleansing ceremony (Dan 8:14).

DOA – Typical of Last Day Events

The Lord required that Yom Kippur be observed as a "**sabbath of rest**" (Lev 16:31), and urged every worshiper to "**afflict his soul**" (bow down or humble self, Ps 35:13; 69:10) by disciplining his appetite in preparation for the ceremonies (Lev 16:29, 31; 23:27, 32).

This "fast," was

- the only one prescribed in the law (Lev 16:29; 23:27-32),
- alluded to by Jeremiah as "the fasting day" (Jer 36:6; cf. Zech 7:5; 8:19), and
- emphasized by Isaiah (Isa 58:3-7; cf. CD 90, for a definition of the true fast), and
- mentioned by Luke as "the fast" (Acts 27:9),
- and clearly noted by Paul as "the day" (Heb 10:25), focuses attention on "the last days," and
- the final day of judgment (Joel 2:15-27; 3:11-17), prior to the Second Advent (see the progressive argument of Paul, Heb 9:26-28; 10:25-33).

Paul emphasized the eschatological overtones of this ritual, and urged his Christian readers to prepare themselves with increasing urgency as they observed from the fulfillment of the prophetic signs that "the day" was approaching (Heb 10:25).

An understanding of the details of the ritual of the ancient Day of Atonement will clarify our grasp of what is currently transpiring, and explain the ministry of our High Priest in His celestial Tabernacle.

High Priest's Preparation

The week prior the tenth day of the seventh month, the high priest spent in prayer and meditation and also rehearsing the ritual for the Day of Atonement, so that no mistake would be made in any of the ceremonies. Once the nation had its capital at Jerusalem under King David's reign, the high priest moved from his house in Jerusalem to the temple precincts one week before the tenth day.

The Service

Fifteen sacrificial animals were needed for the DOA, prepared the day before. Before dawn on the morning of the DOA the high priest once more examined the victims to ensure that they were flawless, "without spot, or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph.5:27). These animals were divided into two categories:

- 1) Those needed by the high priest to _____ his position as the representative of Israel.
- 2) Those which he required for his specific Day of Atonement ritual –for the cleansing of the _____ and the _____ of Israel.

The perfection of Jesus, the Sacrifice provided by God to take away the sins of the world, was thus emphasized. Since the Saviour's death accomplished a number of objectives, several sacrifices were needed to illustrate them.

The high priest himself performed all the ceremonies of the Day, including the morning and evening services. (cf. Lev 16:3,4; Num 29:11). These regular daily rituals, like familiar arms embracing the unique rites of the Day, taught the worshipers that there was no time when God would not grant them forgiveness, including on the Day of Atonement.

The Ministry of Jesus all the way through the Sanctuary
Everything was predicated on the shedding of blood

Five Things to come out that is of great significance concerning the Day of Atonement

Are we preparing ourselves to stand in the presence of a Holy and Righteous God?
Don't even touch the mountain, (Ex.19:23) because sin cannot abide in the presence of Holiness. If I'm planning to stand in the presence of a holy God, I must accept the fact that He is wanting to root out of me the very root and seed of sin.

FIRST POINT: The DOA was always preceded by Ten Days of Blowing of Trumpets
"The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven and having decided relation to God's people on earth." - CW 30

These ten days create a "shaking" so that God can finally reap the reaping.

[The Scriptures provide us with some details of the Day's activities, and the following scenario is devised with the help of additional Jewish records, mainly found in the tractate Yoma.]

SECOND POINT: During the DOA, the High Priest bathed himself and changed his garments five times, washing his hands and feet no fewer than ten times. *These acts called attention to the character of our faultless Saviour.*

THIRD POINT: At the approach of dawn the ram's horn (*shofar*) was blown, signaling the start of the Day's activities. The High Priest put off his ordinary attire, bathed and put on the "golden garments" (full regalia) and offered burnt-offering with prayer of bread and wine, also tending to the candelabra providing wicks and oil.

FOURTH POINT: In the days of Moses, Aaron, the High Priest was to wear—the common linen garments, comprising "the holy linen coat, the linen breeches upon his flesh, linen girdle And the linen mitre—these are holy garments."

In our last lesson, ST-28 we will see as recorded in the 16th chapter of Leviticus, an outline of the events of this most significant Day in Israel in the Old Testament.