

them. And if one dared to neglect the solemn service and take no part in the observance of the fast, that one was excluded from all share in the atonement, and was sentenced to be "cut off from his people." Chap. 23. 29, 30. For the services of the day presented also

*A picture of sin put out of mind.*

After the slaughter of the victim the high-priest, as the representative of the people, entered the tabernacle with the blood of the sacrifice and with sweet incense. He did not pause, as usual, before the curtain which shut off the holy of the holies, concealing the ark of the covenant, and veiling the glory which rested upon the mercy-seat. He did not sprinkle the blood "before the veil," as he had done at other times when some particular transgression of all the congregation, had to be atoned for. He drew back the curtain and passed behind it, into the full blaze of glory, dimmed for him only by the cloud of smoke arising from the incense. He stood there before the Lord, and sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat. Yet he represented the congregation of Israel. He was there in the name of the people whose sin had been remembered and brought to light. Must not the holiness, must not the justice of God demand the swift destruction of the sinner? No, for the blood of the sacrifice had made atonement for the sin—had covered it (this being the meaning of the Hebrew word translated by "atoned.") The blood had been given for an atonement, or covering, Chap. 17. 11. And now it was sprinkled on the *Capporeth*, the mercy-seat, or place of covering. The sin, was, as it were, put out of mind—no longer imputed, no longer remembered by God.

Then later, when all the sin for which atonement was made had been confessed over and laid on the head of the live goat, (most appropriately the goat for Azazel, or for going away,) the animal was sent away into the wilderness, "to bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited." And why? Because God having covered, or put them out of mind, the Israelites need no more to mourn and weep over the remembrance of them. They might enjoy the blessedness of those "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

Every year the same remembrance had to be made over again, because the services of this solemn day were but a picture of a reality not yet actually performed. The devout Israelite had to look forward in faith to the atonement which was to be made when the fit time was come.

But we are to look back and see that the atonement has been made. Once for all

*God has remembered and provided a covering for sin.* On the cross, where the Lord of all hung in agony, sin was brought to light. His life was given for us, and his precious blood poured out as an atonement, a covering for our sin, a shelter for our souls. His dying cry, "It is finished," told that the work was done forever—not one particle of it left to be done over again. And then he rose as our High-priest, and ascended into the "holy of holies," "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9. 24. Having been "delivered for our offences," he was "raised again for our justification," (Rom. 4. 25,) that we may know and be assured that the sacrifice was accepted and that the covering stands good. What then remains necessary?

*The sinner must remember and confess his sin.* If the sacrifice is to avail for him he must recognize his own concern in it. It must not be "nothing" to him. Lam. 1. 12. He must not endeavour to cover his own sin. He must bring it to the light of God's word and see it there judged and condemned. He must not shrink from the pain of having its iniquity laid bare by God's truth. He must not refuse to have his eyes opened to his true condition before God, nor object to mourn and to afflict his soul. He must not plead that he has no time for these things. No business can be as urgent as the business of the soul. As a poet has reminded us—

"He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend :  
Eternity mourns that."

And if he then simply believes and accepts the atonement that has been made for sin, his transgression is forgiven, his sin is covered. God has put it out of mind. Isa. 38. 17; Micah 7. 19; Heb. 10. 17. It shall never again be brought up against him. It is gone forever. Neither need he continue to mourn over it. It is his part to be glad and rejoice. Psal. 31. 11.

But whoever is not willing to see and own his sin, but clings to the thought that he has harmed no one, and that he has "done his best," that he is in fact, a very respectable character, for him the atonement has yet availed nothing. His sin is still there, and any day it may be brought to fearful remembrance.

## BEREAN METHODS.

### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Notice (1) The time of the atonement ;  
(2) The plan or method of the atonement ;  
(3) The teachings of the atonement.... Meaning of the word atonement, "at-one-ment," reconciliation. (1) Who are reconciled? (2) Why is there need of reconciliation? (3) How are they reconciled? (4) What is required for their reconciliation? (5) What