

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE DAY OF ATONEMENT – LESSON 2

YOM KIPPUR

Today is the holiest day of the Jewish religious calendar. It is Tishri 10, the seventh month (but first month of the Jewish civil calendar) and called in scripture “the Day of Atonement” in Exodus 30:10, all of Leviticus 16, Leviticus 23:26-32 and Leviticus 25:9.

The word “atonement” is not what we Christians understand it to be. The Hebrew word that is translated “atonement” in English is made up of two different words with the same meaning. The verb (action) form is “kaphar” meaning “to cover.” The noun (object) form is the plural “Kippurim” meaning “coverings” so “Kippur” would be the singular form of “a covering.” It is a temporary covering and not a forgiveness.

The New Testament word of “atonement” in Romans 5:11 is “katallagé” which means “reconciliation” or a complete forgiveness. ([see yesterday's newsletter](#))

So, the day is called “Yom Kippur” today by Jews. “Yom” is their word for “day” and “Kippur” means a covering. Therefore “Yom Kippur” means “the Day of the Covering” in which their sins for the year are covered” by the blood of animals, so as to no longer “be seen” by God.

The sacrifices done by the High Priest pointed forward to the sacrifice of Messiah on Calvary (Mount Moriah, Golgotha). His sacrifice was not a temporary covering. It was a complete “washing away” of our sin to reconcile us to the family of God. It is permanent.

I had planned to walk you through the actions of the High Priest and each sacrifice, but I shall do that tomorrow as it did not quite fit today's word (some of which was repetition for emphasis).

Understanding Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, helps us to truly appreciate God's overall plan of redemption from Genesis to Revelation.