

10-12-24 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene – Yom Kippur
Torah Portion; Lev 16:1-34
Haftarah: Jonah
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: Rev 21:3-6

Complete Removal

Central question of this message: Have your sins been completely removed?

Last night we entered 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.

וְהָיְתָה	לָכֶם	לְחֻקָּה	עוֹלָם	בְּחֹדֶשׁ	הַשְּׁבִיעִי	בַּעֲשׂוֹר	29
And this shall be	unto you:	a statute	for ever	in month,	the seventh	on the tenth	
1961	3807a	2708	5769	2320	7637	6218	
לַחֹדֶשׁ	תַּעֲנֶנּוּ	אֶת־	נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם	וְכָל־	מְלָאכָה	לֹא	
of the month,	ye shall afflict		your souls,	and at all,	work	do	
2320	6031	853	5315	3605	4399	6213	
הָאָזְלָח	וְהַגֵּר	וְהַגֵּר	הַגֵּר	בְּתוֹכְכֶם:			
one of your own country,	or a stranger	or a stranger	that sojourneth	among you:			
249	1616	1616	1481	8432			
כִּי־	בַּיּוֹם	הַזֶּה	יַכְפֹּר	עֲלֵיכֶם	לְטַהֵר	אֶתְכֶם	30
For	on day	that	the priest make an atonement	for you,	to cleanse	you,	
3588	3117	2088	3722	5921	2891	853	
חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם	לִפְנֵי	יְהוָה	הַטְהַרּוּ:				
your sins	before	the Lord.	ye may be clean				
2403	6440	3068	2891				
שַׁבָּת	שַׁבְּתוֹן	הִיא	לָכֶם	וְעֲנִיתֶם	אֶת־	נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם	31
a sabbath of	rest	It	unto you,	and ye shall afflict		by	
7676	7677	1931	3807a	6031	853	9999	
shall be							
9999							
חֻקָּה	עוֹלָם:						
a statute	for ever.						
2708	5769						

The English translation of the first few words of verse 31 are a bit disappointing to me: “It is to be a sabbath of solemn rest.” This translation, in my opinion, fails to truly convey the idea that is being conveyed.

The Hebrew uses the same word here twice. It is “*shabbat shabbaton*” which is a doubling of the word. In Hebrew language, when you double the word, it *more than doubles* the meaning of that word. It takes the meaning to the *highest* levels of emphasis. It is signifying a “super-rest” of sorts.

We all know that on sabbath we are to rest. But even on the ordinary sabbath, certain ordinary activities of life are permitted, and even encouraged. What is commanded here in this verse is that we are to put away even all those ordinary activities which are permitted on the sabbath, and engage in the most complete focus we can manage on one task. We are to be *entirely* consumed with being personally, and nationally, reconciled with G-d.

Just how we are to observe this day has developed over time, but was pretty much settled well before the time of the “writings.” One of those aspects was a complete day of fasting.

The idea of fasting with prayer is reflected in a psalm of David, which speaks of how King David dealt personally with those who were hostile to him.

Ps 35:11-14

11 Malicious witnesses rise up;

They ask me of things that I do not know.

12 They repay me evil for good,

To the bereavement of my soul.

13 But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was
sackcloth;

I humbled my soul with fasting;

And my prayer kept returning to my bosom.

14 I went about as though it were my friend or brother;

I bowed down mourning, as one who sorrows for a mother.

Ten days ago, on Rosh Hashana, we heard the first of 100 blasts of the shofar, which would occur during the various services of that day. They served to caution us to beware of further sin, to search-out our past sin, to begin the process of repentance from those sins.

We discussed last week how 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.

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.

I now wish to have you look at the second exciting aspect of Yom Kippur – the “scapegoat.”

Let's look 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 וְהֶעֱמִיד אֹתָם לִפְנֵי 7
 And he shall take the goats, two and present them before
 3947 853 8147 8163 5975 853 6440

יְהוָה בַּתֶּחַת אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:
 the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
 3068 9999 6607 168 4150

וַיִּתֵּן אֶהֱרֹן עַל־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִם גֹּרָלוֹת וְגֹרַל אֶחָד 8
 And shall cast Aaron upon two the goats; lots and one
 5414 175 5921 8147 8163 1486 1486 259

לַיהוָה וְגֹרַל אֶחָד לַעֲזָאזֵל:
 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 עֲזָאזֵל **`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*. עֲזָאזֵל Let's
 take that word apart, and see what we see.

עז = goat, and אזל = אל 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.

עז = goat, and אזל = “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 white 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 in tractate Yoma page 39, tells us in the story of the High Priest called Shimon HaTzaddik (Simon the Righteous) that the *shechina* left the temple 40 years before it was destroyed. It cites evidence for that conclusion:

39a. The Sages taught: During all forty years that Shimon HaTzaddik served as High Priest, the lot for God arose in the right hand. From then onward, sometimes it arose in the right hand and sometimes it arose in the left hand. Furthermore, during his tenure as High Priest, the strip of crimson wool that was tied to the head of the goat that was sent to Azazel turned white, indicating that the sins of the people had been forgiven, as it is written: "Though your sins be as crimson, they shall be white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

39b. The Sages taught: During the tenure of Shimon HaTzaddik, the lot for God always arose in the High Priest's

right hand; after his death, it occurred only occasionally; but during the forty years prior to the destruction of the Second Temple, the lot for God did not arise in the High Priest's right hand at all. So too, the strip of crimson wool that was tied to the head of the goat that was sent to Azazel did not turn white, and the westernmost lamp of the candelabrum did not burn continually.

And the doors of the Sanctuary opened by themselves as a sign that they would soon be opened by enemies, until Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai scolded them. He said to the Sanctuary: Sanctuary, Sanctuary, why do you frighten yourself with these signs? I know about you that you will ultimately be destroyed, and Zechariah, son of Ido, has already prophesied concerning you: "Open your doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour your cedars" (Zechariah 11:1), Lebanon being an appellation for the Temple.

And the death of the High Priest Shimon HaTzaddik was attended by signs as well.

39b. The Sages taught: During the year in which Shimon HaTzaddik died, he said to them, his associates: In this year,

he will die, euphemistically referring to himself. They said to him: How do you know? He said to them: In previous years, on every Yom Kippur, upon entering the Holy of Holies, I was met, in a prophetic vision, by an old man who was dressed in white, and his head was wrapped up in white, and he would enter the Holy of Holies with me, and he would leave with me. But today, I was met by an old man who was dressed in black, and his head was wrapped up in black, and he entered the Holy of Holies with me, but he did not leave with me. He understood this to be a sign that his death was impending. Indeed, after the festival of Sukkot, he was ill for seven days and died.

So, to summarize, what signs attended that Yom Kippur following the death of Yeshua.

1. The western light of the menorah would not stay lit.
2. The wool cloth dipped in blood no longer miraculously turned white.
3. The doors of the temple would not stay closed.
4. The High Priest, known as the holiest of all, would soon die.

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.

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 a few hours from now it is our people's tradition that the gates of repentance will close to the sound of a final shofar blast. After that, the ultimate Judge is then busy with the business of judging. Everyone must seek the L-rd while He may be found.

Will that final shofar blast sound from heaven this time? We will see that together.

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 soon, so you might want to listen even more closely in these days.