

9-21-26 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene – Yom Kippur
Torah Portion; Lev 16:1-34
Haftarah: Isa 57:14 – 58:14
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: Rev 20:11-15

Covering and Removal

Central question of this message: Are you taking advantage of the holiness of this day to draw closer yet to G-d?

Tonight we enter the holiest day in G-d's calendar, Yom Kippur. It is commonly called the "Day of Atonement", but that Hebrew phrase actually literally means "Day of Covering".

It is customary to depart from the regular Torah scheduled reading for this day, and read the 16th chapter of Leviticus.

Lev 16:29-34

29 "And this shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls, and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; **30 for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you shall be clean from all your sins before the Lord. 31 It is to**

be a sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute. 32 So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments, 33 and make atonement for the holy sanctuary; and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34 Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so he did.

Ten days ago, on Rosh Hashana, we heard 100 blasts of the shofar. The first 99 of those blasts, call us to action. We are cautioned to beware of further sin, to search-out our past sin, to begin the process of repentance from those sins.

We are first to get right with others, so that we can then be right with G-d. If you still have baggage, unresolved issues of sin, with your brother or sister, today is the day to get that issue resolved, if possible. It's not too late.

I called my children home from playing with the shofar.

We know that our people have always equated the shofar to the voice of G-d. That association is easy to make. We find it in Ex 19:16 – 20:18 where the giving of the “ten words” was associated with the shofar from heaven. The shofar of G-d was heard at the giving of the Torah at Mt. Horeb. It will be sounded once again when Yeshua returns.

You remember that the final blast of the shofar service during Rosh Hashana is unique. It is blown only once, and it’s always the final blast. It’s called the *tekiah godolah* (great blast, or better “great voice”). It is the longest blast.

I believe that the final blast from heaven represents the voice of G-d calling us out of this world... calling us home.

Paul made that very same association in his letter to the congregation at Corinth, as he clearly referenced the heavenly shofar that will be sounded one day soon.

1 Cor 15:51-54

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an

eye, at **the last trumpet** (final shofar blast); for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

And Paul expands upon this theme in his letter to the congregation at Thessalonica.

1 Thess 4:15-18

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout (Heb. teruah), with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet (shofar) of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.** 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Our people believe that the blast of the shofar, when used appropriately, opens gates in heaven.

There is one more time during this season that the *tekiah godolah* is sounded. That is the blast blown as night falls at the end of Yom Kippur. That will be some 23 hours from now. I hope you will be here to hear it.

That final blast, sounded at the close of Yom Kippur, is believed to signify the closing of the gates of repentance in heaven, and the beginning of G-d's day of judgment.

So, in accordance with the traditional beliefs of our people, the 99 blasts of the shofar at Rosh Hashana open the gates of repentance in heaven, and with the one *tekiah godolah* at the end of Yom Kippur, the gates are closed.

Scripture is clear that G-d doesn't close His ears the rest of the year to our prayers, and our repentance unto restoration. G-d does not close to us the ladder upon which the angels of G-d ascend and descend, carrying our prayers and His answers at any time during our lives.

Yeshua made it clear that He is the ladder that our father Yacov saw in a vision recorded at Gen 28:12.

John 1:48-51

48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." 51 And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Regardless of the pathway for our prayers being opened before G-d at all times, what the shofar blasts of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur signify and represent *is quite real*.

The calendar as set forth by G-d in Lev 23 is rich with prophetic meaning. Their layout in the yearly calendar, and even their timing, provides for us a roadmap of the progression of the plan of G-d for eternal redemption.

Each of the festivals marks an important event in G-d's plan, and each has been fulfilled by an unmistakable spiritual fulfillment in its proper order.

All the spring festivals have already been fulfilled by important kingdom events. We now await the spiritual fulfillment of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Succot, and Channukkah.

The reality behind the spiritual fulfillment of Yom Kippur is that after the shofar of Yom Teruah sounds, only a short time remains where those left behind are given a chance to accept Yeshua. Then the judgment will come.

On that day, the gates of repentance will indeed close and no further prayer or repentance will be effectual.

Isa 55:6-7

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found;
Call upon Him while He is near.

7 Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;
And let him return to the Lord,
And He will have compassion on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.

Our people believe that this passage speaks of the days between Yom Teruah (Rosh Hashana) and the last shofar blast of Yom Kippur. We believe that after the gates of repentance close in Heaven, then G-d “cannot be found” in the traditional manner.

I wish to focus now on a couple of very important aspects of this day, and the duties of the priests as set out in Leviticus 16.

Lev 16:1-10

Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the Lord and died. **2 And the Lord said to Moses, "Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. 3 Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 4** He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash, and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on. **5 And he shall take from the congregation of the sons**

of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. 6 Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household. 7 "And he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the Lord fell, and make it a sin offering. 10 But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

The first thing I want to examine is the prohibition against entering the “holy of holies” at any other time than this day, and then only one special person (the High Priest) may go into this location to encounter G-d.

Why on this day? I believe I have an answer.

It is on this day that the entire nation of Israel is to stop doing what they did every other day, and spend their time fasting and repenting before G-d.

Our people believe that we are all connected with one another, and when one of us falls, our collective knees are skinned.

But have you stopped to consider that the *corollary proposition* is also true?

When we all – as a nation – fall on our faces before G-d in repentance, then He is faithful to cleanse us of all unrighteousness – and the collective holiness of the people makes G-d *more accessible to all of us* (to include the High Priest).

We get a hint of this dynamic from the Chronicles.

2 Chron 7:13-16

13 If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, 14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. **15 Now My eyes shall be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place.**

On Yom Kippur, as the entire nation is fasting and praying, I believe that heaven draws very close to the earth, and our holiness permits G-d to approach us closer as well.

The collective holiness of the people is attributed to the High Priest, and after making his offerings, he is now pure enough to step before G-d without the normal distance that would keep him safe, and alive.

This is a precursor to how things will be in the coming Temple where Yeshua will reign on earth. In the first temples, there were circles of holiness which could not be breached. There was a Court of the Gentiles, then a Court of the Women, then the Court of Israel, then the Holy Place, and finally, the Holy of Holies.

Depending on your level of sanctification and holiness, you could approach G-d as far as the barriers of the next circle, but no further.

But if you read closely of the courts of the Temple in which Yeshua will sit as King, as described in Ezek 40-45, you will see there is no longer a “Court of the Gentiles.” Why is that? There are no longer any such people. There are only “people of G-d” in this place. That body consists of those

Jews who have come to faith, and also those from among the nations who have been “grafted-in” to the rich cultivated olive tree.

The special phrase, “Holy to the L-rd” is emblazoned upon the golden crown worn by the High Priest when he steps into the Holy of Holies (see Ex 28:36).



But the holiness of this Temple, and of this kingdom will be so intense that it will also now be written on the bells of unkosher horses (see Zech 14:20) who are pulling loads.

How can that level of sanctification and holiness be possible? Because the evil people on the earth are now dead and the only people that are left are those who worship G-d in truth and holiness.

Isa 66:22-24

22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth
Which I make will endure before Me," declares the Lord,
"So your offspring and your name will endure.
23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon
And from sabbath to sabbath,
All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the
Lord.
24 "Then they shall go forth and look
On the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm shall not die,
And their fire shall not be quenched;
And they shall be an abhorrence to all mankind."

This dramatic increase in holiness among G-d's remnant people then makes unnecessary the various circles of holiness as found in the first temple, and the breathtaking holiness which has been characteristic of the

Holy of Holies is now common in all of the city. The holiness of the Garden of Eden will be restored in large part, and Yeshua will once again walk with us in the evening breezes. What a time that will be!

Let's look at the second exciting aspect of Yom Kippur – the “scapegoat.”

Let's look again at Leviticus 16:7-8.

7 "And he shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.

וְלָקַח אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִם וַהֲעִמִּיד אֹתָם לִפְנֵי
And he shall take the goats, two and present them before
3947 853 8147 8163 5975 853 6440

יְהוָה פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד אֶת־הַדֶּלֶת
the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
3068 9999 6607 168 4150

וַיַּגֵּד אֶת־לֹט וְלֹט אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִם גּוֹרָל וְגּוֹרָל אֶחָד
And shall cast Aaron upon two the goats; lots and one
5414 175 5921 8147 8163 1486 259

לַיהוָה לְגוֹרָל אֶחָד לְעִזָּאזֵל
for the Lord, lot the other for the scapegoat.
3068 1486 259 5799

Let's look at the Hebrew word that is here translated as "scapegoat".

OT:5799 עִזָּאֵזֶל **`aza'zel** (az-aw-zale');
from OT:5795 and OT:235; goat of
departure; the scapegoat:

The goat that is the "scapegoat" is the goat called *azazel*. עִזָּאֵזֶל Let's take that word apart, and see what we see.

עִז = goat, and אֵזֶל = אֵל with a ז in its center. "El" means G-d. And the Hebrew letter *zayin* represents an axe – an instrument of killing.

So, the concepts of "goat" and "slain G-d" are also tied into that name as well.

But you can take the word apart differently, and get another result which is equally interesting.

עִז = goat, and אֵזֶל = "removal"

The High Priest put his hands on the head of the *azazel*, and pronounced over it all the sins of Israel. Then a piece of woolen cloth soaked in blood was tied around the horn of this goat.

Then the *azazel* was driven out of the camp to die (normally being forced off the edge of a high cliff, where it fell to its death). This symbolically carried the sins of Israel away from the face of G-d.

And one more interesting thing happened. Every year, as the *azazel* died, the wool cloth dipped in blood miraculously turned sparkling white. It was brought back to the Temple by the attendant(s) who were in charge of the *azazel* and its death. It was given to the High Priest who waved it before the people as a demonstration that their sins had been forgiven.

This was a fulfillment of the passage in Isaiah.

Isa 1:18

18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord,
"Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as
snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like
wool.

But there is more to see in this ceremony. The Talmud tells us that the *shechina* left the temple 40 years before it was destroyed.

It cites evidence for that conclusion:

1. The western light of the menorah would not stay lit.
2. The doors of the temple would not stay closed.
3. The wool cloth dipped in blood no longer miraculously turned white.

The earliest of these signs began as Yeshua began His ministry in the flesh, and the doors not staying closed began with His death on the cross.

It seems that G-d was trying to give our people a sign (for we always look for a sign). Sadly, we missed a number of them.

G-d has set aside this day for a number of signs and wonders which mark this milestone in the progression of His kingdom.

One of the most amazing miracles of this day is that you and I can actually repent of our sins before a holy G-d and be cleansed of our sin.

Our people's sins were formerly "covered by the blood" which covered their sin. But the blood of the Lamb of G-d which takes away the sin of the world is stronger.

That blood has washed us clean has washed away our sin. We can now have intimate fellowship with Him.

After sundown about 23 hours from now the gates of repentance will close to the sound of the final shofar blast. After that, the ultimate Judge is then busy with the business of judging. Will that final shofar blast sound from heaven this time? We will see that together.

Everyone must seek the L-rd while He may be found.

Beginning tonight, Jews and those grafted-in around the world are falling on their faces across the globe in prayer, repentance, and intercession. I believe that the gates of heaven are about as open as they will be during this year. The holiness of one benefits all and the holiness of all benefits the one.

On this day heaven again touches the earth, and man can walk with G-d more closely than since we left the garden.

I would urge you to take advantage of the special nature of this day. And once your repentance is complete, continue with intercession for others.

Today you can stand before the G-d of the universe in gleaming white garments. No longer does the blood of bulls and goats cover sin. That is unnecessary now that the blood of the Lamb has washed our sins away as if they never were.

Keep looking up. You just might see the Tabernacle of G-d coming down from heaven, to be among us.

Rev 21:3-6

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, 4 and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." 5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

Do you hear that shofar's voice? I think our Father just might be calling us home.