

Aharei Mot
“After the death”

Torah Reading: Leviticus 16:1 - 18:30

Haftarah Reading: Ezekiel 22:1-19

Study Notes

Yom Kippur

- Leviticus 16 discusses the most holy day of the year for the Jewish people: Yom Kippur or the “Day of Atonement”.

The Purpose

- This day was to render all Israel clean (tahor) through providing atonement for all of their sins. (16:30)
- Which sins? Three different words are used in the Hebrew, in this order: iniquity, transgressions, sins.
- According to the Talmud, iniquities are “deliberate misdeeds”, transgressions are “rebellious deeds”, and sins are “inadvertent omissions”.
- If these definitions are correct then on Yom Kippur every kind of sin was forgiven. Even more than could be atoned for by the regular daily sacrifices. For, on this day, even willful, deliberate sins were atoned for.
- The sacrifices on Yom Kippur were also considered to bring the Mishkan back into tahor as those who might be unclean during the year and still entered it would necessitate.

Sins against another person

- As broad as this scope of transgressions is the sages said there was a limit.
- Only those sins against God were forgiven. Sins between man and man must be dealt with between them and put right.
- Compare this with Matthew 5:23-25.

The Persons

- The chief actor in the drama of Yom Kippur was the high priest.
- He was to take off the high priest garments and put on the regular white linen and make atonement for himself and his family. (Compare to Philippians 2:8)

The Procedure

- The basics are: personal confession, the choosing of the sacrifice, the cleansing, and atonement.

- (I'll read some text from the Talmud that describes the ceremony from the 2nd Temple period. There's too much text to type).

The Blood

- Vayikra has been relatively silent about why blood is critical to the atonement process. Chapter 17 discusses this issue.
- We are told that the "life is in the blood".
- "For it is the blood that atones for the soul, and I have assigned it for you upon the altar to provide atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that atones for the soul." (17:11)
- While we are told that the life is in the blood and that it is a requirement for atonement we don't really know why. Except that God Himself set up the rules. It must be accepted by faith.
- The only part man plays is by trusting God's Word that it is so. In fact, in Ephesians 2:8-9, we are told that even this faith to believe is a gift from God.

The Pictures

- Hebrews 7:26, 7:28, 9:1-12, 9:23-28, 9:11-15, 9:28, 10:12

What About Today

- There is only one way for Yom Kippur to be carried today. That is by trusting in the atoning sacrifice of Messiah.
- When one approaches Yom Kippur with this belief then they day takes on a different kind of atmosphere.
- Yom Kippur can be observed by using the time for personal reflection and repentance for any pattern in the flesh which we need to forsake.
- We can also still fast on this day and use the time to intercede for those who do not know Christ, especially Israel.

Chapter 18

- Teaches us what kind of people lived in Canaan. A totally depraved and gross culture.
- God wanted to make sure his people were nothing like them.
- It is very easy to assimilate into the culture around us. We should daily be on guard that we do not starting reflecting our culture in our own lives.
- We should reflect Christ into the world.