

THE FALL HOLIDAYS

OIM Virtual Series 2007

Days of Awe: Day Ten

by Mark Huey posted 22 September, 2007 www.outreachisrael.net

Psalm 145; Jonah; Exodus 20:17

Yom Kippur is a solemn day of reflection and self-examination. If you read Leviticus 23:26-32, a passage that most specifically describes this day, you will discover that the Holy One is very serious about His people remembering it. Interestingly in v. 31, the phrase that it should be a “perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places,” is inserted into the language of the description. How more definite can it be stated? Is it not amazing how Christianity has strayed from this clear instruction? For those of us who were denied for years—because of ignorant tradition—the blessing of taking one day a year for a time of deep remorse and repentance for our transgressions, this day is now gaining greater significance in our walk with the Lord.

Of course, this should never overtake our belief in the atoning work of Messiah Yeshua at Golgotha (Calvary), and that through faith in His sacrifice our sin has been forgiven. Likewise, we should always remember that through the confession of our transgressions that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9), something that can take place on *any day* throughout the year.

What we have is the blessing of considering, for a twenty-four hour period, a focused amount of time on our condition before the Creator God. Obviously, humbling our souls is something that requires us to put our attention upon His ability to forgive us, and our need of a Savior. Yeshua Himself obeyed these commands during His Earthly sojourn. May our relationship with the Holy One be improved as we each bow our knee and confess with our tongues all that must be said individually and corporately!

Starting with the psalm of David, you can read that his heart was constantly in awe of the Holy One every day. So on this day, perhaps another reading of this psalm will plough up your heart to receive seeds of mercy and love that will carry you through the year ahead:

“A Psalm of Praise, of David. I will extol You, my God, O King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. Men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts, and I will tell of Your greatness. They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness and will shout joyfully of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and merciful; slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. The LORD is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works. All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, and Your godly ones shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and talk of Your power; to make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts and the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion *endures* throughout all generations. The LORD sustains all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds. The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. The LORD keeps all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever” (Psalm 145:1-21).

The Tenth Commandment

“You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Exodus 20:17).

The final commandment of the Decalogue is perhaps, according to the Rabbis, the one sin from where all the others originate. It is covetousness of the heart that prompts a person to follow one's base desires rather than the wishes of the Almighty. Covetousness is a major part of the motivation that generates disobedience. Just take a look at these two flashbacks to the Garden of Eden, and read how Eve looks at the forbidden fruit:

"Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:9).

"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6).

Later, in the writings of the Apostle Paul, we see the example that the sin of covetousness can cause a person to die spiritually:

"What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COVET.' But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin *is* dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become *a cause of* death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful" (Romans 7:7-13).

Paul understood that covetousness in the human heart can cause a great number of other sins to manifest themselves. This is the one major command among the Ten Commandments that directly pertains to a person's ethics or morality, which is often not paralleled among the contemporary law codes of the Ancient Near East. While there were many law codes contemporary to the Ancient Israelites that forbade murder, theft, adultery, and even encouraged respect for one's family—the Tenth Commandment is a Divine injunction to not covet after something that belongs to someone else. Wanting something else can lead to violation of other commandments.

The commandment not to covet has always cast a profound shadow on the other nine, as breaking of this command usually generates breaking more serious injunctions. Due to covetousness, a person will murder, steal, commit adultery, bear false witness, create idols to worship, and commit other gross sins. Interestingly, it is when humans form graven images to worship that the very idols they fashion become precious in their sight. In essence, people covet such things in their ability to protect them from harm. Isaiah describes this problem, and the ultimate result of it as being put to shame:

"Those who fashion a graven image are all of them futile, and their precious things are of no profit; even their own witnesses fail to see or know, so that they will be put to shame. Who has fashioned a god or cast an idol to no profit? Behold, all his companions will be put to shame, for the craftsmen themselves are mere men. Let them all assemble themselves, let them stand up, let them tremble, let them together be put to shame" (Isaiah 44:9-11).

Unfortunately, the pattern of Israel throughout history was to produce vain idols that replaced the Holy One as the object of worship.

Is this why it is beneficial to take a look at the Book of Jonah at this time of year? Is it possible that Jonah is, by his example, a good prophet to study as we see him running from the Lord, and not following the clear word of instruction that he received?

Years ago, I remember receiving some instruction from Jonah that I thought communicated the essence of what we should not do as we seek to worship the Almighty. The teacher likened the concept of constructing "vain idols" to an umbrella. The mental image was of

someone standing in the rain of God's faithfulness being poured out continually around the globe. But if you can picture it, when the person who has adopted a vain idol lifts up his open umbrella—representing an idol—and worships it instead of the Holy One, then all of the faithfulness that is being showered down from Heaven bounces off the umbrella and falls to the ground around the person holding the umbrella. As the Scriptures have explained it, those who worship idols disregard God, and He returns their disloyalty to Him in kind:

“Those who regard vain idols forsake their faithfulness, but I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the LORD” (Jonah 2:8-9).

Jonah decided to proclaim, with a voice of thanksgiving, his loyalty and thankfulness to the Lord. He understood the importance of paying his vows to the Holy One. And then, in an interesting phrase that is read in Hebrew in most Jewish synagogues on this very day of *Yom Kippur*, he proclaims *yeshuatah l'ADONAI* (יְשׁוּעָתָהּ לַיהוָה), meaning “Salvation is from the LORD.” If you have ever heard a Jewish person, who may not believe in the Messiah Yeshua say this, you may be startled that they do not see the connection—as Yeshua is our salvation. But that is not our problem. We can certainly pray, recognizing that at some point in time, we also have lifted umbrellas of unbelief that have prevented the faithfulness of God from raining down on us.

On this Day of Atonement, let us drop whatever vain idols we might be harboring in our hearts, and instead raise holy hands, worshipping and praising our Heavenly Father for His faithfulness to wash us from our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. For He alone is worthy to be praised!

He alone reigns from Heaven above, and indeed, Yeshua is our Salvation!

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