

This wonderful letter was sent to Rabbi Mat after the 2002 Yom Kippur services

Mat,

I can't begin to explain the enormity of my feelings at this Yom Kippur services. I couldn't put it into words then, and I doubt I can put it into words now.

Elation? Yes. Terror? Yes. But so much more than that. The awesome thought that G-d, so majestic and so powerful, could even notice the likes of me, much less care about me and even more, forgive me so easily for constantly transgressing his perfect commandments, is incomprehensible. Yet while it seems impossible, I sense -- I know -- that it is true.

The result is that I am awash in a sea of pure emotion. This experience is not logical, it is not a product of the intellect, it is not a result of learning. All those have their place, to be sure, but what carries me now comes from deep in my soul. It is fear, yes. It is elation, yes. But it also relief -- relief from the guilt and the burden of carrying my sins and my unworthiness around my neck like a millstone. It is extreme gratitude -- incredulous but infinitely thankful that my Creator, blessed be his name, sees fit to welcome me to him in spite of my grievous flaws.

I am humbled as I have never been humbled before, but also uplifted as I have never been uplifted before. G-d is one; G-d is ours. How can anyone but praise him!

Thank you for sharing with me the most profound truths of the universe -- both this week and these past years. Your work is the most important that a man can do, and it does make a difference. I know that sometimes you despair that you push at a rock that will not move and that you knock at a door that never opens. But rest assured, you are making a difference.

A profound difference. Thank you.