

## ATONEMENT

The Day of Atonement is kept on the tenth day of Tishri, five days before the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the highest point of the Jewish religious observances, although with people of the Jewish faith, it is not classed with the feast days but as a sacred day of fasting. It is a day of holy convocation, therefore is kept by the people as a solemn sabbath and is known by the Jews as the "sabbath of Sabbaths": **"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... And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among the 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."** Leviticus 23:27, 28, 30 to 32. There are two points to notice from these verses: first, the "high day" sabbath, is referred to as being their sabbath, and was a day brought in and to be ministered by Moses' Levitical priesthood; second, according to Moses' standard, there is no opportunity for repentance or mercy by God, who will destroy their soul (life) for not observing the Mosaic law.

Once a year, on the specified day, the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place. He would enter it three times: first with incense, second with blood of a bullock for his own sins and that of his house, and the third time with the blood of a goat for the sins of the people: **"And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins..."** Leviticus 16:11 to 16a.

As previously mentioned, only the high priest could enter into the most holy place and he did this once a year making atonement for all: **"And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD."** Exodus 30:10. To know the full mode of its observances, a person should read all of Leviticus 16, however, the information we have presented should give the reader a basic understanding as to what the day of atonement is all about. And though the Day of Atonement is not considered a feast day, it is considered the most sacred of the Jewish religious observances. However, in Jesus, it was to pass away just like all the feast days of the Mosaic ordinances that were against us, which will become clear as we continue our study. **"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needed not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity: but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated [perfected] for ever more."** Hebrews 7:24 to 28. Now, contrast this with the sons of Aaron, who received the office of priesthood by descent and were not appointed: **"And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."** Exodus 28:1; **"Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift..."** Numbers 18:7a. The sons of Aaron did not earn their office through the character of piety, but as said, by descent, therefore, these high priests could be men of worldliness, of which many were. The tribe of Levi was set aside for service to the tabernacle, and as we know, Aaron was of the tribe of Levi, however, Aaron and his descendants, as we have just read, were called out to hold the office of high priests. Therefore, not all Levites were high priests, but only the direct descendants of Aaron. Only the high priests could enter into the most holy place once a year on the Day of Atonement. Today, those called out by the grace of God, being the children of God by His Spirit, have received a new high priest, chosen of God, one not descended from the tribe of Levi but of Judah, of which Moses spoke nothing about a priesthood: **"For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."** Hebrews 7:13, 14. Jesus, our high priest, was not established by man but by an oath from God: **"For he [God] testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec ... For those priests [Aaronic] were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec..."** Hebrews 7:17, 21 – compare with Psalm 110:4. Further: **"... but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."** Hebrews 7:28b; **"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."** Hebrews 6:20. Our

high priest was perfected through obedience and the Spirit, therefore, he entered into the true most holy heavenly place and sits at God's right hand, through the giving of his own blood which can take away our sins, unlike the Aaronic high priests who offered the blood of innocent animals, which could not take away sin. **"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."** Hebrews 10:4. **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us ... How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot [fault] to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"** Hebrews 9:12, 14. Jesus now resides in the presence of God. **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others."** Hebrews 9:24, 25. As the animals which were offered in sacrifices must be without blemish, so was Jesus without spot (or faults), when he willingly offered himself for the scriptures' fulfillment. Now imagine how much better was our high priest who was in a spotless state and offered himself just once and now sits on the right hand of God. The high priests of that first covenant had to continually, year after year, offer the blood of others (ie. animals) for their sins, which could never cleanse them of their sins, so they had to follow the same procedure annually with no effect. **"...in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him [ie. the high priest] that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances [ceremonies], imposed on them until the time of reformation."** Hebrews 9:9b, 10. **"For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity..."** Hebrews 7:28a. This last verse clearly tells us that the Levitical priesthood, instituted by the law of Moses, with its succession line of descent, made men high priests who had moral shortcomings. One cannot, in truth, prove by the New Testament writings about Jesus or of his apostles that the Day of Atonement or any of the other feasts of the book of the Mosaic law were to be carried over into the church of the new covenant. The feasts belong to the old covenant of Moses which were written by his hand in the "book of the law". Christians of today who observe this old covenant are making the death of Jesus of no avail for their salvation, for Jesus died so that the transition from the old to the new covenant could take place, but it could only take place upon his death. Let us not go backwards by making a mockery of Jesus' death, keeping ordinances that were done away with at his death: **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot [fault] to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that BY means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."** Hebrews 9:14 to 17. These verses clearly state that the new testament (or the second covenant) does not take effect until the death of the testator. Jesus, during the emblems of bread and wine at his last supper, said: **"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new testament [or covenant] which is shed for many for the remission of sins."** Matthew 26:27, 28. See also Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20. Note that Jesus said **"this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many"**. Jesus knew he had to die, for the last sin to conquer was death. For death resulted from sin, and through the resurrection of Jesus, by the power of God, death would be conquered. And it was after his resurrection and just before the time of his ascension into the abode of God, that he commanded his disciples to begin their new commission, as the old covenant was now fading away and the new covenant was being established. **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in [into] the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."** Matthew 28:18 to 20; **"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that ALL THINGS MUST BE FULFILLED, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, CONCERNING ME. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things ... but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."** Luke 24:44 to 48, 49b.

It should be noted that Matthew 28:19 has raised controversy because in an earlier writing by Eusebius of Caesarea, he quotes the "triune" passage as follows: **"Go ye and make disciples of all nations IN MY NAME, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I commanded you."** This version was used many times during the early years of the church; the more modern triune version, which was never used until after the Council of Nicea, was written as the more familiar: **"...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]"**.

Today, there are many teachers, just as there were in the days of the apostles, who strive to bring the people back into the bondage of Moses' ministrations. These misled teachers have deluded many people into believing they must keep those laws of the first covenant or face destruction if they don't observe them. The truth of the matter is that when we observe things instituted under the Mosaic Law, we bring ourselves back under the first covenant which had been done away with in Christ. The fact is that we cannot belong to both the old and the new covenant. If we, who profess to be Christians, turn back to observing the ministrations of Moses' law [ie. the first covenant], then we can have no part of Jesus who gave himself to bring in the second covenant by way of his death. Let us look briefly into the writing of Hebrews again: **"And being made perfect, he**

**became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec ... If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law ... For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood ... Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.**" Hebrews 5:9, 10; 7:11, 12, 14, 16, 17. In the previous verses, we are shown from scripture that the Levitical priesthood was done away. The Levitical priesthood was instituted by Moses of which he appointed and set up his brother as high priest and his brother's sons as priests. We also read from scripture how the Levitical priests were the only ones who could perform the feast ceremonies. Even the Passover that was family-oriented was commandeered by the priesthood. Reference to "the law of a carnal commandment" represented both the organization of the priesthood and feasts both being laws of the book which Moses had established as part of that first covenant (or testament): "**And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats. And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office ... And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses.**" Exodus 40:12 to 15a, 18, 19. "**And he [Moses] took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said, will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.**" Exodus 24:7, 8.

Be aware that the "book of the law" was created by Moses, not God, and was continually added to by Moses, until he had finished it. Let us not deceive ourselves about the book of the law: the book of the law was strictly referred to as the "book" or "law of Moses", and we have also read from scripture many times that it was written by the hand of Moses. There were many laws made with the children of Israel, although often when referring to the written laws of the book, it is spoken of in the singular, that is, the "book of the law" or the "book of the covenant". The book of Moses contained both the layout of the Levitical priesthood and of the feast days, all written by the hand of Moses: "**And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee ...**" Deuteronomy 30:1a; "**And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished. That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." Deuteronomy 31:24 to 26. In the preceding texts, we find Moses wrote the laws and had established the priesthood. This priesthood which Moses established is called "**the carnal commandment**" ("carnal" meaning "worldly"). The feasts instituted by Moses are the inventions of men. God has no more need of the carnal feasts than he would of the sacrifice; both are only the carnal desires of His created creatures. The Day of Atonement had no effect for forgiveness or salvation, so what was the purpose of it? God permitted it for a shadow of those things that were yet to come. The high priests were men who had never overcome their own sins, for every year they would enter into the holy of holies with the blood of beasts, repeating the act year in and year out, to atone for their sins, yet not coming any closer, spiritually, to the Father. Jesus, our high priest, was without blemish and offered himself willingly that all things written in scripture concerning him might be fulfilled: "**Who needeth not daily, as those high priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's ... For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity ... But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people ... Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances [ceremonies], imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us ... Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others ... For the law [of Moses] having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereof perfect ... And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes [see Numbers 28:3] the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins ... If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." Hebrews 7:27a, 28a; 9:7, 9 to 12, 25; 10:1, 11; 7:11, 12. There is no question that not only were the sacrifices done away with, but also the Levitical priesthood, and with it, the law, which under this law rose the feasts with their ordinances. Be not deceived by man – the feasts belonged to the law of Moses, representing the first covenant. The second covenant did not carry over the ceremonialism of the feast days with their sabbaths and sacrifices; these faded away along with its temple and priesthood. The book of Hebrews shows the fading away of those Mosaic feasts by using the Day of Atonement as an example of how the ceremony could do nothing for the people, in****

terms of forgiveness and making them better people in God's sight. The Aaronic priesthood, with men who had infirmities or short-comings, could not represent the people when their own consciences were seared with imperfections. But fortunately for us, the Christ came and with him, the bringing in of a new and better covenant: ***"By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament ... But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second ... Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances [ceremonies] of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary ... In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away ... This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts and in their minds will I write them."*** Hebrews 7:22; 8:6, 7; 9:1; 8:13; 10:16. Many people are deceived into thinking that the first covenant of the law is still in effect for God's people. It is important to clarify that we are not speaking about that covenant of the Ten Words (Decalogue) which was written by God's own finger and given to the children of Israel. We are speaking of the covenant of the law written by the hand of Moses in a book. Jesus died, as we have read, to rid us of that which could save no one. Today, there are those who make Jesus' ministry and sacrifice of no avail, by taking those who are spiritually weak to do that which had been annulled by Jesus' sacrifice, that is, the law or covenant of Moses, thus, making of none effect Jesus' death, but also his teachings, which is the Word of God. There was not only one covenant made to God by the Israelites, but many; read the scriptures for yourself and find the truth. And one was the feasts. God said the feasts, with all their ceremonial attachments, were the desires of men, NOT His Will, and yet today thousands are influenced to take participation in these ordinances of the past: ***"Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them."*** Isaiah 1:14. For a more in-depth study contrasting the "law of the covenant" or "book of the law" with the Ten Words of God, feel free to download *"Two Laws & One Testimony"* also on our website.

Remember, Jesus preached the ending of the Mosaic law of ministration. As we have shown from scripture, the sacred day of Atonement has passed away, as did the rest of the Mosaic laws that were against us. Our atonement is found in the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, the testator of the new ministration: ***"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second."*** Hebrews 8:6, 7; ***"And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."*** II Corinthians 3:13 to 15.