
THE ABC'S OF YOM KIPPUR

Father we have gathered together to worship you on this annual holy Sabbath. Direct and teach us of the things that we need to know and understand. Bless us during this fall holy day season and keep us separate, holy and pure by the indwelling power and joy of your Holy Spirit. Guide us in love, wisdom and understanding. Help us to love you with all of our heart, mind and soul. We pray in the holy name of your son Jesus Christ, Yeshua the Messiah. Amen.

Greetings everyone, welcome to Bible study. There has been a lot of interest recently in an upcoming series of total lunar eclipses that began April 15 and will end September 28, 2015. This is usually described as "four blood moons" and taken by some to prophesy upcoming disasters. It may be significant because all four eclipses occur during the Jewish Passover spring holy days and again during the fall holy days (between Yom Kippur and the first day of Sukkot) this year. The same occurrence is destined to happen again next year according to astronomers at the naval observatory. This information has been making the rounds online as a potential harbinger of doom, due in part to a recent book on the four blood moons. Just two days from now on October 8 the second lunar eclipse in 2014 will occur. Astronomers rarely if ever use the term blood moon. When they do, they are usually using it as an alternate name for the Hunter's Moon, the full moon that follows the Harvest Moon, usually in late October. The Hunter's Moon, like the Harvest Moon, rises slowly on autumn evenings so that it shines through a thick layer of the Earth's atmosphere, and is colored red by Rayleigh scattering and air pollution. A tetrad is four successive total lunar eclipses, with no partial lunar eclipses in between, each of which is separated from the other by six lunar months (six full moons).

Today is the Day of Atonement /Yom Kippur, a day of cleansing and wiping away of sin and a day of purification and reconciliation. As such it has wonderful meaning for us. A large part of the book of Hebrews talks about this day and its fulfillment in the church. We need to understand there are two concepts of the Day of Atonement. One is the Jewish concept which is based in the Old Testament, and the day began when Israel came out of Egypt and God gave this holy day to the Jews and all Israel. It was at Mount Sinai that Israel was to receive the Ten Commandments and the laws of God as a covenant. Moses went up Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments written on stone tablets by the finger of God and the covenant laws of God (Torah) and was gone forty days and forty nights. By the time Moses came back down from the mountain top Israel had lost faith that he would return, and had turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded.

Exodus 32—" Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, 'Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the

land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ Aaron made a golden calf so they could worship it as the god that brought them out of Egypt. Aaron took their gold rings, bracelets and jewelry brought to him and melted the gold down into the facsimile of a calf. Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’ Israel corrupted themselves bowing down and worshipping it and then sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play with festival revelry— music, singing, dancing, cavorting and debauched themselves with lascivious behavior right at the foot of the Mt. Sinai where God was present.

When Moses saw this, he was so angry with their behavior that he hurled the two tablets of stone down the mountain side to the ground smashing them. God was ready to wipe out every man, woman and child in the camp of Israel. All the sons of Levi who were consecrated to the Lord gathered themselves with Moses and went throughout the camp doing as God ordered and slew about 3,000 men that day—these men were the leaders and those involved in practicing idolatry and worshipping the golden calf. Moses then went back up the mountain and interceded with God in Israel’s behalf asking forgiveness for Israel and for God to blot out their sin for His own name’s sake. God listened to Moses, forgave Israel and once again wrote his covenant with his finger on the two tablets of stone Moses brought to Him. The day that Moses returned to the people with the two tablets was *Tishri 10—Yom Kippur*. Today is the same day that Israel’s great sin of worshipping the golden calf was atoned for after they repented and Moses returned after being gone forty days (Deuteronomy 9). This time Israel was tested, they were vigilant in keeping track of the time correctly in counting the days faithfully and did not lose faith.

The entire chapter of Leviticus 16 is about the *Day of Atonement*. **Leviticus 16:29** — “This day (Yom Kippur/Atonement) 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.” It is a day of judgment on the wicked and atonement on those who have repented (the righteous).

Verses 5-10—“And he (Aaron) shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering. ⁶ “Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. ⁷ He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁸ Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat (Hebrew: azazel goat). ⁹ And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.” The goat that was the lot for the Lord represents our Messiah—the Lamb of God who was slain from the foundation of the world for the sins of mankind. He is our Passover lamb as we read in **1 Corinthians 5:7**. Through the death of Christ we are pardoned for our sins and reconciled to God. This is alluded to in the book of Hebrews in the New Testament.

The Jewish people as a whole do not understand that the first goat (the sin offering goat) for the Lord represented Christ, the Lamb of God. **Hebrews 9:1**—“Then indeed, even the first *covenant* had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.² For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lamp-stand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary;³ and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all (Holy of Holies). Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services.⁷ But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people’s sins committed in ignorance;⁸ the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. It was symbolic for the time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience,¹⁰ concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed upon the people until the time of reformation (changing).”

Now we see the New Testament understanding of these symbols.¹¹ “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood he entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.¹³ For if the blood of bulls and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?¹⁵ And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, he became our high priest at the right hand of God in heaven today. He is represented by the first of the two goats on the Day of Atonement as a sin offering.

Notice now the other goat. **Leviticus 10:10** —¹⁰“But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat (*Hebrew: azazel*) goat into the wilderness.” *Azazel* means the mighty one and *el* is God, thus it translates as “mighty one of God.” This goat is largely responsible for tempting and seducing all mankind since the days of Adam and Eve through our present day. He is like the first goat, only he depicts the wicked one who led all mankind astray. This goat is not sacrificed, but after being confessed over, this goat is taken by a strong man into the wilderness and cast over a cliff and left to die in the wilderness. This represents another goat (not the first goat) who is responsible for our sins. What great being would that be?

John 8:42 —“I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of myself, but He sent Me.⁴³ Why do you not understand my speech? Because you are not able to listen to my word.⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.” Thus the devil is the one who is a great liar and leads all mankind astray. **Revelation 12:9**—⁹

“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” **1 John 5:19** —“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”

We know that we have to resist the devil and be steadfast in faith. **James 4:7**— “Therefore submit to God; resist the devil and he will flee from you.” Christ paid the penalty for our sins and we are no longer held in bondage by Satan. We have been freed from that bondage, and now have the Spirit of God living in us that enables us to obey God and to be free from sin and the wicked one—the devil. When Christ died, amazing things happened. **John 2:29, 32** –The next day John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “ ‘**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**’ ”³² And John bore witness, saying, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” ’ ” Christ was sacrificed April 5— Nisan 14, 30 A.D. on Passover.

The Jewish Mishna , Yoma 39 B, has some interesting things to say about what happened on that day, forty years before the temple was destroyed by the Romans Titus and Vespasian. “Our rabbis taught, in the year which Simon the Righteous died he foretold them that he would die. They said, ‘How do you know that?’ He replied that on every day of Atonement an old man dressed in white would join me entering the Holy and Holies, but today I was joined by an old man dressed in black who entered, but did not leave with me. After the festival of Sukkot he was sick for seven days and then died.

“His brethren (Simeon’s) that year forbore to mention the ineffable name in pronouncing the priestly blessing, for rabbis taught: during the last forty years before the destruction of the temple the lot for the Lord did not come up in the priest’s right hand when he reached in to pick the lot (for the Lord or Azazel).” The lot for the Lord is supposed to come up in the priest’s right hand. When it came up in his left hand, it meant that the sins were not forgiven and something was wrong with the service (before the temple was destroyed in 70 AD). Forty years earlier was 30 AD, the year Christ was crucified. From that year on the lot for the Azazel goat came up in the right hand and the lot for the Lord in the left hand. This was a miracle showing that Israel was in disfavor (bad place) with God who was very displeased.

When he picked the lot for the Lord before the temple was destroyed, it came up in the left hand. Nor did the crimson colored strap become white—their sins were not forgiven for forty years. This was the piece of cloth that was put on the ear of the Azazel goat after they confessed their sins over the goat and took him out to the wilderness. If their sins were forgiven the crimson color turned white, but for forty years it stayed red. Nor did the western-most light in the temple menorah stay lit. The great doors of the temple would open by themselves—it took 26 men to open those doors. The opening of the doors of the temple was considered by the priests and Jews to be a great curse— meaning that the nation was open to incursion of their enemies. There was no defense, because God had departed. Zachariah Edo prophesied that the temple and its gates were going to be destroyed by fire. These four miracles occurred consistently for forty

years in a row from 30 AD until 70 AD, showing that something happened in 30 AD that caused God's displeasure.

History tells us that 30 AD is when Christ was crucified on Passover 30 A.D. Christ is the Lamb of God who died for our sins. The Azazel goat represents Satan the devil who is the great tempter and seducer and behind all our sins. **Revelation 12:9**—"So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." When Christ returns, he is going to judge the world and deal with Satan the devil. Christ will slay the wicked in the Day of the Lord which is symbolized by Yom Kippur. The righteous will be resurrected and clothed in white.

At that time, this event will also occur as stated in **Revelation 20:1**—"Then I saw an 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." Revelation tells us that the Devil is going to be set free for a short time after the thousand years, when he will deceive the nations for one final time and bring the wicked up to the gates of Jerusalem to attack Jerusalem and he and all with him will be destroyed from heaven. He and his cohort demons angels will be cast into the Lake of Gehenna fire and suffer their ultimate fate.

The Azazel goat (second goat) was to be put out into the wilderness *by the hand of a suitable man*, where it would die. **Leviticus 16:21**—"Aaron shall lay his hands on the head of the live Azazel goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel"—all those things that Satan has been responsible for and leading them into sin. The Azazel symbolizes Satan the devil. Satan will pay for all his sins and those that he inspired and encouraged people to commit. He was the instigator and he will be the ultimate payer. "By the hands of a suitable man" refers to the angel with the key to the bottomless pit who escorts Satan into the bottomless pit in the desert. Verse 22—"this goat released into the wilderness shall bear on itself all their iniquities." The basis of Atonement is described in great detail here in Leviticus 16.

The Day of Atonement pictures Christ's return. **Jeremiah 25:31-32**—"When he returns, He is going to slay the wicked from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth. It is the Day of the Lord's Judgment (vengeance). The Apostle, Jude who was the brother of Christ, quoted from the ancient prophet Enoch (Jude 1:14). "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men. Behold the Lord comes with 10,000 of his saints to execute judgment upon all, to convict all ungodly"—a day of wiping the slate clean. This means the wicked who are still wicked are going to be destroyed. The righteous, at Christ's return, are going to be transformed to spirit beings and made immortal. Rosh Hashanah is the day the books are opened and judgment begins with the warning blast of the trumpet. God is warning this world today through plague, ministers, and prophets and his own direct intervention—warning the nations to repent or suffer the consequences as time is about up. The clock is ticking, and the real judgment is coming—Yom Kippur which this day today represents—and sentence is meted out. When is the sentence of the wicked meted out, and when are the righteous rewarded

with Christ's kingdom? This happens when Christ returns at the last trumpet—**1 Corinthians 15:50- 52; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 11:1 5-18-21**. This is the interpretation of the New Testament, because the people did not know that in Old Testament. This was the one day of the year that the people would appear before the high priest and atone for their sins and the Azazel goat sent out into the wilderness.

What is the one day that mankind is going to see God? **Revelation 1:7**—"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." **Matthew 24:27**—"For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shines even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Christ our Savior will be seen by the entire world. The day that Christ will be seen is the day that the high priest went into the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement.

Aish.com —*The ABC's of Yom Kippur*. "Following the sin of the golden calf, Moses pleaded with God to forgive the people. Finally on the Day of Atonement forgiveness was achieved and Moses brought the tablets down from Mount Sinai on Yom Kippur. From that day forward, Yom Kippur carried a special power to cleanse our mistakes both individually and collectively and wipe the slate clean." If we repent, God will wipe the slate clean. If we don't repent, he will wipe the slate clean with our blood. We can have the slate wiped clean by the blood of Christ who died for us, or we can pay the penalty for our sins our self. It is our choice. If we want the penalty paid for us, then we have to do something. It is not automatic. What we do, is a process called *teshuva* which literally means to return to God. Teshuva involves four steps:

Regret – acknowledging that a mistake was made, and feeling regret at having squandered some of our potential.

Cessation – Talk is cheap, but stopping the harmful action shows a true commitment to change.

Confession – To make it more "real," we admit our mistake verbally, and ask forgiveness from anyone we may have harmed.

Resolution – We make a firm commitment not to repeat the harmful action in the future.

"Though the combination of *teshuva* and Yom Kippur atones for transgressions against God, it does not automatically erase wrongs committed against other people. It is therefore the universal Jewish custom – some time before Yom Kippur – to apologize and seek forgiveness from any friend, relative, or acquaintance whom we may have harmed or insulted over the past year."

Some people will not admit that they have made a mistake. They do not have regrets. It may be that they have been blinded, or it may be that they thought they were called but were not called. Often the blind do not know they are blind in the spiritual realm. If we regret doing wrong, we cease doing it. Have you ever heard anyone say, "Me? Did I do something wrong?"

The Jews do not understand that Atonement/Yom Kippur pictures Christ's return from heaven. What they do see is that "angels are completely spiritual beings whose sole focus is to serve their Creator. The Maharal of Prague explains: All the *mitzvot* that God commanded us on [Yom Kippur] are designed to remove, as much as possible, a person's relationship to physicality, until

he is completely like an angel.” I find this interesting, because believers and followers of Christ are going to become spirit beings. **Philippians 3:20-21**—“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body**, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.” Our bodies are going to be transformed at the return of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15: 50-58 —“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ **For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.** ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’” The dead are raised and their bodies made incorruptible on Yom Kippur (Atonement) which the day pictures. Not necessarily literally on that specific day, but the day it prefigures. That is what Yom Kippur is really all about. We are going to become spirit beings, sons of God—spirit beings like angels in the sense of when we are in God’s kingdom we are going to be totally devoted to serving God as his divine children. The angels are sons of God in the sense that they were created to be ministering servants created by God. But we, like Christ are begotten sons of God and we are going to be born sons of God at the resurrection. Right now we are like babies in the womb of their mother, still being formed and still growing to the point of birth. When we are born we will be completely separate individual beings, literally born sons of God.

We are commanded in **Leviticus 23** to afflict our souls on this day. The Hebrew word for soul is *nefesh* which means our physical body. How do we do that? We do this by fasting and not eating on this one day. Fasting is a way to afflict our self that will make us feel aware of our human physical reality without doing any damage. God does not command us to whip ourselves, or nail ourselves to a cross, or beat our body with blows using a rod or whip. This is not what is meant by the verse. We afflict ourselves by fasting and do without food and water. Affliction is nothing that any of us desire. What day is called a fast in the Bible? The Bible shows us that Yom Kippur is the fast day God has ordained yearly throughout all generations. If someone is ill and fasting that might pose life-threatening, then that would be an exception. Otherwise, it is a day of fasting.

Aish.com —“Yom Kippur and the Secret to a Happy Life – The connection between envy and the holiest day of the year” by Rabbi Benjamin Blech. *Summary*: “Do you want to know the secret for having a happy life? Strangely enough, we can derive the answer from Yom Kippur, the day that seems to be dedicated to depriving ourselves of pleasure. We have to grasp the deeper purpose of Yom Kippur to really understand the ten days of Awe from Yom Teruah to Yom Kippur. The ten days correspond to the exact number of commandments God carved on the two tablets of law given to Moses for Israel on Mt. Sinai—the greatest summary of our prescription for righteous living. The ten days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur present us with an opportunity to set aside one day for each one of the Ten Commandments according to the Decalogue.

Beginning with the first two days, we stress our commitment to the first two commandments emphasizing our dedication to the existence of God as well as his oneness, and shall have no carved images, idols or other gods before him. *Third day*: we will not take the name of God in vain. *Fourth*: remember to keep the Sabbath day holy (weekly and annual Sabbath days). *Fifth*: honor father and mother always. *Sixth*: thou shall not kill. *Seventh*: thou shall not commit adultery. *Eighth*: thou shall not steal. *Ninth*: thou shall not commit false witness — lie. *Tenth*: you shall not covet (envy). Just as physical training proceeds by way of learning to master ever more strenuous and difficult tasks, so too does our moral code move forward with greater and more demanding challenges. Everyone fasting on this day before God is afflicting themselves in the same way as they stand the same before the judgment seat of Christ. The sequence of the Decalogue (the Ten Commands), is rooted in the divine assumption that every step we take in a spiritual program of self perfection allows us then to move forward to even greater heights.

We start by having (1) no other gods, in the beginning, then (2) worship no other gods, (3) be very careful in using God’s name—awe of God, (4) keeping the weekly Sabbath day keeps us in contact with God, (5) honoring father and mother is very difficult for some because of the sins of their parents and broken family relationships – they have never forgiven their parents—incapable of forgiveness. (But it is necessary, if one is going to be converted).

“The tenth and last commandment,—“Thou (you) shalt not covet” – the one that requires of us to control not only our actions and words but even our thought is clearly most daunting and most difficult of all. Yet, in its concern for the elimination of envy and its attempt to convince us of the folly of spending our lives seeking to accumulate more and more of the things others possess, it is almost certainly the most relevant of the Commandments for contemporary times. “Thou shalt not covet” corresponds with Yom Kippur, the 10th and last day of repentance. It deserves to be the focus of our attention on Yom Kippur because only by mastering its message can we hope to achieve self-fulfillment and happiness—and eternal life.

“What is it, after all, that makes so many people feel like failures? On a superficial level the simple assumption is that we are depressed because we are deprived. The truth is that it is not so. Our obsession for acquiring wealth has far less to do with our personal wants than with our refusal to have less than others. We have to face up to the fact that, as Frank Ross put it, ‘It is not so much what we haven’t, but what others have that makes for unhappiness.’ ”

“A fascinating psychological study proves the point. The following question was posed to a representative sampling of people: Would you rather earn 100,000 dollars when everyone around you is making \$50,000 or would you rather make \$200,000 when everyone around you makes \$400,000? The study made clear that the question assumed that the cost of living and goods stays the same. A rational person would choose the second option, where he makes more money but less than people around him. That way he will have twice as much to spend. In reality most people picked the first option. The most important consideration was simply being richer than other people!”

“That’s why there is a multibillion-dollar industry in the world today, *Advertising*, whose purpose is the systematic propagation of envy. Its goal, as frankly admitted by advertising guru B. Earl Puckett, is this: ‘It is our job to make men and women unhappy with what they have.’

Every few months, fashions change. What is ‘in’ one month is ‘out’ the next. One week you’re an outcast if you’re not wearing a certain kind of sneakers. The next week, you’re out of date and a geek if you haven’t switched to another brand. Why must you constantly have something else? It’s because big business needs consumers. So consumers have to be taught what they need rather than to have their real needs met. There’s no big secret which emotion Madison Avenue wants to appeal to most. Gucci was brave enough to admit it when it called a new perfume it was trying to popularize, ‘Envy.’ Remarkable, isn’t it, that what the Torah has identified as the basic cause of human suffering – the sin of envy – has become the very feeling the age of advertising wants us to strongly embrace. There’s always somebody who has a little bit more – enough at least to stir up within us sufficient envy to prevent us from being content with what is ours.”

“A study published this past June in *Psychological Science* confirmed what we should have intuitively recognized. The things we are trained to think make us happy, like having a new car every couple of years and buying the latest fashions, don't make us happy. Buying luxury goods, conversely, tends to be an endless cycle of one-upsmanship, in which the neighbors have a fancy new car and – bingo! now you want one, too. If the desire for something is based on need, then fulfillment brings contentment. If the goal, however, is to overcome the need to covet the acquisitions of others, then we are doomed to disappointment and to ever-greater dissatisfaction.

“So what really gives us true happiness? Faith in a higher power is high up on the list. Optimism based on belief in God is worth more than \$1 million in the bank. A feeling of self-worth rooted in a commitment to a life lived with values provides far more satisfaction than unlimited amounts of stuff and more stuff to fill our closets.”

“The bottom line? The spiritual rewards reaped from a religious perspective far outweigh the benefits seductively paraded before us in the advertisements that daily bombard us with their false and alluring promises. That is why we so desperately need Yom Kippur to help us rearrange our priorities. It is a day when we demonstrate that we can master our physical needs. We choose prayer over food. We choose communion with God over making more money. We do not wear our jewelry and our adornments so that no one need envy the possessions of others. We concentrate not on the things we covet that don't belong to us but on the blessings God has already granted to us that could give us so much joy if we only fully appreciated them. And that's why, ironically enough, the day of Yom Kippur, with all of its deprivations, helps to teach us the real meaning of happiness and contentment.”

When Cain’s sacrifice did not receive God’s blessing, Cain compared himself with his brother Abel (whose sacrifice was blessed by God). Satan played upon Cain’s emotions until Cain became so jealously angry of Abel, he killed Abel. Today ISIS terrorists are killing thousands in Iraq because they are envious and want other’s land and riches of this world which they plan to take by force.

Philippians 4:4-8—“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!⁵ Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just,

whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” Paul says,¹⁰ “But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.¹¹ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

2 Timothy 1:6-7—“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Colossians 1:10-14—“walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Brethren, those who are called of God are blessed to be among the first fruits.

Chapter 15 of Corinthians talks about our triumph in Christ who is the first of the firstfruits and the coming day of Atonement when the last trumpet will sound at Christ's second coming and the dead will be raised incorruptible with new spiritual immortal bodies to reign with him in glory. **1 Corinthians 15:54-58**—“So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?’⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”