

Messianic Rabbi: 'If Yeshua Didn't Provide Atonement, Then There Is No Atonement'

As we move toward the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we should familiarize ourselves again with what those days were about and who was involved in those days in Biblical times. One man who played a primary role was the high priest, who was responsible for fulfilling the rituals required for Israel to receive atonement for their sins.

This one man, the high priest, served that role in both the tabernacle and temple. At the time of Yeshua's (Jesus') death, the man serving in the position of high priest was Caiaphas. In Matthew Chapter 26, we read about the trial of Yeshua before Caiaphas, and in verse 65, we read the following:

"Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, 'He has uttered blasphemy. What further need do we have for witnesses? See, now you have heard His blasphemy.'"

These words are often overlooked as unimportant information, simply a demonstration of the priest's anger, similar to someone being angry enough to pull their hair out. However, there is a much deeper spiritual concept being demonstrated here, which is vital to the spiritual life of every believer. In Leviticus, we find out this about the high priest:

"He who is the high priest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is consecrated to wear the garments, shall not dishevel his hair, nor tear his clothes" (Lev. 21:10).

Notice that the high priest was not allowed to tear his clothing. Once Caiaphas tore his clothes, he had disqualified himself from being the high priest. In other words, Caiaphas'

tearing of his clothing was equal to resignation from his position.

Shortly before this event took place, we find in John 3:28-30 (TLV), Yeshua and His disciples visiting the Jordan River where John the Immerser is. John is speaking to his followers and says the following words:

“You yourselves testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah,’ but rather, ‘I am sent before Him.’ “The one who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the best man rejoices when he stands and hears the bridegroom’s voice. So now my joy is complete! He must increase, while I must decrease.”

It is believed by many (including myself), that John the Immerser was actually, by his lineage, the man who was supposed to be the Cohen Gadol (high priest) at the time of Yeshua. We know from history that Caiaphas was a political appointee by Rome. We also know John’s father was serving in the Temple. We know a large group of people followed John and were immersed by him. We know John was from the correct tribe: Levi. There are other good reasons to believe that John was the “actual” Cohen Gadol, but because of the Roman authority, he was not serving in the temple.

One additional reason to believe this (and very important in the context of this blog) is the statement that John makes above in verse 30. “He must increase, while I must decrease.” If John, as we believe, was the high priest by lineage and biblical rights, then these words become very important and John’s overseeing of the immersion of Yeshua shows John’s relinquishing his position as high priest. John resigns differently than Caiaphas, but he reigns nonetheless.

With this in mind as believers in Yeshua, the only qualified high priest at the time of the death of Yeshua was in fact Yeshua Himself, as we read in Hebrews Chapter 7, after the order of Melchizedek. So, with the resignation of John and the

disqualification of Caiaphas, Yeshua stands as the one and only high priest, and the spiritual authority over all Israel. Yeshua was the only man capable of performing the rituals required to bring atonement to Israel. When we read Hebrews Chapter 9, we find that He did.

At the time of Yeshua's death, Yeshua was the only qualified high priest of Israel, and His sacrifice provided atonement for all Israel. But, unlike all of the previous high priests whose service could only provide atonement from one year to the next, Yeshua's atonement, according to Hebrews 10:10, was once and for all time:

"By His will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Messiah *Yeshua* once for all."

One additional thing we must understand is that, according to the Talmud, the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) offering was not accepted by G-D from the time of Yeshua's death until the destruction of the temple.

So, if Yeshua didn't provide atonement once and for all, then there is no atonement available. {eoa}

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