

THE DAY AFTER

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In our previous Jewish Newsletter we saw how excited Tevye would have been when he found his Messiah from Isaiah's prophecy in 52:15. He would have seen how the word sprinkle was used in both that verse and when God made His Covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24:4-8). And he would have realized how Yeshua's shed Blood allowed him to enter the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-24), with God, and that Yeshua was his Messiah, come to give him new life from God. Now we'll explore how sprinkle is used both on the Day of Atonement and in the consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood, and find out what Tevye would have done, the day after.

52:15—He Will Sprinkle Many

‘So, he will sprinkle many nations and because of him, kings will shut their mouths; for what wasn't told to them, they will see, and what they didn't hear, they will understand.’

Sprinkle: The Day of Atonement

A major theme where sprinkle is seen is on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14, twice, 15, 19), as in the days of Moses. All of Israel's sins for the past year were cleansed by the blood sacrifice of a goat. Some of the blood would be sprinkled seven times on the Ark of the Covenant, and seven times upon the ground in front of it (Lev. 16:14-15). The Ark cover, commonly misnamed the Mercy Seat,¹ not only represented Yahveh, Yahveh was literally above it in the Cloud of Glory in the Wilderness (Ex. 40:33-38; Num. 9:15-23). This was God's point of entry into all the Earth, His place of manifested Presence. He literally and visibly dwelt in the midst of Israel.

Today, most religions boast that they believe in 'god' and that he is 'with them' wherever they go, meaning that he lives in them. But this was not the case in ancient times. The god dwelt in the temple or on the high hills and one had to go there in order to worship the god or goddess. But no other people could ever claim this the way Israel could. For Yahveh literally dwelt above the Ark cover. And in the end, Yahveh will (continue to) dwell in the midst of Israel (Rev. 21:1-14), in a way that we cannot fathom on this side of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:3, 23; 22:1-5). We call the Tabernacle in the Wilderness His 'point of entry' realizing that Satan has authority over all the kingdoms of this world for now (Rev. 11:15), because of the sin of rebellion displayed by our first parents, Adam and Eve. Yahveh is in process of redeeming His people, Israel (both Jew and Gentile), through the blood sacrifice of His son.

¹ The literal Hebrew speaks of a lid that was made of gold (a gold lid cover). The idea of mercy comes specifically because the sins of Israel were forgiven when the blood was placed on the lid, on the Day of Atonement. The idea of it being a seat for God was seen in that God was actually there, although the Hebrew implies that He was above the gold lid and between the Cherubim in the Cloud of Glory.

The Ark cover represented Yahveh in that it was pure gold. Gold is symbolic in Scripture of God. The ground where the blood of the goat was sprinkled pictured Israel, as humanity came from the dust of the Earth. And so the two were reconciled, made 'one', by the blood sacrifice. Israel was forgiven of her sins and brought back into union with her God by the blood sacrifice and the sprinkling thereof. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia tells us of the need for blood sacrifice and how the animal is a substitute for the person (or people):

'In every sacrifice there is the idea of substitution; the victim takes the place of the human sinner. The laying of the hands upon the victim's head is an ordinary rite by which the substitution and the transfer of sins are effected'. 'The sprinkling of the blood is essential to all sin offerings. By dipping the finger in the victim's blood and applying it to a sacred object like the altar, the priest re-establishes the union between the people that he represents and the Deity.'²

The use of blood in sacrifice appears to follow a principle that the blood of the animal is a substitute for the lives of those who make the sacrifice. 'I have given it (the blood), to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes atonement by reason of the life' (Lev. 17:11). If it were not for the pouring out or sprinkling of animal blood, the ancient Hebrews believed they themselves would be slain. Thus the blood of a lamb was smeared on the lintels during the plague of the death of the first-born, to protect the firstborn 'of the house against death (Ex. 12:22).'³

Yahveh sent His Messiah to take upon himself our sins. His blood is sprinkled upon us and we are protected from the Plague of eternal death on the Day of Judgment, just as our Fathers' first born sons were in that first Passover in Egypt. Whoever deals with sin any other way is like the second goat of the Day of Atonement. That goat wasn't sacrificed but sins were imputed to it (Lev. 16:20-22), and it was led out into the Wilderness to die, alone, in a barren place, 'bearing its own sins.'

The first goat of the Day of Atonement is a picture of Messiah Yeshua for all who believe in him. They trust in God and allow God to deal with their sins, His way. The second goat pictures the unfaithful or rebellious of Israel (or the Church). They say they 'believe in God', but they don't truly trust Him. They deal with their sinful condition their way; or no way at all. One either deals with their sin the way God intended, or one carries their own sin before Him on Judgment Day. To carry one's sins before God on Judgment Day means that they will be sent to 'a barren place' (i.e. Hell), with their sins still upon them. This was the meaning of the second goat on the Day of Atonement.

² Sanford R. Howard, *L'Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom* (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), p. 186; The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. 2, p. 286, article, Atonement.

³ Ibid. p. 406, article, Blood.

Sprinkle: The Cleansing of the Leper

The third theme involving sprinkling in Torah has to do with cleansing a leper. When a leper found out that he was free from his leprosy, he would have to go through certain rituals. One of them involved being sprinkled with the blood of a bird sacrifice (Lev. 14:7).

For Israel, leprosy became symbolic of 'sin'. As leprosy literally eats away at the flesh of a living person, so too does sin eat away at the soul of man. The Suffering Servant of Is. 53 is also called the Leprous Messiah by the ancient Rabbis because he would take upon himself 'our sickness' and 'our sins'. Leprosy literally eats away and rots the flesh, even as the person lives. Sin, not dealt with has the same effect on the soul. In the symbolic sense, we are all like lepers before our holy God. (We'll deal more with this aspect of sprinkling and the leper when we examine Isaiah 53:4.)

Sprinkle: The Consecration of the Priesthood

The fourth concept of sprinkling that we believe relates to Is. 52:15 is when Aaron and his sons were consecrated as priests unto the Living God (Lev. 8:24, 30). They were forgiven and cleansed of their sins with one sacrifice (v. 14), and fully dedicated to Yahveh with another (v. 18). Yet a third sacrifice with sprinkling was needed to consecrate them to their office (v. 22), that they might minister before the Holy One of Israel. Seth Postell writes that sprinkling should be the correct translation for 52:15 as the theme of sacrifice and consecration is found in Is. 53:

'Numerous references to the servant bearing the sin of the nation (of Israel), support this understanding (Isaiah 53:4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12). Just as Aaron and his sons were sprinkled in order to gain access to God's holy presence, so the servant will sprinkle many nations in order to bring them near to the God of Israel.'⁴

This cleansing from sin, dedication to Yahveh and consecration into priesthood through sacrifice is an idea that finds expression in Messiah as High Priest after the order of Malkizedek. It shows us that all who believe in him, have been made priests, like him. If all the institutions and ceremonies of the Tanach were pictures of the coming Messiah, as the ancient Sages wrote of,⁵ it's not unreasonable to understand that Messiah as High Priest would have his followers to be priests. The idea that God wanted a priesthood made up of every firstborn son from all the Tribes of Israel was present at Mt. Sinai. If not for the sin of the Gold Calf, every firstborn son from every family of every Tribe would have served as a priest.

'and you shall be to Me a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Sons of Israel.' (Ex. 19:6)

And this is actually what happened before the Gold Calf, when Israel ratified the Covenant:

Ex. 24:4-5: 'Moses wrote down all the words of Yahveh. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve Tribes of Israel. He sent young men of the Sons of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings

⁴ Seth David Postell, *Who?* (Eilat, Israel: unpublished paper, 2000), p. 6.

⁵ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, originally published in 1883; 2000), pp. 113-114.

and sacrificed young bulls as peace offerings to Yahveh.’

No mention is made that these young men who performed the sacrifices were only from the Tribe of Levi, the family of Aaron.⁶ Just the opposite is seen. They were from the Sons of Israel implying that each one came from a different Tribe, to represent that Tribe before Yahveh, as each pillar represented a Tribe. The Gold Calf incident, which would alter Yahveh’s plans for each firstborn from every Tribe being a priest, would not occur till after Moses comes down from the Mountain, about a month and a half later (after his first forty days with Yahveh on top of the Mountain). Because of the zeal of the Levites for Yahveh, they were chosen by God to replace the firstborn of Israel (Ex. 32:25-29). The redemption money allowed the firstborn of Israel to forego their priesthood. The Levites took their place:

‘Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the Sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the first issue of the womb among the Sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine. For all the firstborn are Mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine. I am Yahveh.’ (Num. 2:12-13)

‘So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the Sons of Israel, just as Yahveh had commanded him and all the firstborn males by the number of names from a month old and upward, for their numbered men were 22,273. Then Yahveh spoke to Moses, saying’

‘Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the Sons of Israel and the cattle of the Levites. And the Levites shall be Mine. I am Yahveh. For the ransom of the 273 of the firstborn of the Sons of Israel who are in excess beyond the Levites you shall take five shekels apiece, per head. You shall take them in terms of the shekel of the sanctuary’ ‘and give the money, the ransom of those who are in excess among them, to Aaron and to his sons.’ (Num. 3:42-48)

‘I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the Sons of Israel, to perform the service of the Sons of Israel at the Tent of Meeting and to make atonement on behalf of the Sons of Israel, so that there will be no plague among the Sons of Israel by their coming near to the sanctuary.’ (Num. 8:19)

Covenant, forgiveness of sin, cleansing from sin, with the implication of a new nature or heart (Ezk. 36:24-27), as seen in cleansing from leprosy, and consecration to priestly office form a biblical mosaic for the word sprinkle that Isaiah uses. The essence of what the Suffering Servant would do is seen in his sprinkling both Jew and Gentile with his precious blood, effecting not only entry into the New Covenant, forgiveness and cleansing from sin but also a holy priesthood that has a new heart to follow and obey God, endowed with the Spirit of Yahveh. Sprinkle implies all of this while startle, tremble, and scatter, etc., have no bearing on the passage at all (Is. 52:13-53:12).

The idea of all the firstborn being priests is played out in the New Covenant where all who believe in Messiah Yeshua are considered firstborn (Heb. 12:23), and are made priests:

‘and He has made us to be a Kingdom of priests to His God and Father. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.’⁷ (Rev. 1:6)

⁶ Only Aaron and his sons could offer sacrifice, but that would be after this (Lev. 8-9). And we know that before they were consecrated, Aaron only had four sons. So the 12 men couldn’t have been from Aaron’s line.

⁷ See Rom. 15:16; Heb. 2:17; 3:1, etc.

‘But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous Light’. (1st Peter 2:9)

The interpretation by Rashi and others, may seem plausible for Is. 53:15 (startle; leap, etc), but has no internal connection to the text that it’s part of. And as the first three verses of this section (Is. 52:13-15), form a summary for the rest of the passage (Is. 53:1-12), it is quite understandable for v. 15 to describe how Messiah’s blood would affect the people (having been sprinkled with his blood, salvation was given to the kings and peoples). This, after having been tortured to death (52:14). And yet, God was very pleased with Him (exalted beyond all others, 52:13; 53:10).

We have felt compelled to define the word in it’s plain and conceptually packed meaning. It is both to the language of the word (that we have translated as sprinkle), and to the biblical concepts that use the word, that the Servant’s blood would form the basis of the New Covenant, cleanse from sin, transform our nature and consecrate to priesthood. This seems to give the divine understanding of the verse. Acting as Israel’s High Priest, Messiah’s blood would sprinkle many peoples and kings, including Israel. Kings would shut their mouths, being overwhelmed by what Yeshua did for them. This, to the Glory of Yahveh who ordained the redemption of Israel before He created the Heavens and the Earth, and also the inclusion of many Gentiles into the Family of Israel:

‘I will sow her for Myself in the Land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion and I will say to those who were not My people,’ (Gentiles) ‘You are My people!’ And they will say, ‘You are my God!’ (Hos. 2:23, see also, Rom. 9:25).

‘Yet the number of the Sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it is said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ (Gentiles) ‘it will be said to them, ‘You are the sons of the living God.’ (Hos. 1:10, see also, Rom. 9:26)

‘They have made Me jealous with what is not God. They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people.’ (Gentiles) ‘I will provoke them to anger with a foolish people’ (Deut. 32:21, see also, Rom. 10:19).

‘I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me.’ (Gentiles) ‘I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me. I said, ‘Here am I, here am I’, ‘To a people which did not call on My name’ (Is. 65:1, see also, Rom. 10:20).

This last verse of Is. 65:1 seems to line up perfectly with what we have stated about Is. 52:15. The kings and the peoples that were not seeking the Jewish God, came to Him through His Messiah. The other verse from Deuteronomy and Hoshea show us God’s heart for the peoples of the Earth, to include them with His people Israel.

When one is forgiven and cleansed, the next step is full surrender (total dedication). Serving Yahveh with all our heart is the primary motif for dedication. But it is not enough to enter into covenant, be forgiven, cleansed and fully devoted to God. We must also be consecrated and focused upon our task of being a priest for Messiah Yeshua, whatever position or profession we find ourselves in.

What made the kings of the Earth shut their mouths? Yahveh, the God of Israel, had sent His son to die for them, that they might have eternal life. The Servant would sprinkle them with his holy blood and they would be welcomed into the New Covenant, along with the Jews who believed.

The kings spoken of didn't have any understanding (Hebrew Bible), of what the God of the Jews would do for them. They didn't have an understanding of the brutal beating that Messiah would receive, because of them. This would make them 'shut their mouths', when they would find out. The Gentiles, represented in the 'kings of the Earth' are being gathered in by the one True God. Yeshua said,

'I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must bring them also and they will hear My voice. And they will become one flock with one shepherd.' (John 10:16)

The day after Tevyeh would have asked God to forgive him his sins, by the blood of Messiah Yeshua, and have come into His Kingdom, tasting the new Life that God had for him, we believe that Tevyeh would have told a number of people about it. The Joy of knowing Messiah, and truly knowing that one's sins are forgiven, of receiving the Holy Spirit (Ezk. 36:26), so that they can be fully dedicated and consecrated to God Most High, is joy supreme. One cannot contain it. They have to share the Good News with others. This is God's Love! And so we think that the first one that Tevyeh would have told would have been Golda, his wife.

I can see it now. She looks at him in total astonishment. 'You have become a Gentile?! What?! Are you crazy altogether or just insane?!' After twenty minutes of calming her down and reassuring her that he hadn't lost his marbles, and that the Gentiles can know the Jewish Messiah too (Is. 49:6), he would tell her about meeting the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when he came to believe in Yeshua and asking Him to forgive him of his sins, in the Name of Yeshua and how the sweet Spirit of Shalom (Peace with God), had come over him so He knew it was God. It was something he had never known before.

As he continued to share with Golda about Messiah Yeshua and sprinkle, she too came to believe. And they told their children and their spouses. And the whole family knew the blessedness of God's joyful salvation. Then they told their Jewish neighbors. And the whole town began to worship God and His Messiah King Yeshua (Ps. 2:2, 6-7). For we Jews have always longed for God's Truth.

And now it's come to you. It's no longer a Jewish tradition not to believe in Yeshua. Too many Jews today believe and our numbers are growing because Yeshua is our Messiah! We're finally coming to realize it. We've found God's Life in Messiah's sprinkled Blood. Come! Join us! And know the Joy of your Salvation.