

DAY OF ATONEMENT'S PROPHETIC MEANING

From Light On the Rock

Philip W. Shields

This day is also known as Yom Kippur. Why should Christians keep it? Learn how the Day of Atonement plays a huge role in prophecy. Satan's destiny. Why we fast on this day. Why it is so solemn. The correlation to deep national and personal repentance. And more...

.....

Greetings everyone! Today's message is about the meaning of one of the most solemn holydays of God's calendar. It's a day of FASTING, of "afflicting your souls" – the Day of Atonement. Though we do not eat on this day, yes – God calls it a "*feast* day" believe it or not. Feasting is on the Word of God, for man shall not live by bread alone but by every word of God.

GOD'S FEAST DAYS

Leviticus 23:1-2 "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts *of the LORD*, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, *these are My feasts*.'"

I prefer the term "**feast day**" instead of "festival" – because of the modern neighborhood festivals we have and the connotation they have. God's feast days are joyous, but have an element of solemnity to them. They're sometimes called His "solemn feast days". "Festival" is not wrong – I just prefer "feast".

Notice these points: None of God's holydays are the "feasts of the Jews". No, they're God's feasts. They are the feasts of *the Eternal* (v.2). The Jews certainly have other national *holidays* – which are not holy days, but observed. They have Hanukkah, which is not one of the holydays of God. They have Purim. They have other fasts and holidays. Those days are not wrong to observe. In fact it can be shown Jesus participated in a couple of those. They're not wrong – any more than our Thanksgiving Day or 4th of July would be wrong. But they're not holy days.

Where the New Testament refers to certain feast days "*the feast of the Jews*", it is probably because the way they were keeping them made them no longer "God's" feast days. They had added man-made rituals to the days. They were not worshipping God in spirit and truth any longer – and so God disowned those worship services as being His. **In Amos 5:21, God says, "I despise your feast days"**. God would not, hate His *own* feast days. But the *way* these feast days and holydays were being kept, and the *attitudes* they were being kept with, and in some years - the *days* on which they were being kept -- were no longer *God's* feasts.

One factor you may wish to study more is the matter of "Postponements" to the Hebrew calendar. A "postponement" simply means those figuring the Hebrew calendar have – for their "Four Postponement rules" – decided to move the date God said to keep the holydays 1-2 days earlier or later. Several of the rules have to do with keeping the calendar on track to make up for the partial days in any given year. When they do this, it helps keep the first day of the Feast of Tabernacle, for example, on a full moon day. From the best I can see, *perhaps* there's a case for modifications for *those* reasons of keeping the calendar "in synch", but I'm still studying it.

But, the “postponement rule” that bothers me most, since I see nothing in scripture for it, is the one that says if Rosh Hashana (Feast of Trumpets) falls on a Friday or Sunday, that would mean you’d have two holydays in a row – the annual holyday and the weekly Sabbath. But that also would mean the last 2 holydays (the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles and the 8th day, a separate holyday) would also fall on a double Sabbath. Of course the Jews keep ALL the holydays except Atonement for 2 days anyway! But, the Jewish leaders felt they had authority to prohibit having a double-sabbath (actually 3 double Sabbaths) in the 7th Hebrew month.

The Jews decided that having 3 double holydays in one month would simply be too much and so they thought God would understand if they moved *Rosh Hashana* (Feast of Trumpets) 1-2 days in those years. However, most of us keep double Sabbaths every Pentecost, and sometimes for the Spring holydays. And more importantly, I see no Biblical allowance for moving the holydays from the days God prescribed. Just be aware of that. I’m still studying it. *Just know that in any “postponement year”, the Jews are openly acknowledging that they have moved the holydays from the date GOD set.* No one denies that. That’s what a “postponement” is: moving the God-defined date to a different one for one reason or another.

Does man have authority to move the holyday date from what God set? Most of the Church of God groups and their leaders say “yes”. Hmmm. MOST of you who kept the Fall holydays in 2005 kept dates that were changed. There was no visible new moon in Jerusalem or in America on the eve of the date most of the COG groups kept the Feast of Trumpets in 2005. Trumpets is supposed to be on the first visible sighting of the first tiny crescent. The date in 2005 had been moved. Think about it.

How does God feel about “postponements”? *If you have any input, send it to me. I’m still carefully studying it. If it isn’t important, then with that reasoning, is the day we keep the weekly Sabbath important or not? If we can postpone the annual Sabbaths, why can’t we postpone the weekly one?*

4 FALL HOLYDAYS of the SEVENTH MONTH

The seventh Hebrew month – usually falling in our September or October, or some years overlapping parts of both of those months – is chock full of holydays. **The Fall holyday season starts with the first visible crescent of the new moon of the 7th month, starting the Feast of Trumpets.** The Jews *incorrectly* call this Rosh Hashana – meaning “the Head of the Year”. It is their new year. ***But should Rosh Hashana be the new year? I don’t think so, according to holy scripture.*** I welcome my Jewish friends to comment on this.

Adam and Eve created on Rosh Hashana?

Though the Talmudic tradition is that the 6th day of Creation week was the original Feast of Trumpets, the Friday on which Adam and Eve were created, we can’t be sure. Scripture doesn’t say – although there is evidence they were created in the harvest season, so they had all the fruit they wanted. The Jews call *Rosh Hashanah* the day the world was born. On this day there is a great blowing of the SHOFAR – the ram’s horn, and this day starts what they call “*the 10 Days of Awe*”, the 10 days of very profound repentance leading up to Yom Kippur.

Interestingly enough, I believe modern rules of postponement may not even *allow* a Feast of Trumpets on a Friday and then a weekly Sabbath be the very next day, and yet the Jews believe the original Feast of Trumpets was a Friday, when Adam and Eve were created. Go figure!

But the correct start of the year, according to God – is the spring, not the Fall. Keep your finger in Lev 23 but for now please turn to Exodus 12. The Jews consider Rosh Hashana as their “New Year”.

Exodus 12:1-2 “Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 ***‘This month (Abib) shall be your beginning of months; IT shall be the first month of the year to you.’***”

So which month is GOD calling the head of the year? The *first* month in the spring, not the 7th month! How much clearer can that be? How logical, too? In the spring, as you *observe* the Abib (**Deut 16:1**), the stage of growth in the barley where the head is being formed, soon ready for harvest. I prefer the Hebrew name Abib to the Babylonian one of Nisan, though scripture uses Nisan as well as Abib (Neh. 2:1; Esther 3:7).

Feast of TRUMPETS – LEADING UP TO ATONEMENT (Yom Kippur)

The Fall holydays picture the events just ahead of us, starting with the return of Christ — the “Day of the Lord”, a time of darkness, clouds and gloominess. A terrible time of trouble, such as the world has never seen. A time of much warfare, death and dying – so bad that if Jesus doesn’t return in time, no flesh would be saved alive.

The Jews call the Feast of Trumpets also *Yom Teruah* – the day of *shouting* and of Shofar blowing. The ram’s horn. I have a very large, beautiful ram’s horn. It’s hard to blow it properly. The Jews blow the ram’s horn in 3 different blasts – a 3-second sustained note, then three 1-second notes rising in tone, and then a series of short staccato notes. The Feast of Trumpets is very solemn and starts the 10 days of repentance leading to Yom Kippur.

I’d tell the world – and the Jews this: repent NOW, and avoid the Yom Kippur rush! Repentance is something we should seek as soon as we know we need forgiveness. Daily!

The Jews also keep two days for each holyday – except Atonement, the Fasting day – just in case they have the wrong day. . . but then they think nothing of purposely moving the right day, they call it a “postponement” when they move it backward or forward to make the calendar work out more conveniently for them. I’m still looking into it, but I can find no scriptural justification for it! The evidence I have is that the postponements were started long *after* Christ was on the earth. Why? That’s for another sermon.

Anyway, by the time we come to the end of the 9th day of God’s calendar 7th month, the Day of Atonement begins. Remember Biblical days start around sundown the night before. The Jews start their Sabbaths at 6 pm. The Day of Atonement is the 10th, but begins with the end of the 9th day, the evening before (**Lev. 23:32**).

Turn now with me Lev. 23:26-32: We are still reading about the days God called *His* feasts in verse 2. Now verse 26. As you turn there, realize that Jews regard the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement as their 2 most important “high” days, or holydays (though they call them, I feel incorrectly, “holidays”).

Leviticus 23:26-32 “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 27 “Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement [Yom Kippur]. It shall be a holy convocation for you; ***you shall afflict your souls***, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. 28 **And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement** for you before the LORD your

God. 29 For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. 30 And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. 31 You shall do no manner of work; **it shall be a statute forever** throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be to you **a sabbath of solemn rest**, and **you shall afflict your souls**; on the *ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening*, you shall celebrate your sabbath."

The Jews call this day "Yom Kippur" – which means "day of Atonement". In the Old Testament, **Num. 29:8-11** shows there were animal sacrifices offered on this day. We do not kill the designated sacrificial animals today because Jesus, Yeshua, is God's Lamb, He is what *all* the sacrificial animals foreshadowed. He is the *fulfillment* of the animal sacrifices – whether bull, ram, sheep, or turtledove.

Let's note several things here:

- 10th day after the visible new moon of the 7th Hebrew month
- v. 27 "Afflict your souls" = was understood to mean to fast, eat no food and drink no water. The Hebrew is '*anah* – meaning to humble yourself, to afflict yourself. More on this later.
- v.28 NO WORK whatsoever, whereas some cooking was allowed on the other holydays
- v. 31 A statute forever
- v. 32 A day of solemn rest
- v. 32 When we read "from the evening of" – means the night before, so it starts at the end of the 9th day and goes to the end of the

A STATUTE FOREVER: Let's briefly tackle "*forever*" first. It IS clear that the New Testament church kept the holydays and festivals of God. God sent His spirit on the Feast of Pentecost – Acts 2. God's people were there to receive the spirit, in one accord, in one place. In **1 Cor 5:6-8** and **1 Cor 11**, it's clear they were keeping the days of unleavened bread and the Passover. In **Acts 18:21**, Paul clearly said he had to keep – to observe – the Feast of Tabernacles coming up in Jerusalem. (That verse is omitted from modern versions which used Alexandrian texts as their basis instead of Greek texts). In fact, in **Zechariah 14:16-19** it says in the Millennium, those nations which do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles will be cursed with a drought. That is still ahead of us! So surely its clear we should be keeping these holy days.

The Jews have added many traditions to this day that are nowhere supported by scripture, nor by the teaching of Jesus.

Certainly it *is* a day of fasting – no food or water. **The Hebrew '*anah* means to humble oneself, to afflict and humiliate ones self.** That Hebrew word is used over 74 times in the Old Testament. It's the same word used for when Sarah afflicted Hagar, for when the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites in slavery, also used for when one was humbled, or forced, or punished, or had hardship imposed on him. **God says to "afflict your souls" on this day – so it matches with the concept in James that says "humble yourself under the hand of God and He will raise you up" (James 4:10)**

The intended outcome of affliction from God is very simple, when you study it thoroughly: humility. The passage in James makes that also abundantly clear. So a primary meaning of this day is to humble ourselves, to learn humility, to realize we totally need God in all aspects of our lives. Humility is what Satan lacked in a big way. The more that God dwells in us, the more humble we will be. I have a long way to go in this department, I admit. But that's the first step in growth: *seeing the need for change and growth.*

But here are some of the **additions** or man-made **changes** imposed by the Jews on their people:

- Their Talmud says you can't wash or bathe on this day. Jesus said we *should* bathe when we fast, as we are still coming before God. (See **Matthew 6:16-18**).
- Talmud says one can't use cosmetics or use any bath oils on this day. Jesus said we should anoint our faces when we face.
- Can't wear leather shoes or straps on this day, according to the Talmud.
- They also teach that those younger than 9, or mothers giving birth or having just recently given birth, also should not fast. Our children were encouraged to fast, and did just fine, from a much younger age than 9!
- Jews are encouraged to wear white on this day – as a symbol of purity and being forgiven. Nothing in scripture tells us we must, but there is nothing wrong of course with wearing white on this day. But God is a God of beautiful colors! He's not stuck on white! Sometimes the word translated "white" in the KJV has more of a meaning of "bright" – and is translated as such in newer translations.
- They also teach that the Day of Atonement is your last chance to get right with God. That on this day the book of your judgment is finalized. There is no such "deadline" I can find in scripture for this day.

Also on this day, it is **traditional to READ THE BOOK OF JONAH during the afternoon service**. Not a bad idea, as the books shows our merciful God will forgive even a city-full of sinners, if they truly repent, and He will likewise forgive us if we repent. But it's not commanded we read it. We must be careful not to have manmade tradition override God's word (**Matt. 15:7-9**).

WHY REPENTANCE IS A MAJOR THEME OF ATONEMENT

You might be thinking: "but I thought PASSOVER was about the death of Christ and our repentance – so why is ATONEMENT about repentance again?"

Keep following the sermon and we'll get to that answer fully. What I will give is the answer as I understand it, with Jesus very much a part of the picture. The Jews reject Jesus as the Messiah, and so are blinded from seeing the true, full answer or full meaning of this day in terms of Biblical *prophecy*.

Each of the holydays reveal the next step in God's plan of salvation – and as I'll show you next spring – even His plan to expand His family and have more children. You will be amazed at the parallels between the dates of the holydays and dates that happen as a baby is formed in the womb. I won't say anymore about that just yet – but around February or March 2006 I plan to come out with that sermon. It's simply amazing.

God's holydays reveal God's plan. God told Daniel that "the wise will understand" the prophecies, as God opens our minds in these "last days" to understand them. Read Daniel 12:10. Many of us will be, have to be, purified and refined, and as we accept that – sometimes in the refinery and intense heat of severe trial or even persecution – we will learn to surrender. As we obey God's word, we become wise. The very definition of wisdom is that it "*begins* with the fear of the Lord" (**Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 111:10**). "Fearing" God has to do with a lot of things – but partly it means to fear to disobey or

displease Him. It means we want to honor Him. As we do those things, God gives us some of His wisdom, and in fact He invites us to ask for more and He'll gladly give us more.

My point is this: **Daniel 12:10** says none of the wicked will understand the meaning of the last days. But those who are God's people, the truly wise, are promised that they *shall* understand. I'm also convinced that if we see a truth and don't practice or teach it – and especially if we knowingly teach something we know isn't true – God will take away His insights and wisdom. The wicked have their "light" go out (Job 18:5).

So God's feasts and holydays reveal His plan. Not all feast days are holydays. You can find them listed neatly in one chapter in Leviticus 23. I'll give an indepth sermon on it in the spring 2006, but for now, here's a quick review. *All of you – even children and teenagers and young adults – need to understand this and be able to recite it back to anyone, any time. I know we went over this, over and over, with our children, until we knew they could recite them all back.*

God's plan of salvation *starts* – not ends – with the spring holydays and the Passover of Jesus Christ.

- **PASSOVER**, in the plan of God, pictures the repentance of those God is calling *now*, as we accept the Lamb of God, Jesus the Christ, to pay for our sins by His blood. It is a *personal* repentance, one-on-one, and as God sees God's atoning blood on our house, He will Pass-Over our sins and our home. **Passover Day is a feast day, but is not a holyday.** On it we wash one another's feet and remember the broken bread and cup of wine that Jesus drank. You will find a lot of new material in my sermon on the website titled "*New Insight into the Passover Emblems*". *Many have commented on it.*
- **The 7 Days of Unleavened Bread** – Jesus is the unleavened, sinless bread or manna, we eat for 7 days, completely accepting Jesus as our bread, our manna – and by which we put out sin (pictured by leaven). This pictures our commitment to obey God and let Jesus' life rule in our lives. We become what we eat, after all. It also pictures being sincere, humble, not all puffed up. The first and last days are the first 2 holydays of the year.
- In between the Days of Unleavened Bread is another feast, but not a holyday – the **Wavesheaf offering** of the spring Barley harvest. This pictures the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His ascension to Father to be accepted for us, which you can read about in John 20.
- Next is **Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks**: the day the Law was given in the Old Testament and when that law is written in our hearts by God's Spirit – pictured by Acts 2 and the giving of God's Spirit.
- Then we have about 3 months of no holydays, and then suddenly 4 holydays all in the 7th Hebrew month: **Feast of TRUMPETS**, on the first visible 7th month crescent of the new moon in Jerusalem. This pictures a good-news and bad-news day. Good news because it signals the beginning of the end of this age and Satan's rule over the earth. It pictures the 7 trumpet plagues leading up to the return of Christ, and culminating in the 7th trump and our change to spirit – and leading to the Wedding Supper and then the landing on the Mount of Olives by Christ and His Bride to rule the earth. It's a time *preceded* by what the Bible calls a day of Clouds and Gloominess, a dark day caused by the nuclear wars, volcanic activity, meteor strikes, earthquakes and disease pandemics. This Feast of Trumpets also starts what

the Jews call “**the Ten Days of Awe**”, during which they start repenting vigorously, leading up to, and ending on, the Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur.

- **DAY OF ATONEMENT** – the most solemn holyday of the year, on the 10th day of the Hebrew 7th month – usually in Sept or Oct. We’ll explain it fully today. **A day of fasting, deep national and personal repentance**, soul-searching and humility. It pictures Satan being bound and banished from having any influence on the earth for most of a thousand years. It pictures the whole world gradually accepting Jesus as their King of Kings, and their Savior. It pictures the time when the whole world will give up their false gods, their false religions – and accept the truth of God’s word and it’s Author: Jesus, the Word of God. **It’s a time of deep humility and sobriety, a day of affliction and fasting, a day of total rest and absolutely no work, no food, no drink for 24 hours.** Orthodox Jews make it last longer – even over 25 hours just to be sure – but that’s not a requirement of scripture.
- **FEAST OF TABERNACLES, or FEAST OF BOOTHS** – 7 days picturing the 7th thousand year, the Millennium under Jesus Christ on this earth, when Jesus lives with us, tabernacles with us, on earth literally. Jesus kept the Feast of Tabernacles (**John 7:2, 10**) as did Paul (**Acts 18:21** - - in the KJV or NKJV). In fact, Jesus’ famous message of **John 7:37** was given on the 7th day of that very Feast. It was not a message of what we call the Last Great Day - -but the 7th Day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Please hear my message on that point.

God’s people go to a Feast site and come together in larger groups, and attend 7 days of church services, joyous festivities, and celebration in advance of the time Jesus will rule the earth and spread His way all over the whole planet. It won’t be long now. We live in temporary dwellings to picture that this life is but a temporary life for us; that we are pilgrims and sojourners on this earth. Most of us today now rent a motel room, a temporary dwelling that way, though the Bible speaks of **living for 7 days (not 8)** in literal **booths** made from tree branches of olive trees, palm trees and myrtle wood trees (**Lev. 23:42; Nehemiah 8:14-17**). *The first day only* of the Feast of Tabernacles is a holy day, on the 15th of the 7th Hebrew month through the 21st day, and then the Feast of Tabernacles ends. *Now hear this:* since the Bible says to dwell in booths for 7 days, *not* 8, the Jews start dismantling their booths, or suka or Sukkoth, on the 7th day, the last day of the feast. The Feast of booths is for 7 days, not 8.

The next day, the 8th day – is a totally different and separate feast and holyday. It is NOT a part of the Feast of Tabernacles, the way many of us see it.

- **The LAST GREAT DAY.** This holyday is actually not named in the Bible, except to call it “**the 8th day**”. WE’ve given this holyday the title “the Last Great Day”, and I think largely because we confused it with John 7:37. But it IS a *separate feast and holyday* that follows the Feast of Tabernacles. It’s the 8th day. Eight is the number of new beginnings, as we’ll see later.

This pictures the time at the end of the 7th millennium, when God resurrects everyone who has ever lived and died, and they get their *first* chance to understand God’s way. It’s a time of incredible hope. But it also pictures the resurrection of those who did understand and rejected God and His way – and these will be burned up in the lake of Fire. Not tortured forever and ever – what kind of loving God would do that? – but instead will be burned up. The wages of sin is *death*, real *death*, not -- as so many seem to teach – *not* eternal life being tortured forever in some hell hole torture chamber of fire! That’s not what the Bible teaches!

But then comes the very end, when the earth is purified of all sin and all record of all sin, and God the Father returns to earth with the New Jerusalem. At that point there will be no more death, no more dying. We will all be spirit children of God and the Bible does not reveal what happens after that, except that we will witness a new creation of the entire universe – a new heavens and new earth, as *the present universe we now know will disappear* in fervent heat and be replaced with the new universe. (**Rev. 22:1-2; II Pet. 3:10-13; Isa. 65:17-25**).

Again, we should all learn and really understand and know, this sequence of events -- the 7 holydays, and the festivals -- in correct sequence and be able to explain their meaning to anyone, any time. How about you children and teenagers show your parents you can rattle them off and explain them? Then see if *they* can do it too! We *all* should be able to!

So back to the “Feast” of Atonement. Yes, it’s a holyday, and according to Lev 23, it’s also a spiritual *feast day*, even though we don’t celebrate, or eat and drink on this day or have “festivities” on this day.

Atonement is when God opens the minds of *everybody*, when the whole world will have a chance to understand and to see God’s truths. **The first step in building a relationship with God is to come to repentance.** God actually always takes the first step. HE is the One who leads us to repentance and opens the door into His presence. But repentance is when we *listen* to the call and ask forgiveness for our past sins, and prove we mean it by no longer doing the evil ways as a way of life. We all still slip up and still sin from time to time, of course, but no longer as a way of life. But God cannot and will not walk with us unless we are agreed that His way is the way to go. Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed (**Amos 3:3**). You will see over and over in the Bible where God says He is punishing our nations – and will do ever more so – because we do not walk in His ways.

So Atonement pictures when God begins to be with *all* of humanity again – first in the person of Jesus Christ – and later God the Father comes to the new earth also – after all sin, all death, all evil – has been eradicated. But before God will dwell with us, *we must repent* and live a life that shows we have departed from the former evil way. Atonement pictures when the whole world repents, starting with the nation of Judah and modern day Israelites – the Americans, the Brits, Canadians, Australians, the French, the Scandinavians, and others – and then eventually everyone in the whole world.

Those of you from around the world hearing God’s word and responding to God’s word *today* will be helping bring your country and your countrymen into the fold of believers some day! Under Christ! You’ve been called to have a part in that process – and that is soon, whether you’re in South America or Africa or Asia or anywhere!

The book of Jonah is read as part of this holyday, as I said earlier. After Jonah preached to the ancient Assyrians of Nineveh, they did **repent!** And God heard. But notice how repentance is described – as a time when we stop doing the former evil we did, and it was accompanied with total fasting and humbling of ones’ self.

Jonah 3:4-10

“And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

5 So the **people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth**, from the greatest to the least of them. 6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. 7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,
'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. 8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?'

10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it."

God's word still says to any of our rulers, **the president, the senators and congressmen of this country** – *and to the rulers and leaders of ALL nations* – if you will heed this example, and lead by your example, and if you and your people will repent – who knows, **"who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?"** God saw what they did – and God still sees what we do! God still sees our works – whether they're good or bad.

What power you leaders have! What influence you can wield! If any of you have any influence with any of our leaders, they must hear this message: "Lead in repentance! Lead in turning back to the true God. Set that example. *Ask* everyone to follow your lead of repentance" – and who knows!?

But also notice that they *fasted*. Deep repentance is often coupled with fasting – a time of deep humility, contrition, sorrow and crying out to the Maker of all mankind. We are told in **Leviticus 23** and **Leviticus 16** that we should "afflict" our souls and that is universally understood to mean – do without food and water for at least that 24 hour period.

We are also commanded to have a TOTAL REST on this day of Atonement – ***NO work at all***. A total Sabbath, like the weekly 7th day Sabbath. A day when we *rest* from our former ways. A day when we *stop* the old ways of life. Sabbath means "rest" or "stop".

WHY WE FAST

First of all let's make clear that the command to "afflict your souls" has to do with fasting. The Bible nowhere to my knowledge clearly tells us to fast on this day. It says to "afflict your souls". The reason we fast, is that "afflict your souls" has been understood to mean fasting. That's probably true. Look at these scriptures:

Psalm 69:10 "When I wept and *chastened my soul with fasting*, That became my reproach"

Isaiah 58:3 'Why have we **fasted**,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we **afflicted our souls**, and You take no notice?'

FASTING IS OFTEN COUPLED WITH DEEP REPENTANCE AND HUMBLING.

So WHY we fast on the Day of Atonement? There are several reasons that have much to do with this day.

The meaning of this day goes back to Genesis 3 – and the serpent in the Garden of Eden. God says in Genesis 3 that Satan was the most crafty of all creatures. He deceived Eve, who convinced her husband, to follow Satan's words rather than God's words. Satan made them question God, doubt God. Instead of fighting back with God's word – the way Jesus fought Satan – they conversed and lost.

As a result, humanity – which had been in the presence of God, pictured by the Garden of Delights (Eden) – was thrown out, and the one way in was sealed. That one way, one door, one entrance pictured Jesus, the only and the one way to God (**John 14:6; Acts 4:12**). He *is* the Way. Also He is the door.

It is commonly thought that Adam and Eve were created on what is now the feast of Trumpets, and some believe, as I do, that they ate of the wrong tree on the eve of the 10th, at the end of the 9th day – and that **God banishes them from the Garden on the Day of Atonement way back then**. Others believe they were seven years in the garden before they sinned. I believe up til the Day of Atonement... then BAM, they sinned, with the coming of Satan. God also curses the Serpent, Satan-on that day.

IF that is possibly true, then the Day of Atonement in prophecy has VERY significant meaning. It could picture the world's *freedom* from that Old Serpent, Satan, the world's release from sin, the forgiveness of all mankind – and bringing mankind back “to the Garden” – to God's presence. We know for sure that some other very meaningful events also happened and will happen on this very day.

THE JUBILEE YEAR, AND ATONEMENT

Leviticus 25:8-17

'And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. **9 Then you shall cause the trumpet (shofar) of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. 10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you;** and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. **11 That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you;** in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. **12 For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.**

13 'In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. **14** And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. **15** According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. **16** According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops. **17** Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God.”

Leviticus 25:8-17 tells us that every 50 years, also on the Day of Atonement, there was the **JUBILEE YEAR** that would begin – the freeing of the captives, the return of land to the rightful families, the releasing of all debts. ***I suspect the Jubilee year will be the year when Christ returns.*** No one knows *for sure* when the Jubilee year is anymore, because it has not been kept for so long. Read that passage on your own, as it has so much meaning. **That's Lev. 25:8-17.**

Now who is the CAPTOR? Who is the one enslaving the world? Satan, of course!

Luke 21:20-24

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 And they will fall by the edge of the sword, **and be led away captive into all nations.** And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

We can't just preach "smooth things" – but the truth: our peoples will be slaves some time in the future. And when the Christ returns to the Mt. of Olives, one of the most important tasks we will help Him with is freeing the captives literally, physically – and that freedom *starts* with freeing them first of all *spiritually*. We will help Jesus do what Paul calls leading "*captivity captive*" – *CAPTIVITY will become a thing of the past!* (Eph 4:8). *CHRIST has already DONE THAT for us, and we will help it be a living current reality to millions of Americans, Brits, Jews and other modern day Israelites some day.*

But Satan – spiritually – has deceived the whole world (**Rev. 12:9**). HE is called "the god of this world" – whether they are passive "Christians" who do not do what Christ says to do, or Hindus, Buddhists, or anything else (**2 Cor. 4:4**). Jesus said if you want to take over – you have first **BIND the strong man** that can cause some problems. Remember? Read it for yourself in **Matt.12:28-29** if you're unfamiliar with it. **Prov 22:10** says "cast out the mocker and strife shall cease". We cannot have two Lords. We cannot have 2 gods. We cannot serve 2 masters. ONE has to go – and it's going to be Satan who is going to go!

Satan is strong – and is a problem, a real problem, but He who is with us is stronger than he who is in the world (**I John 4:4**). **Turn now to Revelation 20:1**, to the meaning of this day, when the CAPTOR is led captive, when the Strong man is bound by someone stronger. Don't forget – GOD's name in Hebrew, EL – means literally "The Strong One". GOD is the ALMIGHTY God, El SHADDAI. And when Satan's time is up, it's up!

The beginning of Satan's end is in Rev. 12 – when Michael fights him and casts him down to earth. Then when Jesus returns, we read this in Revelation 20.

Revelation 20:1-3

"Then I saw an angel [probably Michael the arch-angel] coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 **He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;** 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while."

A chain here is probably symbolic of something we can understand – in some way Satan will be "bound", restrained, for 1,000 years. Out of the way.

We are called to be VICTORS over Satan!

Romans 16:20 “And the God of peace *will crush Satan under your feet shortly*. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”

I believe we will literally see this happen and we will literally step on or over Satan before he is bound away. We'll look in the eye, this troubler of humanity – and know we have gained the victory through Christ! We have to defeat him now. And then he is removed for a thousand years.

Why do WE have to defeat him on his own turf – right here on earth – but people in the millennium won't have to?

BECAUSE WE'RE BEING CALLED TO BE LEADERS. *Leaders have to go through more, have it tougher, so those we lead will know their leaders overcame the Evil One by the power of God, and by the might of Jesus the King of Kings. They won't have to fear Satan ever again.*

In **Leviticus 16**, the full priestly functions of the day are clearly described. At the end of the chapter, I want to read a summary of the Day of Atonement:

Leviticus 16:29-34 "This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, **you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all**, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. 30 For on that day **the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD**. 31 **It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls**. It is a statute forever. 32 And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; 33 then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34 This shall be **an everlasting statute** for you, to **make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year.**' And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

*****This day pictures the fact that the world at that time will see it had been deceived, and will come repentantly, starting with the modern-day descendants of ancient Israel, then over the years, the rest of the world will follow.**

I have a question I will explore in depth next year: on this day of fasting, is our fasting picturing what it is supposed to? *Are we fasting along with deep repentance – or just going a day without food? Is the whole day of Yom Kippur spent in church or synagogue and then waiting for the sun to go down – or is the day of Atonement in our homes spent on our knees, as it should be?* Do we even think of repentance on this day? We should have it as our focus! Do we realize it is a day of remembering that Satan should be bound in our lives now? That Satan should be banished from influencing us so much even in this life now, as we should be fighting him with all the strength of the armor of God at our disposal!

This day pictures the time of global repentance, of asking God's forgiveness, of putting the **blame** for all the sins of the world on the **Azazel** goat which was banished from the nation. **That's in Leviticus 16**. I'll try to cover it next year perhaps. But basically there were 2 goats – and lots were cast. The priest puts his hands into the box, and puts the lot in his right hand on the right goat and the lot in his left hand on the left goat. They then heap all the sins of the entire nation on the Azazel goat – and it is led away into the desert, and tradition says, pushed over a cliff to be dashed in the rocks below.

Satan is the one who is *blamed* for all our sins. HE is the Azazel goat.

However the other goat was the one on whom the *penalty* for sin fell, and that represented Jesus, who was crucified and sacrificed as our Lamb of God for our sins. That's it in a nutshell.

The unnamed goat was the Goat of ATONEMENT – and its blood was sprinkled on the holy mercy seat of the ark by the High Priest, who was allowed to go into the Holy of Holies only on this one day, once a year. It was a very frightening time for them, because they felt if anything went wrong, they would die. Apparently a few high priests did not come back out over the years, or so tradition says. The blood of the goat was to atone for all the sins of the nation, hence, the name “Day of Atonement”.

Interesting, it's often been pointed out, that “atone” can be broken down *in English* to “at-one”. That is true only in English, but remember the scriptures were originally written in Hebrew. The atonement *does* make us “at-one” with God again, but I don't think in the Hebrew, that Atonement has any meaning of “at-one-ment”. It is “KIPPUR” – meaning *to cover, to atone*, not to make “at-one”.

Yom Kippur means “Day of Atonement”. Kippur means “to cover”. ***The blood of goats could only cover the sin, not remove it completely and forever, as Jesus' atoning sacrifice does.***

In future we'll go into more detail about the ceremony in the Holy of Holies.

But this day is a day of sorrow and repentance. And we are also lamenting how someone so great as what Satan once was, could decide to go so wrong. I don't think he was ever deceived. He rebelled. He knew what he was doing. For another time, I'll go into the fact that the modern Translation “**Lucifer**” should not be applied to the Devil in Isaiah 14. He is nowhere called Lucifer in the original Hebrew – that's a Latinized word. The Hebrew is *Helel* or *Heylel*. GOD, JESUS, is the *true* Light Bringer. We'll go into that in depth some time – but see **Rev. 22:16; Rev 2:28; Num 24:17; Matthew 2:2.**

The original arch-angel correctly named *Helel* was tasked with taking God's light to earth originally, until he decided to become the *Adversary instead*. He decided to lead a *rebellion!* Satan depicts himself as an angel of light, but he's NOT any longer a light-bearer. And when you read about him in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, those are written in the style called a “Lamentation”. God does *not* rejoice over sin, or even over sinners being punished. God laments sinners who will not repent – but God is also *just*, and so it is also fearsome to fall into the hands of the Living God if you're on His wrong side!

Isaiah 14:12-15

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer [HEYLEL], son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit."

As flesh and blood mortals, we can decide to change, decide to repent – and go the other way, like the ancient Ninevites did, though for just a short time.

Back to SATAN: his problem according to ISA 14:12-14 and Ezek 28, was his *pride*. So we fast on Atonement to show God we now see we must humble ourselves before Him and learn from the error of Satan's pride! Not make his mistake!

Ezekiel 28:14-17

14 "**You were the anointed cherub who covers; I** established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, **O covering cherub**, From the midst of the fiery stones.

17 "**Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;** You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you."

Atonement concludes "the 10 Days of Awe" that started with Feast of Trumpets. Of fearing to come before God, unless we're coming humbly and repentantly.

When we fast, we should not just be fasting because it is a fasting day – but use the fasting to come to a true repentance, to make some real changes – or else, get this, our fasting is meaningless!

True repentance is followed by a life of changes. We stop doing the old way. That's why it's a Sabbath rest. It's a stop sign to the working the old way of life – and now we rest from our wicked past and start a new life. A life that is at peace with God. In harmony with Him and His word.

Isaiah 58:3-11

3 'Why have we **fasted**,' they say, 'and You have not seen? **Why have we afflicted our souls**, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day *of your fast you find pleasure*, and exploit all your laborers. 4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high. 5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 "**Is THIS not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 THEN your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. 9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'**

Do we want to be healed? Do we want to see more healing going on? Do we want to know when we call for God that He'll answer? God tells us how! Become more like Him. STOP wickedness. Love people, help the needy, DO something good for others. Be forgiving, helpful, generous, merciful! That's what we've just read!!! That's why I gave the sermon about Katrina – and helping and praying for the people of the world! Now let's continue in Isaiah 58:9.

"If you take away the yoke from your midst, **the pointing of the finger** [being so judgmental! We are so judgmental and we need to stop that!] and speaking wickedness, 10 **If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then** your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. 11 The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.'

DID YOU NOTICE THE EMPHASIS? Fasting is supposed to help us change, to help us overcome! To make us humble! Read the end of Isaiah 2 some time – and it talks about the 2nd coming of the Messiah and how He will shake the nations and humble the people of the earth. Let's learn it now.

We are the "Israel of God." Do you remember what "Israel" means? It means "Overcomer", "Prevailer" – we are those who Overcome of God, we are the Champions with God, our God. And our battle, our war, is against Satan – **Ephesians 6:11-13**. And so we fight – and fight we must.

But a warning, brethren: too many of us among the people of God are *not* fighting Satan. ***We have fallen asleep***. We have become a part of the world. Some of us are participating in the sins of the world. Some of us are enjoying the world too much. We are sent *into* the world, but must not be OF it.

Fasting and humbling are supposed to go together. So we humble ourselves with fasting (Psalm 35:13). It is those whom God considers humble who will be promoted to be kings and rulers in the kingdom of God.

James 4:10 – "Humble yourselves in the sight of God and He will raise you up."
God does not like *pride* at all.

We also fast on this day to remind ourselves that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. We've got to get our priorities right.

Deuteronomy 8:1-4

"Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3 ***So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.***"

The day of Atonement is **A TOTAL SABBATH OF NO WORK**

You'll notice if you read Lev. 23 that only **two** holydays are unique in not allowing ***any work at all*** be done on them: the weekly Sabbath (**Lev. 23:3**) and the Day of Atonement (**Lev. 23:28**). NO work, except that the priests had to sacrifice a lot of animals (**Num. 29:7-11**). That's the rule.

Some work *is* allowed on the other holydays – just not your usual "customary" ("servile" – KJV) work. Notice Lev. 23:25 for example, about the Feast of Trumpets. You would be allowed to cook the holyday meal on those holydays, for example, as well as the work of offering animal sacrifices.

ALL the holydays are considered Sabbaths, meaning “rest” or “stop”. The day before any Sabbath, whether weekly or annual holyday Sabbath, would be called a “Preparation Day”. God wants His people PREPARED for the Sabbath (We have the weekly Sabbath and then we have the annual Sabbaths, the holydays that come once a year – like Pentecost and Trumpets – which are also Sabbaths, but are annual Sabbaths. **They’re also referred to as a “High Day”.** *The day before any Sabbath or any annual “high day” – the holydays mentioned in Lev 23 – would be called the “preparation day”.* In **John 19:31**, the day after Jesus died was a high day – the first day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of the 1st Hebrew month.

But on Atonement and the weekly 7th day Sabbath, NO work should be done. We personally don’t cook on the weekly Sabbath. We don’t do dishes on the weekly Sabbath. Of course we don’t do any yard work, housework, shopping, no employed work, nor buying and selling on the Sabbath, on Saturdays. We don’t buy gas on the Sabbath, and *neither do we go out to a restaurant on the Sabbath.* That’s doing commerce – buying and selling. It’s wrong. It’s a sin. I feel those things would be breaking the weekly Sabbath rules set down by God Himself. I hope you’ll follow that guideline and example. I’ll give a whole sermon sometime about the Sabbath itself. We rest on the Sabbath and worship God. It’s a time of peace, joy and reflection, Bible study and worship. DITTO for Atonement.

Those of you who think we should now keep Sunday – since when does anyone keep Sunday even the way God says to keep the Sabbath!? So even most Sunday keepers are in no way keeping their Sundays as a Sabbath of no rest, no commerce, no business, and so on. Why not – if that’s what they believe is now the correct Sabbath? It isn’t, as I’ll show soon in a sermon.

WHY ABSOLUTELY NO WORK ON ATONEMENT?

Because of what the day pictures. The time after Christ has returned to the earth to be its King, and a time when PEACE and safety will be everywhere. There will be an end to warfare.

It will picture a time when the world will have stopped, be at rest, from all its evils and hard times. And it will picture the time when the whole world will begin to worship the true God – who on earth will be Jesus Christ. Jesus is considered a part of the “one true God”. We know Jesus is the Rock of the Old Testament. We know Jesus was the God who interacted with Israel – and that makes Jesus “the true God”, as well as His Father (**2 Chron. 15:3-4; 1 John 5:20**). Jesus is also called “the Great God” in **Titus 2:13**, for example, though He is under His Father’s authority. Jesus is the “Lord of Lords” – as well as part of “the Great God” – and he’s identified as both in **Deut.10:17**. He is fully God. He is full Deity – not lacking in that regard. No wonder Thomas could exclaim after Jesus’ resurrection: “My Lord and my GOD” – John 20:17. Jesus *is* GOD, not just “a” god.

SATAN SHOULD BE BOUND in OUR lives NOW!

Jesus said about Satan in **John 14:30**, “The ruler of this world is coming, but he has *nothing* in Me.” Wow, I’m not there yet. But I fight Satan. Sometimes he wins, sometimes I get bloodied up. But FIGHT him we must. And Christ *will* give us the victory if we go to Jesus for strength and find sustenance in His word. That’s what Paul assured us, if we fight the good fight of faith.

At the end of the HOLYDAY OF ATONEMENT, they would *blow the ram’s horn*. The shofar. Remember Abraham and Isaac? God provided a ram caught by its horn, by its shofar. That shofar of that ram symbolized the liberation and salvation of Isaac. (**Genesis 22**).

So they blow the shofar, and then all the people shout out in Hebrew: “Next year, in Jerusalem!” **And then what?**

Next, is what the Feast of Tabernacles pictures: the rulership of King Jesus over all the earth.

The coming of Jesus Christ – the way I see it – is less the “end of the world” and more “the beginning of the rulership of God.” Of course the “kingdom” of God technically is the spirit kingdom, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom.

Wherever you are keeping the feast of Tabernacles with God’s people –

- **have a JOYOUS feast**
- **seek to serve and help others**
- **go and WORSHIP God at this feast. This is why you’re going: to worship God.**
- **Watch attitudes. Keep Satan bound from your feast! Don’t let him get to you.**

Until next time, this is your brother, Philip, saying good ‘bye my friends.

www.LightontheRock.com

If you are learning from these messages, tell others about the website.