

Benjamin's Themes

Related to the Day of Atonement



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|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| atonement | indebtedness to God |
| balancing order and diligence | inscribing names of the righteous |
| being made free from sin | joy and blessings |
| belief in God | knowing the divine name |
| belief in the Messiah | left hand |
| blessings | the means of salvation |
| blood | the name of God |
| blotting out names of transgressors | preparations |
| the commandments of God | pride |
| confession and repentance | purification |
| conversion | rebellion against God |
| eternal rewards and punishments | repentance |
| faith | right hand |
| the fall of Adam | sacrifice and purifications |
| the fallen state of humanity | scapegoat, driving ass out |
| foundation of the world | service to God and fellowman |
| giving to the poor | submission |
| the goodness of God | suffering and works of the Messiah |
| humility | unintentional sin |
| ignorant sin | |

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Key Scripture Mosiah 2–5

Explanation The Day of Atonement is one of the most sacred holidays in Jewish culture. In preexilic Israel it included ritual atonement in the temple and a series of holy assemblies. Because Benjamin's speech in Mosiah 2–5 and its surrounding context emphasizes several topics particularly significant to this day of religious celebration, it is possible that Benjamin gave the speech on or near the Day of Atonement. In fact, he refers to the atonement overtly seven times—a number that represented spiritual perfection and that was used in connection with rituals performed on the Day of Atonement and during other times of purification mentioned in the book of Leviticus. This holy day was also a time of forgiveness for the people of Israel who confessed their sins and repented; similarly, the people of Benjamin were spiritually reborn after they confessed and repented of their sins. Each element in this chart, listed alphabetically, is found both in Israelite texts and in Benjamin's speech.

Source Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 174–83, 201.