

God's Prophetic Roadmap Part 4 Yom Kippur

By

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As we discussed in the introduction, God gave to Moses on Mt Sinai seven feasts which he commanded the Nation of Israel to celebrate each year:

In Leviticus the LORD said to Moses, **“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: These are my appointed festivals, the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.”**

God introduced the Seven Feasts to the nation of Israel during the time they were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. They were called the feasts of the Lord because He Himself instituted them- a fact that made these Feasts hugely important in the Israeli calendar. They are referred to throughout the Bible but Leviticus 23 is the only place they are listed in chronological order. These Feasts have both historic and prophetic significance. From a historic viewpoint they are Feasts commanded by God every year as part of the elect of God or the Jewish nation. From a prophetic significance they serve as types of something bigger to come.

So far we have discussed and have seen the prophetic fulfillment of the Spring Feasts:

Jesus was crucified on Passover, buried on Unleaven Bread, resurrected on First Fruits and gave the Holy Spirit to all those that believed on Pentecost. All of these Feasts took place in rapid succession and then there was a long time between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets. From an agrarian point of view the Feast of Trumpets ushers in the fall season and the end of the harvest time. The last three “Festivals” that the Lord commanded the Jewish people to observe are the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. Each occurred in the seventh month of the Jewish calendar, the month called Tishrei. The Feast of Trumpets heralded the arrival of that seventh month. It also began what is known as the Ten Days of Awe between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement, where each person humble themselves in preparation for the great Day of Atonement. The next Fall Festival we will discuss is the Feast of Atonement. Leviticus 23:27 **“The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves,[a] and present a food offering to the Lord. “You will hear it referred to as “Yom Kippur”. If you recall the Feast of Trumpets occurs in September and is a long time between the last of the Spring Feasts in May or June until the Fall Feasts. Most scholars from a prophetic sense attribute this gap in God’s timeline to the age of the Church, where belief in the Messiah, Jesus Christ is the only condition required to being justified in God’s eyes. With sound of trumpets and the subsequent rapture of the Church all that is left is the Nation of Israel and all those that did not trust in Jesus as the Savior and Messiah. Yom Kippur is a time of confession and is the most important Feast of the Jewish calendar. This one feast that does not concern the Church. The Church or those who have accepted Christ as Savior owes no atonement for sin. That price was paid on the Cross by Jesus. The Church is certainly not innocent, but it is exonerated.**

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement that occurs on the 10th day of Tishri or the seventh month is the culmination of the Ten Days of Penitence that began with Rosh Hashanah. According to the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, Yom Kippur was as day of a solemn fast, on which no food or drink could be consumed, and on which all work was forbidden. The people prepared themselves, with fasting and prayer, to stand trial before the heavenly court that would review their life of the past year, and render a verdict. The solemnity of the occasion is highlighted by the fact that God said that anyone who did not "afflict his soul" on that day would be cut off from the community.

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Rabbi Irving Greenberg writes that on Yom Kippur "the ritual trial reaches its conclusion. Jews experience what a death sentence would mean by living as if dead for a day, giving up the fundamentals of dignified life. . . The people finally drop all their defenses and excuses and throw themselves on the mercy of the court, yet the same people never lose the conviction that they will be pardoned. This atonement is by divine grace; it is above and beyond the individual effort or merit." Since believers will not be present on earth of what significance is this to God's prophetic timetable? The nation of Israel has been and will always be the chosen of God, we are simply grafted in. It will be during these 10 days of awe just before the judgment that the nation and all of the nations will have one last chance to acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah.

The Feasts are in perfect chronological order, therefore Yom Kippur has to represent a day that follows Rosh HaShanah and the Ten Days of Awe. As discussed above, the symbolism of Rosh HaShanah seems glaringly obvious. They are the final opportunity anyone will get to repent before the doors finally close. And then comes Yom Kippur, the symbolism of which is found in the books of Hebrews and Revelation - passages that too many Christians have simply skimmed over. The author of Hebrews both compared and contrasted the Old Testament ritual of the atonement with Christ's redeeming sacrifice on the cross. He tells us how the imperfect observances on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) are but a type, or a shadow of the perfect to come.

In the Old Testament, the high priest was barred from going behind the veil into the Most Holy Place of the temple but, on Yom Kippur, he was allowed into the presence of God to atone for the sins of the nation. He slaughtered both a bull as a sin offering for himself, and a goat as a sin offering for the people, then brought the blood of each behind the veil, and sprinkled it on and in front of the Mercy Seat. This ritual which took place every year pointed to a future event that had yet to occur. Jesus as our High Priest did not need to repeat the sacrifice but once, offering His own blood as a one-time sacrifice for sin. Again remembering that the details of this ceremony were laid out by God as a type of an event yet to take place, we turn to the ultimate sacrifice made by Jesus on Calvary. Just as the blood of the goat was shed, Jesus shed His blood for the atonement of sin. But Jesus' blood has (in a sense) to be sprinkled on the Mercy Seat. To say that atonement is complete without this second part of the ritual is like saying Aaron atoned for his sins and the sins of the people just by slaughtering the animals outside the tent and then went about his priestly duties. Because everything that Aaron was instructed to do was a type of something to come, we have to know that the second part of the ritual cannot be ignored. We know that Jesus shed His blood on Calvary, but when does (or did) the second part of the process actually happen? Hebrews 9:24-26 gives us a glimpse into the timing:

(24) For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; (25) nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. (26) Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. (Hebrews 9:24-26)

"Has been" is the perfect tense which, in English, always refers to actions completed at some time in the past but usually have some effect on the present. However, in the original Hebrew and Greek, the perfect tense is often used when the speaker intends to represent a future action as if it were already accomplished. The past tense is used to emphasize the certainty of a future event.

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Revelation describes the culmination of the days of awe with the judging of the nations and the great white throne judgment. The time when everyone who remains here on earth will once and finally be judged on their acceptance or rejection of the Messiah.

So where do you stand today? Will you be part of that throng that will be called home at the Feast of Trumpets or are you one that will go through the days of awe and have to finally repent and accept Jesus as Messiah? Why put off that decision today, see Jesus as your Savior and accept Him to be Lord of your life today.

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