



Yom Kippur, Kol Nidre

September 15, 2021

Yom Kippur is all about Yeshua. Ultimately, it will be about every person on earth, but right now, it is all about the Jewish people. Yeshua is ADONAI's ultimate plan of atonement for Israel, the Jews and *Yom Kippur* is a picture of it. His role in ADONAI's plan for His chosen people and for the people of all nations has been a reality since before the foundation of the universe. It was a plan in G-d's mind before He created anything. At that time, He knew that Abraham would be faithful and that one of his descendants, Yeshua, would become the ultimate *Yom Kippur* sacrifice. And, He is drawing everyone who does not know Him, Jew and Gentile, by His Ruach, His Spirit. In John 1 it says: *1 In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning.* (John 1:1-2 TLV). G-d's plan for *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, which was given to Moses at Sinai was also set before the foundation of the universe. It was not a flawed plan as some say, but a system designed by our Creator for that time. It is impossible for anything which He does to be flawed. It was the plan which He had for Israel and the nations in those days. Even when the First Covenant was initiated at Sinai, ADONAI had already set the time that animal sacrifice for atonement would end. And the Levitical priesthood and animal sacrifices in the Temple ended at the exact time set by ADONAI before He ever created anything. The plan of *Yom Kippur* in the Book of Leviticus was the framework for ADONAI's ultimate plan for bringing all of the people whom He created into fellowship with Him and into His family. And that "ultimate plan" is and always has been, by and through His Son Yeshua as our eternal sacrifice.

In the first century, Jewish understanding was focused on group atonement as was provided at *Yom Kippur*. In those years, there was great division between Israel's people. Having returned from Babylon some 500 years earlier, the people had become a diverse group. The *kohanim*, the priests, were dominated by the Sadducees, a sect which had degenerated into a humanistic faction that did not believe in the afterlife and curried favor with the occupying Romans. The Pharisees as a group did believe in the afterlife, and even though there were righteous Pharisees, there was hypocrisy and greed among many of them. The Essenes were a minor group which rejected Temple worship, primarily because of the hypocrisy of the priests. The Zealots were a humanistic sect which incited the people to rebel against Rome. And, then there were the ordinary people, those like sheep without a shepherd. These were the people of Yeshua's days on earth. This was the world that ADONAI sent His Son into.

Yeshua's twelve disciples were not trained in *Torah* and were referred to in that day as *am ha'aretz*, people of the land, the common uneducated and ordinary folk. Nevertheless, they learned quickly and guided by Yeshua and the *Ruach*, were very effective teachers and evangelists. *Sha'ul* was different. He never physically met Yeshua. A very zealous Pharisee and also a very learned one, he had studied *Torah* at the feet of the great Jewish rabbi, Gamaliel. When Yeshua died on the stake *Sha'ul* probably was not even aware that it had

happened and only learned about Yeshua some years later when the *kohanim* and Pharisees began to call His disciples trouble makers. Theologians place the timing of the stoning of Stephen at approximately 36 CE, about six years after Yeshua died. *Sha'ul* was there as a young man. He probably had his Damascus road experience with Yeshua about a year later in 37 CE. He was still a young leader within the sect of the Pharisees, but was moving up because of his desire to track down and persecute Yeshua's followers, a movement which he considered heretical. He was a sold out Pharisee and believed that by doing this, he was doing ADONAI's will.

That he had trained under Gamaliel was to become very important in his life as a *shaliach*, an emissary of Yeshua. As a *Torah* scholar, he fully understood ADONAI's plan of atonement under the Covenant at Sinai. That was invaluable in his presentation of the *b'sorah*, the good news of Yeshua, both in person and in his letters. Once he had his encounter with Yeshua, his focus changed from group salvation to individual salvation. And, while *Sha'ul* continued to uphold Temple worship as ADONAI's will as long as the Temple stood, he was now completely sold out on proclaiming that Yeshua's death had taken the place of *Yom Kippur*. Incidentally, that is what we are doing as Messianic followers of Yeshua today. We know that trusting in Yeshua is our only means of salvation, but we continue to observe *Yom Kippur* as a commanded festival for two reasons. We observe it as a rehearsal for Yeshua's future fulfillment as our righteous judge when He returns, and now, as a testimony to our traditional Jewish brothers and sisters who have not yet trusted Him.

Sha'ul's understanding of *Torah* was the key to explaining righteousness in his letters. Yeshua gave him a mission and he focused on explaining salvation in a way that both Jew and Gentile of that day could understand. It's a little harder today because so many Bibles do not include the Hebraic background of the writings of Yeshua's *talmidim*. And today, some in Yeshua's body have turned against *Sha'ul*, saying that he teaches a different gospel. The reason for their not understanding what he teaches is that *Sha'ul* teaches a Jewish gospel, a gospel which can only be understood fully by knowing its background in the Scriptures. He said to Timothy: 16 "All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness,"... (2Timothy 3:16 TLV). The Greek word from which "Scripture" is translated is *graphé* (graf-ay') meaning "a writing or scripture." We understand the *p'shat*, the plain meaning of *Sha'ul's* word *graphe'* to mean the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible. It was the only Scripture in *Sha'ul's* day. We certainly understand "all Scripture" today to include *Sha'ul's* writings and the writings of Yeshua's other disciples. Today, it's Genesis to Revelation, but what *Sha'ul* wrote in his letters was based only upon the Hebrew *Tanakh* and the Septuagint, the Greek language *Tanakh*. He quoted both of them liberally to support his conclusions.

Let's break down the elements of 2Timothy 3:16. The TLV used the words teaching, reproof, restoration and training to explain the purpose of Scripture. Both Latin and Greek were the official languages of the Roman Empire. *Sha'ul* spoke Greek as well as Hebrew and Aramaic and probably at least some Latin. But, Greek was the most important and necessary language in order to be able to converse throughout the Roman Empire. The four Greek words he used in this verse were: *didaskalia* (did-as-kal-ee'-ah), *elegchos* (el'-eng-khos), *epanorthósis* (ep-an-or'-tho-sis) and *paideia* (pahee-di'-ah). Let's look at each one.

The TLV has translated *didaskalia* (did-as-kal-ee'-ah) as teaching. Teaching in the TLV or instruction in some Bibles is correct usage and lines up with our understanding of *Torah* as being "teaching and instruction" for right living under ADONAI's rule. This teaching is

ADONAI's teaching and we understand it best through those who wrote it, Jewish men. They wrote in Jewish ways and with nuances which are not evident to a casual reader. To rightly divide ADONAI's Word, we must seek the best understanding and it comes best from Hebraic Bibles like the TLV and CJB with our additional word study. We must not just accept Scripture blindly, but be Berean and search the Scriptures to see if these things are true. The TLV translated *elegchos* (el'-eng-khos) as reproof. *Elegchos* also means "a proof." Maybe we could best understand it as ADONAI proving to us our errors and showing us that they are sin. In these first two words, "all Scripture" has already taught us the truth and convicted us of our errors.

The TLV translated *epanorthósis* (ep-an-or'-tho-sis) as restoration. A good way to understand this word is as restoring not only our thinking, but our actions. Human ideas about what ADONAI requires can be far from the truth. Once we have been taught the truth and convicted of our errors, we must now walk correctly in ADONAI's Word. Finally, the TLV translates *paideia* (pahee-di'-ah) as training in righteousness. This could be understood as education with discipline. *Sha'ul* has also described *Torah* as our schoolmaster. It shows us what we are "to do" and what "not to do." It is education with teeth. The writer of Hebrews said: 5 "Have you forgotten the warning addressed to you as sons? *My son, do not take lightly the discipline of Adonai or lose heart when you are corrected by Him, 6 because Adonai disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts.*" (Hebrews 12:5-6 TLV). Because we are ADONAI's sons and daughters, we are corrected by Him. Don't forget that there is also correction by spiritual leaders if you are willing to receive it. We exhort everyone including ourselves.

The four directive words of 2Timothy 3:16 explain that the *Tanakh* contains all the elements necessary for a person to become a disciple of Yeshua. All Scripture is God-breathed and 1) teaches the truth about right living and points us to Yeshua. All Scripture 2) teaches us that we are sinners and that repentance is necessary. All Scripture 3) sets us straight and corrects our errors in living before ADONAI. Finally, all Scripture 4) provides us the training we need to mature as Yeshua's disciples and adds the necessary discipline. Today, many never realize that all of Yeshua's disciples and all of the early believers came to salvation through the words of the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible, and the witness of *Ruach HaKodesh*, the Holy Spirit. But, not only that, that was enough to cause them to live their lives as faithful disciples, suffering persecution and death for their faithfulness to Yeshua.

Sha'ul knew that the *Tanakh* contained everything necessary for the follower of Yeshua. He was probably thinking along these lines when he wrote Romans 10:4. He began chapter 10 by saying to the congregation at Rome that "his deepest desire for Israel was "for their salvation." He explained to them that "Israel's way of making people righteous" was incorrect and was based on their own understanding and not on ADONAI's. Then he said: 4 "For Messiah is the goal of the Torah as a means to righteousness for everyone who keeps trusting." (Romans 10:4 TLV). What he meant by this was that the *Torah*, the five books of Moses, and the rest of the *Tanakh* as well, has as its goal the bringing of everyone into a righteous relationship with ADONAI. This means that the purpose of the *Torah* in our Bibles is to point us to the Messiah Yeshua who is pictured throughout these Scriptures. Any person who asks for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and reads *Torah* looking for Yeshua, will find Him.

One of the places that we see Him is in the Day of *Yom Kippur*. He is the goat that was slain for Israel's sins and also the scapegoat sent into the wilderness to die. To the congregation in Rome, *Sha'ul* wrote that Judaism's way of salvation in that day was not

correct. Things continued to go on as before. The High Priest was sacrificing the *Yom Kippur* goat each year, but it had no spiritual effect. The authority and spiritual effectiveness was removed from the Levitical priests by ADONAI in the year 30 when Yeshua died on the stake. Daniel showed us this: 27 “Then he will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.” (Daniel 9:27a TLV). Yeshua is the “He” in this verse. He declared the truth of the Covenant to Israel each day of the last four days of His life as the lamb selected to be slain. In the middle of the week, a Wednesday, He ended the effectiveness of animal sacrifice by dying on the stake. His body and blood cut the covenant for the New Covenant and ended the effectiveness of the Levitical system of sacrifices given under the Covenant at Sinai. *Sha’ul* made it clear to the Roman congregation that they were to come to Yeshua by faith and not by law-keeping. He said: 9 “For if you confess with your mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9 (TLV). Yeshua is the goal of the *Torah*. He is the *telos*, the end goal, that those who see Him there and trust Him will obtain righteousness. He did not come to end *Torah*, but through *Torah* to be salvation for those who trust in Him.

We commemorate *Yom Kippur* today as a congregation of Messianic Jews and non-Jews. It is a shadow of a future *Yom Kippur* during which Yeshua as our Righteous Judge, will sit on His judgment seat and either affirm as His, or condemn as not His, every person who has ever lived. We are not here today because we are fearful but because we have the hope of salvation by having trusted in Yeshua’s sacrificial death and entered into the New Covenant provided by His shed blood. But we are also here as witnesses to those who don’t yet know Yeshua and to testify to them that they can enter into His blood covenant and have assurance that the future judgment day of *Yom Kippur* should hold no fear for them.

Jews have faced tremendous persecution throughout the ages, not because they deserved it, but because of the actions of the Adversary, *HaSatan*. He has used every kind of devious plan to persecute those whom ADONAI has called to be priests to the nations. From having the “black death” blamed on them to the Holocaust, the Jews have continued to be *HaSatan*’s target through the ages. “Blood Libel” is a vicious lie that is still being perpetrated today, that Jews kill Christian children and use their blood to carry out religious rituals. That intelligent people can believe this lie and all the others can only be explained by hate, hate originated by the “father of lies.”

Our *kol nidre* service has always been very meaningful to us. Its origin may have been as early as the 7th century in Spain. Because of the persecutions and the forcing of vows, the Jews used this service as a means of undoing things forced upon them. We join all Judaism tonight in this service to show our solidarity as family members. And, as family members, we pray for the salvation of “all Israel” through Yeshua their *Mashiach*.

Tomorrow, we will continue the theme of this message by revealing Yeshua in the *Torah* and specifically in *Yom Kippur*. One traditional *Yom Kippur* greeting is *gmar chatima tovah*, meaning “a good final sealing.” The best final sealing that anyone could have would be “sealed by Yeshua,” a sealing for eternity. Wishing you a meaningful *Yom Kippur* and *shana tovah*, a good year!