

Audio Transcript of Sermon  
October 9, 2019  
The Day of Atonement given by Tom Laign

Hello, and thank you for joining us today on this Christian Day of Atonement. Today is Wednesday, October 9, 2019. My name is Tom Laign and I'm coming to you today from El Paso, Texas. We'll be looking at the history of the Day of Atonement, how it was observed in the Old Testament. We'll be looking at teachings from Jesus and some of the prophets for teachings about fasting. And we'll also be taking a look at what the Day of Atonement is designed to foretell. We'll find out it is one of the Holy Days that gives a big clue as to what is going to happen for Satan the devil.

So, let's begin by taking a look at Leviticus chapter sixteen in verse one, Leviticus sixteen beginning with verse one. And as I read through the scriptures today, you'll see I'm using the King James Version of the Bible; that's my preference, and I would encourage you to not only use the King James Version in your studies, but any version you think would be helpful and useful in helping you to better understand what is intended by the verses. So, let's take a look at verse one.

### **Leviticus 16:1-32**

**1. And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;**

And so, the two sons of Aaron made a mistake. They made an offering when they shouldn't have and God punished them by taking their life.

**2. And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.**

So, Aaron was restricted in his ability to come into the Holy of Holies and in verse three we have more information about what Aaron was to bring with him and do. So, verse three.

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**3. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.**

So, a young bull, a ram.

**4. He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.**

So, he not only had to bring these animals with him, he was to be bathed very clean and wear these holy and ceremonial garments. Verse five.

**5. And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.**

**6. And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.**

So, first Aaron needed to sacrifice this young bull and it was to acknowledge his sins and to make himself right with God along with his family so he could do what he needed to do next. Verse seven.

**7. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**8. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.**

**9. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.**

So, looking forward to the new testament, we can begin to think about a new testament personage who was sacrificed as the Lamb of God. This would be the Old Testament equivalent, thousands of years before. Verse ten.

**10. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.**

And so, here we have a goat being led off into the wilderness after having the sins of the congregation pronounced on him. Verse eleven.

**11. And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:**

**12. And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail:**

**13. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not:**

And so, if Aaron wouldn't do all of these things, he would die. So it was very important for Aaron to do everything that was required of him.

**14. And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.**

**15. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:**

**16. And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.**

Verse seventeen.

**17. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.**

**18. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.**

**19. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.**

And so, all of this had to happen, and if something went wrong, Aaron could die. Verse twenty.

**20. And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:**

**21. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel,**

So think, who gets blamed for all the iniquity of the children of God today. We'll see there is a connection that is tied to a future event of prophecy. The best way to think of prophecy is simply history written in advance. We may not understand all of the symbolism and terminology but we are definitely going to see a connection between this Day of Atonement and what is going to happen in the future. So, And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel,

**and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:**

**22. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited:**

So think of a place that is totally empty, devoid of people, barren. We are going to come across a future description of what that might be, for a big actor if you will, and a big bad actor if you will in the Bible.

**and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.**

And so very, very interesting series of events and rituals taking place on the Day of Atonement. Concluding the Day of Atonement in verse twenty-three.

**23. And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there:**

**24. And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.**

**25. And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar.**

**26. And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.**

In other words, the person who led the scapegoat go into the wilderness would have been treated like someone who was unclean to the congregation.

**27. And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.**

So, Everything was going to be burned up.

**28. And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.**

Again, this person was following a lot of the ceremonial principles of somebody who might be unclean. Verse twenty-nine.

**29. And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:**

**30. For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.**

**31. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.**

And so here we are, thousands of years ago, today the Christian Day of Atonement is a Sabbath of Rest for us and we are afflicting our souls because this was a statute forever. Verse thirty-two.

**32. And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments:**

**33. And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.**

**34. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.**

So here we have a very detailed account of the Day of Atonement thousands of years ago with the children of Israel. We find that there were different kinds of animals were sacrifice. A bullock was sacrificed, a goat was a sacrificed, and another goat was led away baring the sins of the congregation and left in the isolated wilderness. All of that plays into our Christian faith today. Let's take a look at another account of the Day of Atonement beginning with Leviticus twenty-three beginning with verse twenty-six. That's Leviticus twenty-three and beginning with verse twenty-six.

#### **Leviticus 23:26-32**

**26. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,**

**27. Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.**

**28. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.**

**29. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.**

**30. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.**

**31. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.**

**32. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.**

And the reference to the ninth day of the month is the Hebrew calendar that is being referenced, not the calendar that we use today. And so, some more information comes out to us on how and when we observe the Day of Atonement. We notice it is a fast that begins at even, when the sun sets, from sunset if you will to sunset is when we celebrate the Sabbath. So, as we are observing the Day of Atonement, we observe it from sundown to sundown. Here we are it is Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. We would begin fasting on what would be the calendar date of Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at sunset and we will continue to fast until the sun sets on Wednesday, October the 9<sup>th</sup>. So afflicting your soul is commonly referred to as fasting. The children of ancient Israel weren't told to fast, they were told to afflict their souls which they took to mean to fast. And so, what is fasting? Fasting means no food and not water for the twenty-four hour period. That's the Biblical definition of what fasting is, and maybe at another time, we can go into a deeper explanation of what fasting is. For those of you who may never have fasted before, I would always encourage people to consider making sure that you are healthy enough to fast. I would not want anyone to hear what I am saying today and use that to replace the advice that might be given to you by a medical doctor. If the medical doctor says no food and no water for twenty-four hours would be a very bad thing for you, then I wouldn't encourage that. I think you could afflict your soul in another way and still meet the requirement that is given to us in the Bible. For those who can fast, and that would be a lot of people, that is what we do today.

I mentioned that this Day of Atonement when the scapegoat was led away into the wilderness plays into a future event that is going to take place. When we think of future events that are very exciting for us with symbolism that is very fantastic, we think of the Book of Revelation. There is a passage in the Book of Revelation that correlates very nicely to the Day of Atonement. Let's take a look at Revelation twenty, beginning with verse one, Revelation twenty, beginning with verse one.

## **Revelation 20:1-10**

**1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.**

A bottomless pit, you can't see the bottom of it. You probably can't see the light at the bottom of the pit. If you fall into a bottomless pit you will get to the point as you near the bottom if you survive the fall that you might not be able to see the opening that you used to enter the bottomless pit. So, what is this bottomless pit? The reality is we don't know. It could be a physical confined space here on earth at some future time, it could be a physical confined space in the universe at some future time. It could be a spiritual bottomless pit that impacts Satan and the devil. It could be something as fantastic as a black hole where if you get sucked into a black hole, everything we know about a black hole means you don't get out of the black hole. So what this bottomless pit is, we have no idea. But, we know this angel in verse two took the dragon and put him in this bottomless pit. Let's read it very closely, verse two.

**2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,**

So we know that Satan is the dragon of the Book of Revelation just as much as he is the serpent of the Book of Genesis and in his own profane way, Satan attempts to be the evil alpha and omega, if you will, of the Bible. He's there in the beginning and there up until the end, and he is then basically no more for us. So we know that Satan is bound for a thousand years.

**3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more,**

So, a seal, think of a medical pharmacy and you buy over-the-counter medicines. When you open the bottle you would hope to find a safety seal in there. That means your medicine pills haven't been tampered with. That sort of is what happens with Satan. A seal is placed on him that isolates him from being able to cause harm, and the seal is on him for a thousand years.



**till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.**

Verse four.

**4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

So we know from looking at this verse that after Satan is exiled into this bottomless pit, those who were victimized by his rule come into power. Verse five.

**5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.**

These are the dead did not die in Christ. Their live we will find out is not in vain. They will have this future time to get to know Jesus and God for salvation.

**This is the first resurrection.**

When it says, "This is the first resurrection," it is the resurrection of those who died in Christ. They are resurrected at this time to reign after Satan is exiled into the bottomless pit.

**6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**

And we'll find out these verses have a lot to do with the Feast of Tabernacles coming up next week, and the Last Great Day, the Eighth Day of the Feast. Verse seven.

**7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,**

So Satan will be in that bottomless pit for about a thousand years.

**8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**

So, he is going to stir up a lot of strife after the thousand years. Mankind during this thousand years will sort of be like Eve in the Garden of Eden, only knowing good because Satan will be exiled. There is no indication that these people will have any knowledge of Satan and the brutality and inhumanity that was brought on planet earth when Satan was allowed to reign freely. We do know he is going to be allowed to deceive these nations, just like he deceived Eve, just like he tried to deceive Jesus Christ. That's what we studied during the sermon on Saturday.

**9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.**

So, even though there is this attempt at a coup by Satan, it is short-lived.

**10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

So, we commonly hear about hell and hell-fire. The Good news is it is Satan the devil who is tormented day and night forever and ever in hell. That's what verse ten shows. This hell-fire, if you will, the lake of fire. So, we've talked about a lot today, about the Day of Atonement, how there was this religious ceremony, where the high priest's life was on the line if he made a mistake and on all days on a day when he is not eating or drinking. I think I would be much more likely to make a mistake on that occasion, how thousands of years ago a bullock was sacrificed, a goat was sacrificed, and a second goat was let off to the wilderness with the sins of the people confessed upon it. We find out how in the future, we have Satan who is exiled into a bottomless pit and then after deceiving some

nations after the thousand years, Satan gets tossed into the lake of fire where he is tormented forever and ever.

We may be wondering, OK, this is the Christian Day of Atonement, how does Christ fit into this and what about this bullock and goats? So let's take a look at Hebrews verse ten, Hebrews verse ten, and beginning with verse five.

### **Hebrews 10:5-10**

**5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:**

**6. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.**

So even though God required burnt offerings and sacrifices, it didn't make Him feel good. The burnt offerings and the sacrifices were a ritual to cleanse the people of their sin. The Day of Atonement was a day for the people's sins to be cleansed so the people could be at one with God. Verse seven.

**7. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.**

**8. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;**

**9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.**

So we move from the Old Testament to the New Testament through the life of Jesus Christ. And here is what we find out about Jesus Christ in our Christian observance of the Holy Days and as everything we do as Christians. Verse ten.

**10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

So the death of Jesus Christ was the sacrifice to end sacrifices. With the death of Jesus Christ we no longer have a need to be sacrificing animals. The blood of Jesus Christ takes care of that need. Beyond being the ultimate sacrifice to take away sin, we also have this element of the high priest that entered into the Holy of Holies. How does Jesus fit in to that story? Let's take a look at Hebrews verse,

I'm sorry chapter four beginning with verse fourteen, Hebrews four beginning with verse fourteen.

#### **Hebrews 4:14-16**

**14. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.**

So today, Jesus Christ is our high priest. Aaron as the high priest on the Day of Atonement made intercession for the people for their sins once a year. Jesus Christ has direct access to God the Father and can make intercession on our behalf on a daily basis. Verse fifteen.

**15. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**

So, Jesus was tempted, just like we would be tempted yet he remained sinless. He was not tricked or deceived by Satan the devil. Verse sixteen.

**16. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

So we have this incredible high priest who can help us do what we need to do, to become right with God, and as we look at celebrating and observing this Christian Day of Atonement we can take comfort in knowing that we have a high priest who can intercede with God, not only on the Day of Atonement but on every single day throughout the year.

We may be wondering, did the early church keep the Day of Atonement. There aren't many passages that would indicate that, but there is an interesting passage from Acts twenty-seven, Acts twenty-seven and beginning with verse nine.

## **Acts 27:9**

**9. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,**

So, “the fast” indicated here in verse nine of Acts twenty-seven would be the Day of Atonement. There would be not need to mention “the fast’ if the Day of Atonement were not observed.

People sometimes wonder why we call it “the fast.” Well, because as you are going without food, at some point you hope the rest of the day goes fast. So, I guess, that’s a joke for the Day of Atonement.

When we fast, how should we fast? Should we make a big scene of fasting? Should we draw a lot of attention to ourselves in our fasting? How should we fast? Let’s take a look at Matthew six beginning with verse sixteen, Matthew six beginning with verse sixteen.

## **Matthew 6:16-18**

**16. Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.**

So, back in this time during Jesus’ time if somebody was fasting they wanted the world to know they were fasting. They looked the part, they acted the part, they probably hoping to get sympathy. They knew if they looked the part and acted the part people would likely say, “Oh, look at that righteous person; that person is fasting. They are so Holy.” And so Jesus said, they had their reward. If you want people to say good things about you that is your reward. We should not strive to have people say bad things about us, but really what counts are not the platitudes of men or women, but the platitudes of God and Jesus. That’s what is going to lead us to salvation. Verse seventeen.

**17. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;**

So even though the Day of Atonement says do no work, that wouldn’t mean we need to look sad and sloppy, dirty and filthy. The Day of Atonement is a day we should be presentable to others. It shouldn’t look to others like we are fasting. It

should look like any other day of the week to somebody who would not know us. Verse eighteen, Matthew six.

**18. That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.**

So here, we have the reward given to us openly by God when we choose to worship Him in a way that might be hidden and not seen by other people. Worshipping God is not about the public face of worship. Worshipping God is not about receiving warm accolades from other people. Worshipping God is about doing what we need to do in private. It is between us and God. It is not a show that we put on for other people, whether that is the weekly Sabbath, a prayer or blessing we may give before a meal. It is something we do in private before God, and God will bless us openly in doing so.

So why fasting? Yes, fasting brings us down. As we lose energy, we realize how frail we are as people. We understand how little we can do without the blessing of God, and the ability to have food and water in most western countries is taken for granted. Sometimes on the news stories we take a look at people in other parts of the world. Maybe there has been a natural disaster and they are without food and water. Or maybe it's a country that is not as fully as developed as the country I live in and they have more frequent problems with famine and safe drinking water. So, it's very easy in 2019 in a western civilized country to overlook the value of food in our life. We can become very arrogant and very prideful

But for all people, regardless of where you live, the Christian Day of Atonement is the day when we fast. We go without food and we go without water unless for some reason the doctor has advised you otherwise.

So, let's take a look at a verse in Isaiah. And you may note from today's sermon that this sermon may not go quite as long as other sermons, but I wanted to cover this verse, or these verses to conclude.

So why do we fast? If we don't fast to be seen as glorious before other people, if we fast in private, and then afterwards God promises us to be rewarded, and we humble ourselves through fasting, what is really the purpose of fasting? We get a

very good explanation for that in the Book of Isaiah. So as we are fasting today and wondering, "Why do we fast?", Jesus said his disciples would fast and here we are fasting. Verse one of Isaiah fifty-eight.

## **Isaiah 58:1-12**

### **1. Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,**

We recently observed the Christian Feast of Trumpets and found out the trumpet was used for many purposes including sounding an alarm, calling people to battle, and to announce the beginning of the month and the day or the Feast of Trumpets.

**and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.**

### **2. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.**

It sounds very much like a Christian country, today. You know, the United States, the country in which I live thinks of itself as a Christian country. A lot of countries think of themselves as Christian countries. So what do people in Christian countries like to do? They like to think they know the ways of God. They like to think that what they do is generally a righteous approach to life. They like to think that they don't forsake and ignore God. They like to think that they understand the smaller and minute points of what God would expect of us. And they like to be seen in the limelight with God. Verse three.

### **3. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.**

So here are the people who fasted and they recognize, "Hold it-we're not getting the big bang on our buck on fasting." And why is that? They say, "We have afflicted our soul; haven't You paid attention?" Of course God hasn't take attention to their fast and some of the reasons is this, "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours." So, these are people who do what they want to do and not what God would have us do. These are people who do work and not pay attention. Verse four.

**4. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.**

So why do some people fast? For strife and debate. You know there's this thought among many people including people who are what I would call brothers and sisters in Christ who look at politics as being sacredly connected to religion. Politics is distinct and separate from religion and faith. There are some people who would say would Jesus Christ be a liberal or conservative if he came here today. Jesus Christ would be neither. Jesus Christ would be Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ transcends both liberalism and conservatism. So, I wouldn't limit Jesus Christ to either of those labels because they are both flawed in many ways. And so why do people fast? For strife and debate. Politics gives us a lot of reasons for strife and debate.

To smite with the fist of wickedness-yeah, people think in the name of God they can knock other people down. That happens even here. And the truth is if you are doing something in harm in the name of God or Jesus to another person you are acting in a very wicked way. Only God or Jesus Christ can determine how and when to punish a person.

"ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high." So when we fast, we do not fast to look good. We don't take out huge billboards along the interstates and highways and say, "Look at us, we're fasting today!" We don't do that. But why is it we fast? Let's take a look at verse five.

**5. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?**

You know, just like Jesus said in the New Testament, we are not to appear to others to be fasting. So we wouldn't be looking at that as an acceptable fast either. So there are all sorts of bazaar reasons people develop in their minds as reasons for fasting. We'll find out all of those are wrong. But the good news here is in verse six; we begin to find the reasons for fasting. Let's take a look at verse six.



## **6. Is not this the fast that I have chosen?**

So this is how and why God wants us to fast.

**to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?**

So, we don't fast for political strife and debate, to see if we can make Jesus out to be a liberal or a conservative. That's not what fasting is for. We are fasting to loose the bands of wickedness. If there is something bad happening out there, some kind of evil, That's the wickedness that is being talked about, and by fasting we take spiritual, proactive steps forward to minimize the effect of wickedness. We fast to undo the heavy burdens, people are saddled with debt, people are very busy and hurried in their life, and people are very frustrated by what is happening in the world. As we fast, we begin to undo these heavy burdens because as we fast and in secret become right with God, we are moving ourselves and the Kingdom of God, which will undo all of those evils, one step closer to fruition. And so when we fast, we're fasting not to glorify ourselves, we are fasting in service to people around us, and to do undo every evil thing we may see. We fast to let the oppressed go free. We don't think of people as being oppressed in 2019 in America, maybe to the same degree as we might look at people being oppressed in other countries. That's easy for me to say as a person who is a European American, but if you were to go up to a person who was minority, maybe living in a different zip code, they may feel very oppressed. They may be totally afraid to speak to the police. They may be afraid of bad things happening to them. We have people in this country who are enslaved, it's called sex trafficking. These are people who are oppressed. And when we fast, yes we are humbling ourselves, we go without food and water, but really it is all of these evils that we are fasting to break. And we fast to break every yoke. The yoke is what was put around the oxen to keep them in place, to make sure they did what needed to get done. In a properly regulated work environment, a yoke could be a good thing. But a yoke can also be used to enslave and entrap. So here we are, we are taking this opportunity and this requirement to fast to undo all of these evils.

So how powerful is it that by fasting, that by denying ourselves physical food and water, we are making a statement against all of these evils. It's an opportunity to

for us to make a stance. Let's look at verse seven. Again, talking about fasting, "Is not this the fast that I have chosen?"

**7. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?**

So when we are fasting, we think of the people who are less fortunate than we are, we look at it as an opportunity to provide food to those who have no food that we look at it as an opportunity to help those down and out on their luck. In today's world it may be unsafe to bring somebody you don't know into your house and I would never advise that. But there are other ways how you can help somebody who is poor and homeless by maybe contributing to one of the shelters that supports the homeless people in your community. Following up with the next thought, "when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;" the naked are people who are lacking clothes, people who lack scruples. You know, if you see somebody who doesn't have a full sense of understanding, in a way, they are naked in that area. So, a lot of times, people who have problems with their thought processes are victimized. The elderly are victimized financially all of the time by people calling them up pretending to be their grandchildren, pretending to be the Social Security Administration, pretending to be their bank, because they know somebody who is, if you will, naked, not fully covered in the mental process they can be an easy target for fraud.

"...and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" By fasting we also in a way reunite ourselves to our family. We never want to separate ourselves from our family and fasting should allow us to get through the most difficult and challenging of situations that could separate a family. Verse eight.

**8. Then shall thy light break forth as the morning,**

As brilliant and as spectacular as a sunrise, on a clear day, that's how your light will break forth.

**and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.**

As we fast, and as we begin to see our connection to other people, and why we fast that it is not just about us and our relationship with God, but it is about these other people, we begin to see we are part of something much bigger than who we are. And yes, we can see our own worries but we can see our own worries as being maybe small and insignificant compared to others. And as we do all of this, our light will break forth as the morning. You know, the good that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are doing within us will not be hidden. It will be obvious to all who see us. And, we will feel good about ourselves; that's how our health shall spring forth speedily. Verse nine.

**9. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;**

**10. And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:**

So, as we submit ourselves to God, as we allow His Holy Spirit to live within us, we are transformed, we can take something that is dark through the Holy Spirit of God and turn it into something that is incredibly bright, bright as the midday sun. Here in El Paso, trust me, I know how bright the midday sun can look because we have a lot of sunlight here in what we call the Sun City.

**11. And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.**

God will take care of us, He will not abandon us. Verse twelve.

**12. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.**

In future Holy Days for the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day, the Last Great Day of the Feast, we will find out about this wonderful place of the Kingdom of God. And we will inherit this world that is very shattered, and everything we have just read in verse twelve will be something at that time that we will definitely be doing.

So as we fast today, yes, we are going without food, we are going without water, and it is not just an endurance test. It is not something we do simply out of obedience, it is something we do because Jesus said we would do it as His disciples. It is something we do because it was a statute that was implemented forever back in the book of Leviticus.

But we fast today to undo all of the evils that Satan has brought upon this earth. And so as fast, as we are hungry, as we are physically weak, we are spiritually strong. And in the end, we who are spiritually strong will win.

Thank you for joining us today on this Day of Atonement, and I will see you next time on the weekly Sabbath.