

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



GIG57 - Day of Atonement—We Are Seated In Heaven

We are entering into the season of the dynamic biblical event called Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. I recommend that you go to my website at hargraveministries.org and navigate to the Podcast page, where you can find the archives for my *Growing in God* podcasts. There, you can look up the podcast titled, "The Day of Atonement - Episode Six." This podcast will give you foundational teaching and understanding about the Day of Atonement that will not be covered in today's podcast. Today, instead, I would like to concentrate on what I feel God wants us to focus on and believe for during this year's celebration of the Day of Atonement. Lord, I asked You to speak to our hearts about all that You want us to receive during this time.

To look a little bit at the Day of Atonement, we will go to Leviticus, the sixteenth chapter. In verse 2 it says, "The Lord said to Moses: 'Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, or he will die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.'" Part of the context of the Day of Atonement is that it was the one day a year that the high priest was able to enter into what we call the Holy of Holies. At no other time in the year could anyone enter the Holy of Holies, except the high priest on the Day of Atonement. So it showed how isolated the Holy of Holies was, and the fact that you could only go there for this singular purpose on the Day of Atonement. The high priest would go through this elaborate process; it was the most detailed process of the Mosaic Law and of the sacrifices that were done that existed. The high priest would have to go through all of the ceremony that you find here; in Leviticus 16 it gives the details of it. I am just going to hit some of the high points so that we have enough of an understanding to go on and look at what it is God is speaking to my heart about during this year.

In verse 6, it talks about the fact that "Aaron shall offer the bull for a sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household." The first thing that we see about the Day of Atonement is that the high priest had to make atonement for himself and his household. When we drop all the way down to verses 32-33, it says, "So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments, and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly."

Here we see the fact that on the Day of Atonement, the high priest was performing all of these sacraments and he was basically making atonement or sacrifice for everything: for himself, for his household, for the garments, for all of the articles that were used in the other sacrifices during the year. He made atonement for the Tent of Meeting itself. He made atonement for the priests, for everyone who was there, including all of the assembly of Israel. So everything was included in the purification process that was part of this Day of Atonement. That was the need, because everything was defiled by virtue of the fact that it existed within the congregation of Israel; and through that impartation, all things then were polluted by sin and iniquity. This was the process whereby the cleansing would take place.

As we mentioned, the priest during this time also goes into the Holy of Holies, the Most Holy Place. In verse 12 it says, "He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil." So now we see that there is this veil separating the holy place from the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place. And the high priest now is entering into that veil, going into the Holy of Holies with this firepan and sweet incense.

Verse 13 goes on to say, "He shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the ark of the testimony, otherwise he will die." He would die because God himself dwelt within the Holy of Holies; that was His dwelling place. He was there over the Ark, and the high priest wasn't permitted to see Him. So he was to put this incense on the firepan; the smoke of the incense would fill the room, and the high priest was not able to see the Presence of God over the Ark. This shows again how holy God is, how holy His Presence is, and how isolated His Presence was from man, even from His chosen people, from Israel.

This gives us the idea, then, that during the Day of Atonement, they were allowed to go inside to sanctify this area. But God Himself dwelt there, therefore they could not behold God. The other thing, after all of this was done, the Holy of Holies was sprinkled with the blood and everything was cleansed by the blood of the sacrifices, then there is this Azazel goat, this second live offering that was there. And after everything is sanctified and purified, then the high priest would go out and finish this process of the Day of Atonement. That is shown in verses 20-22: "When he finishes atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat. Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness."

Two important factors about this Day of Atonement that I want us to really focus on in this podcast – first, that the priest entered into the Holy of Holies, went through the veil, and went into the Presence of God. Secondly, after everything was sanctified, he then laid hands on this live goat and put all of the sin, all of the iniquity, if you will, the sin nature of man, of Israel, upon this goat; and he was taken outside the camp, out into the wilderness where we assume he was to die. Some traditions say he was thrown off a cliff, whatever. We don't really know what happened; but the picture that is being painted here is that all sin, all iniquity, all wickedness of mankind – spirit, soul, and body – was removed, so that we have this sanctity now. The Holy Place has been opened, and because of the sanctity, access to the Presence of God is opened. This is the picture that we want to understand. So two points, just to begin with. We believe for complete sanctification and removal of sin and iniquity during the Day of Atonement. Secondly, now having been sanctified, we must enter into the heavenly Presence of God with Yeshua, Jesus, as our high priest. That is what we see taking place for us during this time.

Now we are going to look at Yeshua, crucified for us, and what transpired, because it ties right into this Day of Atonement. In Matthew 27, verse 50, it says, "And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." This is of course Christ on the cross, and He dies on the cross, yields up His Spirit. Verses 51-53 say, "And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many." So we see the power of the resurrection of Christ, and what really transpired through not just the crucifixion and the cross experience, but it goes on into that time He spent in the tomb; and moving through to the resurrection of Christ, the power is released in this whole of the events that transpired,

to the point where, during His death, the veil was rent – because obviously He was going into the veil, into the Holy of Holies, into the Presence of God to bring His blood as the sacrifice on this great example of the Day of Atonement.

So we see that this happens, the veil is rent. In Luke 23 we have confirmation, starting at verses 44-46: "It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.' Having said this, He breathed this last." In other words, that veil in the Temple had to be ripped open for Jesus to enter into the Presence of the Father at this moment of His death. And of course, we know He entered the Presence of the Father with His blood that was the sacrifice being made. So again, we see the reality that this veil that separated us, that separated all of mankind from God Himself and where God dwells, in Christ that veil was rent and torn in half, and access now through Christ is opened into the Presence of God. This we must see as a reality of the Day of Atonement, what the Day of Atonement is expressing happened for us; and we will go on further into why that is significant for us.

Yeshua is then resurrected. He ascends to the Father in heaven. And in Ephesians, the first chapter, verses 18-20, it says, "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ." So all of this is talking about God, what God is doing and what He brought about in Christ. In verse 20, "Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places."

It was God who resurrected Christ from the dead, raised Him up into the heavenly places, seated Him at His right hand. Verses 21-23 say, "Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." What a wonderful picture of what God has done for us. So we see again this idea of the Day of Atonement being played out in Christ. Through His cross, He died, He was able to take His blood, the veil was rent, He went into that veil to bring that offering. But then He also descended into the lower places, taking that sin away and having it put away from mankind.

We know in the Azazel goat, the live goat, remember all sin had to be carried away. So not only do we find this offering made before God which brings about our initial salvation, but we also see that the door was open for our total sanctification in that this live goat, the goat of removal, the Azazel goat, was taken out of the camp with all of sin, all of iniquity placed upon him. John 14 goes on then to say what Yeshua's purpose for us is through these things. We are backing up before the crucifixion, listening to His discussion with the apostles, the disciples that were with Him, as well as in chapter 17, the Father Himself. But we will start at John 14, in verses 1-3: "'Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.'" Now this, in my mind, covers both the return of Christ as well as His coming after His Ascension to the Father, including with the Holy Spirit, to take us to where He now dwells, at the right hand of the Father, according to Ephesians. Verses 4-6 say, "'And you know the way where I am going.' Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the

Father but through Me." So Christ is speaking of the reality that because of what He is going to go through, the access to the Father is opened up.

Now we know that in salvation, we are reconciled to God because our sin has been removed; so our relationship with God is reconciled. But Christ is speaking of something more here. He is speaking of this access to Him and to His Presence, which He opened up in the day of His crucifixion, and what the Day of Atonement is pointing to would happen through that event. So Atonement is saying the way to the Father is opened up because the veil can be passed through. In John 12:26, it says, "If anyone serves Me, He must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him." In other words, the Father will let him in. But we, as the servants of Christ, must be where He is. We are not supposed to dwell in the lower places of this world. We are supposed to be seated with Him.

John 17, in the prayer of Christ to the Father – and I encourage you to start reading with verse 19, but I am going to begin at verses 24-26: "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am." Where is He going to be? He is going to be at the right hand of the Father. "I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

This is beautiful impartation to the disciples, recognizing the oneness of Christ and the Father. And in the verses above, He talks about the oneness of the Body itself, because of Their oneness. But what I want to focus on is this issue, that He is saying, "Listen, where I am, I want them to be also. I want them to see My glory that You are now giving Me." See, we should have not just salvation in Christ and the forgiveness of sin; we should have sanctification, the removal by the Azazel of all iniquity, all sin, all of the nature of mankind removed from us, so that we experience a complete sanctification. Because remember, we must have access into the Presence of the Father through the veil, and that is what Christ provides for us. And so, as He provides that for us, we are able to enter into the heavenly realms, even now. We should know how, in our waiting upon God, to bring the blood of Christ and the experience of the crucifixion into our life; and we should follow Him, knowing He entered through the veil into the Presence of the Father, and He dwells there in the Presence of the Father, having been seated by the Father at His right hand. We are to join Him there; and we are to behold, while we are there, the glory of Christ, not to mention the glory of the Father that exists in the heavens. What a beautiful picture. This is what is available to us. This is what atonement is pointing to, that we should have as our daily experience: that we should give ourselves to times of prayer, to waiting upon the Lord, to being in His Presence; to ascending to Him in our hearts and our spirits, to dwell with Him, to be with Him, to behold His glory, to behold the Father, because that door now has been opened, the veil has been rent.

In John 14, Christ goes on to say, in verses 16-18, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." And Christ does. He comes to us via the Holy Spirit, and we are to see Him and to know Him and we are to move with Him under the teaching and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. "I will not leave you orphans." He is not going to leave us alone. Christ did not abandon us into this earth.

Verse 19 says, "After a little while the world will no longer see Me," which was true. He was crucified and buried, and after the Resurrection, the world didn't see Him. "But you will see Me," He says. "Because I live, you will live also." We are not supposed to be blind to Christ. He is not supposed to have disappeared out of our sight, even if He did disappear out of the world's sight. See, this is what Atonement is talking to us about. We are to have access through the veil. The veil was rent at the time of His death, and He was able to enter the Presence of the Father at His Ascension. And we, likewise, through the Holy Spirit, are to have that experience of being able to be where He is. "My servants should be where I am." We should be seated with Him in heavenly places.

Verses 19-20, again, "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you." That is a beautiful picture of oneness. And I encourage you to go on and read more through the chapter of John 14, because it is so much touching on this reality that we are looking for in God. But I want to run the Hebrews the sixth chapter right now, and start at verses 18-20. It says, "So that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us." This is our response to Atonement. We should take strong encouragement and take hold of this hope that has been set before us. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil." This hope we have doesn't sit here in the earth and hope for something; this hope enters into the veil. We by this hope come into His Presence within the veil. "A hope both sure, and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Christ, it says, was the forerunner for us to go into this veil. This is significant because we know that ultimately the Kingdom of God is on this earth. In fact, that is what we will begin to focus on and celebrate when the great Feast of Tabernacles becomes our focus during this time. But before Tabernacles, which is His return to Earth and establishing His Kingdom on Earth, we see a very interesting thing: we are first to have this experience of entering into the heavenly realms. Now, just because we are going to dwell here on Earth in His Kingdom, doesn't mean that we are not going to, through our eternity, have access also into the heavenly realms, and to be able to dwell with Him who is our Father in the heavens. He will forever have that as His throne. The throne of Christ will be upon this earth. The throne of God will forever be in the heavens. We will have access to both throne rooms; and this is what is being spoken of as we look at the Day of Atonement.

I want to look at Hebrews the eighth chapter, starting at verse 1. It says, "Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Christ, Yeshua, Jesus, is seated with the Majesty in the heavens. He has taken His place there and He is established there. He first is established in the Kingdom of God, and establishing that is done before He returns to take His seat on the throne of David here on the earth. This is the point of what is being said. Hebrews 9:24-25 says, "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; 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." Going down to Hebrews the tenth chapter, starting at verses 19-22, it says, "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus." Get this. This is the point of the Day of Atonement. It is telling us that there is access with the blood to go into the Holy of Holies, which is the throne room and holy Presence of God with the angels in the heavenly places.

“Therefore brethren, since we have confidence...” Do you have confidence in what He has done in the work that He has accomplished on the cross and in His passing through the veil into the heavens? We have confidence “to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” See, we cannot forget that aspect of the goat of removal. There must be sanctification for us in order to enter the Presence of God. Nothing unholy can enter His Presence. Therefore this experience of sanctification where all sin, all iniquity, was run out of the camp; it was removed from Israel completely. And that is the totality of the sanctification and salvation that Christ bought on the cross. He says in verse 23, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

Ephesians 2:4-6 says, “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,” – This is God. God loved us – “even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” This is what the Father did. He made it accessible and He raised us up. He wants to raise you up and seat you with Christ with Himself in the heavenly places. Oh, what a salvation we have! The complete, total salvation. It goes way beyond just forgiveness of sin and trespasses; it is our sanctification, our change into His likeness, our being raised up into His Presence and seated with Christ in His glory in those heavenly places. Lord, let us experience this Day of Atonement. Let us fully recognize this hope that we have within the veil, and let us enter in to your Presence in the heavenly places.

I am going to read one more Scripture, in Colossians 3:1-4. “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.” Amen. What a beautiful picture. God grant to us that we lay hold of the Day of Atonement and we experience all that You have made available for us. What a love that You have given us. What a salvation that You have provided for us.

I want to make just a few points at the end here to have something solid in your memory. Number one, Passover – when we celebrate Passover, it conveys the revelation of the blood of the Lamb that covers us. It is saving us from death and delivering us from the bondage into the plan of God for our lives. When you look at the Feasts, you can say, “Why a Passover and a Day of Atonement?” Because they really are two different things. Passover is our initial salvation experience, and we thank God for it; but we differentiate that Passover experience from the Day of Atonement. So number two on Atonement – it conveys the revelation of our complete sanctification, the nature of sin and iniquity being removed from us. It also expresses access to the Holy of Holies, showing that we will have access to the heavenly dwelling place of God.

Remember, as point number three, Christ is our High Priest of Atonement. His sacrifice has ripped open the veil of heaven and granted us access to be with Him, dwelling in the Presence of the Father. All of these experiences of the Day of Atonement, they precede God tabernacling among men on the earth. So this is something we should believe for now. This is not waiting for the return of Christ; this is something we should appropriate. Let us wait upon the Lord. Let us learn to enter into that heavenly Presence, where Christ dwells; that heavenly Presence that God has prepared for us in Christ, that we may be with

Them. I pray that this Day of Atonement that is coming up this year be a tremendous meeting with God for you on a personal level. Amen.