



PRESIDENT'S prayer letter

SEPTEMBER 2020

Dear friend in the Messiah,

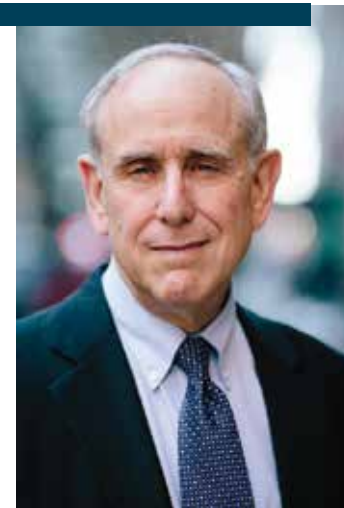
I must admit that I am pretty tired of the pandemic! I cannot wait until it is *officially* over. I am praying for the Lord, our ultimate Healer, to work in the minds of brilliant scientists to come up with a vaccine and medications to counter the devastating impact of this disease that has killed so many people!

However, my hope is not in epidemiologists, though I pray for them and respect their hard work to find a cure. **My hope is in the Lord.**

We are social and spiritual creatures—especially as followers of Jesus—who love being with family and friends. We love sweet fellowship, praying as a community, worshiping and singing together, and hearing God's Word unmediated by a screen.

All of us continue to mourn for what we have lost during the pandemic: schools, jobs, businesses, and, most significantly, loved ones who have suffered from the virus. I am grateful for our Savior's words of promise, "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted*" (Matthew 5:4). Therefore, we will continue to seek comfort from the Lord and His unchanging Word.

Psalms 121 has greatly encouraged me: "*I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth*" (Psalm 121:1–2). In Him, we find our help, our hope, and joy for living!



Dr. Mitch Glaser
PRESIDENT

ROSH HASHANAH AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:
LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE AND JEWISH TRADITION

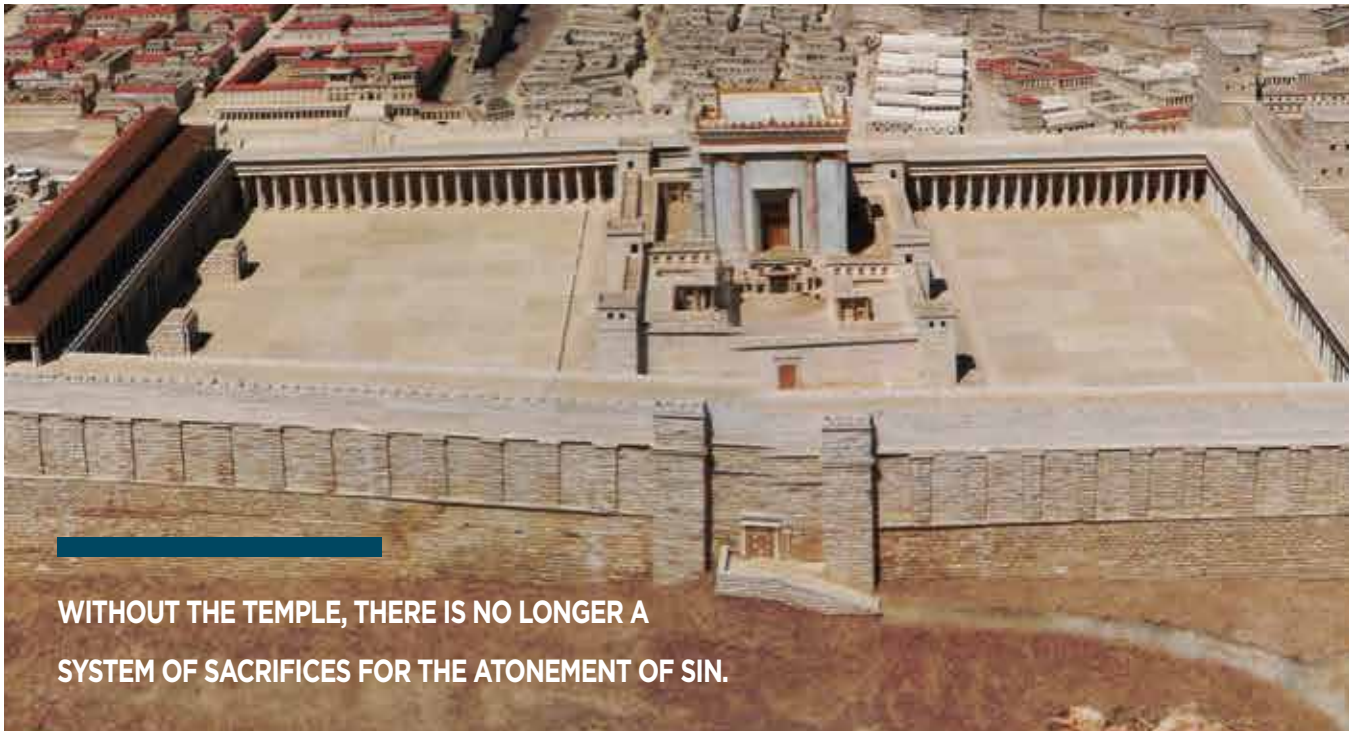
LESSONS FOR CHRISTIANS FROM THE JEWISH HIGH HOLIDAYS

We are about to celebrate the Jewish New Year, which is called Rosh Hashanah. In Hebrew, Rosh Hashanah literally means "the head of the year." There are ten days between the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) according to the holy days calendar outlined in Leviticus 23:23–27. In Jewish tradition, these ten days are called the Ten Days of Repentance. Our Jewish sages tell us that we have ten days



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WITHOUT THE TEMPLE, THERE IS NO LONGER A
SYSTEM OF SACRIFICES FOR THE ATONEMENT OF SIN.

to make things right between ourselves and God and between ourselves and our fellow man.

As followers of Jesus, we do not believe we are able to earn God's forgiveness—He provides salvation and forgiveness graciously and freely (Ephesians 2:8–9). Our sin always requires payment, and the Day of Atonement graphically illustrates this. The Scriptures depict the Levitical priests offering blood sacrifices at the Temple altar for sinful humanity throughout the centuries until the Temple was destroyed.

As Moses explained, *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement”* (Leviticus 17:11).

Yet, we know that these offerings pointed to Jesus, the perfect sacrifice for our sins. As the author of Hebrews wrote, *“He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”* (Hebrew 9:26).

This atonement, achieved through the Messiah's once-for-all death, was effective for all sins, for all time, and

ATONEMENT, ACHIEVED THROUGH THE
MESSIAH'S DEATH, WAS EFFECTIVE FOR ALL
SINS, FOR ALL TIME, AND FOR ALL PEOPLE.

for all people. Unfortunately, most of my Jewish friends and family do not understand this. Jewish people today are generally unfamiliar with the Temple's sacrificial system, which ended when the Romans destroyed this magnificent house of worship in AD 70.

Sacrifice for sin is now only a corporate historical Jewish memory. Modern Jews now only read about the Temple sacrifices in the Bible or Jewish literature and visit the Western Wall in Jerusalem, which was an outer wall of the Temple mount that still stands and reminds us of what once was!

Most Jewish people do not think about sin or atonement in the same way Christians do. Contemporary Judaism adjusted to the destruction of the Temple and teaches that the performance of good deeds is a substitute for the sacrifices of animals. Modern Judaism teaches that one's name is written in the Book of Life when good deeds outweigh wicked deeds.

Yet, Jewish tradition teaches that the Temple will be rebuilt one day and that sacrifices will be restored. However, most Jewish people do not know about this future rebuilding of the Temple as it is believed by only the most ultra-religious within the Jewish community.

In fact, the Jewish people to whom I am the closest seem to live as agnostics or even atheists most of the year. *Yet, surprisingly, many open their hearts to God and even yearn for forgiveness of sin during the high*

holidays. Maybe this is why the Day of Atonement is the most well-attended Jewish service of the year!

All human beings appear to have a deep inner longing for forgiveness; to forgive others and to be forgiven—even to forgive ourselves.

THE VALUE OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS FOR ALL

As a Messianic Jew, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur cause me to think about my relationship to God more profoundly. They remind me that atonement for sin came at a high price—Jesus’ death on the cross. God’s love and grace move me profoundly during the holidays as I reflect upon my sin and the forgiveness I have received through Jesus the Messiah. My heart cries out in joy with the Apostle Paul: *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 8:1).

Classical Judaism, on the other hand, teaches that humanity sins, yet it is not inherently sinful. Contemporary Jewish faith holds that we are free to choose righteousness or sin, and when we fail, atonement via repentance is always possible! Therefore, God’s offer of His grace, mercy, and forgiveness is received based upon our remorse and willingness to change.

When I found Jesus as my Savior, I became convinced of the opposite as I have broken with Jewish teaching on this topic because of what the Bible says (Romans 3:23) and because I know that I am sinful by nature. Yet, I do believe that regular personal

repentance is a key to spiritual transformation. This is why I observe the high holidays. They are times for spiritual reflection, which are wonderfully enriching and essential for spiritual growth.

THREE ONLINE HOLIDAYS SERVICES:
SEPTEMBER 18, 27, AND OCTOBER 2, 2020.

THE HIGH HOLIDAYS AND YOU

Your Mission to the Jewish People will observe the Jewish high holidays beginning with Rosh Hashanah, then Yom Kippur, and finally, the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). **We have planned three online services on September 18, 27, and October 2, 2020. You will receive more information about them in the days to come.**

I hope you will join us and invite your friends—especially your Jewish friends who do not know the Lord and might not be able to attend synagogue services in person because of the pandemic.

It is one thing to tell a Jewish person they can be Jewish and believe in Jesus. It is quite another to sit next to them during a Messianic Jewish high holiday service listening to the blowing of the shofar, the chanting of familiar prayers, and hearing a Jesus-centered holiday message.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for your faithful prayers and financial support during this season. I expect our September services, our online ministries, and Facebook ads in Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States will cost close to \$100,000.

Your gift of support today will enable us to reach out more intensively during the holiday season when Jewish people are more open to the gospel than during any other time of the year.

Please help us reach God's chosen people with the gospel message. Jesus is the hope of our salvation and our atonement, and we want our Jewish friends and family to put their hope and faith in Him.

ROSH HASHANAH AND HOPE

I would like to add one closing thought about hope—one of my favorite topics these days. The Jewish holidays bring us hope as each festival looks forward to our bright future in relationship to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As followers of Yeshua, we know this world will one day fade away, as the trumpet will sound and those who believe will rise to a new and everlasting life.

Rabbi Saul—the Apostle Paul—wrote:

“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 Christ 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).

We have a great hope, brothers and sisters! Our hope is a person—Jesus, who died for our sins once and for all and rose from the grave conquering death. He is the resurrection and our life!

Thank you again for your faithfulness and generosity.

Your brother,



Mitch

P.S. For a \$100 gift or more, I will send you a tabletop shofar as a thank you and reminder of the Lord's coming. It will give you many opportunities to share the great hope we have with friends and families!



ONLINE HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

For more information or to register for these ONLINE services, visit chosenpeople.com/higholidays.



Rosh Hashanah

Friday, September 18, 2020 at 4:00 pm and again at 7:00 pm.

Yom Kippur

Sunday, September 27, 2020, at 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

Sukkot

Friday, October 2, 2020, at 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm.



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