

# Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur comes at the end of the '10 Days of Awe' (or repentance) that followed The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah). This is the day the worshiper stands before Almighty God. He confesses his mistakes and admits that he has sinned. It is his desire to bring himself into harmony with God.

“And it shall be a statute to you forever that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict yourselves and shall do no work, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you. For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the Lord from all your sins. It is a Sabbath of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict yourselves; it is a statute forever. And the priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father’s place shall make atonement, wearing the holy linen garments. He shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. And this shall be a statute forever for you, that atonement may be made for the people of Israel once in the year because of all their sins.” (Leviticus 16:29-34)

*Kippur* is from the Hebrew word *kaphar* meaning “to cover.” Therefore, the word atonement simply means a covering. Originally atonement or covering consisted of a blood sacrifice of innocent animals. Besides the regular, daily burnt offerings with their required grain and drink offerings, additional burnt offerings were made on Yom Kippur. These additional offerings included a bull, a ram, seven lambs for the people, and a ram for the priesthood.

The Day of Atonement remains the most solemn day of the year for God’s people. However now that the system of temple sacrifices is no more, the day is focused on fasting and prayers.

## **Ways to Celebrate:**

**Bless the children.** It is customary in the Hebrew tradition for fathers and mothers to bless their children on the day before Yom Kippur. Place your hands gently on your child’s head. Pray specifically for your child, being aware of individual abilities and needs.

**Have an evening meal.** Choose healthy foods that will last. Fruits and vegetables are good choices because the fiber will help you stay full longer and their high water content will help you stay hydrated. Avoid salty, sugary, or spicy foods that will make you want to eat again soon.

**Fast and pray.** Designate the next 24 hours to fasting and prayer as is appropriate for your situation. You can abstain from all food, a certain category of food, or something else such as media or electronics. *See the Fasting resource for more information.*

**Read the story of Jonah.** Jonah was sent to tell the people of Nineveh that they were going to be destroyed because of their sinfulness. The story illustrates God's judgment of sin and His mercy when people repent.

**Break your fast with a light meal.** A light, healthy meal will help your body readjust to eating. Try some eggs, dried fruit, or low sugar smoothies, anything that is easy to digest.

#### Resources

[Celebrating Biblical Feasts](#). Martha Zimmerman.

[Walk with Y'shua Through the Jewish Year](#). Janie-sue Wertheim and Kathy Shapiro.

[Feasts of the Bible](#). Dr. Sam Nadler.

[The Feasts of the Lord](#). Kevin Howard and Marvin Rosenthal.