



A Summarization of Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah Traditions

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Yom Teruah or *Rosh HaShanah* is the first of the Fall (Autumn) appointed times, and it begins a very serious season of personal reflection and repentance for the individual, leading up to *Yom Kippur*. It occurs on the first of Tishri on the Hebrew calendar, and along with *Yom Kippur*, constitutes one of the most sacred times for the Jewish community. The instruction for this day appears twice in the Torah, in Leviticus 23:23-25 and Numbers 29:1-6:

"Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD"' (Leviticus 23:23-25, NASU).

"Now in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall also have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for blowing trumpets. You shall offer a burnt offering as a soothing aroma to the LORD: one bull, one ram, and

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seven male lambs one year old without defect; also their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs. *Offer* one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you, besides the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD" (Numbers 29:1-6, NASU).

There is a great deal of significance attached to this day in Jewish theology, as it is most often emphasized as a time when God looks down from Heaven and reconsiders where He stands with people. It is a time when His people are to rejoice and celebrate, remembering His goodness, but also begin a sober examination of their humanity, and consider faults and sins which must be rectified. Deuteronomy 11:12 explains, "the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year" (NASU), and this has been interpreted as meaning that at this time of year, when crops are gathered and the final harvest begins to come in, that the Lord considers where He stands with His own. The Talmud explains the severity of this concept in Jewish thought:

"Said R. Kruspedai said R. Yohanan, "Three books are opened [by God] on the New Year: one for the thoroughly wicked, one for the thoroughly righteous, and one for middling [people]. The thoroughly righteous immediately are inscribed and sealed for [continued] life. The thoroughly wicked immediately are inscribed and sealed for death. Middling [people] are left hanging from New Year until the Day of Atonement. If they [are found to have] merit, they are inscribed for life. If they [are found] not [to have] merit, they are inscribed for death'" (b.*Rosh HaShanah* 16b).¹

Of course, how God exactly considers or reckons the relationship which human beings have to Him, is something which we cannot fully know. What thoughts like this should convey to us as mortals, though, is that we are very limited, we need to be in awe of God's holiness, and as the Apostle Paul's words may remind us, "each one of us will give an

¹ *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary*. MS Windows XP. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005. CD-ROM.

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account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12, NASU). He would further say, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12, NASU).

The need for each of us to reflect on ourselves, and maintain an active and vibrant relationship with God, is a key theme of the teachings of Yeshua and the Apostles. While this is to be happening every day of the year through prayer, meditation, and study of the Bible—this is a particular season when we have **the opportunity to overhaul** where we might stand with our Heavenly Father and with one another. Each year at this time, religious and observant Jews are forced to consider where they stand with the Almighty. Even though as Believers we have experienced the salvation available in Yeshua, we still commit sin and errors, and we still need a yearly reexamination of where we are in our spiritual walk. This reexamination begins on *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*. We get to improve where we are with Him, and remember that He is the One who will provide for us in the coming year. A Talmudic sentiment asserts how, "A person's entire allotment [for the year] is determined [by God] between New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement" (b.*Beitzah* 16a).²

The Day of Blowing

The specific command which dominates *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah* is the command to blow the trumpet, or *shofar*, seen in Leviticus 23:23-24:

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the Israelites, saying: 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a sabbath, a commemoration with horn blast, a sacred convocation'''" (Leviticus 23:23-24, Alter).

The term used for "trumpet blasts" (NIV) or "loud blasts" (NJPS) is *teruah*, meaning "shout or blast of war, alarm, or joy," applied in various contexts, including: "*battle-cry of king*," "*blast for march*," and "*shout of joy with religious impulse*" (BDB).³ While various

² Ibid.

³ Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 929.

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emotions are involved in “blowing,” or even “blasting out,” to the Lord, the idea conveyed is that the *shofar* is not only blown for the people to recognize His holiness and awesomeness, but also so that others can be drawn to Him. As a consequence, Israel as God’s people will be shown His mercy and will experience spiritual fulfillment. A picture of the types of sounds which are to be blown on the Day of Trumpets is seen in Numbers 10:5-8:

“But when you blow an alarm, the camps that are pitched on the east side shall set out. When you blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are pitched on the south side shall set out; an alarm is to be blown for them to set out. When convening the assembly, however, you shall blow without sounding an alarm. The priestly sons of Aaron, moreover, shall blow the trumpets; and this shall be for you a perpetual statute throughout your generations” (Numbers 10:5-8, NASU).

There was some debate in post-Temple Judaism as to how these commands were to be followed, and specifically regarding the types of sounds which were to be blown. There was disagreement as to whether the sound of the blast was to be one of wailing or moaning, or one of quick sobs. So, a combination of blasts from the *shofar*, which depicts the various sounds a crying person would make, were chosen.⁴ The three sounds which are made today by the *shofar* in the traditional Synagogue service are *tekiah*—a long blast, *shevarim*—a moaning sound, and *teruah*—a crying sound. The order in which they are blown is

Tekiah, shevarim teruah, tekiah

Tekiah, shevarim, tekiah

Tekiah, teruah, tekiah

This is followed by a long great blast or *tekiah gedolah*. This series of blowings is usually offered only twice in the traditional Synagogue service, a testament to its great solemnity as a matter of God’s gift of

⁴ Ronald L. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 192.

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mercy.⁵ Most Messianic Jewish congregations follow very closely with the custom of blowing the *shofar* blasts only at these designated times, although it does vary. While in Jewish tradition it is customary to remember the sound of the *shofar* throughout the year, but not necessarily blow it, a number of Messianic congregations regularly sound the *shofar* as a part of their weekly *Shabbat* service and standard worship throughout the year.

In Jewish thought the sound of the *shofar* is to be one of awe and reverence, and not always rejoicing. A customary *Musaf* service, often held late in the afternoon on this day, is conducted so that members of the Jewish community can remember the sobs of their people, with as many as 100 *shofar* blasts offered.⁶ Furthermore, on this holy occasion it is held that blowing the *shofar* is only intended for the daytime,⁷ and will not be blown on the evening following.

The regulations concerning the *shofar* and its composition are very important to note, because of its significance for both members of the Jewish community and for today's Messianic people. The Mishnah specifies that a *shofar* can be made from the horns of a sheep, goat, or antelope, but not from a cow because of the incident of the Israelites worshipping the golden calf (m.*Rosh HaShanah* 3:2-3; also b.*Rosh HaShanah* 26a; Exodus 32). The ram's horn is preferred, so one can remember the substitution of a ram in place of the sacrifice of Isaac (b.*Rosh HaShanah* 16a; cf. Genesis 22:13). A curved ram's horn is especially preferred, as it is used to symbolize human beings' required submission to God, bending to His will (b.*Rosh HaShanah* 26b).

While sounding the *shofar* is the dominant theme of the Day of Trumpets, some particular reasons are often given in Jewish theology for why it is blown on this day. These reasons bear significance for

⁵ Louis Jacobs, "Rosh Ha-Shanah," in Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 14:309.

⁶ Eisenberg, 193.

For a review of this liturgy, consult J.H. Hertz, ed., *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, revised (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1960), pp 866-887; Jules Harlow, ed., *Maḥzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur* (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, 1992); Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotowitz, eds., *Complete ArtScroll Siddur, Nusach Ashkenaz* (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1984), pp 462-489; Nosson Scherman, ed., et. al., *Seif Edition of the ArtScroll Transliterated Siddur: Sabbath and Festival* (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1998), pp 433-497.

⁷ Eisenberg, 194.

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Messianic people as well, especially as we understand how the themes of the Tanach are connected to the Apostolic Writings, and most especially the future salvation work of Messiah Yeshua:

- the *shofar* announces the beginning of a period of repentance
- the *shofar* reminds Israel of the warnings of the Prophets
- the *shofar* reminds Israel of the battle alarms which accompanied the fall of the Temple
- the *shofar* reminds Israel to be in fear of God: "When the *shofar* is blown in the city, don't the people tremble?" (Amos 3:6, CJSB)
- the *shofar* reminds Israel of the future summoning to the Day of Judgment (Zephaniah 1:16)
- the *shofar* reminds Israel how its blast will call the scattered remnants of the people to return to the Holy Land in the Messianic Age (Isaiah 27:13).
- the *shofar* reminds Israel of the future resurrection of the dead.⁸

These are all sobering themes which Messianic people need to be reminded of as we contemplate the varied themes present on *Rosh HaShanah*. Many in the Messianic community connect the theme of blowing the trumpet to the return of Yeshua the Messiah, as seen in some critical passages:

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky [Isaiah 13:10; Ezekiel 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15], and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER [Zechariah 12:10, 14; Daniel 7:13-14] His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other" (Matthew 24:29-31, NASU).

⁸ Cf. Eisenberg, pp 195-196.

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“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Messiah will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, NASU).

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52, NASU).

While the gathering of the holy ones or saints to Yeshua is going to be a wonderful event, it is also quite serious. It will involve the resurrection and transformation of the bodies of those who have died in the faith, and the transformation of living Believers at this time. But at the same time, Yeshua’s gathering of the holy ones is a *post-tribulational* event; it occurs after a great deal of suffering and pain have been experienced in the world. It occurs only after terrible catastrophes and disasters have taken place, billions of people have died, and the faithful have endured through God’s judgment on Earth via His Divine protection. The Believers living through this time will have experienced any number of destinies, including being protected by the Lord, but also including persecution and martyrdom. When Yeshua finally appears in the clouds, He can then come to claim the Earth as His own:

“Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever’” (Revelation 11:15, NASU).

The future return of Yeshua is something for Messianic people to seriously consider on the day of *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah*, but it is also something which is to make us be very reverent of who we are in the eyes of a holy and righteous God. While this is to be a time when we hear the blowing of the *shofar*—is it a time to blow the *shofar* and “party”? Not at all. It is a time for God’s people to hear the blast of the

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trumpet, so that they might be called to gather and consider the Lord's place in their lives. While we are to rejoice in the Lord and enjoy His presence, **we are also to be very serious**. The Jewish community takes this time very seriously, as many wish to reconcile any differences they have with God and with others. How much more important is it for us as Believers, if we seriously contemplate the future return of the Messiah and God's judgment on Earth?

The Head of the Year

In the Jewish community the holiday which is specified by the Torah as being called *Yom Teruah* (Numbers 29:1) is called *Rosh HaShanah* or the Head of the Year. The Pentateuch actually counts the months of the year beginning with the month of Aviv/Nisan (Exodus 13:4), or the month of Passover, and what is commonly called *Rosh HaShanah* in Judaism actually begins in the seventh month, Tishri. The reason for the designation of this day as *Rosh HaShanah* can only be understood by an examination of history, and the varied Jewish opinions on this subject.

The Mishnah tractate *Rosh HaShanah* actually lists four different new years, with *Yom Teruah* being listed as one of them:

"There are four new years: the first day of Nisan is the new year for kings and festivals; the first day of Elul is the new year for tithing cattle. **R. Eleazar and R. Simeon say, 'It is on the first day of Tishre.'** **The first day of Tishre is the new year for the reckoning of years, for Sabbatical years, and for Jubilees, for planting [trees] and for vegetables;** the first day of Shebat is the new year for trees, in accord with the opinion of the House of Shammai. The House of Hillel say, 'On the fifteenth day of that month [is the new year for trees]'" (m.*Rosh HaShanah* 1:1).⁹

Following these opinions, the Jewish community of the late Biblical period began recognizing the first of Tishri as their civil new year.¹⁰ Concurrent with this point of view was the opinion that the world was created on the first of Tishri:

⁹ Jacob Neusner, trans., *The Mishnah: A New Translation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 299.

¹⁰ Eisenberg, 185.

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"Said Rab Samuel bar Isaac, 'Nowadays, on whose [authority] do we pray [on New Year]: "Today is the beginning of your works, the commemoration of the first day"? On whose [authority]? On [the authority of] Eliezer, who said, "In Tishré, the world was created"' (b. *Rosh HaShanah* 27a).¹¹

The logic behind considering this day *Rosh HaShanah*, is that since the world is going to be judged at this time and that it will usher in the Messianic Age, it is only logical to assume that the world was created at this time as well, and that God has brought and will bring His Creation full circle. A secondary reason sometimes offered is that the Hebrew word *beresheet* (*b'reishit*), "in the beginning" (Genesis 1:1), can be rearranged to spell *alef b'Tishrei* or the First of Tishri.¹² The overwhelming reason which must be considered, is the awe and holiness attached to this day, and referring to it as the Head of the Year was likely designed to enhance such holiness.

For those of us in the Messianic community, we are forced to observe how the Apostolic Scriptures are totally mute on the subject of how Yeshua the Messiah and His Apostles observed this holiday. While a number of contemporary Christians might take this silence as evidence meaning that the Apostles no longer observed the Fall (Autumn) festivals, Jewish studies in the New Testament are forcing many theologians to admit that they did continue to observe the appointed times, and this would logically include the Fall high holidays. The issue for today's Messianic people is *how* the Apostles observed these festivals. If there is no direct, extant record about how they remembered the Fall high holidays, then we may have to make some assumptions from the contemporary history of Second Temple Judaism. And, we may also have to make some extrapolations and value judgements as to what we think they would likely do were they living among, or in association with, the Twentieth/Twenty-First Century Jewish community.

Many in the independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots movement are seen to claim that the Apostles did not keep "*Rosh HaShanah*," as the Pentateuch itself only says that the "new year" begins in the Spring,

¹¹ *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary.*

¹² Eisenberg, 187.

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and they must have followed the Torah in its strict written sense. One's answer to how to properly handle this holiday is going to be found in the extant literature of Second Temple Judaism, and the evidence which points to what the larger Jewish community was doing. Consider the fact that the Apostle Paul attested before the Sanhedrin, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today. . . I have committed **no offense either against the Law of the Jews** or against the temple or against Caesar" (Acts 22:3; 25:8, NASU). Paul's reference to Rabban Gamaliel and "the Jewish law" (HCSB) or *ton nomon tōn Ioudaiōn*, provides some important clues that he followed a wide degree of the orthopraxy delivered by the Pharisaic School of Hillel, and that he followed the mainline Jewish customs of his time.

Rabban Gamaliel is a major figure in First Century Judaism, and notably in the Mishnah tractate *Rosh HaShanah*.¹³ It summarizes the tradition laid down by the Pharisees in Second Temple times regarding how the New Moon was to be determined, specifically how

"A picture of the shapes of the moon did Rabban Gamaliel have on a tablet and on the wall of his upper room, which he would show ordinary folk, saying, 'Did you see it like this or that?'" (m.*Rosh HaShanah* 2:8ff; cf. 3:1).¹⁴

Following the destruction of the Second Temple, a pre-calculated system of determining the months was developed to ensure unity among the scattered Jewish people, forming the basis of the current Jewish calendar, something which today is followed by all the major branches of Judaism, and the wide majority of the Messianic Jewish movement. Recall how Paul's defense was, "I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews" (NLT), which would have included the calendar he followed for the appointed times. If the Apostle Paul were living today, would he not similarly follow the religious calendar of mainline Judaism, not offending his Jewish kinsfolk on such an issue which bound the wider Synagogue together? Today's Messianic people should emulate such an example, and not

¹³ Arnost Zvi Ehrman, "Rosh Ha-Shanah (tal. tract.)," in *EJ*, 14:311.

¹⁴ Neusner, *Mishnah*, 302.

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only observe *Rosh HaShanah* with the Jewish community—but all of the appointed times on the same dates as the mainline Synagogue.

Rosh HaShanah to Jews all over the world is the beginning of the Civil New Year, and it is not celebrated like the January 1 New Year on the Roman calendar with parties, drinking, and frivolity. It is to be a time of blowing the *shofar*, turning to God, and considering where one stands with Him. These are all themes which Believers in Yeshua need to seriously consider. We need to continually reevaluate where we stand before the Almighty. We need to shed ourselves of sinful attitudes and behaviors, so that we might be rededicated to His service for the next year. We need to remember the justice of our God and how He is going to judge the world, calling His people to attention.

Customs and Traditional Foods

There are some very compelling traditions which are followed during this season, most notably the customary greetings, *l'shanah tovah*, "to/for a good year," and "May you be inscribed in the Book of Life." Those who gather to honor the Lord in corporate worship and prayer say things like this, so that people will focus on doing good deeds for the year ahead.

A ceremony which is practiced by many Jews, on the first day of *Rosh HaShanah* for those in the Diaspora, is *Tashlikh*.¹⁵ It is particularly observed by those of Ashkenazic extraction, as it was developed in Medieval Europe. Jews would throw crumbs or small pieces of bread into a body of water to symbolically "cast away" their sins. The name *Tashlikh* is derived from the Hebrew in Micah 7:19, which says God "will cast [Heb. verb *shalak*] all their sins into the depths of the sea" (NASU). It is preferred that the pieces of bread are thrown into a body of water with fish, as fish never close their eyes, a reminder of how God is always watching and witnessing the activities of people.¹⁶ An interesting Scriptural reason for this is given from Ecclesiastes 9:12:

¹⁵ For a review of its liturgy, consult Hertz, *Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, pp 888-889; Scherman, *ArtScroll Siddur Ashkenaz*, pp 770-771.

¹⁶ Eisenberg, 204.

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“Moreover, man does not know his time: like fish caught in a treacherous net and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them” (Ecclesiastes 9:12, NASU).

The observation which is made is that fish who see “sins” cast into the water during *Tashlikh* cannot speak and thus cannot gossip about them. So, those who cast off sins are likewise to not talk about them once they are remitted.

Interesting derivations of the *Tashlikh* ceremony include people actually jumping into bodies of water themselves, swimming like fish, or people lighting aflame small rafts in water, to represent their sins not only floating away, but also being burned up.¹⁷ It is notable that today the observation of *Tashlikh* is principally limited to those in Orthodox Judaism, and Conservative and Reform Jews do not often practice it. Likewise, there are only a handful of Messianic Jews who tend to observe this custom.

What is consistent with all major branches of Judaism, and likewise with people in today’s Messianic community, is the focus on somber liturgies dealing with the holiness of God, His kingship, His righteousness, and our collective mortal state. Common prayers to hear on *Rosh HaShanah* include: *Avinu Malkeinu* (Our Father, Our King), where cries are issued for God to show His mercy; *Hineini* (Here I stand), where the sins and misdeeds of the previous year are recalled; *Malchuyot*, which expresses the universal sovereignty of God and His future reign over the whole world; and the *Zichronot* prayers which appeal to God’s justice and Him rightly redeeming Israel and the Earth from its suffering.¹⁸ Also common is the *Kaddish*, or praise to God which is often canted in remembrance of deceased loved ones.¹⁹

Rosh HaShanah is not a day of fasting, and there are some traditional foods which are eaten at this time to recall the sweetness of

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ For a summary of the different *Rosh HaShanah* liturgies, consult Hertz, *Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, pp 842-889; Scherman, *ArtScroll Siddur Ashkenaz*, pp 762-771.

¹⁹ For a review of the *Kaddish* liturgy, consult Hertz, *Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, pp 398-399; Jules Harlow, ed., *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* (New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 2007), pp 184-185; Scherman, *ArtScroll Siddur Ashkenaz*, pp 1048-1050.

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God toward His people. Most commonly eaten are pieces of *challah* bread and sliced apples dipped in honey. The traditional prayer *she-techadesh aleinu shanah tovah u'metukah*, "May it be Your will O Lord our God and God of our fathers, to renew unto us a good and sweet year," is recited after eating. The *challah* which is baked at this time is customarily round, recalling the cyclical nature of life.²⁰ Some *challahs* are decorated in the form of a ladder to recall the story of Jacob's dream (Genesis 28:10-22), and how all humans are undoubtedly connected to the Divine in Heaven.

As *Rosh HaShanah* ends, a ten-day period, known either as the Ten Days of Awe or Ten Days of Repentance, begins. This ten-day period ends at *Yom Kippur* or the Day of Atonement, the most holy of all of the appointed times. In the Jewish community, this is a specific time for people to encounter others and finish any unresolved conflicts. Some Jews will even visit cemeteries and visit the graves of their deceased loved ones, using it as a time to reflect on their own mortality and where they stand with God.²¹ For Believers in Yeshua, this too can be an important time of reflection when we forgive others for wrongs done to us, and ask for forgiveness for sins which we have committed. We have a great opportunity every year to improve upon our relationship with the Lord and be sanctified at this season as we are conformed more and more into the image of Yeshua (Romans 8:29). It is a time when we can consider what it means to truly be His representatives in this fallen, sinful world—and *how all need salvation*.

A Call to Repentance

The overwhelming theme which one is confronted with on *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah* is that the God of Israel calls His people to holiness. God wants His people to assemble in corporate worship and to rejoice, but their rejoicing must be tempered not with enthusiasm, but rather solemnity. As you remember the Feast of Trumpets, this is surely a time to go before the Lord in worship, but it also needs to be a time when each of us considers who He is as our Supreme Creator. Fortunately, God does not just call His people to *Yom Kippur* or the Day of Atonement without some prior preparation. He knows that as

²⁰ Eisenberg, 189.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 205.

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human beings, we cannot go from our daily routines immediately to a time of total concentration on Him and our mortality and sin. **The transitional period toward *Yom Kippur* begins now.**

As you assemble with your Messianic congregation or fellowship, your family, or even just you and God, be urged to consider the supreme concept of the Lord being the King of the Universe. This is something to certainly rejoice about, but is also something which we as humans must be in awe of. The *shofar* blast calls God's people to the severe scene of Mount Sinai in fire and smoke—but for us as Believers it also calls us to consider Mount Zion and the Heavenly Jerusalem, where the angels, and the redeemed who have passed on before us, *presently worship* the Lord. This is a scene which should cause each of us to praise God for His mercy toward us, and also make us be continually thankful that He has indeed sent His Son:

“For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, ‘IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED’ [Exodus 19:12]. And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, ‘I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling’ [Deuteronomy 9:19]. But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and [congregation] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect, and to Yeshua, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel” (Hebrews 12:18-24, NASU).