

Sheepfold Gleanings

YOM KIPPUR / DAY OF ATONEMENT

Morning Readings:

Leviticus 16:1-34

Numbers 29:7-11

Isaiah 57:14 to 58:14

Hebrews 5:1 to 7:28

Minchah/Afternoon readings:

Leviticus 18:1-30

Book of Jonah

Book of Micah

Hebrews 8:1 to 10:39

Revelation 19:11-16

Leviticus 16 The Day of Atonement / Yom Kippur

For the Day of Atonement, YHVH had Aaron wash in a Mikvah for change of status and dress in white linen clothing before ministering in the Mishkan/Tabernacle. First Aaron was to sacrifice a bull for his own transgressions and those of his household. Then he took the burning coals from the altar and two handfuls of fragrant incense and walked behind the curtain, putting the incense on the fire before YHVH. Some blood from the bull was sprinkled on *the front* of the atonement cover, called the Mercy Seat, which was over the Ark, and seven times *before* the cover. Next, he brought *two goats* for the sins of the Israelite community. The first goat was for the sin sacrifice. Some of its blood was also taken behind the curtain and sprinkled on the atonement cover seven times. Then Aaron took some of the bull's blood and some of the first goat's blood and put it on the horns of the altar, sprinkling it seven times to cleanse and consecrate the altar from the uncleanness of the Israelites (Leviticus 16:3-19).

The sprinkling of blood behind the veil can be likened to our heart. Our heart is encased in a sack, which is referenced by the veil. Behind "the veil", the heart is made of two chambers, just as the Tabernacle is made of two chambers. The priest was to sprinkle the blood behind the veil. When Yeshua died, His heart was torn in two likened to "renting the veil". His blood was sprinkled behind the veil before the altar in heaven, as Yeshua serves as the High Priest of the heavenly Tabernacle (Hebrews 8:1). At the exact moment of His death the veil in the earthly Temple was torn in half from top to bottom, showing us what took place in the Heavenly realm. The blood of Yeshua is to be sprinkled on our hearts (the altar), thus changing our status from unclean to clean and causing the law that was written on hearts of stone to now be written on hearts of flesh. His blood burns off the dross (likened to the firing process of refining gold) and enables the true Light of this world, Yeshua, to be the flame that is kept burning in our hearts forever. Yeshua's blood has opened a way for us to have consecrated hearts in His presence.

Before His sacrifice, the blood of animals could only cover our sins, not take them away. In a more excellent way, this is what the blood of Yeshua does in our hearts. With His perfect sacrifice, no other sacrifices are needed again. His perfect blood provided atonement and opened our hearts to receive His deliverance from the sins of our past that held us back from life in Him. He has opened the way for us that we might *choose* to walk in the redemption now offered us. The choice to walk in that redemption is left to us. The way into His presence is still the same: through obedience to His Word. (Hebrews 8:1, 8:8-10; Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Matthew 3:11 John said, "I baptize you with water for *repentance*. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and *with fire*."

Hebrews 10:16-22 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says YHVH: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,' then He adds, 'Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Yeshua/Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Leviticus 16; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-10).

Leviticus 16:16 "And he shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel, and because of their transgressions, in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities."

When the priest finished, they made atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the Altar (Leviticus 16:20).

The second goat, which was alive, was to be brought before the assembly. Aaron was to lay both hands (representing the Two Houses of Israel, House of Judah and House of Israel) on the head of the goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites. This ritual symbolized the transference of sin and guilt from the Children of Israel to the goat, after which it was sent, *with a designated man*, into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:21-22).

While we are to examine our altar/heart daily before him, this set aside Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement by YHVH is a day in which the ekklesia/assembly of YHVH is called to corporately examine their hearts once a year. There are sins that fall on the community as a whole, immorality for example. These sins may be done by a few but effect and contaminate the whole body of believers...and even more so if tolerated in the camp (fellowship). We are called to keep our camp/tabernacles clean. Corporate sins cause us *all* to be guilty. YHVH provided a way for those sins to be atoned for. Yeshua's shed blood has made this now possible. He atoned for our sin with His own blood. This does not mean we discount the observance of Yom Kippur as a feast merely for the Jews. No, this means we as believers embrace it even more now that Yeshua has made a way for us to approach a holy altar in our sinfulness through recognizing where we have missed the mark, taking responsibility for it, then repenting and renouncing. We are still

accountable for “our” sins. Have we sinned since being born again? Then this is important for us in order to fulfill all righteousness (all *right*-ways). Our job is to bring our sin to Yeshua so He may take it away.

Again, YHVH has appointed a day of corporate cleansing. YHVH declared Yom Kippur to be observed throughout all our generations. That means it still exists today. The only difference being that the animal sacrifices have stopped as the Messiah Yeshua has fulfilled the *law of sin and death*. The way to the *law of life* is still open to us. The path was made straight by Yeshua. We can now have victory over our sins through Yeshua who made the importance of Yom Kippur and the keeping of it today even more relevant. This Day is not, and never has been, for salvation purposes but for a cleansing process to consecrate hearts (likened to the altar) once a year. Yeshua’s blood is the eternal sacrifice that cleanses us upon our deliverance through Him (called salvation). Now our *redemption* process begins. Salvation and redemption are separate. It is up to us to rid ourselves of the impurities in our lives (physically and spiritually), especially the ones that may have come through our ancestors, as well as issues that may have built up in us since our salvation.

Yom Kippur is the day when we ask forgiveness for the sins we personally and corporately have committed against YHVH *innocently* or *knowingly*. These are called transgressions. Secondly, we repent for the sins that we have participated in that have been passed on to us from the third and fourth generation through our ancestors. These are called iniquities. We also repent for any sins committed since our salvation. It is now the Spirit of Yeshua in us that gives us the ability and strength to repent and cleanse our altar/heart.

Leviticus 16, which speaks of the Day of Atonement, is YHVH’s teaching and instruction *to believers*, those who have already been atoned by His Blood. We see the incense is to be put on the “fire.” If we are consecrated, the fire will be burning in our hearts. We are commanded not to let the flame go out. YHVH gave us the Day of Atonement observance for us to obey every year throughout all generations to help keep the fire burning “*brightly*.” This is how we trim our wicks. All candles and wicks need trimming in order for them to burn brightly. The Day of Atonement is YHVH’s feast given to “trim our wicks” to keep the flame, the true Menorah Yeshua, in our hearts burning brightly and keep all contamination far from us. This is called circumcision of the heart. The Day of Atonement has nothing to do with salvation but everything to do with health and Temple maintenance.

One example in Scripture of this cleansing process is the story of Hezekiah, King of Judah. His father Ahaz had desecrated the Temple and it was no longer in use. This caused YHVH’s fierce anger to fall upon the nation of Israel. At the age of twenty-five, Hezekiah opened the doors of the Temple of YHVH, then gathered in the priests and the Levites and instructed them to consecrate themselves in order that they might then consecrate the Temple and remove all defilement from the sanctuary (2 Chronicles 29:1-36; 30-31).

2 Chronicles 29:15 "They went in to purify the temple of YHVH, as the king had ordered, following the word of YHVH given them by Moses."

It was Hezekiah's intention to restore the *covenantal relationship of the nation of Israel* to YHVH by restoring the Temple and its laws, thus turning YHVH's fierce anger away from the Israelites. This is still how we are to return and restore the covenant and the Temple in our hearts today, and this is also how the land of Israel can be restored to peace once again.

The life and teachings of Moses still reveal to us present-day order for our lives. Scripture records this in Act 15:19-21, by the words of James, the half brother of Yeshua who was the head of the Jerusalem council of disciples and elders. He said to them, "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles (those returning from the Nations) who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is [still] read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

The Covenant of Moses is the teaching and instruction "*booklet*" to the Abrahamic Covenant (our covenant of salvation/deliverance). We consecrate ourselves by coming back to the Covenant of YHVH *through Yeshua*. We return to the vow our ancestors and we made to keep His Word and walk in it (called redemption) (Deuteronomy 29:14-15). We consecrate our Temple (our body) by making a distinction between clean and unclean practices and associations in our lives. We remove all defilement from our lives, homes and bodies by making clean choices following the instructions found in YHVH's Word. We are no longer living for ourselves but for Yeshua, as we desire for Him to accomplish *His* purposes in our lives. This calls for us to leave our "earthly" nature behind and walk in our heavenly calling. This is called the walk of redemption on the highway of Holiness (Isaiah 35:3-10; Ephesians 4:17-5:21; Romans 13:9-14; Colossians 3:5-10; 1 Timothy 1:17-27; 1 Peter 1:22-2:10; Romans 6:1-14).

Hezekiah's story took place during the feast of Passover. By obedience to YHVH's Word we who obey *pass-over* from the realm of sin and death (which we fall into when not obedient) to the realm of life (which we remain in when obedient). At King Hezekiah's invitation, a remnant from the House of Israel (Northern Kingdom) joined their brothers of the House of Judah (Southern Kingdom) for the Passover feast. This not only broke the chains of sin and death among them but also broke down the dividing wall of animosity that stood between the two houses (Ephesians 2:11-18). The scriptures say that all were healed who came. The House of Israel was so convicted by this Feast that they went about tearing down Judah's idols and cleansing the Southern Kingdom before returning home to purify their own homelands. Blessings *pursued* them following their acts of obedience, and once again Godly order was birthed in their hearts and in the land.

This will happen to us also when we return to YHVH's righteousness. Our hearts will repair and our temples become holy again. We will go throughout Judah and Israel – and into the Nations – to cleanse the land of unrighteousness and lawlessness. YHVH will strengthen us and deliver us from all our enemies (including those within us) when we truly worship Him with all our heart, soul and mind.

Romans 6:6-8 "For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin--because anyone who has

died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Yeshua, we believe that we will also live with him."

The story of atonement through Yeshua is also recorded in John 1:6. John came in the Spirit of Elijah to bear witness to the true Light of the world, Yeshua the Messiah. John was crying out in the wilderness. In the same way, the bride of Yeshua is *found in the wilderness*. When we fall away from YHVH's ways we live in the wilderness. John was calling to those people in the wilderness to come home through repentance to cleanse their hearts and respond to His calling by walking in God's right order. John quoted the words of the prophet Isaiah to the people to call them home (John 1:23).

Isaiah 40:3-5 "A voice of one calling: 'In the desert prepare the way for YHVH; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of YHVH will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of YHVH has spoken.' "

How do we make straight the way for YHVH? By recognizing we are outside YHVH's ways, repenting and coming into His right order. His Spirit will give us power to walk this out. We are called to consecrate ourselves by removing and resisting all that defiles us so that the Glory of YHVH may dwell in us. Likewise, we must refuse to accept anything that separates us from His anointing and blessings. Choosing not to walk in the way of the world, and disengaging ourselves from willful sin that contaminates us such as wrong attitudes and unforgiveness makes straight the way for YHVH's return. May we endeavor to bless and serve people, elevating and encouraging them at every opportunity.

Isaiah 35: 3-8 "Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.' Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the **Way of Holiness**. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way."

Leviticus 16:29-31,34 "And this [Day of Atonement] 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; 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 YHVH. It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute. 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 YHVH had commanded Moses, so he did."

Yom Kippur / Day of Atonement

We continue the study of the Wedding this week starting with a review of YHVH's feast days with added Messianic meanings. Pesach (Passover) with Hag HaMatzot (Feast of Unleavened

Bread) represents the redemption of the bride from slavery. S'phartem Omer (the Counting of the Omer) indicates the maturing of the bride toward betrothal. Hag Shavuot/Yom HaBikkurim (Feast of Weeks/ Day of Firstfruits) corresponds to the betrothal of the bride to Messiah. Yom Teruah (Day of Trumpets) denotes the return of Messiah for the bride. Yom HaKippurim (Day of the Atonements) signifies the purification of the bride and her wedding day. Hag Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) symbolizes the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. Shemini Atzeret (Eighth Day Assembly, Feast of Tabernacles) implies Eternal Dwelling.

Yom Kippur: On the tenth day of the seventh month the Children of Israel were called to hold a sacred assembly, deny themselves and do no work. The high priest bathed himself and put on the sacred linen garments. He took two male goats: one for his own sin offering to sacrifice before YHVH, and the other for the sin offering for the people, called the scapegoat, to be lead out into the wilderness. Aaron sacrificed a young bull (red heifer) and took its blood behind the curtain to be sprinkled on the atonement cover. In this way atonement was made for the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins had been. (Leviticus 23:26-32; Leviticus 16; Numbers 29:7-11)

The Two Goats:

The Hebrew word for scapegoat is *azazel* and means: goat of departure; the scapegoat (Strong's #2799). The word *azazel* only appears four times in Scripture (Leviticus 16:8,10,26). There has been extensive debate concerning the definition of the word *azazel*. One view interprets the term *azazel* to represent the chief of demons. Based on this meaning of the word *azazel* a "tradition" arose within Judaism concerning the release of this goat to the wilderness. The high priest was required to lay his hands on the scapegoat and confess the sins of the people (Leviticus 16:20-22). The tradition that started was such: The Israelites would lead the scapegoat approximately twelve miles into the wilderness and someone would then push the scapegoat off the edge of a cliff to its death. Alfred Edersheim, in his book *The Temple Its Ministry and Services*, says that the "later Jewish practice" of pushing the goat over a rocky precipice was undoubtedly an innovation, in no wise sanctioned by the law of Moses, and not even introduced at the time the Septuagint translation was made, as its rendering of Leviticus 16:26 shows. The law simply ordained that the goat, once arrived in "the land not inhabited," was to be "let go" free, and the Jewish ordinance of having it pushed over the rocks is signally characteristic of the rabbinical perversion of its spiritual type. The word *azazel*, which occurs in Leviticus 16, is by universal consent derived from a root which means 'wholly to put aside,' or 'wholly to go away' (page 258).

The Day of Atonement is about Messiah presenting to Himself a spotless bride (Ephesians 5:21). The first goat is the goat for YHVH, commonly called an elevation offering. (It is burned on an altar and the aroma ascends.) It represents Yeshua's righteousness being imputed to us, ascending to YHVH as our aroma of righteousness (Romans 4:24). The second goat is the goat for Azazel, commonly called the scapegoat. The sins of the people are symbolically placed upon it, and it is led into the wilderness. It represents Yeshua taking our sins upon Himself, taking them *away* from us.

The Two Houses of Israel could also represent another view of the two goats offered. One House was "sacrificed", the House of Judah (in the Holocaust, Pogroms, Inquisitions etc), and the other

House was led into the Wilderness, the House of Israel (in that Ephraim assimilated into the Nations and lost their identity). During the Second World War it was reported that six million Jews, 20 million Russians, 10 million Christians and 1,900 Catholic priests lost their lives. The blood of Yeshua's sacrifice was the price that provided atonement for the sins of both Houses.

“My Sins Will be Forgiven on Yom Kippur” (commonly held to be true by brother Yehudah/Judah)

Is that what we really believe? Can one live any way they desire and give only little acknowledgement to the Almighty, then in one day of fasting become pure as snow? Is it not true that only a minority of synagogue attendees on Yom Kippur is truly devout in their religious beliefs? One rabbi said that most people are more concerned about their clothes and their car, than they are about their sins. To think that one day of fasting will deal with three hundred and sixty four days of sinning is ludicrous and unscriptural.

On the other hand, many from church backgrounds have attitudes that say “the ‘blood’ covers us regardless of what we do, how we behave, and regardless of our speech to one another. So I’m OK. God accepts me the way I am and I don’t need to change or follow the Feast, repenting from sinful ways.”

It is one thing for someone to approach Yom Kippur broken and truly sorry for his sins, to try and live his life fully to please God, yet realize that he falls short. It is entirely different for the one who looks to Yom Kippur as some kind of magical loophole that allows him to offend YHVH, yet enjoy His forgiveness. Yom Kippur was never intended for that purpose.

In addition, one must remember that fasting was not the essential ingredient in Yom Kippur, but the sacrifice. Israel's sins were forgiven based on a sacrifice at the Temple. The Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. Without a temple, you cannot have a sacrifice. It is the rabbis, not the Hebrew Scriptures, who have said that fasting can replace the Yom Kippur sacrifice. While it is true that we are commanded to deny ourselves on Yom Kippur, the major emphasis is on the sacrifice. Both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Renewed Covenant (New Testament) demand the shedding of blood.

“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for ourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life” (Leviticus 17:11). In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Hebrews 9:22). Since the destruction of the Temple, it has been impossible to worship on Yom Kippur as the Torah commands. Without a temple there can be no sacrifice.

Then what was the purpose of fasting? Though fasting cannot get rid of sin, it does express humility before YHVH. On this great and high Holy Day, which YHVH had set aside as the Day of Atonement, the people of long-ago waited in fear and trembling. Would YHVH receive the sacrifice? Would the high priest come out of the Holy of Holies alive? It was a day of great concern. For one to eat on this day, or go to work, was a sign of incredible chutzpah! Fasting was not intended for the purging of sin, anymore than not working was. Both were ways that the Jewish people could express their deep respect for and fear of an awesome and holy God. To

take this day lightly would surely be a grave mistake. But make no mistake about this: it was the blood of the sacrifice and not the fasting that was essential.

What happened to the Temple? By taking an in-depth look we can see YHVH's hand in the destruction of the Temple. It is interesting that Yeshua rose from the dead (30 CE) exactly forty years prior to the Temple's demise (70 CE), that is, exactly one generation before. There is something quite fascinating about those specific forty years according to Jewish tradition. The Talmud itself tells us that YHVH rejected all the Yom Kippur sacrifices from 30 CE until 70 CE – from the year Yeshua rose from the dead until the year the Temple was destroyed.

In his book *The Fall Feasts of Israel*, Mitch Glaser gives some insight: According to the Talmud, the destruction of the Temple did not come as a total surprise to the Jewish people. In fact, the Talmud records that four ominous events occurred approximately forty years before the destruction of the Temple. Those four events were to warn the rabbis of the Temple's impending doom.

According to Talmud there were four sightings that caused the rabbis to conclude that YHVH rejected the Yom Kippur sacrifices every year from the crucifixion of Yeshua until the Temple's demise. The four signs were:

1. Every Yom Kippur, the priest would place his hands in an urn and pull out two lots, one in each hand. The right hand usually held, "For YHVH," a sign of YHVH's favor, and the other, "for Azezel" (scapegoat). However, every year during the forty years from Yeshua's death until the Temple's destruction, the lot "For YHVH" was found in the left hand.
2. A scarlet cord would be tied to the door of the Temple each year, as a scapegoat was taken to a precipice to meet its end. As the scapegoat, who now bore Israel's sins, was cast over the cliff, the scarlet crimson cord would turn white. The Mishna tells us that the cord stopped turning white in 30 CE, the year Yeshua died, the year that the New Covenant claims that the need for the Yom Kippur sacrifice ended.
3. The westernmost light on the Temple menorah would not burn. It is believed that this light was used to light all the other lights of the menorah.
4. The Temple doors began to open by themselves. This terrified the rabbis, as they interpreted this as a sign of judgment to come.

If this is true, why did the rabbis not turn to Yeshua? More than likely because they merely interpreted these signs as a prophetic warning of the destruction of the Temple. Messianic Jews would agree, but add that the Temple was going to be destroyed because there was no longer any need for a sacrifice now that Yeshua had taken the sins of Israel upon Himself. Hence, God has never accepted a Yom Kippur sacrifice since His death. Even the rabbis testify to that. His sacrifice was once for all.

Hebrews 10:1-14 "For the law, is only a shadow of the good things that are coming – not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year

after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins...we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Yeshua the Messiah once for all...Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when (Messiah Yeshua) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of YHVH...because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Something else happened at the moment of Yeshua's death: The curtain of the Temple was torn in two from "top to bottom" (Mark 15:38). The curtain in the Temple separated the people from God. If anyone went behind the curtain without permission from God, they would be struck down as Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu were in Leviticus 10:1-2.

The fact that the Temple curtain was torn was a statement from YHVH that Yeshua had paid the price, so that all men could be forgiven of their sins (the cleansing from the guilt of sin and the removal of the presence of sin) and come to YHVH. No longer would there be a barrier between YHVH and man. No longer would there be a need for endless sacrifices.

Notice the curtain was torn for "top to bottom" signifying that this was the work of YHVH and not man. The curtain was so thick it would have been impossible for a mere human to rip it. Yet it was ripped, signifying that Yeshua the Messiah had paid the price for us to have eternal life and be separated from our sins.

Yom Kippur means a day of covering man's sins and much more. It was a day to avert the wrath of YHVH. On this one day of the year, YHVH could choose to judge the nation by slaying the high priest.

The word *kippur* was first used in the Scriptures to describe the "pitch" which was used on the Ark of Noah. The word pitch (*kaphor*) has the same meaning in Hebrew as *kippur*. It not only covers and conceals but also protects. The pitch that covered and sealed the Ark of Noah also protected Noah and his family from the judgment of YHVH's wrath that came upon the earth. So also on the Day of Atonement, when YHVH saw the blood, He passed over the nation. The blood covered, concealed and protected the nation of Israel from the wrath of YHVH. The message of Yom Kippur is that a price must be paid for sin, according to the Life for Life principle. Substitutionary atonement was foundational to the sacrificial system. Under the Old Covenant system it was the death of an innocent sacrificed animal. Leviticus 17:11 says that it is the blood that makes atonement for one's "soul". YHVH chose the blood as the basis for atonement. Without the blood there is no forgiveness of sin.

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16).

In addition to all this evidence from the Talmud and the Renewed Covenant, we have the prophecies of the Jewish prophet Daniel who said the Messiah would come before the destruction of the second Temple, and that He would not die for Himself but for others. According to Daniel, this prophetic event would have to happen before the destruction of the second Temple that took place in 70 CE.

Daniel 9:25-26 “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the price that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”

If this is accurate, then the Messiah has already come and died as a sacrifice for others. After considering these facts we are able to see that Yeshua was the once-for-all-time sacrifice for sins. Through Him, we can have eternal life!

Yom Kippur is the sixth feast of YHVH. On the sixth day of Creation YHVH made man. Six is the number for man. Adam was made in the image of YHVH and was fashioned from the dust of the ground. Eve was fashioned from the substance of man and was made from him, being herself in the image of YHVH. Because of sin, they lost their glorious position of honor and authority. A once wonderfully intimate relationship with YHVH was broken and a once perfect world came under a curse of God. It was in the heart of YHVH before the foundation of the world to have a people created for the praise and glory of YHVH, a people whom YHVH could dwell among in all of His glory as revealed in the feast of Sukkot.

When man sinned, YHVH was not caught unaware. YHVH had a perfect plan to redeem and restore mankind back to Himself, a plan fashioned from before the foundation of the world. It was through a holy seed and a chosen nation that YHVH would bring redemption to the world. It was through a Redeemer who would come and set man free and restore this once-broken relationship.

YHVH purposed that He Himself would step off His throne of glory, from His exalted position of authority and power. The very Creator of heaven and earth chose to take on the form of man and humble Himself as a lowly servant. He chose to offer Himself as an offering for sin and die a horrible death, all because He loved man and longed to redeem Him and have a people that He could dwell in the midst of. An incredible plan. Who could ever have imagined?

Exodus 25:8 “Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.” The tabernacle in the wilderness and later the temple became a beautiful foreshadowing of YHVH preparing a way to lead man out of the wilderness of the world into the very presence of God. “In His presence is fullness of Joy at his right hand there are pleasures forever.” Both the Tabernacle and the Temple were intended to impress upon the people of Israel the importance of a proper approach to YHVH. Both the Tabernacle and the Temple were divided into three parts: the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies.

There was a proper approach to enter YHVH's presence, as pictured in the Holy of Holies. Every detail of the tabernacle – every type of material, every color, dimension and article of furniture – had a special purpose in showing man “how” one may properly approach YHVH. That is why YHVH devoted 50 chapters in the Torah alone to show man “how” he is to approach a Holy God. This is the whole essence of Atonement. How can we approach a perfect, Holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, omniscient God? The message of atonement outlines the “HOW”.

The Day of Atonement was the most significant of all the seven Feasts. It was on this day once a year that the high priest would enter the Holy of Holies, the one place on earth that YHVH reserved to reveal His glory and presence between the two cherubim that rested on the Ark of the Covenant. In preparation, the high priest would set aside his golden garments. (He actually wore seven pieces of clothing as he conducted his priestly duties.) But on this day, he would lay aside his garments of glory and clothe himself with a plain, yet pure, white linen garment called a “kittel”. He was to look like everyone else, as he was representing the nation before YHVH. We know that Revelation 19:7-8 speaks of the bride who has made herself ready. Just as a bride on the day of her wedding was to be arrayed in white – speaking of purity and holiness – so also we, as the bride, will be arrayed in white on the day of Yom Kippur.

THE MARRIAGE

Continued from last week's parasha study... The following is an excerpt from *His Majesty Requests: An Invitation to the Royal Wedding of the Lamb* by Rebecca Park Totilo. (Used with permission.) <http://www.rebeccatotilo.com/index.html>

“They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels’ (Revelation 3:4-5).

“Two attendants dress the bridegroom in a white linen vestment, preparing him to enter the wedding chamber with his bride, like the Cohen Gadol, or High Priest, preparing to go into the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur.

“In Talmudic times, it was customary for the groom to wear white. Today, many Jewish grooms wear a white robe (the kittel) without pockets. The white garment symbolizes spiritual purity or “rebirth” and holiness, as the wedding day is like Yom Kippur and all of the bride and groom's sins are forgiven. For it is written in Isaiah 1:18, “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow”. And more importantly, they must be careful to remain faithful and free from sin, for Ecclesiastes 9:8 says, “Let thy garments always be white”.

“The kittel also serves as a reminder of his mortality and the white shroud worn when he dies. It is for this reason there are no pockets – we come into this world with nothing and cannot take anything with us when we leave. Marriage, of course, is meant to last until death, for on the day that he and she die, they will again wear white. For the bonds of love are as strong as death, as spoken of in Song of Songs 8:6. And so, just as the dead do not dress themselves for their burial, so the groom has ‘two’ attendants to help him put on his kittel.

“Just as YHVH blessed Adam and Eve before they married, telling them to be “fruitful and multiply,” so the groom’s father blesses his son before the wedding ceremony. It is also customary for the bride to be blessed in a similar fashion by her parents.

“It is YHVH’s desire to bless us with a clean and holy life. Even as believers, though, we blow it and sin. Through Yeshua, we can receive forgiveness anytime. As our Bridegroom, He gives us the chance to wipe the slate clean and start fresh.

“ ‘Let your garments always be white, and let your head lack no oil. Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun’ (Ecclesiastes 9:8-9).

Lifting the Veil:

“ ‘When one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord’ (2 Corinthians 3:16-18).

“In a ceremony called *bedeken*, the groom goes up to his bride and confirms by lifting the veil that she is the woman he chose to marry, then he lowers it over her face. This custom is symbolic of the hard lesson Jacob learned in Genesis 29:23-30. Laban tricked Jacob into marrying Leah, his older daughter, by concealing her face under a thick veil and pretending she was Jacob’s true love, Rachel.

“During ancient times, once the couple was married, the bride no longer wore the bridal veil. The bride “week” was fulfilled, and everyone in the community got a chance to see who the bride was. In the same matter, the Bride of Yeshua wears a spiritual veil. We are betrothed to our Savior and must be faithful to wait until our marriage to Him. The world does not recognize the bride, as she has been hidden away, but she will soon be revealed, after the marriage to the Lamb of God.

“ ‘For she had said to the servant, “Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself’ (Genesis 24:65).

The Huppah Wedding Canopy:

“ ‘He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love’ (Song of Songs 2:4).

“During the ancient times of Israel, the “huppah” was the special “room” built onto the bridegroom’s father’s house, where the bride was brought at the end of the betrothal period. The original Hebrew meaning for huppah means a room or to cover with garlands, symbolic of the laurel wreath worn by the bride and groom during the marriage ceremony. Over the centuries, the huppah has taken on many forms, including a tallith (prayer shawl) draped over the couple’s heads, to a huppah made entirely of flowers. Today, the huppah is a wedding canopy made from ornamented silk or satin cloth, supported by four firm poles, fashioned from trees planted when

the groom was born. Its structure, being temporary and removable is held up by men and serves as a reminder that our permanent wedding chamber is in New Jerusalem with the Messiah.

“At the end of the millennial reign, the Bride of Messiah will be brought into the huppah (bridal chamber) to be with the Bridegroom. This is the room that Yeshua referred to in John 14:2-3. He has prepared a special place for us!

“ ‘Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband’ (Revelation 21:2).

Here Comes the Bride:

“ ‘And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints’ (Revelation 19:8).

“As the bride makes herself pure and ready for her bridegroom, so too, the Lord in glory, longs to have His bride stand in great beauty beside Him, wearing the “bright and clean” radiant, white wedding gown He has provided. Clothed in fine linen, we will be without spot or wrinkle, and all sins will be removed. The garments prepared for us will be woven with the good deeds (obedience to His word) we faithfully keep while here in our Earthly walk that will reflect His awesome workmanship.

“As His bride, we need to keep our ways pure and holy according to His word given us at Mount Sinai during our betrothal and renewal at Pentecost. We must listen carefully to the sound of His voice and obey Him. For the days are evil and it will become harder to do His will and follow after Him. The bride of the Lamb, His wife must stand blameless and spotless, ready for that day!

“ ‘For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present a pure virgin to Yeshua’ (2 Corinthians 11:2).

Compass the Man:

“ ‘For YHVH has created a new thing in the earth -- A woman shall encompass a man’ (Jeremiah 31:22).

“The ancient custom of circling the bridegroom three times is based on the Bible verse in Jeremiah. With this act, the bride is binding him with his three obligations described in the Torah: Food, clothing and conjugal rights. Yeshua, our Bridegroom, reminded us in Matthew 6:28-29 that He would meet these needs. “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” We don’t need to worry about these things. The Lord willingly fulfills His obligations because He loves us.

“The groom is also bound by three moral obligations in YHVH’s oath to Israel as outlined in Hosea 2:19-20: “He will betroth you to Himself forever, He will betroth you to Himself with fairness, justice, love, and mercy, and He will betroth you to Himself with faith, and you shall

know Him. The Lord holds Himself accountable under the same agreement a husband accepts when he marries. We can trust our Heavenly Bridegroom. He will never leave us or forsake us!

" 'I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, In loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the LORD' (Hosea 2:19-20).

“Sheva Berakhoth” ~ The Seven Blessings over the couple:

“ ‘For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you’ (Isaiah 62:5).

“Blessed are Thou, O YHVH our Elohim, King of the Universe,
Creator of the fruit of the grapevine.
Blessed are Thou, O YHVH our Elohim,
King of the Universe, who created all things for His glory.
Blessed are Thou, O YHVH our Elohim,
King of the Universe, Creator of Man.
Blessed are Thou, O YHVH our Elohim,
King of the Universe, who created man in His image –
in the image set forth by His plan and
who prepared from him a ‘tabernacle’ to last for all time.
Blessed are Thou, O Elohim, Creator of mankind.
May the barren rejoice and be glad,
when its children are gathered back to it in joy
Blessed are Thou, O Elohim, who makes Zion rejoice in her children.
May thou grant great joy to these dearly beloved,
just as You granted happiness to the work of your hands
long ago in the Garden of Eden.
Blessed are Thou, O Elohim,
who grants joy to the bridegroom and bride.
Blessed are Thou, O YHVH our Elohim, King of the Universe,
who created happiness and joy, bridegroom and bride,
rejoicing and song, delight and cheer,
love and harmony, peace and fellowship.
Soon, O YHVH our Elohim, may there be heard
in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem,
a sound of gladness, a sound of joy,
the sound of the bridegroom and sound of the bride,
the sound of rejoicing from bridegrooms at their weddings,
and young people at their feasts of song.
Blessed are Thou, O Elohim, who grants joy
to the bridegroom with the bride.”

“When the rabbi finishes singing the blessings over the couple, he hands the second cup to the groom to sip, and then to the bride. The wedding is now complete, and they begin their married life.

“Just as marriage is a reenactment of the creation of the world in six days, and the blessings over the wine represents the Sabbath, so these seven blessings are a reminder to what God had done and His ultimate plan for mankind.

“ ‘How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy’ (Psalm 137:4-6).

The Best for Last:

“Pointing to six, large, stone water pots for ceremonial purification, Yeshua orders, “Fill them to the brim.” Without hesitation, the servants quickly fill each twenty-gallon vessel with water. Then Yeshua says, “Draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.” They did so, “The master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.” John 2:6-10 Yeshua performed His first miracle at the wedding of Cana in Galilee, changing water into wine. Unlike many of His other subsequent miracles, which relieved suffering and need, this miracle ministered great joy at a festive occasion, blessing the couple and the marriage.

“Stone water pots, used for the Rachatz (hand washing ceremony), were now filled to the brim with new wine, symbolic of the inward cleansing power and new life we have in Yeshua. Not only do we cleanse the outside, now we are made clean on the inside. In our hearts the blood of Yeshua cleanses us, opening the way for us to become obedient to His ways.

“Our marriage to Yeshua will not be complete until His return when we share the second cup of wine with Him, just as He said in Matthew:

“Yeshua said, ‘I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom’ ” (Matthew 26:29).

The Wedding Supper of the Lamb

To be continued...

Shabbat Shalom
Carl and Julie Parker

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Sheepfold Gleanings written by Carl and Julie Parker
Mail: 6655 Royal Avenue; P.O. Box 94014; West Vancouver, BC; V7W 2B0 CANADA
Website: www.sheepfoldgleanings.com
Email: sheephear@yahoo.ca
Now in Spanish / Espanol

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