

# Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

May 29, 2019 Lesson #21 Day Of Atonement: Mercy Seat

Significance Of Day Of Atonement: No other sacrifice in Leviticus more clearly anticipates the Future, Greater, Atonement of Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

No other sacrifice provides a better backdrop against which to see the vast superiority of our Lord's atonement over that of Aaron.

An Assigned Procedure - Lev. 16:3-28

- ❖ It wasn't enough the high priest serve on the right day [Tishri 10],
- ❖ For the right purpose: make atonement or covering for sins of nation, himself and the Tabernacle [Lev. 16:30-34]
- ❖ The people must have the right heart attitude: afflict themselves and do no work. [Lev. 16:29, 31]
- ❖ The high priest **MUST** follow the right procedure God gave to him.

The day of Atonement was not a time for innovation because too much was at stake.

Lev. 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.

A. High Priest Prepares To Atone For Himself First - Lev. 16:3, 5

Lev 16:3,5 "Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering." [These are for himself and his family.]

<sup>5</sup>And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

- Needs 1 bull [sin offering], 2 rams [burnt offerings] and 2 young goats
- These animals must be examined to check for any defects.

Unique Feature Of This Day:

- No other time is he to walk into the Holy of holies where God dwells among His people.
- The high priest performed the ritual alone with NO assistance whatsoever. [Lev. 16:17]
- It was all his work, from the menial tasks to the high priestly tasks.
- All the other priests retired from the tabernacle. He alone entered, for the work of atonement was his only.

What a beautiful picture of our Great High Priest Who went alone to the Cross even to the point of crying out to His Father "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" [Ps 22:1]

## B. Proper Dress For The High Priestly Duties

Lev. 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

- ❖ He washed at the laver and put on the simple linen garments of an ordinary priest.
- ❖ Washing at the laver was an act of sanctification.
- ❖ He was setting himself apart to serve the Lord and His people on this special day.
- ❖ His outfit consisted of 4 simple garments in white linen, even plainer than the vestments of the ordinary priest. [Ex. 39:27-29]
- ❖ On this one day, the high priest enters into the very presence of God.
- ❖ In God's presence he is stripped of all honor. He becomes simply the servant of the King of Kings. His true status is portrayed in the simplicity of his dress.
- ❖ Portrays the High-Priest as God's humble servant, one who as a sinner was himself in need of atonement.
- ❖ In the course of his daily sacrifices, Aaron, represented God. His garments were of great beauty and splendor.
- ❖ Among his fellow men his dignity as the great mediator between man and God is unsurpassed, and his splendid clothes draw attention to the glory of his office.
- ❖ The high priest took off his glorious garments of beautiful colored materials, intricate embroidery, gold and jewelry.
- ❖ He left his special garments in the holy place, where he would return later to put them on again.
- ❖ Laying aside his glorious robes was an act of humility.
- ❖ He became attired in the pure white linen garments devoid of all ornamentation, signifying the highest degree of holiness and humility
- ❖ When he entered the Holy of Holies in performing the atonement ritual on the Day of Atonement, he went before God in simplicity and humility.

This is a beautiful foreshadowing of Christ, our High Priest, Who laid aside His glory even as the High Priest took off his glorious garments, replacing them with the holy linen tunic.

In John 13, our Lord took off His garments, and stripped down to the garb of a slave, so as to cleanse His disciples.

Jesus, who "being in the form of God," laid aside His glorious royal robe, His majesty and glory and took upon Himself the form of a man.

- ❖ Our Lord Did Not Lay Aside His Deity, but He put aside His glory when He came down to this earth and became a man. [Phil 2:5-8]
- ❖ He "clothed himself" with flesh and blood. [Heb. 2:14] that He might qualify as the Sacrificial Lamb on the Cross, the Mercy Seat of God. [John 1:1,14, 18]
- ❖ This was necessary because it was only by the payment of His BLOOD, the work of Atonement [covering for sin] that eternal life would be possible for all who believe in Him.

John 17:17, 19 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

- ❖ Jesus never needed to be cleansed from sin because He was sinless, but He did set Himself apart to serve us.
- ❖ As God's Suffering Servant, He humbled Himself and died on the cross.

II Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

C. The High Priest Offers His Own Sin Offering - Lev. 16:6, 11-14

v. 6: And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

In the OT, atonement means cover, coverings, or to cover.

- The Levitical offerings "covered" the sins of Israel until and in anticipation of the cross, but did not "take away" [Heb 10:4] those sins.
- God's righteousness was never vindicated until Jesus Christ was "presented... as a sacrifice of atonement." [Rom. 3:25].
- The OT sacrifices enabled God to go on with a guilty people because those sacrifices pictured or foreshadowed the cross.
- They were the confession in essence that they deserved the death the animal died.
- It was the Cross, not the Levitical sacrifices, which made full and complete redemption.

Being properly washed and dressed, the high priest went to the altar where he sacrificed the bull as a sin offering for himself and his family. [Lev. 16:11].

- Taking some of the blood of the bull, plus a censer of coals from the brazen altar and a supply of the special incense, he entered the Holy of Holies.
- Put the incense on the coals so the cloud would cover the mercy seat upon the ark [v. 13].
- Then he sprinkled some of the blood on the mercy seat and some of the blood seven times before the mercy seat [v. 14]

The Ark of the Covenant: most sacred object of the tabernacle.

Origin & Purpose of Mercy Seat: Ex. 25:21-22 And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. <sup>22</sup> And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

- The blood-sprinkled mercy seat was a point of meeting between God and man.
- God's justice and mercy meet.

The lid on top of the Ark was the Mercy Seat on which rested the cloud or visible symbol of the divine presence. From this place God was supposed to dispense mercy to man when the blood of the atonement was sprinkled there.

In a manner of speaking, the mercy seat concealed the people of God from the ever-condemning judgment of the Law. Each year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the blood of the sacrificed animals on the mercy seat for the atonement of the sins of God's people.

Key Point: It is only through the offering of blood that the condemnation of the Law could be taken away and violations of God's laws covered.

### The Hilasterion

The word "mercy seat" in the Hebrew, kapporeth, was translated into Greek in the Septuagint [Greek translation of the OT], with the word "hilasterion."

In the Latin Vulgate, it was translated as propitiation.

Hilasterion [Greek] and kapporeth ([Hebrew] both mean the same thing. There is a covering for your sin. There is a mercy seat for your sin, and there is forgiveness that is divine.

Hebrews 9:5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat;...

- Mercy Seat = hilasterion

Rom. 3:23-25 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God Hath Set Forth To Be A Propitiation Through Faith In His Blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

- Propitiation = hilasterion = Strong's #2435 = an atoning victim = lid of the Ark

Key: Jesus Christ is the hilasterion = propitiation = mercy seat

- ❖ Jesus is the covering for sin. By means of His death and our response to Christ through faith in Him, ALL our sins are covered.

Rom. 3:25

- ❖ whom —Christ, the object;  
God —is the subject of the sentence;  
put forward —the verb, the action God has performed;  
as a propitiation (a hilasterion);  
by his blood —the predicate, the purpose for which God put Christ forward;  
to be received by grace through faith.

God's Word is CLEAR: Propitiation is demanded before sins can be forgiven.

God does the propitiating himself. He provides the sacrifice, which is Himself.

Gen. 22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. [The father & the son]

- The Father isn't angry and the Son gracious; rather, the Father is gracious, and the Son is obedient.
- We don't offer anything to God to make him forgive us; we simply receive by grace through faith the forgiveness He offers.

Remember: What was the peoples' part on the Day of Atonement? Lev. 16:29- 31  
Afflict Your Souls & Do NO Work At All. This was a matter of life and death.

Lev. 23:29-30 For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. <sup>30</sup> And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

When believers sin, we may turn to Christ who continues to be the propitiation or covering for our sins

I John 2:1-2 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: <sup>2</sup> And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Every time the gospel is proclaimed, every time the message of the cross is explained, every time the story of salvation is told, God is putting Christ forward to the whole world as the mercy seat, the place of atonement made not with the blood of animals but with his own blood, the place where forgiveness is found, where God can be met, to be received by faith.

Jesus came to fulfill all the Old Testament types and shadows that had pointed to Him.

- ❖ When He was sacrificed on the Cross, He fulfilled the picture of the Passover lamb sacrificed for us [I Cor. 5:7].

John 20:1-15 Mary Magdalene and the other women go to Jesus' tomb very early on the first day of the week. They see that the stone that covered the opening was rolled away. Mary and the other women run and tell Simon Peter and John that someone has taken Jesus' body.

John arrives first, stoops down outside the tomb, looks & sees (Blepoi-see with simple sight; he didn't fully grasp what he was seeing) the linen bandages that had been used to wrap Jesus' body, but waits to go in.

Peter arrives after John, and he goes straight into the tomb. He sees and considers (*theōrei*-see and mentally consider; to come to a knowledge of) the linen clothes lie and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Then John goes in, he sees and perceives (*eiden*-see and perceive; to observe with understanding) what has happened, and he believes.

Note the powerful progression: From seeing to scrutinizing and contemplating to understanding which then results in BELIEF.

Then Peter and John leave.

Mary had followed them back to the tomb. She is left standing outside weeping aloud. She stooped down and looked in the tomb.

In the tomb, she sees and considers (*theōrei*) two angels sitting, "the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

Two angels, one at each side, is the arrangement of the mercy seat. WOW!

- ❖ Lying in the tomb with the angels watching over His body, Jesus fulfilled the picture of the mercy seat. The picture fulfilled, He was gone.

Consider: When Mary saw these 2 angels, Jesus' body was gone because He had been resurrected. So the mercy seat was gone when Mary looked.

In the Old Testament, the high priest sprinkled blood on the mercy seat once every year.

But, of Jesus Christ, Hebrews 10:10-14 says, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ Once For All. And every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Jesus was offered once. Then He was raised for our justification [Rom. 4:25]. He was not to remain a dead mercy seat; He was to become our Living Throne Of Grace in heaven.

Heb. 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Exodus 16:32-34 Moses laid up the pot of manna "before the Testimony."

- The testimony was the two tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written.
- Numbers 17:10 says Moses put Aaron's rod that budded before the testimony.

Romans 7:9 "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

- The idea that the law brings sin and death is found again in...

I Cor. 15:56: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law."

Romans 6:23 gives us hope: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- Although Jesus Christ was manifestly revealed in the New Testament, He is not missing from the Old Testament for those who will see Him.
- He was pictured by the Mercy Seat that, significantly, covered the law.
- He is also pictured by the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded that were placed before the law. Jesus said,

John 6:32-33 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

- The Old Testament manna sustained physical life, but Jesus Christ gives spiritual life.

John 6:35, Jesus says, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Aaron's rod that budded: In the Bible, a rod symbolized authority. It was like a scepter.

- God showed Pharaoh that Aaron had more authority than Pharaoh's wise men, sorcerers, and magicians when Aaron's rod became a serpent that "swallowed up their rods." [Exodus 7:11-12].
- God again showed Aaron's superior authority when He had Moses line up the rods of the princes of Israel along with Aaron's rod before the tabernacle [Num. 17:1-7].
- "And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" [Numbers 17:8].
- The Hebrew word for almonds is based on a word for "waken" because almonds come out of their winter "death" and blossom very early in the spring.

In a prophecy of Jesus Christ, Isaiah 11:1 "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

Psalms 110:2 "The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."

Psalms 45:6: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre."

Isaiah 61:11 prophesies, "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

How will this happen? Through the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom of God, which is the rule of Jesus Christ among the nations.

- Aaron's rod that budded symbolized the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all of His saints with Him.

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Jesus Christ will lead with a rod of iron during His Kingdom.

Ps. 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;

Rev. 2:26-27 And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: <sup>27</sup> And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Consider: By having in it the body of Jesus Christ, the tomb contained the mercy seat, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. And bud it did when Jesus Christ rose from the dead! But He still had to return to heaven to sit "down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

## Why Mary?

Why did God chose Mary Magdalene, a woman out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, to see the picture of the mercy seat? Under the Old Covenant, the mercy seat was behind the veil in the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest could enter and only once a year.

No one else could enter, certainly not a woman who had been demon possessed.

With the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, the veil had been rent from top to bottom [Matthew 27:51] and the way to come before God's throne was completely opened.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Who better to show the openness to the mercy seat than this woman, who in that society would have been considered the lowest of the low? Who better, just moments later, to be shown the living proof of her forgiveness by becoming the first person to see the risen Jesus Christ [Mark 16:9], the living mercy seat, than this lowly sinner?

Mary's story is an example for all sinners who can now "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

[Hebrews 4:16]