



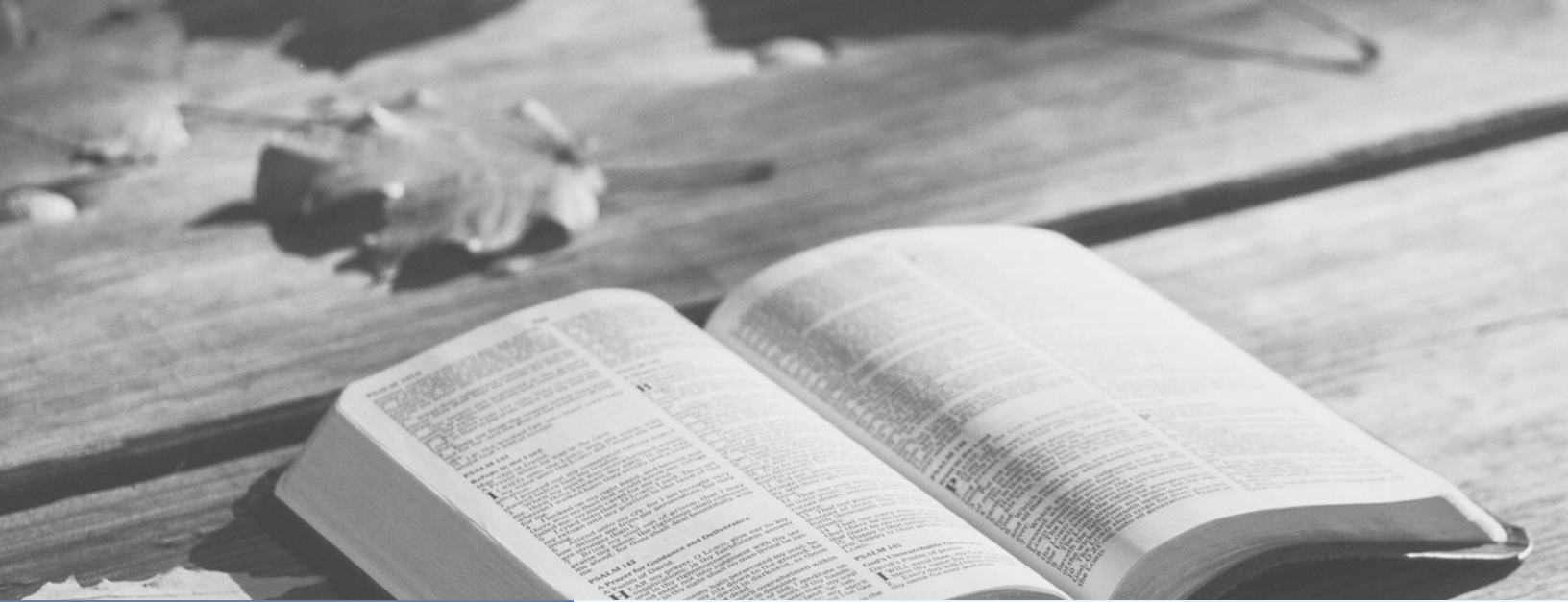
HOPE IN ISRAEL'S HIGH HOLY DAYS

THE DAYS OF AWE

A NEW YEAR & TIME OF REPENTANCE
ROSH HASHANAH—YOM KIPPUR

"The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites
and say to them: 'These are my appointed
festivals, the appointed festivals of the Lord,
which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies."
Leviticus 23:1-2 NIV

CATHENA FREEMAN



Yamim Noraim

The 10 days of awe
including Rosh
Hashanah/Yom
Teruah and Yom
Kippur and the days
in between.

*"Teach us to number our
days that we may gain a
heart of wisdom."*

Psalms 90:12 NIV

Making it Right

Seen as the holiest time on the biblical calendar, these days traditionally serve as a time of repentance. A time to get it right with yourself and others and ultimately getting it right with God. A time to forgive and be forgiven. From the time the trumpet sounds, it serves as a reminder of a time of newness as the head of the year, but also a reminder of a time of judgement as sacrifices were made for atonement. A time when it was said that God sealed each person's destiny. A time for judgement. But these days are linked to even greater days; Yom Teruah, a yearly reminder to live with expectancy for Jesus' return and Yom Kippur reminding us of an even greater judgement. This time should cause us to live in a way that looks toward final judgement and our eternal destiny. What will we be sealed for? We are not limited to these 10 days to get it right but it should also remind us that our days are not forever. A time will come when our days here end. We should strive for a Yamim Noraim way of living every day. As we take an inward look and reflect on where we are, we are ultimately living the rest of our days here on earth as a time of awe. Until we hear the final trumpet sound, we commit to live right daily, doing good today, forgiving & being forgiven. Making it right with God.



Purification

“Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.”

2 Corinthians 7:1 NIV

What are the promises?

These promises are associated with us being the temple of the living God, His dwelling place. (1 Corinthians 6:16)

- *"I will be with them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they will be my people (1 Corinthians 6:16)*
- *A conditional promise "Come out from them and be separate" says the Lord. "Touch no unclean thing and I will receive you." (1 Corinthians 6:17)*
- *"And I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, " says the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6: 18)*

Out of reverence for God, because we have these promises, we are called to a life of perfecting holiness. This tense indicates a continuing, ongoing process. We should be working toward a holiness that is mature, complete, lacking nothing. The ESV says, "Bringing holiness to completion."

How? By coming out from, by separating, by not touching unclean things. (2 Corinthians 6:17). By purifying myself of everything that contaminates body & spirit (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Out of **reverence** for God - a HOLY, perfect, out of this world, bigger than my understanding God - the only appropriate response is holiness; striving for it, perfecting it daily.

- Reverence: a feeling or attitude of deep respect, love and awe, as for something sacred; veneration

The holiness of God is awe-inspiring. It draws us to look at our own lives in its light, as Isaiah did when he encountered the pure presence of God & experienced the fulness of His holiness. He was immediately aware of his flawed existence as well as those he lived among (Isaiah 6:1-6). As we take this introspective look it should draw us to continually turn from sin & toward God. The influences of the world are all around us, but in deciding to separate we have already chosen. We don't give up or give in. Don't give up living holy, and don't give in to sin. The Lord says we are His temple, the place He desires to abide, for His presence to be, and it can't cohabitate with sin (2 Corinthians 6:16). His desire for His temple is distinction. To stand out from the world, not pridefully, but in a way that it is obvious we belong to Him. Different from the ways of the world; its practices, its ways of thinking, its gods, its lifestyle, its priorities, its mindsets, its beliefs. As we obey the truth, as we obey God's command to be holy, to set ourselves apart, we are purified.

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God." (1 Peter 1:22-23)



A Call to Holiness

“As obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you were ignorant. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in ALL you do; for it is written: 'Be holy as I am holy.' ”

1 Peter 1: 14-16 NIV

Why?

Because I, the LORD (YHWH) your God am holy.

He is our God, we are His people; chosen, set apart, to be a reflection of Him to the world. God repeats this multiple times as He lays out the laws for His people. Among the people surrounding them, He desired it be evident they were set apart. This is still His desire for us. (see Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20: 7,26)

Holiness is both given to us and required of us.

" And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ (Yeshua Hamaschiach) once for all." (Hebrews 10:10)

We are once again able to live the way God created us to be because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Any other ways of attaining holiness were flawed, prone to corruption and temporary. That is why they had to continually make sacrifices. So, the beauty in God asking holiness of us, is that Jesus has already made it possible. We are enabled and empowered to live a life distinctly different from the world, strange to them.

From the beginning, the image of God was created in us. For God to be seen in us was always His desire and intention for our lives; to be among all He created as a reflection of His image and likeness.

" Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. (Genesis 1:26-26)

"And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

We Can strive to live the way God intended, like Him in righteousness and holiness, daily perfecting these qualities in ALL WE DO.

Sometimes we want to pick parts, to choose some of us and leave some out, but God has always been a God of wholeness; desiring burnt offerings offered whole on His altar. He wants all of us, not just some.

"Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar." (Psalm 51:19)

As living sacrifices, presenting ourselves to Him, we are called to bring all. In our own strength we may fail, but as He empowers us, we have already been made holy through the body of Jesus Christ. To be a holy & pleasing sacrifice.

"Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, HOLY and PLEASING [ACCEPTABLE] to God --- this is your true and proper worship. (Romans 12:1)



Repentance

"Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death"

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 NIV

Good Sorrow

Godly sorrow is "sorrow for our sin that results in changed behavior." Our sorrow shouldn't only be just for the effects of sin or getting caught but should lead to repentance, to change. The understanding and awareness of the gravity of our sin and how it grieves God should moves us to quickly correct our wrongs and change our trajectory.

NO REGRETS

Godly sorrow, leaves no regrets. Being in right standing with God will never lead us astray. Its outcome is always for our good. Repentance keeps us in right standing with God. It restores us to faith. What are the benefits here of repentance?

It produced:

- Earnestness: sincere conviction; seriousness & zeal in intention
 - caused them to be sincere & serious about their beliefs & sincerity & seriousness in what they said & did
- Eagerness: they were eager in clearing themselves, to make their name right. There was zeal to vindicate (clear of blame or suspicion) themselves against charges of tolerating sin. (2 Corinthians 7:11 AMP)
 - there should be no room for tolerance of sin in our lives or where we don't speak out about it and where there is we should be eager to correct it.
- Indignation: anger aroused by something unjust, unworthy, or mean
 - it allowed them to see sin was unjust, unworthy, and mean and aroused something in them toward sin resulting in correction.
- Alarm/Fear (AMP): an anxious awareness of danger/avoid or put off doing something because one is afraid [here out of reverence and awe of God]
 - the thought or idea of offending God became alarming, seeing it in the lives of others was the same. They feared the consequences of sin.
- Longing: having or showing a yearning desire
 - their desire was for God and for what is right
- Concern: a matter of interest or importance to someone
 - the lives of others became important to them, it wasn't only about self interest, but it was a matter of interest for them to see others living a life of righteousness.
- Readiness to see justice done

Worldly sorrow is hopeless. There is no anchoring for the soul provided by the hope that belief in God and the complete work of Jesus Christ brings. It doesn't produce change, there is no fruit from it. It results in death physically and/or spiritually.

In MY Life

What is repentance producing in me? Is my sorrow godly, leading me to repentance or worldly, leading me to death?

"Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place." (Revelation 2:5)

"'The redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,' declares the LORD [YHWH]." (Isaiah 59:20)

"'For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone' declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live." (Ezekiel 18:32)

Repentance brings life! We cannot just assume God is going to forgive us, WE HAVE TO REPENT!



Yom Teruah

"The LORD said to Moses,
'Say to the Israelites: on the
first day of the seventh
month you are to have a day
of sabbath rest, a sacred
assembly commemorated
with trumpet blasts. Do no
regular work, but present a
food offering to the LORD"
Leviticus 23: 23-25 NIV

Get Ready, Stay Ready

This time, Yom Teruah-the Feast of
Trumpets, is a reminder that the creator is
going to judge His creation, reveal Himself
to the world, and is coming back.
What should the sound of the trumpets
remind us of?

*"Mount Sinai was covered with smoke,
because YHWH descended on it in fire. The
smoke pillowed up from it like smoke from a
furnace, and the whole mountain trembled
violently. As the sound of the trumpet grew
louder and louder, Moses spoke and the
voice of God answered him. YHWH
descended to the top of Mount Sinai and
called Moses to the top of the mountain. So
Moses went up." (Exodus 19: 18-20)*

This is a picture of the return of King Jesus.

"For the LORD Himself will come down from heavens, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

"Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and ALL peoples will mourn because of Him." (Revelation 1:7)

Why mourning?

Because they will recognize their sin & guilt & anticipate the coming wrath as the creator of the word reveals Himself to His creation once again.

Jesus is coming for us soon.

The LORD desires that every generation since Jesus is to live with the mindset, expectation that Yeshua Hamashiach will return in their lifetime. Cultivate that expectation. He is coming back soon. He is coming back for me. Never stop looking for Him, never stop expecting Him, no matter how long He tarries. Always be ready, be prepared with enough oil to keep your lamp burning. Don't fall into society's trap of inventing a different god whose morality I define while I wait for Him. Continue perfecting holiness. Tolerance and holiness cannot coexist. Tolerance includes all, all people, all things, all behavior,. Holiness calls us to be separate from exactly this. We are moving toward sin reaching a climax when, "transgressors are come to the full. Holiness does not fit here, it is not welcome.

"He will destroy the mighty and the holy people. (Daniel 8:24)

The time to get ready is now. Waiting until the trouble hits, we will fall, we will crumble. Every year as the trumpet is blown, we remind ourselves to live expectantly, knowing the truth so we are not led astray by the mass deception. Our job is to get ready. To prove ourselves. When He returns, will He find faith in us? Will we be among the faithful?

"And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He will see that they get justice and quickly, However, when the Son of Man comes will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:7-8)



Opening My Eyes: What should I see?

- First, I should see that God takes sin seriously
- Second, I should see that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin

This awful wound that sin our sin has afflicted upon creation itself can be healed in no other way. In Yeshua's death on the cross, God, the Father did not spare Himself the anguish He spared Abraham

The Shofar, trumpet

- commemorates the creation itself
- acknowledges the sovereign power of God our king over all creation
- a wakeup call for Israel (us) to turn from sin
- reminds us of the coming of the Messiah and the dawning of the messianic age.

All the feasts God commanded His people to celebrate point to Jesus. These feasts celebrated during the High Holy Days are no different.

- The priestly ministry of Jesus-the high priesthood of Messiah (Hebrews 5:1-7:18) connects the priestly sacrificial system to Jesus.
 - ex: the high priestly prayer in Leviticus 16 parallels Jesus' prayer in John 17.

Christianity is the extension of the covenant promises given to Israel, the extension of those promises to all people through the fulfilling ministry of Jesus the Messiah.

Finally, I see that God is FAITHFUL. He gives us these observances to call attention to His faithfulness, to the claim He's placed upon us, upon creation and the blessed hope that we look toward, the hope of His return.



Yom Kippur

The Day of Atonement

Atonement

Satisfaction or reparation for a wrong or injury;
amends

The doctrine concerning the reconciliation of
God and humankind, especially as accomplished
through the life, suffering, and death of Christ.

Reconciliation; agreement

Leviticus 16-To Cover

A Temporary Solution

The sacrifices offered in the Old Testament couldn't actually remove sin, they were just a cover. The people confessed their sin AS A NATION and the high priest went in to the Most Holy Place to make atonement for the people. They didn't have the privilege to come before God at any time. Access to God was filtered through the priests. (v. 6) We have to examine ourselves, make sure our life is right with God before we move to intercede and minister to others. We are called to holiness.

"Aaron is to offer the bull for HIS OWN SIN OFFERING to make atonement for himself and his household." (Leviticus 16:6)

Our personal life is important to God, my inner life, personal purity.

Just because the rituals are no longer required does that mean we just come before God any way? With no regard for His holiness? No reverence?
No way! These things serve as reminders of what an honor it is for us to come before God freely. We aren't made righteous by following the law, instead, "through the law we become conscious of our sin." (Romans 3:20).

"Therefore since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. Did we do not have a high Priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet He did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV)

"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." (Romans 8:34 NIV)

God was (and still is) extremely intentional with everything He did and said. Nothing was or is just because. The entire of the Day of Atonement and everything leading up to it - the animals, the priests, the cleansing, the sacrifice - everything all points to Jesus. But it had to be done over and over, every year. This system was temporary. The only true and permanent atonement for sin is through Jesus.

“This is to be a lasting ordinance for you: Atonement is to be made once a year for all the sins of the Israelites.” And it was done, as the Lord commanded Moses.”
(Leviticus 16:34 NIV)

There was no permanent, lasting solution for sin. Every year the high priest had to make atonement for himself and the nation. An annual reminder of sin and the gravity of it. A reminder that without blood being shed on that altar, there was no cancellation of the debt owed for sin, nothing to cover the penalty. Until the perfect High Priest, the perfect sacrifice, the only blood worthy to cover it all.

“And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” (Hebrews 10:10-14 NIV)

Jesus removed the separation between us and God. He brought reconciliation. He became the bridge. There was a physical barrier present in the temple representing the spiritual and relational barrier sin caused. Even the person considered holiest, the representative of the people before God, couldn't come whenever he wanted. The presence of God is so powerful, the high priest could die coming inappropriately. If only we could get this sense of reverence for God back. It seems that because we can approach with confidence, we have a tendency to also approach casually. The removal of this separation was costly. It cost God His best. He didn't spare what was priceless to Him. Only His death, His blood spares us from death entering into the presence of God unworthy as we are.

“The Lord said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come whenever he chooses into the Most Holy Place behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark, or else he will die. For I will appear in the cloud over the atonement cover.”
(Leviticus 16:2 NIV)

“With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” (Mark 15:37-38 NIV)

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,” (Hebrews 10:19-20 NIV)

With sin forgiven, the ultimate sacrifice made, what is my responsibility? What is needed from me, what sacrifice?

- Repentance. Turn away from sin. Be intentional about living a holy life, a life free from sin. "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God." (Hebrews 10:26-27 NIV)

In our human nature, in the flesh we are inclined to sin but because of Jesus we are freed from sin AND empowered by the Holy Spirit to live that way. Easy? Not necessarily, but definitely possible. We need that empowerment from the Holy Spirit because our own strength will fail us.

- Be the sacrifice. When I turn from sin, and am reconciled to God, I become the sacrifice. My life, my heart, my will for His.

"My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise." (Psalms 51:17 NIV)

Is my heart genuine, is my spirit surrendered, in a position of pliability in the hands of God? God's concern is not the action if our hearts are not genuine. If we are not contrite.

- **Contrite: caused by or showing sincere remorse; filled with a sense of guilt and the desire for atonement; penitent**

The key to atonement is realizing you have a need for it. Understanding the gravity of sin and the need for a savior. It's only by the mercy of God that we've even been given this gift of grace. As rightful judge, He had the authority to give us any punishment He saw fit. Deserving of death, He instead extended grace, pardoning us and Jesus took our place. What to I do? What is the only valid response?

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." (Romans 12:1 NIV)

My response is to daily lay aside my own desires to follow Him, trusting that His way and His plan are perfect. Allowing Him to transform our hearts and minds back to His ideal image, likeness and nature as He created and desired for us to be.

The time of atonement, the details & preparation is to remind us. Not because of the rituals or to follow steps, but so we remember: 1. That God is intentional. 2. That I (we) should never be casual about His presence or take coming before Him for granted. It is a privilege. 3. That we are sinners in need of a savior. That should always be before us. Not so we live feeling condemned or under a burden of guilt, but so we always stay in a position of humility and gratitude. 4. Be the sacrifice. Surrender my heart, my mind, my spirit, my life. Be open to brokenness. God can work with that. He can do nothing with an unwilling life. 6. I have a great High Priest who understands. Who intercedes for me before God and has made it possible for me to approach God with confidence on my own.

Prayer Thoughts

As I spiritually enter this new head of the year, renew me God. I pray for vision. Where do I go from here? If I am stuck, help me get unstuck. Please reveal your plan and purpose for my life. That's all I want to live for.

This head of the year, as it is said that you write the destiny of each person for the coming year in the book of life, I pray you write my name for this year and every year after. Let me closely examine myself. I pray for your favor over my life. As I let go of my sins, I pray you remove them far from me. I pray you will again have compassion on me, on us; that you will tread all my sins underfoot and hurl all my iniquities into the depths of the sea. As I examine my conscience and find out I'm not all I could be, I pray it doesn't lead me to despair and anxiety but instead allow me to see more of my need for you and pull me closer to you. (Micah 7:19)

Out of reverence for you, I pray I live a life perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1)

You promised to live with me, to walk with me, to be my God, and us to be your people (2 Corinthians 6:16)

You promised me that if I come out from among the world, separate, touching no unclean thing, you will receive me (2 Corinthians 6:17).

You, Lord Almighty, promised to be my Father, that I would be your daughter (2 Corinthians 6:18)

That I will live as your temple Living God, be a suitable, desirable place for you to dwell. I pray that anyone or anything I have made an idol in my life I will get rid of it, that the agreement will be broken (2 Corinthians 6:16)