

On the Corner Fringe: Yom Kippur and Fasting September 18, 2018

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/sf6hqq8/otcf-yom-kippur-and-fasting>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

The Biblical Command to Fast on Yom Kippur

In this transcript from **Corner Fringe Ministries**, **Pastor Daniel Joseph** defends the traditional practice of **fasting on Yom Kippur** against contemporary claims that the Torah does not require it. Daniel argues that the Hebrew word "*anah*," meaning to afflict or humble oneself, is fundamentally linked to **abstaining from food** throughout the Bible and historical Jewish literature. He cites numerous scriptural precedents, such as **Psalm 35** and **Ezra 8**, to demonstrate that physical affliction and fasting are inseparable concepts in the context of atonement. Furthermore, Daniel references ancient **Aramaic Targums** and the **New Testament book of Acts** to show that "the Fast" has been the universal designation for this holy day for millennia. He warns his audience that rejecting this commandment is a **dangerous deception** that could lead to being spiritually cut off from the community. Ultimately, Daniel urges believers to approach the day with a **repentant heart** and a commitment to the physical discipline of fasting as commanded in **Leviticus**.



[Introduction]

Insightful—Challenging—Cutting Edge—
Biblical

[Daniel Joseph]

Shalom, everyone, Daniel Joseph. I have a special treat today, if you will. I'm doing an impromptu video. This is a little out of my character. I don't do this normally; I'm typically more intentional about these things, but I decided to do this video

impromptu.

I got a call from a friend, and he had expressed serious concern about a particular teaching that is going around on the internet from a particular ministry within the Hebrew roots arena. It's a very well-known ministry, very reputable if you will, on the ministry. They're going to remain nameless simply because I am not looking to make enemies by any stretch of imagination, and I don't think it's good form to get

sucked into biting and devouring one another when we're supposed to be on the same team. But I will make an exception in this case. But this is not about attacking character, the character of the ministry, or the character of people. This is simply: I'm just going to address the teaching itself. And so, we're going to leave names out of it and just deal with the issue at hand.

The issue is this: a buddy of mine told me I had to watch a video, and I watched it. The video was about 20 minutes long; it was all about Yom Kippur and, explicitly, the whole context of it—or the purpose of it was to show that the Torah does not command us to fast on Yom Kippur, okay? That was the premise. And I have to tell you, it was a Cirque du Soleil of theological acrobatics. I mean, to a frightening degree. It was exegetically very irresponsible.

I get really worked up because the presentation was really good. See, if you didn't know better, if you're not well-versed in Scripture, if you can't, and you're not used to navigating word searches or reading Hebrew or even getting into the Greek, and you just don't have a strong command of the Word as a whole, this video looks golden. This video was presented very well. It sounded very intelligent and very believable, which was really troubling to me on some levels, but there are so many scary errors, shall I say, regarding this video. And so, I'm going to attack the teaching. The teaching, again, is simply "Yom Kippur. You don't have to fast on that day."

Well, let's look at the actual command in Leviticus 23, verses 27-28. This is what it says: **"Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement, Yom HaKippurim in Hebrew, okay? It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. ²⁸ And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God."** (Emphasis added).

Now, really the basis of their arguments rests right here in the word "afflict." In Hebrew it is "*anah*" (עָנָה), and they did a great job at putting the word up in Hebrew and showing it to you and, to a degree, expressing how this term can be utilized. Well, let me say this: the word "*anah*" is first and foremost being translated as "afflict" in English, and it's a very good translation. Generally speaking, this is how the word... This is the context of the word "*anah*." It is afflict, and I want to be clear: it's afflict in the context of afflicting your flesh in some form or fashion.

Okay, so in Genesis 15, the first time that the word is actually used, you'll find that Abraham has this terrifying vision that his descendants are going to be afflicted for 400 years. *Anah*. They're going to be afflicted. Now, all you need to do is study the treatment of Israel under the authority of Pharaoh, or the bondage of Pharaoh, and you'll realize they suffered greatly. Their own flesh suffered. It was a physical affliction against them. Going to the next chapter in Genesis 16, you see Sarah afflicting Hagar. Now she wasn't blowing her kisses or writing her mean letters. She afflicted her in the flesh. So, she experienced affliction in the flesh. And so generally speaking, when you look at this word, this is the context of the word "*anah*." There's an affliction of the flesh.

Now, there are times the Hebrew "*anah*" is somewhat flexible. There are times when it is translated as "humble." And a perfect example of this is Exodus 10:3. When Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and Pharaoh gets chastised, he's not humbling; he's not "*anah*"; he's not humbling himself before the LORD God of Israel. And so, at that time and in that context, it is absolutely referring to a heart issue: that he is not listening to the word of the LORD, and he is not adhering to it. And so, there are times that you do see the term translated as "humbled," and it's a good translation. Moving from "*anah*" to the English and saying it "humbled" depending on that context. And then, generally speaking, you'll find that it is

translated as "afflict" a lot of times, and you'll see the context; there's actual affliction happening, alright?

With that said, the argument that this video was portraying is that the term "*anah*" is not the term "fast." The term for "fasting" or "fasted" is "*tzam*" (צם). Or "*tzom*" (צום) if you're looking at it as a noun. "*Tzam*" (צם) as a verb is not found there. And so, the argument is because we don't see the term "fasting" and what "affliction" actually means; it simply refers to humbling your heart and obeying the reality that we're supposed to rest on this day, and this is something that the video does. The gentleman links, and this is very important, so listen carefully: he links the term "*anah*" to the very next verse, verse 28, in the context that "you shall do no work." So, he's linking the term "*anah*" with "rest" and stating that "*anah*" is really a definition for "rest."

Okay, so the first problem you have with this is that when you read this in English or even in Hebrew, there is a distinction between this affliction that is happening and this concept of being commanded to rest. Okay? This is critical. And so, these things are not melded together. Affliction, *anah*, is not defining what rest is, but it is two separate things. You are to afflict and—the conjunction—there's something else that you're to do, and you are to rest from work on that day. You're not to work on that day, so they're not one and the same.

And, you have to make them that way if you want to peddle the fact that you're not supposed to fast on this day, but they are not. And when you read Hebrew, the conjunction is there. The *Vav* (ו) is there, so to speak, when you see this. There is an addition: these are two separate things entirely, okay? It's very important, so that's the first thing.

The second thing I want to mention here is that we have to work unprecedentedly. Okay, so the premise of the video's argument is that people who think rabbis, messianic-believing Jews, and the rest of the Messianics and Hebrew-roots or whatever, who actually believe they're supposed to fast, really, what they're stating is that that is an interpolation because "*tzom*" is not there because we don't see the term "fast." You're interpolating, meaning you're reading something into the text that isn't there. Okay, first things first, you have to have a precedent. Well, let me actually, let me just back up for a second. Let me approach something else, and then just look at the first red flag.

The first red flag is you can go back in history. You can go back in history as far as you can. You can go back to the early church fathers, which I spent countless hours reading. You can look at the Apocrypha. You can look at the Torah. Somebody needs to come and show me where this argument, this debate, has ever happened. So, if there's an interpolation, if there's a changed thing, there's a reading and text; what we're going to see in history is some debate about it. We find lots of debate in the Talmud. We find tons of debate. It's endless debating in the Talmud. We find debates in the early church fathers galore. Just off the top of my head, Justin Martyr and Trypho. The whole thing is a debate. You find all these things. You know, there is no evidence; there's no historical evidence of anyone ever coming with this teaching that, you know what, you don't have to fast on Yom Kippur.

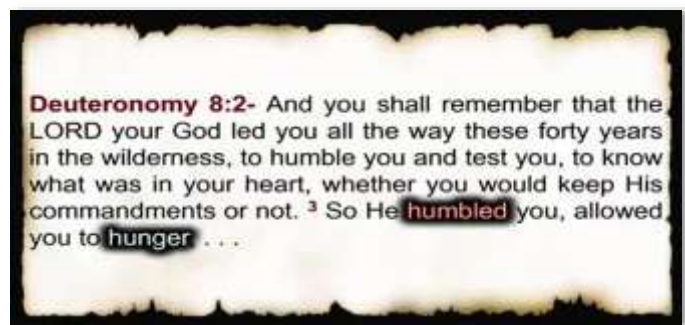
So, what I'm telling you is this is totally a completely new argument. You won't find this anywhere. I mean that in and of itself should put a red flag up and go, "Hold on." Now I need to really investigate this, and I need to look closer at what is really being said because I'm going to tell you, for thousands of years the Jews have been under the assumption that Yom Kippur is explicitly referring to when it's talking about afflicting, "*anah*," it's referring to fasting. They've never been under any other

understanding. And you would think that there would be some sort of debate, as there is in the Talmud, or there would be some fragment brought into the early Church Fathers, but there's not.

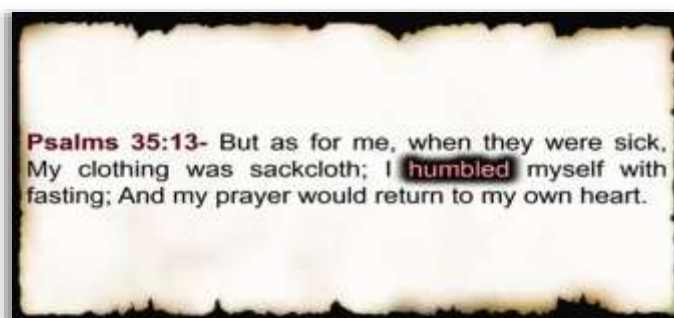
Now, let me draw a distinction; let me be very clear. The early Church Fathers just simply did away with the festivals altogether, and there was a lot of debate about that: that they shouldn't do those things, but that's a completely different debate. They were not debating whether or not Yom Kippur was talking about fasting, you know; all of them were of the understanding that Yom Kippur is about fasting. You know, for early Christianity that was departing from her Hebrew roots, it wasn't about whether or not Yom Kippur was about fasting; it was about, "We just don't need to keep any of the Jewish feasts; we're not Jewish. We're separating from the Jews." Some are simply going in the replacement theology route, which so much of the church did, and others were dual-covenant; they got more sophisticated. But the point is, you just want to find this argument. This is a new argument, and when we see something like this, it requires your utmost attention, alright?

Okay, so going back to the text and looking at this, whether or not this is an interpolation, we have precedent. We have precedent all over Scripture that shows "*anah*" being used explicitly in the context of fasting, okay? So, I'm just going to share a few of these with you. And you know, the ironic thing is a couple of these were actually featured in the video but just kind of glossed over and laid aside. It was really stunning to me that they would even offer these particular passages, seeing that they completely contradicted the point that they're trying to make.

Be that as it may, let me take you to Deuteronomy 8:2-3—**"And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, there's that word '*anah*,' to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So listen to this: ³ So He humbled you, '*anah*,' and allowed you to hunger..."** (Emphasis added).



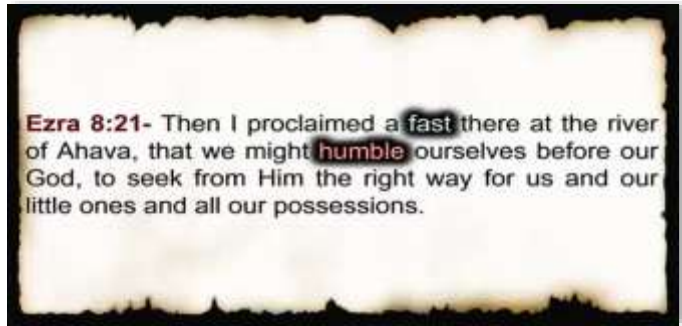
Okay, do you get this? So, you want to talk about affliction. See, that's what afflicting the flesh is: going without food and going without water. That's afflicting the flesh. That's humbling. Okay, so here we have this precedent of affliction where Israel was being allowed to hunger. They were not eating; they were being tested, and God wanted to know what was in their heart. But here you have a precedent explicitly of "*anah*" being used in the context of being hungry, not eating, or what we would say, fasting.



Let me read another one. And this one they actually featured, which was really mind-blowing. —Psalms 35:13—**But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself '*anah*.' How did he humble himself? With fasting (*tzam*)...** (Emphasis added). I mean, you can't make this stuff up; there is an explicit precedent. There's an explicit connection between *anah* and *tzam*, or

fasting, alright? —And my prayer would return to my own heart.

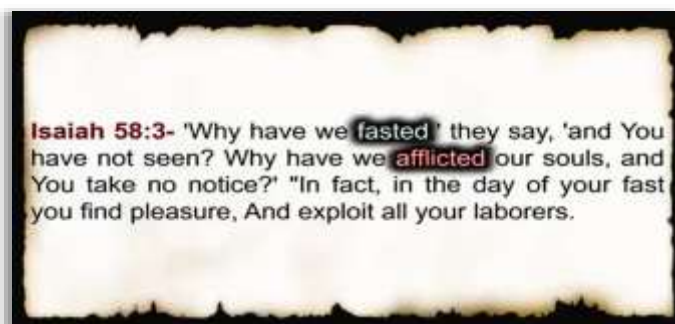
Let me take you to another one. —Ezra 8:21— Then I proclaimed a **fast** (*tzom*), okay? We're talking about fasting. There's no debate here. There at the river of Ahava, that we might **humble** ourselves before our God, there's "*anah*," to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions (emphasis added).



Now, it's interesting when you look at what is actually happening: whether we're talking about Deuteronomy 8, whether we're talking about Psalms 35, or whether they're talking about Ezra 8:21, you look at this context, and every time we have *anah* being linked together with *tzom*, with fasting. You look at this; the whole concept is humbling. You're humbling yourself. You're pouring out your soul before God to seek from Him the right way, okay? To seek from Him the right way. This is Yom Kippur.

Do you understand what's going on in Yom Kippur? You are crushing your soul. You are afflicting your flesh. You will not feed your flesh anything. You starve the flesh because that's what produces death, but what produces life? Let's see, Yeshua says in John 6:63, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." See, on that day, on Yom Kippur, you only eat the words of God. And it's interesting because if you go back to Deuteronomy 8:3, the very passage I quoted for you, it goes on to say, "... that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD."

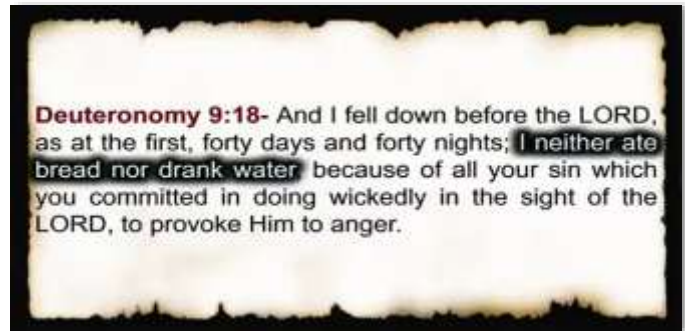
That's how we survive. That's how we are going to make it as we move from this age into the next age by confessing the Word with our mouth, which is the Messiah Yeshua, and walking it out. Literally embracing that Word. You know, I think, I mean, there are so many things we could talk about regarding this and how the LORD literally put the Word, His Word, in the mouth of the prophets. I mean, it's just an amazing thing. This is what Yom Kippur is. We are only going to be sustained by His Word. And so, this is the concept.



Let me take you to Isaiah 58:3— "Why have we **fasted**,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we **afflicted**, *Anah*? Fasting literally, specifically, being linked to *anah*. Fasting being linked to affliction. Why have we afflicted **our** souls, and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers" (emphasis added).

—Isaiah 58:5— "Is it a **fast** that I have chosen, A day for a man to **afflict his soul**? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? ..." (Emphasis added). See, again, to afflict a soul, and fasting being used, they're being conjoined together. Okay, so again, I say there is a massive precedent. There is a presence of *anah*, of this afflicting being used explicitly in the context of fasting.

Let me take it a step further in understanding Yom Kippur. It's the Day of Atonement for sin, right? Well, let's go to Deuteronomy 9:18—“**And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first,** this is Moses, because Israel sinned; they built a golden calf and worshiped it falsely, so now we come to this, and Moses is recounting. I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, **forty days and forty nights;** and what does it say? **I neither ate bread nor drank water...** What do we call that? We call that fasting; Moses is afflicting himself. Why? **Because of all your sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.**” (emphasis added).



See, you need to understand there are aspects, and I'm not going to take the time to do it today, of talking about fasting. I've done teachings on fasting before, but there are elements that you have to understand involved with fasting. When you understand fasting, the more you understand Yom Kippur, and the more you understand, the more you see exactly what it is talking about, what it is requiring, and what it is commanding—and I explicitly say that word, commanding,—you to fast. See, Moses had to afflict; he had to fast because of the sin, and that is exactly what we are doing on Yom Kippur. We are fasting because of the sin.

Let me take you to the New Testament. I want to take you to James 4:9-10—**Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.** ¹⁰ **Humble yourselves,** and that right there, that Greek word is the Greek equivalent of “*anah*”: humble yourselves **in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.** In fact, you'll find the same Greek word used in the Septuagint in Leviticus 23. So, here we have just again, lament, mourn, and weep. The writer, James, or Ya'akov, is drawing from the prophets here.

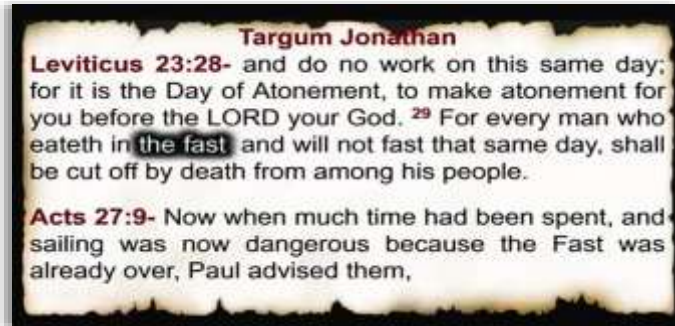
Interestingly enough, I want to take you to Joel 2:12—**“Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart.** How? How do we do this? **With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.**” The very thing James was talking about, okay? This is where he's drawing from. He's literally drawing from this passage. But how do we do it? We do it with fasting. And James utilizes and understands this as humbling yourselves. They are synonymous with humbling myself before the LORD, emptying and pouring myself out, begging for forgiveness, and being convicted over my sin and the pain I have caused the Messiah Yeshua. That is absolutely all relevant; it's all tied together. Absolutely imperative.

Let me take it a step further. Again, getting into precedent, going back to the argument that I was talking about regarding, “Where are these arguments? Where are these things?” Well, I want to actually take you back into some ancient documents, specifically the Targums. And again, for those of you who are not familiar with the Targums, these are the Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible. And the Talmud actually commands that, when you were to read these, you were to read the Hebrew version formally in the synagogue twice, as they would call the Scripture, and then you would read the Targums once. So, these are ancient documents that were read way back in the days in the synagogues.

I want to read to you what these say. So this comes from Targum, specifically Targum Jonathan. And this is Yonatan or Jonathan, Ben Uzziel. Now, if you know who Jonathan Ben Uzziel is, he was said to be the

disciple of Hillel, so we're going back to the first century. And Hillel was the foundation of the Talmud essentially. I mean, the Talmud's built upon his work, if you will, in the Mishnah.

But let me read to you the very same passage I just read to you in Leviticus, where we see the command. And I'm going to read verse 28. This is in the Targum. We're going to do the English version here. —Targum Jonathan, Leviticus 23:28–29—“and do no work on this same day; for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹ For every man who eateth in **the fast**, and will not fast that same day, shall be cut off by death from among his people.”



And I want to say in quotations, this is interesting: anyone “who eateth in the fast.” It comes out and specifically uses the term “the fast.” That’s ironic when you consider Acts 27 verse 9, where you actually see the Apostle Paul making a voyage because he’s spreading the gospel and he’s on a ship and it’s actually in the seventh month, which is when Yom

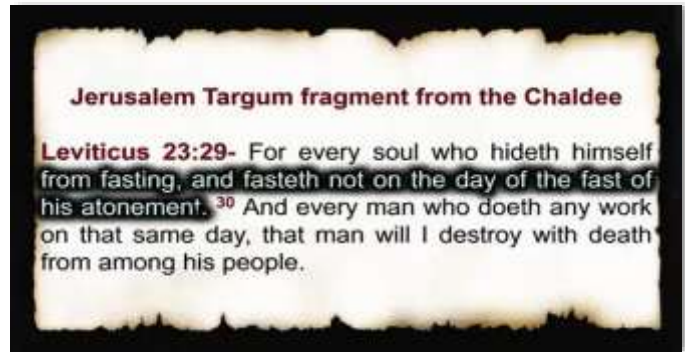
Kippur is. And you're in the fall; the weather—vicious storms can erupt. It literally says the following: **Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,** (Emphasis added).

So, it's the actual term that you do see in the Greek. It's called “the Fast,” in parentheses. That is fascinating in light of what we just read here in Leviticus 23 verse 29 in Targum Yonatan.

That's interesting; it's called “the Fast.” And I want to say one thing: Scholars across the board, and Christian scholars who absolutely do not keep the feast—they do not keep festivals; they're all on the same page. They all understand that Acts 27 verse 9 is talking about “**the Fast**” in quotation marks; it's talking about Yom Kippur. They're pretty unanimous on this fact. Okay, so there's no conspiracy here of interpolation, all right, as though this is some crazy conspiracy because everyone involved is saying the same thing.

In fact, let me take it a step further. Do you know that in the Samaritan Targum, they have the term “fasting” in Leviticus 23? They explicitly insert the term “to fast.” That is an incredible thing because, guess what? The Samaritans were enemies, arch-enemies of Rabbinic Judaism. And you would think, if this is some rabbinic interpolation, which the Samaritans rejected everything rabbinical; in fact, they took it to a much further extreme; they didn't even accept the prophets. They only accepted the Torah; they only accepted the prophet, Moses. But you would think that, considering if this is some rabbinical conspiracy and interpolation on the rabbis' part, the Samaritans would have picked up on this. But they didn't. They actually insert the term “fasting” because everybody is on the same page on this. There's no debate on this, all right?

Let me read a fragment to you, and this is the same passage—Jerusalem Targum fragment from the Chaldee, Leviticus 23:29-30—“For every soul who hideth himself from fasting, and fasteth not on the day of the fast of his atonement.³⁰ And every man who doeth any work on that same day, that man will I destroy with death from among his people.” (emphasis added). Okay, he could not get clearer than that. There's no debate here about what it's referring to; the actual term "fasting" is there.



Let me explain why I get fired up on this thing, why this is so dangerous, and why I would do an impromptu video. Let me go back to Leviticus 23:29—“For any person who is not afflicted in soul, meaning okay, so I know you're not afflicted in soul, on that same day, meaning on Yom Kippur, shall be cut off from his people.” It's a very simple verse. It's terrifying, though, to know that if we do not fast on this day, we do not fast on this day; we do not afflict ourselves on this day, and it's not simply in my heart approaching the LORD and saying, “You know, LORD, I'm sorry for sins.” You have to have that heart. Your fasting is worthless unless you have that heart. But make no mistake, we are commanded to abstain from food. We are to afflict our flesh in that fashion.

You do not want to make this error; you do not want to fall into the ... You know, think of all the warnings that we were given by Yeshua and by the Apostle Paul, that there would be wolves in sheep's clothing. Paul warns us in Acts 20:29 that “...savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.” They will not spare the flock. See, they would bring in false doctrine. They would bring in heresy; they would bring in teachings that would take you away from the commandments of God. But they would be believable. They don't come in as atheists. They don't come in as Hindus. They don't come in from some other false religion. They're among you. They look like you. They are sheep; they are dressed as sheep. They're believers.

This is the deception. Do you understand? And then men would go out deceiving and being deceived. Read 2 Timothy 3:13—being deceived. And so, what's so scary is that you have men who have authentically believed, they have real conviction, and they're trying to spread the truth, when in fact they're leading you away from the commandments of God.

I mean, it is so frightening the time we are living in right now. You cannot spend enough time in the Word of God. You need to get in. You need to get sharp. I am astounded at the lack of discernment today among believers. It's frightening, and it pains me; it really does. I don't say that to sound spiritual. I'm telling you these things keep me up at night. I am so concerned, and with my job as a shepherd, I want to protect the flock with everything I have, and I will do that by the grace of God to the best of my ability.

So, I'm going to end it here, but as we enter into Yom Kippur, we're going to enter it tonight at sundown. As we enter it, you want to be fasting. Brothers and sisters, I'm telling you this is what is commanded in the Torah. Do not be deceived. This is a demonic deception. You do not want to be deceived. You want to enter into this Yom Kippur with fasting. And yes, with the right heart, with a humble heart.

Leviticus 10:3—“...the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; ...’” And this is why Nadav and Avi, who died, because they did not respect the LORD, did not approach Him according to what they were commanded. They offered a strange incense that was foreign and that wasn't commanded. We want to offer what is commanded. Amen?

So, with that said, have an awesome Yom Kippur. One, I pray that it is going to be extremely powerful and spiritual for you. And you want to be meditating right now. If you're watching this video, as soon as you get done, you want to be in prayer; you want to be meditating as you enter into Yom Kippur, asking the LORD for forgiveness and humbling yourself in every way imaginable.

One thing on the heels of that is that there are medical exclusions; there are people with serious medical problems who would not be able to do this, and there are exceptions to that, and that is understandable; that has been understood even amongst the rabbis.

And then also children typically don't fast, but that's up to a parent's discretion on when they want their children to fast and at what age they're going to fast. And you know, even for kids, I would, if I may suggest to the parents out there, your kids need to fast from something. I don't care how old they are; they need to be abstaining from something: dessert, sugar, or candy. They shouldn't taste anything sweet that day. But feeding them is absolutely normal. But we want our kids to experience it, even at a young age, the severity, the seriousness, embarking on the holiness, and the awesomeness of this day.

With that said, shalom to you all.

Yom Kippur: The Biblical Mandate to Fast

The Meaning of "Anah" (Afflict)



"Anah" primarily refers to physical affliction of the flesh, such as hunger or hardship.

Affliction vs. Rest



Afflict

Rest

Leviticus 23:27-28 treats "afflicting your soul" and "resting" as two distinct, separate commands.

Scriptural Synonyms



Psalm 35:13 and Ezra 8:21 explicitly link "afflicting the soul" with "fasting".

The Direct Scriptural Connection

Hebrew Term "Anah" & Fasting



The "Fast" in the New Testament



Acts 27:9 uses the Greek term "The Fast" to identify the Day of Atonement.

Historical & Scriptural Proof

Ancient Universal Consensus



Targums

Samaritan Texts

The Targums and Samaritan texts explicitly insert "fasting" into the Yom Kippur commands.

Medical Exceptions



Historically, exceptions are recognized for those with serious medical conditions or young children.