

The Day of Atonement

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Leviticus 16

Leviticus 23:27-32 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

- I. The 10th day of the 7th month was the Day of Atonement.
 - A. It was the one and only day of the year that high priest went within the veil to the holy of holies.
 - B. It was a day set aside as a Sabbath day where they did no work and all the business of life came to a standstill.
 - C. It was a special holiday when their sin was remembered, confessed, and atoned for.
 - D. It was a most important day, and the significance of it was vital to keeping the hearts and minds of the people right in regard to their sin, their God, and his mercy.
 - E. Without special things like the Day of Atonement sin becomes less and less of a thing, and so does forgiveness and atonement.
 1. If sin is not made an issue of and is not thought to be of any consequence, then there is no concern or interest in forgiveness or atonement.
 - F. It was a day to “afflict your souls.”

Leviticus 16:31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

1. That is, to think upon your sins against one another, against the holy place, the holy altar, and against God himself.
 2. It was NOT a day to feast, party, rejoice, fellowship, and have a wonderful time.
 3. Anyone who did not afflict his soul on this day was to be cut off from among his people, which was a severe punishment.
 4. This shows the seriousness and importance God placed on observing this Day of Atonement.
- G. When our sins stop being a part of the preaching and teaching and conversation of the churches we have failed to deal with it as God intended.
 1. Although we are not obligated now to observe a “Day of Atonement” every day should be one for us.
 2. If we have a right view of sin, of God, and of ourselves, we will “afflict our souls” more often than once a year.

3. Our souls should be afflicted about how the house of God is neglected.
4. Our souls should be afflicted about how the altar and the holy things of God are set at naught and neglected or forgotten altogether.
5. Our souls should be afflicted about how God is mistreated and falsely accused by not only ungodly people, but those who claim to wear his name.

H. The Day of Atonement set things in order again.

1. It was like a reset that brought everyone back to where they needed to be in their minds and attitudes.
2. It was a day that was meant to affect the hearts and soften the hardness that a year of living surrounded by sin had caused.
3. It was a day set apart to begin anew and do things better and right.
4. A day like this is important because it offers hope where there would be none without it.
5. The Day of Atonement marked the Jubilee ever 50th year – on this day everything was reset, all debt was forgiven, all who were in bondage went free.
6. It was a day to be reminded of the things that really matter, and what is most important in life – we need that, also.

I. And since it was the Day of Atonement it was a day of forgiveness.

1. If God forgave sins, then so did everyone who was forgiven.
2. Conflicts and strifes were settled.
3. Sins and wrongs against one another were pardoned and forgiven.
4. People got right with one another and began anew.
5. The Day of Atonement was the most wonderful day of the year.