

What Is Yom Kippur? Prophetic Meaning Behind the Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur, which means “the Day of Covering”) follows the Feast of Trumpets. In ancient times, on this holy day the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies, a sacred room where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, and pour the blood of a bull and a goat on top of the Ark of the Covenant, called the Mercy Seat in Hebrews 9:5. When the Lord saw the blood poured out upon the Mercy Seat, He would overlook the sins of His people for a year.

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Leviticus 17:11 declares: “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement. ”Biblically, the Day of Atonement is about the blood that is shed for the forgiveness and covering of sin.

The Lord can only be in covenant with humanity through a blood atonement, for “without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (Heb. 9:22). Therefore, for believers in Yeshua, this holy day symbolizes the ultimate atonement made by Messiah, the sinless One whose blood was poured out, opening the way for us to be in covenant relationship with God forever.

In one way, this feast has been fulfilled, insofar as Yeshua’s

blood has already been shed and we are able to be in fellowship with God now. But there is also a prophetic way that Yom Kippur will find fulfillment in the future—the Jewish people will turn to Messiah Yeshua. Zechariah 12:10 says, “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.”

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When Yeshua returns, He will lift the veil from their eyes! The Book of Revelation foretells this glorious event that Zechariah wrote about: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen” (Rev. 1:7). Paul also foretells of this event in Romans 11, stating that at Messiah’s return “all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins’” (vv. 26–27).

The Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament alike anticipate a time in the future when a mass of Jewish people will receive Yeshua as their Messiah. As they do, the kingdom of God will be fully inaugurated in the earth and the fullness of the Day of Atonement will be gloriously manifest.

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Rabbi Schneider hosts the impactful television program, Discovering the Jewish Jesus, which is available in more than 100 million homes in the United States and nearly

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