

Introduction:

- Start of the year: Feast of Trumpets - declares wake up time! A call to attention. Days of Awe - were time of seeking Him. Day of Atonement - a time of restored fellowship with God. Feast of Tabernacles - a time of experiencing God's presence.
 - God wants us to wake up. Put off lethargy and passivity and seek Him for 10 days.
 - After seeking Him for 10 days we are to deal with anything that hinders our fellowship with Him. We are to use that time restore full fellowship with Him.
- *"Then the Lord said to Moses, "Be careful to celebrate the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of that same month—nine days after the Festival of Trumpets. You must observe it as an official day for holy assembly, a day to deny yourselves and present special gifts to the Lord. Do no work during that entire day because it is the Day of Atonement, when offerings of purification are made for you, making you right with the Lord your God." (Leviticus 23:26-28, NLT) "Aaron must take from the community of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering." (Leviticus 16:5, NLT) "The other goat, the scapegoat chosen by lot to be sent away, will be kept alive, standing before the Lord. When it is sent away to Azazel in the wilderness, the people will be purified and made right with the Lord." (Leviticus 16:10, NLT) ""Then Aaron must slaughter the first goat as a sin offering for the people and carry its blood behind the inner curtain. There he will sprinkle the goat's blood over the atonement cover and in front of it, just as he did with the bull's blood." (Leviticus 16:15, NLT) ""When Aaron has finished purifying the Most Holy Place and the Tabernacle and the altar, he must present the live goat. He will lay both of his hands on the goat's head and confess over it all the wickedness, rebellion, and sins of the people of Israel. In this way, he will transfer the people's sins to the head of the goat. Then a man specially chosen for the task will drive the goat into the wilderness. As the goat goes into the wilderness, it will carry all the people's sins upon itself into a desolate land." (Leviticus 16:20-22, NLT)*

I. What Is Yom Kippur?

- A. A simple translation is: yom meaning day and kippurim meaning atonement.
 1. The verb is always used in connection with the removal of sin and defilement. It is closely associated with the Hebrew word 'ransom'. Which leads to the understanding: to atone by offering a substitute.
 2. As a noun, Kippurim - means atonement. To cover or conceal, by way of ransom or substitute.
 3. Kapporet - means mercy seat. It was the covering over the ark of the covenant. It was the place that the blood of the goat was sprinkled.
- B. The Day of Atonement is a day to **repent** and be **restored**. This one day of fasting is to humble oneself before God. Repent of any sins. And be restored to God in fellowship.
 1. "Therefore,...let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." (Hebrews 12:1, NLT)
 2. The Day of Atonement is the holiest day of the year. The word holy means "set apart, special, unlike any other." On this special day of God, it is not a feast like all other holidays it is FAST. It was required of all Israel.

3. God desires that we experience the freshness of the day of atonement all year round, through Christ. The Day of Atonement was designed to answer the question, "How can sinful man enjoy fellowship with a holy God?"

II. What Happened on Yom Kippur?

- A. God dealt with sin! It was the day that the High priest entered the Holy of Holies.
 1. We were created to dwell/live with God. The desire for His presence is built into us. We want relationship with God. Without Him there is an emptiness that cannot be filled.
 2. The problem was this. Sin had entered the world and all humanity was cut off from fellowship with God. God hates sin. He hates what sin does to us. And because of that sin we could no longer come into His presence.
 - a) God took that very seriously. IE. Uzzah when he touched the ark died instantly
 - b) Within the tabernacle he hung a thick curtain called 'the Veil' to separate man from His presence.
 - c) When sinful men came into His presence they died.
- B. Sin had to be dealt with. It had to be covered. When it occurred you were free from your past and made ready to face your future.
- C. God dealt with sin by providing a substitute for death in the form of two goats.
 1. The first goat was called the goat for the Lord. Lev 16:5-ff describes the ceremony.
 - a) This goat was to be sacrificed. In it God was saying Ro 6:23 *"the wages of sin is death."* A wage is what is earned. It is the horror of sin.
 - b) As the people looked on they realized that the blood of this goat is covering for my sin.
 - c) It was sprinkled out on the kapporet - mercy seat.
 - d) Jesus is now our atoning sacrifice! Ro 3:25-26.
 - e) *"With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever."* (Hebrews 9:12, NLT) This settled God's wrath.
 - f) Therefore, God calls us into His presence!
 2. The second goat, settles man's uncleanness. Sin makes you feel dirty and guilty. It makes us feel awfully uncomfortable in God's presence.
 - a) The second goat deals with that issue. It was a goat for the people. It gave the people a chance to confess their sins and see a tangible picture of that sin being removed.
 - b) *"When Aaron has finished purifying the Most Holy Place ..., he must present the live goat. He will lay both of his hands on the goat's head and confess over it all the wickedness, rebellion, and sins of the people of Israel. In this way, he will transfer the people's sins to the head of the goat. Then a man specially chosen for the task will drive the goat into the wilderness. As the goat goes into the wilderness, it will carry all the people's sins upon itself into a desolate land."* (Leviticus 16:20-22, NLT)
 - c) Our confession of sin this day is our 'scape goat.' *"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."* (1 John 1:9, NLT) We no longer need a goat but we do need to confess our sin. To confess means to 'come into agreement with.' When we confess our sin we come in agreement with God that we have sinned, and we see our sin as God does.

d) He also promises that if we will come into agreement with Him He will act on the basis of Jesus blood, to cleanse us and fully restore relationship with Him.

III. How Do We Respond to Yom Kippur /Day of Atonement

- A. Yom Kippur is not a day of joyful celebration. But what happens on that day can open our future up to walking with God or closer to God. Remember it was a day of fasting. Intentionally afflicting ones self for the purpose of getting closer to God.
- B. David said it this way: *"Search me and see if there be any displeasing way in me."* Ps 139:23-24. This is what we should be asking, not just on the day of atonement but regularly.
- C. Exercise of confessing.
 - 1. Take a piece of paper and write down your sins. Most people just lump them in a pile and say 'Forgive me.'
 - 2. Write them out in a list. Confess them to God. Many people feel guilty because of their sin. When you list them you are identifying a specific place of sin and guilt and transferring to Jesus because He cares for you.
 - 3. Ask forgiveness.
 - 4. Experience atonement!
 - 5. Now burn your list!