Experiencing Joy through repentance

Dr. Robert Heidler in his book, *The Messianic Church Arising*, pages 201-202, (Heidler, 2006) has developed some suggested exercises for repentance. This exercise below is largely based on his suggestions. During any national day of repentance, or any day of the year for that matter, this is an excellent exercise. We recommend that you take time to complete this joyful exercise. It should be a leisurely “dinner” with the Lord as you welcome Him into your heart and He assists you in the repenting process to be an overcomer. (Revelation 3: 19-22). It’s essentially moving from “sin to joy” in a few basic steps.

Joy follows repentance in the same way that the most joyous seven day festival in Hebrew tradition follows five days after the most solemn Day of Atonement. Leviticus 23:40 says: “…you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days.”

Step one is setting aside time to be alone with God. For many this will be just before bed or early in the morning. Dr. Heidler suggests: “As you come before the Lord, bring your Bible, a pen, and paper. Begin by reading Psalms 32 and 51, where David shares his testimony of confessing sin. Thank God for His love and ask His Spirit to minister to you.”

Next, ask God to bring to mind any sins He wants you to confess. Pray, as David did, ‘Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me.’ (Psalm 139:23). As God brings your sins to mind, write them down. Make a list of your sins. When God stops bringing them to mind ask Him, ‘Is there anything else?’

As He shows you more sins, write them down also. Write down every sin He shows you. **Don’t be in a hurry and don’t try to make excuses**...make your list as complete as possible. …When you ask, ‘Is there anything else?’ and God
doesn’t show you any more, you know your list is complete. You now have a list of every sin God wants you to confess.

The third step is confession. When you feel your list is complete, pray carefully through the list, confessing them one at a time. Ask Him for forgiveness. In 1 John 1:9, God assures us that: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

At any point of confessing a sin when you sincerely wish to be done with its hold on you, renounce it by name using the Name of Jesus Christ, the Name above all names, using the full power of the Holy Spirit available to you at that point, including any heavenly language you may have.

When we come into agreement with God about our sin, He restores us. We are forgiven and cleansed. The blood of Jesus has already paid the price for every sin in your life. Before you even existed, God loved you so much He took the penalty for your sin upon Himself. As we come before Him in humility to confess our sin, God applies the ‘Atoning Sacrifice’ of Jesus to our lives and restores us to full fellowship with Him.

When you have prayed over every item on the list, confessing every sin, there is one more step. Take your sheet of paper listing all the sins you’ve confessed, turn the paper sideways and write across the list in BOLD letters the promise of 1 John 1:9: ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.’

Thank God that every sin is now confessed and forgiven! Now, take that list, tear it up and destroy it! Don’t show your list to anyone. As you tear up your list, you will experience an even greater joy than the Israelites experienced when they watched that second goat led away into the wilderness! You will be assured that God has dealt with your sins and that your defilement has been taken away!”
At that point our Lord Jesus’ truth in John 16:24 will become real; His joy awaits us: “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”