

Ten Days of Awe (Yamim Nora'im)

Now that Yom Zikaron Tru'ah (Remembrance Day of Shouting or Trumpets) has passed, we now enter into a very special period of time - the **ten days of awe called Yamim Nora'im** in Hebrew. This is the period of ten days between Yom Tru'ah and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement).

Traditionally, Yom Tru'ah is the day when God as judge opens His book and examines our deeds. God is a righteous judge; all His ways are just and true. He will reward the righteous and not allow the wicked to go unpunished.

“Surely there is a reward for the righteous. Surely He is a God who judges in the earth.” (Psalm 58:11)

The scriptures contain many references to this Book of Life. The common Jewish greeting at this time is, “May your name be inscribed in the Book of Life.”

The Hebrew Prophet, Daniel, wrote that “Everyone whose name is found written in the book will be delivered” (Daniel 12:1)

May it truly be so for all our family and loved ones – and for all Jewish people who do not yet know their Messiah Yeshua; may He reveal Himself so that their names will be inscribed in the Lamb's Book of life for eternity.

“He that overcomes, ...I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life,...” (Revelation 3:5)

“Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15)

On Yom Kippur, the closing service is called **Nillah**, which means **the closing of a gate**. It is traditionally considered in Judaism that up until this very last moment we can repent and pray for God's mercy, but when dusk comes and the fast of Yom Kippur is finished, the gate is closed and judgement is sealed.

Yeshua (Jesus) said He is **the gate** for the sheep. (John 10:9) **“I am the gate, whoever enters through me will be saved.”**

What does Yeshua mean by this? What is a gate and what are its' purposes?

* A gate gives us access to a place; we go through the gate to get to what is on the other side. When we go through Him, by faith, we get to access eternity:

“Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish.” (John 11:25-26) (NLT)

*A gate also provides a way through a barrier. Our sins separate us from God, but through Yeshua, we may all, Jew or Gentile, have access to the Father. Yeshua said,

“I am the way, the truth and the Life; **no one can come to the Father but through me.**” (John 14:6) Yeshua tells us that anyone trying to climb in by some other way is a thief and robber:

“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.” (John 10:1)

*A gate may control who is allowed to enter in and who is shut out.

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may **go through the gates into the city**.¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.” (Revelation 22:14-15)

God, the Father, has turned over all judgment to His son, Yeshua Hamashaich (The Messiah). “And the father leaves all judgment to his son.” (John 5:22)

Yeshua, however, did not come to judge or condemn the world, but to save us. (John 3:17) God’s desire is that not even one should perish but that all would come to repentance. (Matthew 8:14)

Even while dying on the execution stake between two criminals, Yeshua offered the one who placed his last minute trust in the Messiah, a place in Paradise (Gan Eden).

He said “This day you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

We must remember that even until someone’s very last breath, the gateway to salvation through Yeshua is still open.

A Jewish custom still practiced by Orthodox Jews during the Ten Days of Awe is called Kapparat from the Hebrew word, Kapparah, meaning atonement. A live fowl is swung over the head while reciting a prayer: *“This is my substitute, my vicarious offering, my atonement (kapparah). This chicken /rooster will die so that I may obtain a long and pleasant life of peace.”*

In modern times, many Jewish people substitute tzedakah. They wave coins, which are then put in a ‘pushke’ (charity box). Some Jewish people practice this custom simply out of religious ritual without even any real understanding of the concept of atonement.

Hoping to obtain Divine pardon through the sacrifice of a chicken or the giving of tzedakah is a vain hope. No amount of silver or gold can deliver us from the wrath of God.

**“Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD’s wrath.”** (Zephaniah 1:18)

We have been redeemed without money through the precious and costly gift of the blood of Yeshua. **“You have sold yourselves for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money.”** (Isaiah 52:3)

As we pass through these ten days of awe, eser Yamin Nora’im, may we not only examine our own lives for any unrighteousness, but also pray fervently that all God’s children, including Israel and the Jewish people, will enter through ‘the gate’, to eternal life.

These ten days of awe are a time to seriously seek the face of God, to examine their lives and repent before God for our sins - to call upon His mercy, for ourselves, our families, and our nations.

It is a time to get our lives right – before our God and with one another; a time to let go of petty grievances and forgive and seek forgiveness. If we don’t forgive from our hearts, God will not forgive us.

Ultimately, each one will stand before God the judge, and give an account of his or her life. God is coming to judge the earth.

**“For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth.
He shall judge the world with righteousness,
and the nations with His truth.”** (Psalm 96:13)