

# FALL FEASTS an introduction

WE ARE CURRENTLY IN THE 2024 FALL FEAST SEASON.
BELOW IS A 10-DAY DEVOTIONAL, WHICH BEGINS ON ROSH
HASHANAH AND CONCLUDES ON YOM KIPPUR.
BUT FIRST, AN INTRODUCTION...

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GOD GAVE HIS SPIRITUAL FAMILY 7 ANNUAL FEASTS TO OBSERVE. 4 OF THE FEASTS TAKE PLACE IN THE SPRING AND 3 TAKE PLACE IN THE FALL. TAKE NOTE THAT THEY ARE A MYSTERIOUS MIX OF SPIRITUAL AND AGRARIAN OBSERVANCES. SOLVE THE MYSTERY AND WE END UP WITH A ROADMAP OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN FOR THE WORLD!



# fulfillment and FORESHADONS

THE BEAUTY OF THESE 7 FEASTS IS THAT THEY ARE NOT ONLY ANNUAL OBSERVANCES OF A PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST, BUT ALSO FORESHADOWS OF A SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST. THESE FORESHADOWS FIND FULFILLMENT DURING THE MESSIANIC ERA WHICH BEGAN WHEN JESUS GAVE UP HIS LIFE ON CROSS, MAKING ATONEMENT FOR SIN ON BEHALF OF THE WORLD. THEY WILL CONCLUDE WITH AN ETERNAL SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST CELEBRATION, AND AGAIN NOT BEFORE ENTERING THE MOST SOLEMN DAYS IN EARTH'S HISTORY.

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ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE ARE THE 7 FEASTS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER INCLUDING THEIR ANNUAL PHYSICAL PURPOSES AND ETERNAL SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENTS. AGAIN, NOTE THE MYSTERIOUS MIX OF SPIRITUAL AND AGRARIAN OBSERVANCES.

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### SEVEN FEASTS

FEAST NAME ENGLISH

FEAST NAME HEBREW ANNUAL PHYSICAL OBSERVANCE

ETERNAL SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT

**PASSOVER** 

PESACH

DELIVERANCE FROM PHYSICAL DEATH DELIVERANCE FROM SPIRITUAL DEATH

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

HAG HA-MOTZI NO PHYSICAL YEAST NO SPIRITUAL YEAST (SIN)

EARLY FIRST FRUITS

HA-BIKURIM

FIRST PHYSICAL FRUIT (GRAIN) OUT OF THE GROUND FIRST SPIRITUAL FRUIT (JESUS) OUT OF THE GROUND

FEAST OF WEEKS SHAVUOT (PENTECOST)

BEGINNING OF THE GRAIN HARVEST BEGINNING OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST

#### SUMMER HARVEST TIME NO FEAST - THE FOCUS IS BRINGING IN THE HARVEST

FEAST OF TRUMPETS

YOM TERUAH BLOWING OF THE SHOFARS SIGNIFYING THE END OF THE PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST BLOWING
OF THE SHOFARS
SIGNIFYING THE
END OF THE
SPIRITUAL HARVEST
& THE RETURN OF
THE MESSIAH

#### NOTE - THE PHYSICAL & SPIRITUAL HARVEST CELEBRATIONS ARE DELAYED FOR A SOMBER TIME OF JUDGMENT

DAY OF ATONEMENT

YOM KIPPUR

NATIONAL DAY OF ATONMENT FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE

GLOBAL DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR THE WOLD

FEAST OF BOOTHS

SUKKOT

ANNUAL PHYSICAL HARVEST CELEBRATION

ETERNAL HARVEST CELEBRATION

### YOY TERUAH feast of trumpets

YOM TERUAH, THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS, IS THE 5TH FEAST, BUT THE 1ST OF THE FALL FEASTS. TERUAH LITERALLY MEANS "BLOWING" OR "BLASTS", AS IN THE SOUND OF A TRUMPET OR SHOFAR.

LEVITICUS 23:23-25 SAYS,

"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."



MOST OF THE JEWISH WORLD TODAY CALLS THIS DAY ROSH HASHANAH TO CELEBRATE THE CREATION BIRTHDATE OF THE UNIVERSE, HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT ORIGINATE FROM THE BIBLICAL TEXTS. IN THE BIBLE, THIS DAY IS THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS TO MARK THE END OF THE PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST SEASON, BUT IT IS ALSO A FORESHADOW THAT WILL EVENTUALLY MARK THE END OF THE SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST.

WHEN MESSIAH JESUS RETURNS FOR THE SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST, HE WILL BE PROCEEDED BY THE BLASTS OF TRUMPETS OR SHOFARS, AND HE WILL GATHER THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST... THE SOULS OF THE SAINTS.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16

FOR THE LORD HIMSELF WILL COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, WITH A LOUD COMMAND, WITH THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL AND WITH THE TRUMPET CALL OF GOD, AND THE DEAD IN MESSIAH WILL RISE FIRST.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-52

LISTEN, I TELL YOU A MYSTERY: WE WILL NOT ALL SLEEP, BUT WE WILL ALL BE CHANGED-- IN A FLASH, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, AT THE LAST TRUMPET. FOR THE TRUMPET WILL SOUND, THE DEAD WILL BE RAISED IMPERISHABLE. AND WE WILL BE CHANGED.

#### REVELATION 14:15-16

THEN ANOTHER ANGEL CAME OUT OF THE TEMPLE AND CALLED IN A LOUD VOICE TO HIM WHO WAS SITTING ON THE CLOUD, "TAKE YOUR SICKLE AND REAP, BECAUSE THE TIME TO REAP HAS COME, FOR THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE." SO HE WHO WAS SEATED ON THE CLOUD SWUNG HIS SICKLE OVER THE EARTH, AND THE EARTH WAS HARVESTED.





BEGINNING ON THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS AND ENDING 10
DAYS LATER ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT IS A PERIOD
CALLED **THE DAYS OF AWE**. THESE 10 DAYS ARE DESIGNED
TO BE MOMENTS OF DEEP REFLECTION AND PRAYER,
BECAUSE THE ANCIENT RABBIS TEACH THAT GOD OPENS THE
BOOK OF LIFE ON THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS AND DECIDES
WHOSE NAME WILL BE WRITTEN IN IT FOR THE FOLLOWING
YEAR ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER DURING THIS TIME REVOLVE AROUND THE HEBREW WORD TESHUVAH. THIS WORD MEANS TO REPENT IN THE SENSE OF RETURNING TO WAYS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR THAT WERE CONTRARY TO GOD'S COMMANDMENTS.

THE DAILY DEVOTIONALS YOU WILL RECEIVE FOR THE NEXT 10 DAYS WILL FOCUS ON A UNIQUE ASPECT OF THE WORD "RETURN" THAT CAN BE USED FOR PERSONAL, FAMILY OR GROUP DEVOTIONAL TIME.

MAY THIS DEVOTIONAL FILL YOU WITH HOPE AND STRENGTEHN YOUR UNION WITH MESSIAH THIS FALL FEAST SEASON.

-RABBI GENE



# OUR HEARTS and his great love

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING OUR HEARTS TO GOD AND HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US

JOEL 2:12-13

"EVEN NOW," DECLARES THE LORD, "RETURN TO ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH FASTING AND WEEPING AND MOURNING." REND YOUR HEART AND NOT YOUR GARMENTS. RETURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD, FOR HE IS GRACIOUS AND COMPASSIONATE, SLOW TO ANGER AND ABOUNDING IN LOVE, AND HE RELENTS FROM SENDING CALAMITY.

NOTICE THAT CONGRUENT WITH RETURNING TO GOD IS A POSTURE OF HUMILITY. GOD IS LESS IMPRESSED WITH OUR WORDS THAN HE IS WITH OUR HEART. ALSO, NOTICE THAT THE MOTIVATION OF OUR HEART IS TIED TO A SPECIFIC GROUPING OF GOD'S CHARACTER TRAITS. THIS SAME GROUPING OF TRAITS IS MENTIONED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE BIBLE. TAKE THE TIME TO FOCUS ON ONE TRAIT AT-A-TIME BEFORE MOVING TO THE NEXT. SPEND A MOMENT THINKING ABOUT WHAT EACH ONE MEANS TO YOU.



# QUESTIONS Ron reflection

SINCE THIS PASSAGE ASKS US TO RETURN TO GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART, REFLECT ON ANY AREAS OF YOUR HEART THAT MAY BE DISTANT FROM GOD RIGHT NOW? [LACK OF TRUST, DISAPPOINTMENT, WOUNDS, ETC.]

WHAT EMOTIONS, IF ANY, DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT HOW THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE DESIRES TO BE CLOSE TO YOU?

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS SPECIFIC GROUPING OF TRAITS IS REPEATED SO OFTEN IN THE BIBLE?

DO THESE CHARACTER TRAITS LINE UP WITH YOUR CURRENT UNDERSTANDING ABOUT GOD?

IS THERE SOMETHING IN YOUR LIFE TAKING PLACE THAT IS CAUSING THOSE GAPS?

SPEND SOME TIME IN PRAYER ASKING GOD TO HELP YOU BRIDGE THOSE GAPS.



### REYOUISC idele from our lives

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING BY REMOVING IDOLS FROM OUR LIVES

#### 1 SAMUEL 7:3

SO SAMUEL SAID TO ALL THE ISRAELITES, "IF YOU ARE RETURNING TO THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEARTS, THEN RID YOURSELVES OF THE FOREIGN GODS AND THE ASHTORETHS AND COMMIT YOURSELVES TO THE LORD AND SERVE HIM ONLY, AND HE WILL DELIVER YOU OUT OF THE HAND OF THE PHILISTINES."

AN IDOL IS ANYTHING THAT KEEPS US FROM LOVING AND FOLLOWING GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART. THEY ARE ACTIONS OR ACTIVITIES IN OUR LIVES THAT HOLD A HIGHER POSITION THAN GOD [WORK, RELATIONSHIPS, HOBBIES, MONEY, ADDICTIONS, ETC.]. WE ALL HAVE IDOLS TO ONE DEGREE OR ANOTHER AND TO MATURE IN OUR FAITH IS TO CONFRONT THESE IDOLS OVER TIME TO GIVE GOD MORE AND MORE THE SPACE IN OUR HEART. BE PATIENT BECAUSE THIS IS A LIFE-LONG PROCESS!





CAN YOU IDENTIFY ANY ACTIONS OR ACTIVITIES THAT HOLD A HIGHER POSITION IN YOUR HEART THAN GOD?

WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS SO DIFFICULT TO GIVE GOD CONTROL OVER CERTAIN AREAS OF OUR HEART?

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU FEAR THAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU WERE TO FULLY GIVE GOD THESE AREAS?

WRITE DOWN THESE STUBBORN IDOL AREAS ON SOMETHING YOU CAN REFER TO REGULARLY. SHARE THEM WITH A TRUSTED PERSON IF YOU CAN. BEGIN TODAY TO PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU TEAR DOWN THESE IDOLS AND OCCUPY MORE AND MORE OF YOUR HEART EACH DAY.



# OUR STORY

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING TO OUR STORY OF FAITH

#### LUKE 8:39

"RETURN HOME AND TELL HOW MUCH GOD HAS DONE FOR YOU." SO THE MAN WENT AWAY AND TOLD ALL OVER TOWN HOW MUCH JESUS HAD DONE FOR HIM.

IN THE PASSAGE, JESUS HEALS SOMEONE AND THEN TELLS HIM TO GO AND SHARE WHAT GOD DID FOR HIM.

FEW PEOPLE REALIZE THAT BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME GOD WROTE AN EPIC TALE. GENESIS 1:1 IS WHEN HE PRESSED THE PLAY BUTTON AND HISTORY (HIS STORY) BEGAN. DID YOU KNOW THAT GOD ALSO INCLUDED YOUR STORY WHEN HE WROTE HIS STORY?

PSALM 139:16
ALL THE DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME WERE WRITTEN IN YOUR
BOOK BEFORE ONE OF THEM CAME TO BE.



THERE IS ANOTHER TIME JESUS HEALS A BLIND PERSON. WHEN OTHERS BEGAN TO QUESTION HIM WHETHER JESUS WAS FROM GOD, THIS IS HOW HE RESPONDS:

JOHN 9:25

HE REPLIED, "WHETHER HE IS A SINNER OR NOT, I DON'T KNOW. ONE THING I DO KNOW. I WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE!"

HOW HAS GOD BEEN WORKING IN YOUR LIFE? HAVE YOU TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE ABOUT IT WITH SOMEONE?. YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE BIBLE OR HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE- WE ONLY NEED TO SAY, "I ONCE WAS THAT WAY, BUT GOD MADE ME THIS WAY. SIMPLE STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION ARE POWERFUL.

### QUESTIONS for reflection

HOW HAS GOD BEEN WORKING IN OUR LIFE? [HEALING, TRANSFORMATION, ETC.]

HAVE YOU HAD OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE ABOUT GOD'S WORK IN YOUR LIFE WITH OTHERS?

THANK GOD FOR HIS CONTINUED WORK IN YOUR LIFE AND ASK HIM TO CONTINUE TO GIVE YOU OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE WITH OTHERS- AND DON'T FORGET TO TELL THEM THAT THEIR STORY IS ALSO A PART OF GOD'S STORY!



# TREASURES returning a portion

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING A PORTION OF OUR TREASURES TO GOD

#### MALACHI 3:7-1

EVER SINCE THE TIME OF YOUR ANCESTORS YOU HAVE TURNED AWAY FROM MY DECREES AND HAVE NOT KEPT THEM. RETURN TO ME, AND I WILL RETURN TO YOU," SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY. "BUT YOU ASK, 'HOW ARE WE TO RETURN?' "WILL A MERE MORTAL ROB GOD? YET YOU ROB ME. "BUT YOU ASK, 'HOW ARE WE ROBBING YOU?' "IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS. YOU ARE UNDER A CURSE--YOUR WHOLE NATION--BECAUSE YOU ARE ROBBING ME. BRING THE WHOLE TITHE INTO THE STOREHOUSE, THAT THERE MAY BE FOOD IN MY HOUSE. TEST ME IN THIS," SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY, "AND SEE IF I WILL NOT THROW OPEN THE FLOODGATES OF HEAVEN AND POUR OUT SO MUCH BLESSING THAT THERE WILL NOT BE ROOM ENOUGH TO STORE IT.

IF GOD CREATED EVERYTHING, THEN EVERYTHING BELONGS
TO GOD - EVERYTHING WE OWN AND ALL THE MONEY WE
POSSESS - IT'S ALL A GIFT FROM GOD!

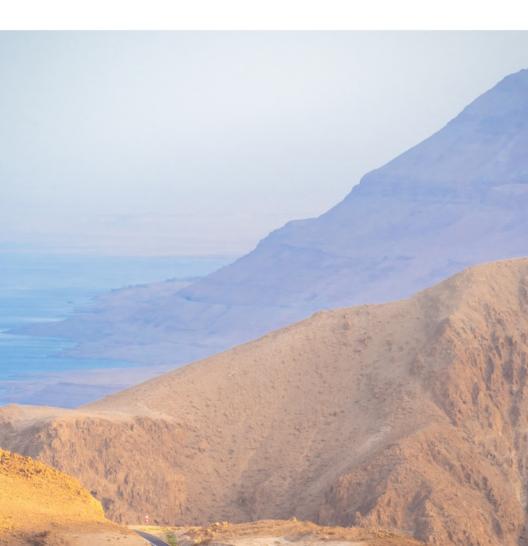
IN THIS PASSAGE, NOT RETURNING A PORTION OF EVERYTHING GOD GIVES US IS EQUATED WITH BEING DISTANT FROM GOD AND THEREFORE IS A HEART PROBLEM, NOT A MEASURABLE DISTANCE PROBLEM.

GOD DOESN'T NEED OUR MONEY; HE WANTS OUR HEART,
AND OUR LEVEL OF GIVING IS AN INDICATION OF OUR LEVEL
OF TRUST AND CLOSENESS TO GOD. NOTICE HOW
CHALLENGES US TO TEST [TRUST] HIM WITH OUR GIVING TO
SEE HOW MUCH GOD WILL RETURN BACK TO US.

#### GOD SAYS SOMETHING VERY SIMILAR IN 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-7:

REMEMBER THIS: WHOEVER SOWS SPARINGLY WILL ALSO REAP SPARINGLY, AND WHOEVER SOWS GENEROUSLY WILL ALSO REAP GENEROUSLY. EACH OF YOU SHOULD GIVE WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED IN YOUR HEART TO GIVE, NOT RELUCTANTLY OR UNDER COMPULSION, FOR GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.

I HOPE YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE THAT GIVING IS MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAN IT IS ABOUT THE MEASURE OF OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATION TO GOD.



### QUESTIONS For reflection

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED GIVING A BAROMETER OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD RATHER THAN AN OBLIGATION?

DOES THIS CHALLENGE YOU IN ANY WAY?

ARE YOU CURRENTLY RETURNING A PORTION OF YOUR INCOME BACK TO GOD? REMEMBER, THE AMOUNT IS LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE HEART BEHIND THE GIVING.

ARE YOU GIVING WITH INTENTIONALITY AND REGULARITY? INTENTIONALITY MEANS YOU HAVE A STRATEGY OF HOW MUCH TO GIVE AND WHERE TO GIVE IT. REGULARITY MEANS YOU ARE FAITHFUL TO DISPERSE WHAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO IN YOUR HEART TO GIVE. REMEMBER, YOUR CHURCH IS TYPICALLY AT THE TOP OF THIS LIST FOR GIVING SINCE YOU BENEFIT WHEN YOUR CHURCH BENEFITS. HOWEVER, IT'S AWESOME IF YOU CAN ALSO SUPPORT OTHER MINISTRIES SINCE THEY ALSO RELY ON GENEROSITY.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD WILL RETURN MORE THAN YOU GIVE? SOMETIMES THAT RETURN IS IN THE FORM OF RESOURCES, BUT OFTEN IT IS IN THE FORM OF PERSONAL BLESSINGS. THIS IS WHY THE BIBLE TEACHES US THAT, "IT IS BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

GIVING IS A FAITH ISSUE. ASK GOD TO INCREASE YOUR FAITH IN THIS AREA OF GIVING.





#### TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING REST TO OUR SOULS

PSALM 116:7-9 NIV - RETURN TO YOUR REST, MY SOUL, FOR THE LORD HAS BEEN GOOD TO YOU. FOR YOU, LORD, HAVE DELIVERED ME FROM DEATH, MY EYES FROM TEARS, MY FEET FROM STUMBLING, THAT I MAY WALK BEFORE THE LORD IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING.

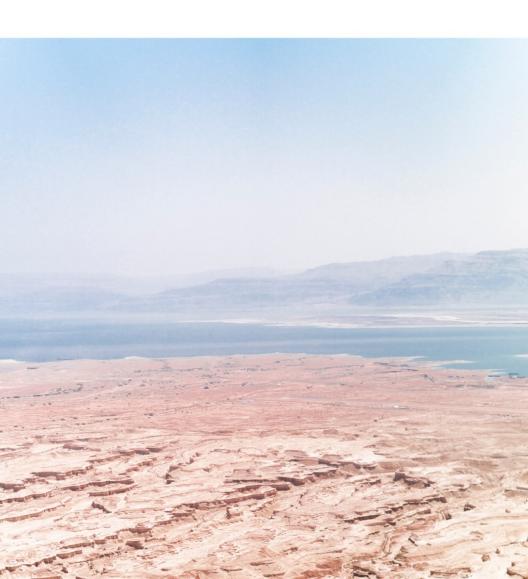
THESE DAYS, WE LIVE IN A VERY STRESSFUL WORLD, AND IT TAKES A HUGE TOLL ON THE STATE OF OUR SOULS. FROM POLITICS TO NEWS TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND MORE, IT SEEMS LIKE THERE ARE FEW PLACES TO HIDE FROM THE CRAZINESS. AND YET, WHEN WE TAKE A MOMENT TO CHECK IN WITH OURSELVES, IT IS THEN THAT WE REALIZE HOW WEARY AND UNSETTLED WE REALLY FEEL. WELCOME TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING!

NOTICE IN THIS PASSAGE HOW SOUL-REST IS CONNECTED TO SYNCHING UP WITH GOD'S INTIMATE INVOLVEMENT AND GOODNESS IN OUR LIVES. HE WATCHES OVER US. HE WIPES OUR TEARS AWAY. HE DIRECTS OUR STEPS. INTIMACY WITH GOD IS EQUAL TO SOUL-REST.

#### JESUS INVITES US INTO THIS INTIMACY IN MATTHEW 11:28-30:

COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND BURDENED, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST. TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU AND LEARN FROM ME, FOR I AM GENTLE AND HUMBLE IN HEART, AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. FOR MY YOKE IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT.

A YOKE, IN THIS STORY, IS A WOODEN DEVICE THAT TETHERS TWO OXEN TOGETHER WHILE THEY WORK IN THE FIELDS. THIS VISUAL CREATES A SYNCHRONIZED PARTNERSHIP. MORE WORK WITH LESS EFFORT. DEEP SLOW BREATHS RATHER THAN SHALLOW WINDED ONES. WHEN WE SYNC UP WITH GOD THE REALITY OF THE WORLD DOESN'T CHANGE, BUT OUR REALITY DOES. WE NOW HAVE INSULATION AND RESILIENCE FROM THE CRAZINESS AND THE RESULT IS A DEEP PEACE THAT WE CANNOT EXPERIENCE OTHERWISE.



### QUESTIONS for reflection

ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10, TEN BEING HIGHEST, HOW STRESSFUL DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW? WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR STRESS LEVELS?

ARE YOU ABLE TO SEE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN GOD'S GOODNESS IN YOUR LIFE AND SOUL-REST? WHY OR WHY NOT?

DESCRIBE WHAT IT MIGHT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU TO "COME TO JESUS" TO BE SYNCHED UP WITH HIM?

TAKE SOME DEEP SPIRITUAL BREATHS BY THANKING GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS IN YOUR LIFE. PURPOSE YOURSELF TO BE YOKED (SYNCHED UP) WITH JESUS IN A WAY THAT ALLOWS YOUR LIFE TO BE LESS STRESSFUL- BEARING HALF THE WEIGHT WITH HIM TO LIGHTEN YOUR LOAD AS HE LEADS YOU TO GREEN PASTURES AND QUIET WATERS.

#### PSALM 23:1-4

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I LACK NOTHING. HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES, HE LEADS ME BESIDE QUIET WATERS, HE REFRESHES MY SOUL. HE GUIDES ME ALONG THE RIGHT PATHS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE. EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE DARKEST VALLEY, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR YOU ARE WITH ME; YOUR ROD AND YOUR STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME.



### RETURNING to kindness

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING TO KINDNESS

#### EXODUS 23:4-5

IF YOU COME ACROSS YOUR ENEMY'S OX OR DONKEY WANDERING OFF, BE SURE TO RETURN IT. IF YOU SEE THE DONKEY OF SOMEONE WHO HATES YOU FALLEN UNDER ITS LOAD, DO NOT LEAVE IT THERE; BE SURE YOU HELP THEM WITH IT.

WE LIVE IN A VERY DIVIDED WORLD TODAY; ONE THAT PITS PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER AS HOSTILE ADVERSARIES. IT'S VERY CHALLENGING TO AVOID GETTING CAUGHT UP IN THE RHETORIC. IN THIS PASSAGE, WE HAVE A VERY SIMPLE TEACHING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES- BE KIND, EVEN AND MAYBE ESPECIALLY, TO THOSE CONSIDERED OUR ENEMIES.

JESUS SAID SOMETHING VERY SIMILAR IN MATTHEW 5:43-45: YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID, 'LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AND HATE YOUR ENEMY.' BUT I TELL YOU, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU, THAT YOU MAY BE CHILDREN OF YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN. HE CAUSES HIS SUN TO RISE ON THE EVIL AND THE GOOD, AND SENDS RAIN ON THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE UNRIGHTEOUS.

NOTICE HOW KINDNESS TO OUR ENEMIES IS BASED ON HOW GOD DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE AGAINST WHO RECEIVES SUNSHINE OR RAIN. SUNSHINE AND RAIN ARE TWO ELEMENTS THAT BRING LIFE TO THOSE IT FALLS UPON. AND THE REASON WHY GOD DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE, IS BECAUSE EVERY HUMAN BEING IS MADE IN HIS IMAGE AND THEREFORE, DESERVES TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND KINDNESS-EVEN IF THEY ARE THOSE WHO DISRESPECT AND ACT UNKIND TO US. LOVING WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHILD OF GOD.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE AREAS IN LIFE TODAY WHERE YOU SEE PEOPLE BEING PIT AGAINST EACH OTHER AS ENEMIES - EVEN IF THE SITUATION MAY BE GOOD CAUSE?

WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS SO DIFFICULT TO BE RESPECTFUL AND KIND TO THOSE WHO HOLD DIFFERENT VALUES, OPINIONS. IDEOLOGIES. OR BELIEFS ETC. THAN OURS?

HOW CAN YOU BE A CHILD OF GOD TODAY AND LET YOUR SUNSHINE AND RAIN FALL ON THOSE YOU CONSIDER ENEMIES?

PRAY THAT YOU WILL NOT GET PULLED INTO THE TIDAL WAVE OF DISRESPECT AND HATRED THAT HAS TAKEN OVER OUR WORLD TODAY. PRAY THAT AS A CHILD OF GOD, YOU WILL REPRESENT GOD'S NON-DISCRIMINATING POSTURE TO ALL THOSE HE PUTS IN YOUR PATH.



### REVERANCE for the word

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING TO A REVERENCE FOR THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF GOD'S WORD

#### ISAIAH 55:10-11

AS THE RAIN AND THE SNOW COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND DO NOT RETURN TO IT WITHOUT WATERING THE EARTH AND MAKING IT BUD AND FLOURISH, SO THAT IT YIELDS SEED FOR THE SOWER AND BREAD FOR THE EATER, SO IS MY WORD THAT GOES OUT FROM MY MOUTH: IT WILL NOT RETURN TO ME EMPTY, BUT WILL ACCOMPLISH WHAT I DESIRE AND ACHIEVE THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH I SENT IT.

NOTICE IN THE PASSAGE HOW THE WORD OF GOD, THE BIBLE, IS POWERFUL AND LIFE-GIVING.

THE WRITER OF HEBREWS SAYS IT THIS WAY IN HEBREWS 4:12:

FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS ALIVE AND ACTIVE. SHARPER THAN ANY DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD, IT PENETRATES EVEN TO DIVIDING SOUL AND SPIRIT, JOINTS AND MARROW; IT JUDGES THE THOUGHTS AND ATTITUDES OF THE HEART.

NEVER HAS GOD, THE BIBLE AND FAITH BEEN CHALLENGED SO MUCH AS IT IS IN OUR SOCIETY TODAY. THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF CONFUSION ABOUT WHO GOD IS, WHAT THE BIBLE REALLY TEACHES AND HOW TO LIVE OUT OUR FAITH. MANY TODAY ARE RETHINKING [DECONSTRUCTING] WHAT THEY BELIEVE, WHICH IS A VERY HEALTHY ENDEAVOR, BUT ALSO A VERY RISKY ONE. ONE NEGATIVE SIDE-EFFECT OF DECONSTRUCTING FAITH IS LOSING A REVERENCE FOR GOD AND HIS WORD- AND POSSIBLY LOSING FAITH ALTOGETHER.



HAVE YOU BEEN STRUGGLING TO KNOW WHO GOD IS, WHAT THE BIBLE REALLY TEACHES AND HOW TO LIVE OUT YOUR FAITH? CAN YOU LIST THOSE AREAS OF STRUGGLE?

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS NOT AN ORDINARY BOOK, AND THAT WHEN READ, HAS SUPERNATURAL POWER? WHY OR WHY NOT?

IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE STRUGGLING IN YOUR FAITH, DO YOU HAVE A RESPECTED PERSON OF FAITH YOU CAN REACH OUT TO TALK ABOUT IT?

QUESTIONS AND DOUBTS ARE NORMAL, SO DON'T SEE THEM AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS. WE ALL GO THROUGH UP AND DOWN SEASONS OF FAITH, AND THEREFORE IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE TRUSTED FRIENDS IN OUR LIVES TO HELP EACH OTHER THROUGH THOSE SEASONS.



# OUR DIVISELY created selves

TODAY WE FOCUS ON RETURNING TO OUR TRUE, DIVINELY CREATED SELVES

#### LUKE 15:17

WHEN HE CAME [RETURNED] TO HIS SENSES, HE SAID, 'HOW MANY OF MY FATHER'S HIRED SERVANTS HAVE FOOD TO SPARE. AND HERE I AM STARVING TO DEATH!

THIS PASSAGE IS FROM THE STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

THIS JEWISH YOUNG MAN REQUESTED AN EARLY
INHERITANCE FROM HIS FATHER AND THEN SQUANDERED IT
QUICKLY AWAY ON WILD LIVING. TO SURVIVE, HE WAS
FORCED TO TAKE WORK CARING OF PIGS, A FORBIDDEN
PROFESSION FOR A JEW, AND EVENTUALLY BECAME SO
DESPERATE HE STARTED EATING THEIR FOOD. HE HAD HIT
ROCK BOTTOM.

SHORTLY AFTER, THIS YOUNG MAN HAS AN EPIPHANY MOMENT REALIZING THE BLESSED LIFE HE HAD LEFT BEHIND. IT IS AT THIS MOMENT THAT THE PASSAGE SAYS, "HE CAME TO HIS SENSES." HOWEVER, THE ACTUAL GREEK WORD IS "HIMSELF" MEANING THAT HE RETURNED TO WHO HE WAS REALLY CREATED BY GOD TO BE.

THIS STORY IS MOST OF OUR STORIES AS WELL. MOST OF US GET CAUGHT UP IN THE PLEASURES AND ACTIVITIES OF THIS WORLD THAT OFTEN PROVE TO BE DESTRUCTIVE AND LEAD US TO HIT ROCK BOTTOM AS WELL. THE BOTTOM IS TYPICALLY WHERE EPIPHANY MOMENTS OCCUR. IT IS THEN THAT WE CAN RETURN TO THE PERSON WE ARE REALLY CREATED BY GOD TO BE.

ANOTHER KIND OF EXAMPLE OF THIS IN THE BIBLE IS THE STORY OF A JEWISH LEADER NAMED NICODEMUS. HE COMES TO JESUS UNDER THE COVER OF NIGHT SO NOT TO BE NOTICED. EVEN THOUGH THIS GODLY MAN IS A RESPECTED LEADER AND TEACHER, HE REALIZES THAT SOMETHING IS MISSING IN HIS LIFE AND REACHES OUT TO JESUS FOR AN ANSWER.

JESUS SAYS TO HIM IN JOHN 3:3-4:

"VERY TRULY I TELL YOU, NO ONE CAN SEE THE KINGDOM

OF GOD UNLESS THEY ARE BORN AGAIN." "HOW CAN

SOMEONE BE BORN WHEN THEY ARE OLD?" NICODEMUS

ASKED. "SURELY THEY CANNOT ENTER A SECOND TIME INTO

THEIR MOTHER'S WOMB TO BE BORN!"

JESUS FOLLOWS UP HIS QUESTION IN JOHN 3:3-6:
"VERY TRULY I TELL YOU, NO ONE CAN ENTER THE KINGDOM
OF GOD UNLESS THEY ARE BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT.
FLESH GIVES BIRTH TO FLESH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVES BIRTH
TO SPIRIT."

AND A FEW VERSES LATER JESUS SAYS IN JOHN 3:16: FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONE AND ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.



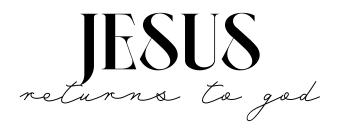


HAVE YOU HAD A ROCK BOTTOM EPIPHANY MOMENT IN YOUR LIFE? IF YES, THEN TAKE A MOMENT TO CELEBRATE THAT DAY AND RECALL WHAT IT MEANT TO YOU.

HAVE YOU HAD A ROCK BOTTOM EPIPHANY MOMENT BUT THEN STRAYED AWAY ONCE AGAIN? IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME AND SOMETIMES IT TAKES A FEW OF THESE MOMENTS BEFORE WE SEE LASTING CHANGES. TAKE A MOMENT TO ASK GOD TO HELP YOU RETURN TO THAT DIVINELY CREATED LIFE.

HAVEN'T HAD AN EPIPHANY MOMENT? TODAY IS A GOOD DAY TO HAVE ONE. IT BEGINS BY ENTRUSTING YOUR LIFE TO JESUS- BECOMING SPIRITUALLY REBORN BY FAITH. TAKE A MOMENT TO VERBALIZE THAT COMMITMENT TO GOD. FAITH IN WHAT JESUS DID FOR YOU ON THE CROSS IS HOW YOU ENTER THE FAMILY OF GOD- WELCOME TO THE JOURNEY BACK TO YOURSELF!





TODAY WE FOCUS ON WHAT IT MEANS FOR JESUS TO RETURN TO GOD

#### JOHN 13:3

JESUS KNEW THAT THE FATHER HAD PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS POWER, AND THAT HE HAD COME FROM GOD AND WAS RETURNING TO GOD.

WHEN GOD WROTE HIS EPIC TALE CALLED "HISTORY"
[HIS-STORY], HIS MAIN ROLE IN THE STORY WOULD BE THE
HERO- THE ONE WHO DEFEATS THE EVIL VILLAIN [SATAN]
AND RESCUES THE HEROINE [US] ONLY TO RIDE OFF INTO
THE SUNSET TO LIVE TOGETHER HAPPILY-EVER-AFTER. IN
THE BIG STORY, GOD IS THE MESSIAH, THE REDEEMER AND
HE ACCOMPLISHED THIS BY LEAVING THE COMFORT OF
HEAVEN AND COMING TO EARTH IN THE LOWEST FORM OF A
HUMAN- A SERVANT.

SPEAKING OF GOD'S INCARNATION, PHILIPPIANS 2:6-8 SAYS: [JESUS], BEING IN VERY NATURE GOD, DID NOT CONSIDER EQUALITY WITH GOD SOMETHING TO BE USED TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE; RATHER, HE MADE HIMSELF NOTHING BY TAKING THE VERY NATURE OF A SERVANT, BEING MADE IN HUMAN LIKENESS. AND BEING FOUND IN APPEARANCE AS A MAN, HE HUMBLED HIMSELF BY BECOMING OBEDIENT TO DEATH--EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS!

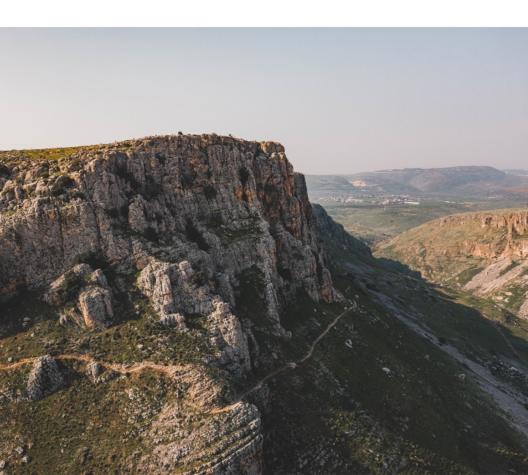
THE CROSS IS THE TIPPING POINT IN HISTORY. IT'S THE MOMENT DEATH IS DEFEATED AND LIFE BECOMES RESURRECTED - FOREVER!

WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY OUR MESSIAH SHEDDING HIS OWN BLOOD FOR OUR ATONEMENT.

TOMORROW IS YOM KIPPUR, THE DAY OF ATONEMENT - THE MOST SOLEMN DAY OF THE YEAR IN THE JEWISH WORLD. BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE IN 70AD, THIS DAY WAS ABOUT THE SHEDDING OF AN ANIMAL'S BLOOD- A FORESHADOW OF THE BLOOD THAT MESSIAH WOULD EVENTUALLY SHED FOR US.

IN THE FINAL DEVOTIONAL TOMORROW, WE WILL EXPLAIN MORE ABOUT YOM KIPPUR AND HOW JESUS FULFILLED THIS FEAST.

FOR TODAY, AS YOU PREPARE FOR YOM KIPPUR TOMORROW, MAKE YOUR DEVOTION TIME ONE OF REFLECTION AND MEDITATION.





WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU THAT THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE WOULD HUMBLE HIMSELF TO BECOME ONE OF US AND THEN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR OUR REDEMPTION?

WHAT LIBERTY IS THERE IN KNOWING THAT THROUGH FAITH OUR SINS - PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE- ARE FORGIVEN AND COVERED BY THE BLOOD OF MESSIAH?

HOW MIGHT THESE TRUTHS IMPACT YOUR DAY? HOW MIGHT THEY INFLUENCE THE INTERACTIONS YOU WILL HAVE WITH AS OTHERS YOU COME ACROSS? HOW MIGHT GOD'S SACRIFICE FOR US ENCOURAGE US TO SACRIFICE OURSELVES (BE SELFLESS) FOR OTHERS TODAY?



### YOYKIPPUR fulfilled by jeono

TODAY WE FOCUS ON HOW JESUS FULFILLS THE FEAST OF YOM KIPPUR

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME HOW JEWISH PEOPLE WERE SAVED DURING ANCIENT TIMES. THE ANSWER IS JUST LIKE PEOPLE ARE TODAY- BY GOD'S GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

THIS IS WHAT ROMANS 4:3 SAY ABOUT HOW ABRAHAM WAS SAVED:

WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

SALVATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND WILL ALWAYS BE BY GOD GRACE THROUGH FAITH AND YOM KIPPUR PLAYS A HUGE ROLE IN THIS FOR ANCIENT JEWS.

YOM KIPPUR WAS ESTABLISHED BY GOD TO BE NATIONAL DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE- MEANING THAT IS FOR EVERY JEW. IN ANCIENT DAYS, THE PEOPLE WOULD GATHER JUST OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE WALLS IN JERUSALEM ON THIS DAY.

THEN THE HIGH PRIEST WOULD SLAUGHTER A BULL AND ENTER THE MOST SACRED ROOM IN THE TEMPLE WITH SOME OF THE BULL'S BLOOD. THIS ROOM IS CALLED THE HOLY OF HOLIES AND ONLY THE HIGH PRIEST WAS ALLOWED TO ENTER AND ONLY ONCE-A-YEAR ON THIS VERY SACRED DAY. HE WOULD THEN SPRINKLE SOME OF THE BLOOD ON THE COVER OF THE ARK OF THE COVENT CALLED THE MERCY SEAT OF GOD- MEANING THE PLACE OF GOD'S GRACE.

WHEN THE HIGH PRIEST RETURNED, THERE WOULD BE A COLLECTIVE SIGH OF RELIEF THAT GOD HAS "SAVED" THEM FOR ANOTHER YEAR AND WILL ENTER THEIR NAMES INTO THE BOOK OF LIFE.

THEY WERE NOT SAVED BY ANYTHING THEY DID, BUT ONLY BY GOD'S GRACE THROUGH THEIR FAITH.

HOWEVER, THE WEAKNESS OF THIS ANCIENT SYSTEM WAS TWO-FOLD: 1) THE PEOPLE HAD TO KEEP COMING BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR, AND 2) THE BLOOD OF AN ANIMAL WAS ONLY A TEMPORARY SOLUTION FOR THE REMISSION OF SIN

THE WRITER OF HEBREWS ADDRESSES THESE TWO ISSUES IN THE PASSAGE BELOW:

#### HEBREWS 9:1-7

NOW THE FIRST COVENANT HAD REGULATIONS FOR WORSHIP AND ALSO AN EARTHLY SANCTUARY. A TABERNACLE WAS SET UP. IN ITS FIRST ROOM WERE THE LAMPSTAND AND THE TABLE WITH ITS CONSECRATED BREAD: THIS WAS CALLED THE HOLY PLACE. BEHIND THE SECOND CURTAIN WAS A ROOM CALLED THE MOST HOLY PLACE, WHICH HAD THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE AND THE GOLD-COVERED ARK OF THE COVENANT. THIS ARK CONTAINED THE GOLD JAR OF MANNA, AARON'S STAFF THAT HAD BUDDED, AND THE STONE TABLETS OF THE COVENANT. ABOVE THE ARK WERE THE CHERUBIM OF THE GLORY. OVERSHADOWING THE ATONEMENT COVER. BUT WE CANNOT DISCUSS THESE THINGS IN DETAIL NOW. WHEN EVERYTHING HAD BEEN ARRANGED LIKE THIS. THE PRIESTS ENTERED REGULARLY INTO THE OUTER ROOM TO CARRY ON THEIR MINISTRY. BUT ONLY THE HIGH PRIEST ENTERED THE INNER ROOM, AND THAT ONLY ONCE A YEAR. AND NEVER WITHOUT BLOOD. WHICH HE OFFERED FOR HIMSELF AND FOR THE SINS THE PEOPLE HAD COMMITTED IN IGNORANCE.

IN THE NEXT SECTION THE PASSAGE GOES ON TO EXPLAIN HOW JESUS FULFILLS YOM KIPPUR BY SHEDDING HIS OWN BLOOD; THUS TRANSFORMING SALVATION FROM A ONCE-A-YEAR EVENT FOR ALL JEWS INTO A ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL EVENT. I SUGGEST YOU READ THIS NEXT PASSAGE SLOWLY, ABSORBING IT SENTENCE BY SENTENCE AND WORD BY WORD, BECAUSE THIS IS THE PINNACLE OF GOD'S RESCUE PLAN FOR HUMANITY.

#### HEBREWS 9:11-15

BUT WHEN MESSIAH [JESUS] CAME AS HIGH PRIEST OF THE GOOD THINGS THAT ARE NOW ALREADY HERE, HE WENT THROUGH THE GREATER AND MORE PERFECT TABERNACLE THAT IS NOT MADE WITH HUMAN HANDS, THAT IS TO SAY, IS NOT A PART OF THIS CREATION. HE DID NOT ENTER BY MEANS OF THE BLOOD OF GOATS AND CALVES; BUT HE ENTERED THE MOST HOLY PLACE ONCE FOR ALL BY HIS OWN BLOOD, THUS OBTAINING ETERNAL REDEMPTION. THE BLOOD OF GOATS AND BULLS AND THE ASHES OF A HEIFER SPRINKLED ON THOSE WHO ARE CEREMONIALLY UNCLEAN SANCTIFY THEM SO THAT THEY ARE OUTWARDLY CLEAN. HOW MUCH MORE, THEN, WILL THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, WHO THROUGH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT OFFERED HIMSELF UNBLEMISHED TO GOD, CLEANSE OUR CONSCIENCES FROM ACTS THAT LEAD TO DEATH, SO THAT WE MAY SERVE THE LIVING GOD! FOR THIS REASON CHRIST IS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT, THAT THOSE WHO ARE CALLED MAY RECEIVE THE PROMISED ETERNAL INHERITANCE -- NOW THAT HE HAS DIED AS A RANSOM TO SET THEM FREE FROM THE SINS COMMITTED UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT.

I HOPE YOU CAN SEE THAT THE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FROM THIS ANCIENT SYSTEM [THE OLD COVENANT THROUGH THE BLOOD OF AN ANIMAL] TO THE NEW SYSTEM [THE NEW COVENANT THROUGH THE BLOOD OF MESSIAH] IS:

- THE LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE FROM EARTHLY TO HEAVENLY
- 2) THE SOURCE OF BLOOD FROM ANIMALS TO GOD
- 3) THE DURATION OF SALVATION FROM ONCE-A-YEAR FOR JEWS TO FOREVER FOR ALL OF HUMANITY

GOD WROTE THIS RESCUE PLAN FOR ALL OF HUMANITY INTO HIS STORY BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME. YOM KIPPUR WAS A TEMPORARY SYSTEM UNTIL THE TIME GOD WOULD ENTER OUR WORLD AND BECOME THE TRUE SACRIFICE THAT BRINGS REDEMPTION. HALLELUJAH!

THE ANNUAL FEAST CYCLE IS SO IMPORTANT FOR US COMPREHEND AND ESPECIALLY THIS MOST SACRED DAY CALLED YOM KIPPUR. BE BLESSED BECAUSE ONLY GOD COULD PULL OFF SOMETHING LIKE THIS OVER THE SPAN OF HISTORY.

### QUESTIONS for reflection

HOW DOES SEEING GOD'S PLAN ON A MACRO LEVEL ENCOURAGE YOUR FAITH?

DO YOU FEEL GRATEFUL THAT WE ARE NOT REQUIRED TO WORRY EACH YEAR ABOUT WHETHER OUR NAMES WILL BE ENTERED INTO THE BOOK OF LIFE? USE SOME WORDS TO DESCRIBE YOUR GRATEFULNESS.

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THE FINAL FEAST, SUKKOT, THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES, BEGINS ON OCTOBER 16. THIS IS A 7-DAY FEAST, AND CORNERSTONE WILL BE HOSTING A BIG SUKKOT PARTY CELEBRATION ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN HOW THE FORESHADOWING AND FULFILLMENT OF THIS AMAZING FEAST, MAKE SURE TO JOIN US FOR THIS EVENT. IT'S THE BEST PARTY OF THE YEAR AT CORNERSTONE.

