



אחרי מות *Acharei Mot* After the Death
[Leviticus 16.1-18.30](#) / [Ezekiel 22.1-9](#) / [Luke 14-15](#)

כפר *kaphar* Covering/Atonement כפר is used 14 times in this portion, such as [17.11](#)—it is blood which makes כפר for the soul. [Hebrews 9.22](#) agrees that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. The first use of כפר in Scripture is [Genesis 6.14](#), when God tells Noah to כפר the ark with pitch (*kaphar* sounds a bit like cover). That כפר helps protect those inside the ark. [Hebrews 9.7-15](#) shows how ישוע *Yeshua* Jesus/salvation fulfills the day known as יום כפר *Yom Kippur* (כ has either an *f* or *p* sound) Day of Atonement. On that day, the High Priest enters the Most Holy Place with blood offered for himself and for the sins of the people. [Hebrews 10.1-4](#) goes on to say that since these sacrifices needed to be repeated every year, it's obvious they never took away sin, but only served as a reminder. Only when ישוע makes the perfect sacrifice of His blood in the heavenly Tabernacle are our sins removed.



Town כפר also means town, since a town offers protection. Many towns in ישראל *Yisra'el* Israel today have this in their name, such as כפר נחום *Kaphar Nahum* Town of Comfort/Capernaum, where ישוע lives with Peter by the Sea of Galilee. We could say ישוע lives in the Covering of Comfort—an appropriate place for our Redeemer!

Approaching God אחרי מות of Aaron's sons. The sons died as they approached God with “strange fire” and God's fire consumed them. God gives instructions in this portion on how to approach Him deliberately, not casually. These instructions are given so that Aaron, his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, and future priests won't die in God's presence as Aaron's first two sons did. In this is a warning for us as well, that we not treat the King of Kings casually, but take worship seriously, and worship in a way that God accepts.

Afflict [Leviticus 16.29](#) says that on this tenth day of the seventh month, **יום כפר**, we (including the strangers among us) are to **ענה** *anah* afflict the soul/humble one's self/be afflicted. Jewish tradition says that the two days of greatest joy in **ישראל** are **ט"ו באב** *Tu B'Av* 15th of Av and **יום כפר**. **ט"ו באב** is also known as **חג האהבה** *Chag HaAhava* Feast of Love/Jewish Valentine's Day. On this day, unmarried girls dress in simple white clothing to hide any distinction between rich and poor, and go out to sing and dance in the fields. And on **יום כפר**, observers dress in a kittel/burial garment, a simple white garment to hide any distinction between rich and poor, and refrain from eating, drinking, lighthearted conversation, and work. Yet both these days are considered joyful because of the darkness that precedes them.



באב תשעה באב *Tisha B'Av* The 9th of Av, is the saddest day in the Jewish year. On this day, both the first and second Temples were destroyed. But before those calamities, **באב תשעה באב** is the day **ישראל** listened to the evil report of the spies and refused to take the Land. During the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness that followed, they would dig graves to sleep in on **באב תשעה באב**. Those who died in their sleep were buried where they lay. At the end of the 40 years, no one died on **באב תשעה באב**. Thinking they miscalculated the date, everyone slept in graves the next five nights until they saw the full moon of **ט"ו באב**, the middle of the month. They realized they had been spared from death on **באב תשעה באב**; judgment is past.

As **ט"ו באב** is a celebration for not dying on **באב תשעה באב**, **יום כפר** is a celebration for not dying the previous year. In any given year, friends and family will die. For some it is expected due to old age or illness, for others it is a shock. Either way, those who are still alive on **יום כפר** have reason to celebrate. The mood is somber and the wearing of the kittel is a remembrance of mortality. But despite the somber mood, there is—usually—great joy in being alive for another year, another year of escaping the grave.



It is customary for the high priest, who offers the **כפר** of blood on the Mercy Seat of the Ark, to stay up all night to **ענה** himself. On the night before His sacrifice, **ישוע** our High Priest, who would be offering the **כפר** of His own blood the next day, is **ענה** all night in the Garden of Gethsemane and at His trials.

Glossary, in order of appearance:

אחרי מות	<i>acharei mot</i>	after the death
כפר	<i>kaphar</i>	covering/atonement
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
יום כפר	<i>Yom Kippur</i>	Day of Atonement
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
כפר נחום	<i>Kaphar Nahum</i>	Town of Comfort/Capernaum
ענה	<i>anah</i>	afflict the soul/humble one's self/be afflicted
ט"ו באב	<i>Tu B'Av</i>	15 th of Av
חג האהבה	<i>Chag HaAhava</i>	Feast of Love/Jewish Valentine's Day
תשעה באב	<i>Tisha B'Av</i>	The 9 th of Av