

I. Fall Feasts

A. As we looked at last week, the seven annual feasts of God are to be understood as both historically and presently relevant. From their onset, they spoke of an ultimate fulfillment of the redemptive work of Jesus as Messiah. Universally, Christian theologians view the spring feasts as being primarily fulfilled in the first coming of Christ. The fall feasts are viewed as being primarily unfulfilled and so we look to a future fulfillment of them in the second coming of Christ.

1. Prophetic Clarity - It is critical for believers to understand that prophecy is given so we can have clear understanding and concrete hope in their fulfillment. Therefore, it is not biblical to view future fulfillments of prophecy as being left up to total speculation. That heart posture is not in alignment with Godliness or wisdom. Even though many in the church view that posture as virtuous, it is absolute folly.
2. It is not lost on anyone that the spring feasts were fulfilled to the exact day during Christ's first coming. Jesus was crucified on Passover as the sacrificial lamb, buried during unleavened bread, raised from the dead on Firstfruits, and sent the Holy Spirit 50 days later on Pentecost. Therefore, wisdom and understanding should inform us that these unfulfilled feast days are extremely significant and will be fulfilled in the future.

II. Feast of Atonement Overview

A. The feast of atonement or in Hebrew, “Yom Kippur” is the sixth of the seven annual feasts of God. The Hebrew word “Kippur” is used two different ways: one is “to cover”, the other is “to cleanse”. This is the day of covering and cleansing. This feast is to occur every year ten days after the feast of trumpets (10th day of the 7th month).

"This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native-born or the stranger who sojourns among you; for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord." (Lev. 23:16-31)

B. On this day, God's people were to pilgrim together up to the city of Jerusalem to appear before God in His temple and fast in holy mourning in sobriety, repentance, and humility over their sins and the sins of their people. Then, the high priest was to present two goats as sacrifices to the Lord. One goat was

sacrificed to God, and the other became the "scapegoat" (Azazel). Azazel in Hebrew means, "the goat to be removed". Azazel is also the name of the fallen angel who dwells in the wilderness in historical Jewish writings. The High Priest laid his hands on the scapegoat, confessed Israel's sins over it, and sent it into the wilderness to symbolically carry their sins away. It was on this day that the collective sins, both unknown and known, were to be cleansed from the people and the land. It was the only day of the year when the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies behind the veil to make atonement for the sins of the nation. This was not a day of joy. It is held as the feast day that demands the greatest amount of holiness, reverence, and mourning.

C. Traditional Observance

1. Pilgrimage to Jeruslaem. The feast lasts approximately 25 to 26 hours, The holiest and most solemn day of the year in Judaism. There is total abstinence from food and water for the duration.
 - a. No Leather Shoes: Wearing non-leather footwear as a sign of humility.
 - b. No Washing or Lotions: Refraining from bathing, washing, or applying creams.
 - c. Prayers: Spending the majority of the day in the synagogue engaged in confessions and petitions for forgiveness.
 - d. Dressing in White: Wearing white clothing or a *kittel* (burial shroud) to symbolize purity and repentance.

III. Already but not Yet

- A. Progressive Fulfillment unto Ultimate Fulfillment. It is prudent to point out that the nature of biblical prophecy is a progressive fulfillment unto an ultimate fulfillment. This principle is known in many Christian circles today as the "Already but not yet" principle.
 1. This is incredibly true in the case of this feast. The writer of Hebrews references the feast of atonement being fulfilled by Christ at His first coming as he offered up himself for the sins of all people. (Heb. 9:11-14, 10:1-4)

"He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption." (Heb. 9:12)

"The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood." (Heb. 13:11-12)

IV. Christian Interpretation

- A. The Christian belief in future ultimate fulfillment of this feast yet coming is rooted in the principle that Jesus' sacrifice for sin was not accomplished on the exact day of this feast, and on the fact that the bible specifically tells us of another day. A great and terrible day when full and complete judgment of sin happens worldwide, thus cleansing the world from sin and death forever.
- B. The final stage of the Day of Atonement is a total creation-wide purification. In the New Testament, this occurs at the end of the millennial age, when sin and death are completely eradicated through a specific sequence of events. King Jesus, upon His return and rulership, totally and ultimately deals or "covers and cleanses" the earth with righteousness. All of these unique events are future fulfillments of this feast, culminating with the ultimate fulfillment of a final cleansing of the earth from sin, satan, and death, resulting in a new heavens and earth where righteousness dwells.
 - 1. **The High Priest Emerges** - During the feast of atonement in the ancient Tabernacle, the congregation of Israel stood outside in fearful anticipation, while the High Priest was hidden inside the Holy of Holies making atonement. If he came out alive, it meant their sins were forgiven for another year, prompting massive celebration. Jesus (High Priest of the New Covenant) is currently hidden from sight in the heavenly sanctuary. The future salvation of Israel occurs when the High Priest emerges, or is revealed, from heaven at the Second Coming. Upon His appearance, the surviving remnant of Israel will look upon Him, receive His atoning sacrifice, and experience a total, national, and spiritual cleansing.

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn..... In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. (Zech. 12:10-13:1)

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. (Rev. 1:7)

2. **All of Israel is Saved** - Paul explicitly connects the future salvation of Israel to the ultimate fulfillment of covenant atonement.

"And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes....." "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols." "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." (Eze. 36:23-29)

For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, Fury to His adversaries, Recompense to His enemies; The coastlands He will fully repay. "The Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," Says the LORD. "As for Me," says the LORD, "this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the LORD, "from this time and forevermore." (Is. 59:17-21)

"For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. As it is written: 'The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.'" Rom. 11:25-26

3. **Banishment of Satan** - There is a clear prophetic promise that Satan will be banished from the earth when Jesus returns. Theologians note that in ancient Jewish texts (like the Book of Enoch), *Azazel* was understood to be the name of a fallen angel or demon dwelling in the wilderness. In this view, the two goats represent Christ and Satan. The sacrificial goat (Christ) pays for the sins, but the scapegoat ritual represents returning the ultimate guilt and responsibility for sin back to its originator, Satan, banishing him away from the camp of God's people.

"Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." (Rev. 12:12)

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. (Rev. 20:1-3)

4. **Establishment of Righteousness** - The promise of the rulership of Jesus over the earth is very much tied to a fulfillment of the feast of atonement. It is through the establishment of worldwide progressive righteousness that creation is cleansed and the kingdom of God is established over every aspect of life. This is the primary work of the church under the leadership and partnership of King Jesus during the promised 1000 year reign that restores the heavens and earth, thus making all things new.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope..(Rom. 8:18-24)

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (Rev. 20:6)

"In his days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth." (Ps. 72:7-8)

"Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey... He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth." (Zec. 9:9-10)

"But with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth... Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist... They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Is. 11:4-9)

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations... He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope." (Is. 2:1-4)

- 5. Total and final Cleansing of Sin, Satan, and Death** - The final stage or total fulfillment of the Day of Atonement is a total universe-wide purification. In the New Testament, this occurs at the end of a 1000 year period of King Jesus' rule with his church to restore all things. It is at this time that sin, Satan, and death are completely eradicated. Because Jesus conquered sin and death through His resurrection, these are defeated enemies merely waiting for their execution date. After the final judgment, death and sin themselves are personified and destroyed, along with Satan, forever.

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! (Hos. 13:14)

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone... And will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:14)

Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father; when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. (1 Cor. 15:24-26)

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. (Rev. 21:4)

- 6. Heavens and Earth Made New** - Once sin and death are cast out, Jesus fully completes the covering and cleansing promised in the day of atonement, culminating in the "new heavens and the new earth". Interestingly, the new Jerusalem is described in terms that perfectly mirror the architectural design of the Holy of Holies. During the feast of Atonement, only the High Priest could enter this space once a year. In the future fulfillment, the entire city is the Holy of Holies, where the fullness of God dwells openly among all His people, and there is no longer any need for a temple, a curtain, or a hidden sanctuary.

"As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me," declares the LORD, "so will your name and descendants endure. From one New Moon to another and from one

Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD. (Is. 66:22-23)

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. (2 Pet. 3:13)

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.....Then I, John,[fn] saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. (Rev. 21:1-3)