

# Practical lessons from the Experience of Israel South Lancaster Printing Company, 1902.

## The Day of Atonement.

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**A**s has already been mentioned, the next solemn day given to the Israelites, was the Day of Atonement. (Lev. 23:26-28). This was the most solemn of all days of the year. Whatever the condition of the people during the year, if they would only come up to this day, and seek the Lord while the priest was ministering in the sanctuary, there was hope, pardon, salvation for them. (Lev. 16:30.) If they did not come up to the Day of Atonement they were to be cut off from among the people (Lev. 23:29, 30). The original command for this day is given as follows:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a Day of Atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath."-Lev. 23:26-32.

In addition to the regular offerings for all occasions the priest and the people were to have special sacrifices for this most solemn day (Num. 28:7-11). First, the priest was to offer sacrifices for himself and his family (Lev. 16:3, 6; Heb. 5:3), then the offerings for the people were to be rendered to the Lord (Lev. 16:5; Heb. 9:7).

There were two goats to be selected for the people on that day, and to be brought to the high priest (Lev. 16:7). Then lots were to be cast for them; one lot was to be for the Lord, and the other for the Azazel, or scapegoat (Lev. 16:7, 8), as rendered in our version. When the lots were cast, that goat which was for the Lord was offered by the high priest (Lev. 16:9; Num. 29:11). The blood of this animal was then taken into the most holy place of the sanctuary, and sprinkled before the mercy-seat, and on the mercy-seat seven times (Lev. 16:14-15). He was also to take the censer and fill it with incense (Lev. 16:12); and while he was making the atonement with the blood in the most holy place, the smoke from this incense would cover the mercy-seat, and fill the sanctuary with the sweet fragrance (Lev. 16:12, 13), while the glory of the Lord would fill the place.

**While this was being done by the high priest, the people without were fasting, praying, and earnestly seeking the Lord for the pardon and obliteration of all their sins. This**

service was conducted in behalf of all the people (Lev. 16:17). When the high priest finished this work on this day, then the **whole camp of Israel was clean**, for the man who did not comply with the command of God by fasting, praying, and affliction of soul on this day was to be cut off (Lev. 23:28-30; Num. 29:7).

### **The Day of Atonement to Israel, therefore, involved these things:**

1. The blotting out of sins. When the high priest sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat on the Day of Atonement it was to represent that all the people of Israel had transgressed the law of God, which was under the mercy-seat in the most holy place of the sanctuary, and that all were desirous of having these sins **entirely** removed. The law demanded the sinner's life (1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:23; Eze. 18:4); but the blood would cleanse and blot out the sins (1 John 1:7; Heb. 9:22); for it was through the blood that pardon was secured. The people having now received the atonement for their transgressions, and the glory of God having filled the house, which indicated that **God had accepted the offering**, the priest came out from the inner sanctuary with the sins of the people which had been accumulating all the year, as well as those which had been forgiven that day. Thus all the sins of all the people were removed that day; and the sinful record of the year was all cleansed. The blood was also sprinkled upon the vessels of the sanctuary to cleanse them (Lev. 16:16, 18, 19). In other words, the blood of this day cleansed all the people, and removed and blotted out all their sins. It also removed all uncleanness from everything connected with the sanctuary service, which had a part in the ministry for sin during the entire year. When this work in the sanctuary was finished, the priest came to the door - of, the tabernacle, and called for the other goat, the Azazel (Lev. 16:20). The priest then-laid his hands upon the head of this live goat, and confessed upon it all the sins (Lev. 16:21) which had been accumulating in the sanctuary all through the year, and which the priest had brought out with him. All these sins were then transferred to the head of this animal, which was to bear them instead of the people. Then he was led by a proper man into the wilderness (Lev. 16:22), where he was to remain till his death. Jewish writers say the animal was thrown over a steep precipice, and so died. When this day's service was accomplished, the people not only were forgiven of their sins, but in figure, or type, had them all blotted out. So that from the evening of that day they began as it were a new year's experience with the Lord. Their record was now a clean one; the atonement was completed.

### **They were purged and cleansed from all sin, and so also was the sanctuary.**

2. The cleansing of the sanctuary. As has already been mentioned the **sanctuary was also cleansed this day with the shed blood of the Lord's goat** (Lev. 16:16, 18). The reason for this was that during the year the animals which had been slain for the sins of the people had their blood brought into the holy place, by which act the records of the sins were kept. Of course this was merely typical and figurative; nevertheless these vessels and furnishings were affected by the blood which was sprinkled upon them during the year. Since the blood of the animal slain represented the sins of the sinner, as well as the life of the innocent one, these vessels shared in the work of the sins of the people. Therefore on this Day of Atonement, when the work of blotting

out of sin for the people was completed, the sanctuary also must be cleansed from sin and its effects. So when the high priest left the sanctuary that day, in type, there would be no more remembrance or thought of sin.

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