

## Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement

- *One of the amazing things that validates the Bible as God's inspired Word is that even though it was written over a 1600 year period, contains 66 books, was written by 40 different authors in three different languages, it is so unified and fits together so harmoniously that only God Himself could have inspired it.*
- *The consistency of the revelation of Jesus Christ is seen from the first book of the Bible, Genesis, to the last book, Revelation. It is so remarkable because it is the inspired Word of God, and always reveals the Person of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of Mankind.*
- *The Bible is filled with so many beautiful prophecies and prophetic allegories that enable us to understand who Jesus is and what He has done for us through His redemptive death at Calvary.*
- *The Passover paints a beautiful and clear picture of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.*
- *Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, gives us another wonderful perspective into Jesus Christ's redemptive work on the cross.*
- *As we study Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and how it ties together many seemingly unrelated verses found in both the Old and New Testament, we will see a beautiful tapestry form before our very eyes as we watch how God weaves it together.*
- *We are going to look at a number of biblical principles that help us to really grasp the significance of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.*

### 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup>Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- *The first thing we must understand is that God has made man in His own image. Just as God is a trinity, so is man. He created us with a spirit, a soul, and a body.*
- *Before a person is born again, his or her spirit could be described as the breath of life.*

### Ecclesiastes 12:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup>Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

- *If a person who has not received Jesus Christ as Saviour dies, then the spirit (the breath of life) returns to God who gave it, their body goes to the tomb, and their soul descends into Hell for eternity.*

**John 3:6–7 (NKJV)**

**<sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

**<sup>7</sup>Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’**

- *When a person receives Christ and is born again, this new birth takes place not in his body, or in his soul, but in his spirit.*
- *At our new birth the Holy Spirit joins or baptizes our spirit into Christ’s spirit and forms the new creation – our new divine identity in Christ! (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27)*

**1 Corinthians 15:45 (NASB95)**

**<sup>45</sup>So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**

- *Before a person is born again and saved he is a living soul, but after he is born again he becomes a life-giving spirit.*
- *Before we are born again we are a soul that lives in a body.*
- *After we are born again we are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body.*
- *Through Christ we have been transformed from a soulish being to a spiritual being!*

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)**

**<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

- *When a person is born again, he or she becomes a new creation with a new identity, one that is in Christ.*
- *In the New Testament we see the idea repeated over and over that we are a new creation and if we will walk in the spirit, in our new creation, Christ will live through us.*
- *Our spirit once it is born again is transformed from just being “the breath of life” to our new life in Christ. Our spirit and soul together now define who we are.*
- *Since our real identity has changed from being a soul to a life-giving spirit, our reborn spirit has become our true identity and thus it is impossible for our soul and spirit to ever become separated.*
- *When a person who is not born again dies, the spirit separates from the body resulting in physical death. Then the spirit separates from the soul resulting in spiritual death.*

**2 Thessalonians 1:9 (NKJV)**

**<sup>9</sup>These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,**

- *One description of Hell is a soul that is without spirit resulting in eternal separation from God's presence and glory.*
- *In Hell a soul is fully conscious, but at the same time experiencing death, being without a spirit, and so it is unable to experience the presence and glory of God – Hell is a place of eternal isolation.*
- *Even an unregenerated person while he is alive and has a spirit, is able to experience to some extent the presence of God. However, once he has died, all the beauty and pleasures that were produced by sensing God are absent.*
- *Even unbelievers can sense the goodness of God in seeing a sunset, hearing the birds sing, or sharing a meal with a friend.*
- *Once a person is born again he does not just vaguely experience God's presence through creation, but he can enjoy the delight of having fellowship and communion with Him.*
- *Once a person is born again, at death the spirit and soul separate from the body resulting in physical death, but the spirit and soul never separate. The soul has eternal life and never experiences death, and is united with God in Heaven.*
- *What happened to those who put their hope in God's redemption before Christ came and died for their sins?*
- *In Luke 16, Jesus tells us a story about such a situation.*

**Luke 16:22–26 (NKJV)**

**<sup>22</sup>So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.**

**<sup>23</sup>And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.**

**<sup>24</sup>“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’**

**<sup>25</sup>But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.**

**<sup>26</sup>And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’**

- *From this story in Luke 16 we can learn a number of things about Paradise prior to Christ's redemptive death and resurrection.*

- *Both Hell and Paradise were located under the earth.*
- *Paradise was a place of comfort and it was referred to as the bosom of Abraham.*
- *Hell was a place of great torment.*
- *There was a great separation between the two even though they were both under the earth.*
- *Why didn't the Old Testament saints go directly to Heaven when they died? Why did they go to this place called Paradise which was located under the earth?*

**Hebrews 10:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup>For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

- *The Old Testament sacrifices could not take away sins, so the sins of the Old Testament saints had not yet been removed. Their entrance into Heaven was barred because nothing unclean or imperfect could enter.*
- *Paradise was a place of waiting for the time when Jesus would come and take away their sins.*
- *If the Old Testament sacrifices could not take away sins then what purpose did these sacrifices serve?*

**Exodus 29:36 (NKJV)**

<sup>36</sup>And you shall offer a bull every day as a sin offering for atonement. You shall cleanse the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to sanctify it.

- *The Old Testament sacrifices were able to make atonement for sin.*
- *Atonement in the Hebrew means to cover over something.*
- *The difference between what the blood of bull and goats did and what the blood of Jesus did is like the difference between sweeping the dirt under the carpet versus vacuuming it away and removing it from the room.*
- *The Old Testament sacrifices covered over the sins so that those who made the sacrifices were no longer under wrath even though their sins were not yet removed.*

**Revelation 1:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

- *The blood of bull and goats could only cover our sins, but the blood of Jesus washes our sins away forever.*
- *The Old Testament saints had to wait in Paradise until Jesus shed His blood so their sins could be washed away and they could ascend to Heaven—fully redeemed.*
- *Numbers 35:11-25 shows us a beautiful prophetic allegory of Paradise by providing Cities of Refuge for those that had to flee for their lives.*

#### **Numbers 35:11–12 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup>then you shall appoint cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person accidentally may flee there.

<sup>12</sup>They shall be cities of refuge for you from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation in judgment.

- *If a person killed someone accidentally they could flee to one of the six Cities of Refuge and they would be safe. None of the relatives of the person who was killed could take vengeance upon him for the death of their relative.*
- *The only stipulation for the manslayer who accidentally killed someone was that he had to constantly remain in the City of Refuge. If he left it and the dead man's relative encountered him they would have the right to put him to death.*
- *So the City of Refuge was a safe haven for those that had accidentally killed someone, but it was also a place of captivity where they had to remain in order to be safe.*
- *Thus Paradise can be seen like the Cities of Refuge, because those in Paradise had all been guilty of sin, but because of their faith in the redemption that was going to come through Jesus the Messiah they were safe from judgment. But at the same time they had to remain in that place.*
- *The last person recorded in the Bible to enter Paradise is found in Luke 23.*

#### **Luke 23:39–43 (NKJV)**

<sup>39</sup>Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."

<sup>40</sup>But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?"

<sup>41</sup>And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong."

<sup>42</sup>Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

<sup>43</sup>And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise."

- *The thief on the cross is a beautiful example of God's mercy and grace. Even though he had wasted and destroyed his entire life because of sin, in his dying hours he put his*

*faith in Christ and received salvation. Jesus comforted him with these words, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”*

- *“Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” - Another remarkable thing about what Jesus said to the dying man was that He would be with him that very day in Paradise.*
- *Doesn't Scripture also teach that Jesus was in Hell for three days and nights and if that is the case how could He say that today you will be with Me in Paradise?*

**Hebrews 2:9 (NKJV)**

**<sup>9</sup>But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.**

- *Part of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins was for Him to experience death for everyone.*

**Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV)**

**<sup>12</sup>Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.**

- *“Jesus poured out His soul unto death” – Jesus experienced not only the death of His body, but also of His soul.*

**Acts 2:27 (NKJV)**

**<sup>27</sup>For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**

- *“You will not leave my soul in Hades” – Shows Christ's soul was in Hell for those three days and three nights. Psalm 88 and parts of Psalms 18, 22, and 69 also describe aspects of Jesus' soul suffering in Hell for us.*
- *“Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption” – This is referring to Christ's body in the tomb for those three days and nights.*
- *Just as we are spirit, soul, and body, so was Jesus.*
- *Christ's Spirit contained His Divine nature as the Son of God.*
- *Christ's Soul contained His Humanity as the Son of Man.*
- *Christ's body reflected His earthly physical life.*

**Luke 23:46 (NKJV)**

**<sup>46</sup>And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’” Having said this, He breathed His last.**

- *“Into Your hands I commit My Spirit” - For Christ’s soul to experience death it had to be separated from His personal spirit, which the Bible also refers to as the Spirit of Christ.*
- *The Greek word translated as “breathed His last” is ἐκπνέω *ekpneō* meaning “to breathe out” and word πνέω *pneō* is the root word for the Greek word “spirit” and thus can indicate giving up the spirit.*
- *The King James translates ἐκπνέω *ekpneō* as “he gave up the ghost” and Young’s Literal Translation as “he breathed forth the spirit.”*

**Mark 15:34 (NKJV)**

**<sup>34</sup>And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which is translated, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”**

- *As Jesus chose His time to die, He gave up His spirit into the hands of His Father meaning His spirit was separating from His soul. For the first time Jesus experienced total separation from His Father and thus He cried out in His dying moments, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*
- *Now that we have collected a number of puzzle pieces we are going to look at Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement to see how they all fit together.*

**Leviticus 16:7–10 (NKJV)**

**<sup>7</sup>He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.**

**<sup>8</sup>Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.**

**<sup>9</sup>And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord’s lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering.**

**<sup>10</sup>But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.**

- *We see three different players involved in the Day of Atonement for this very sacred act to be accomplished: There was the High Priest who had to perform the sacrifices; the goat that would be slain, and the scapegoat that would be led into the wilderness.*

**Leviticus 16:15 (NKJV)**

**<sup>15</sup>“Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.**

- *The High Priest would take the first goat and slay it and collect the blood. Then he would enter into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the blood before the mercy seat and on the mercy seat.*

**Leviticus 16:21–22 (NKJV)**

<sup>21</sup>Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man.

<sup>22</sup>The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

- *The High Priest would lay both of his hands on the living goat, the scapegoat, and confess the sins of the people over it. Then a suitable man would take the goat into the wilderness, and release it to perish, carrying with it the sins of the people.*

**Hebrews 9:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup>how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- “who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” – *The High Priest represents Jesus Christ’s Spirit.*
- *Jesus as our High Priest offered Himself up by His Spirit.*
- *The goat that was slain, whose blood was collected and sprinkled on the mercy seat, represents Jesus’ body that was crucified and then placed in the tomb.*
- *The scapegoat that was led into the wilderness to perish carrying with it the sins of the people represents Christ’s soul taking upon Himself all our sins and suffering in Hell in our place, for those three days and nights.*
- *The wilderness, an uninhabited land, is an appropriate description of Hell. Hell is both a place of total isolation, uninhabited, and a place devoid of water where death reigns.*
- *If Christ’s body was in the tomb and His soul was in Hell where was Jesus’ spirit for those three days?*

**1 Peter 3:18–20 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

<sup>19</sup>by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

<sup>20</sup>who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.



- *“by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison” – What was Jesus doing? Some have thought He was preaching to the demons in Hell, but in Hell, Jesus was suffering for our sins not evangelizing demons. Demons cannot be evangelized—only man can experience salvation.*
- *Jesus’ body was in the tomb and His soul was in Hell, but there was another location that we mentioned previously.*
- *Jesus said to the thief on the cross “Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise.”*
- *The cities of Refuge are an allegory of Paradise for it was both a place of protection against judgment, but at the same time a place of detention, since they were unable to leave its confines.*
- *To describe Paradise as a prison or a place of detention seems appropriate. They were unable to leave it, because outside its confines lurked judgment.*
- *It is interesting why those in Paradise are described as spirits and not souls.*
- *All those that were in Hell no longer had life even though they were conscious. Because they had no spirit, we could say they were spiritless.*
- *However, in contrast to those in Hell who were in a place of torment and devoid of spirit, those in Paradise were alive and in comfort. They were not separated from their spirits and thus could be said to be “spirits” as opposed to being without spirits.*
- *Jesus’ spirit, the High Priest, was in Paradise and proclaiming something to all those that were there.*
- *What was Jesus proclaiming for those three days and nights in Paradise?*
- *Looking back to the allegory found in the Cities of Refuge we see one very interesting and important fact that holds the key to this last question.*

#### **Numbers 35:25 (NKJV)**

**<sup>25</sup>So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.**

- *All those manslayers in the cities of Refuge had to remain within the cities. However, at the death of the Anointed High Priest they were free to leave the confines of the city and travel anywhere. Now no one could bring any type of judgment or vengeance upon them.*
- *They were totally free once the Anointed High Priest had died.*

- *Who is our Anointed High Priest? Jesus the Christ – the Anointed One.*
- *What was Jesus’ Spirit proclaiming in Paradise for those three days and nights? – “The Anointed High Priest has died and your sins are forgiven and you are free!”*

<sup>20</sup>who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

- *“Who formerly were disobedient ... in the days of Noah” – We see a very interesting point describing some of those who were in Paradise.*
- *Even though only Noah and His family were saved from the flood I believe many others who had initially mocked and disobeyed Noah’s warnings, when they began drowning during the flood cried out to God in repentance and were saved from eternal damnation.*
- *The last person to be saved in such a manner was the thief on the cross as he realized he was a sinner. In his dying hours he called out to Jesus to save him and Jesus responded by saying, “Today you will be with Me in Paradise.”*
- *In Paradise that same man who a few hours before was dying a horrible death as a sinner, heard Jesus’ spirit proclaim in Paradise the most wonderful words, “The Anointed High Priest has died and your sins have been washed away.”*

**Ephesians 4:8–10 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup>Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.”

<sup>9</sup>(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?

<sup>10</sup>He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

- *“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive” – In the light of what we have just studied these verses becomes much clearer. As Jesus was ascending to the Father He took with Himself all those in Paradise who had been waiting for the death and resurrection of their Anointed High Priest, so that they could have their sins washed away and enter into Heaven.*
- *Yes, Jesus took captivity captive, and all those in Paradise ascended into Heaven with Him.*
- *Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World.*
- *Jesus Christ is also the Anointed High Priest who offered Himself up for our sins.*

- *Jesus Christ is also the Sin offering represented by the goat whose blood was sprinkled in the Holy of Holies.*
- *Jesus Christ is also the Scapegoat who suffered for us in Hell so we could be freed from the penalty of sin, which is eternal damnation in Hell.*

Points of prayer:

- *If someone has never received Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Saviour today you can.*
- *Today is an opportunity for those who have received salvation to begin to express a greater level of thanksgiving and to ask Him to open our eyes even more to all that He has done for us.*