

# Benjamin's Themes

## Related to the Day of Atonement



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.