

THE FALL FEASTS OF ISRAEL

The Feast of Trumpets/Yom Kippur/The Feast of Tabernacles

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God, Who is above time and space...created time – the sequence of events – to serve as the arena where the heavenly meets the temporal...where God meets man.

God gave the children of Israel a holy calendar. It is through this calendar of feast days that the Jewish people were to recognize that God is the Lord of every moment and that He must rule over every second of their lives.

The Hebrew word for feast is *mow-ed* which means “appointed time” which means that these feasts are fixed – they are not going to change. God does not change – Malachi 3:6 – “I am the Lord, I change not.” “Appointed time” also means to meet by appointment. God’s desire is to meet with us! What a beautiful picture of God’s heart! God is a personal God Whose desire is to meet with us for relationship, for fellowship, and to teach man His plan for us individually and for the world! And, He does so through the feasts.

Lev. 23:4 - *These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.* These appointed times are to be proclaimed as holy (set apart for its intended purpose) assemblies/gatherings.

In Lev. 23:2 - God calls the feasts **MY** feasts. They belong to God; they reflect Who God is!

God has laid before us His plan which will never change. And, we see a timetable in God’s plan of redemption. And, it is through the Feasts of the Lord that God the Father pointed the children of Israel to the Messiah, God the Son!

The spring feasts point to the Messiah’s first coming. The fall feasts point to the Messiah’s physical Second Coming to earth.

What does Rosh Hashanah mean? I don’t find “Rosh Hashanah” in the Bible. Because those two words are NOT in the Bible! Rosh Hashanah” means *head of the year*. Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year. The Jewish New Year began at sundown 9/25/22! The new year will be 5783. How has the Jewish community arrived at 5783? My understanding is that Rabbis have taken the dates of the people (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, King David, etc.) noted in the Tanakh/the OT and have gone back to the fourth day of creation when the sun and moon were created and came up with the calendar year.

The fall feasts all take place on the Jewish calendar in the 7th month of Tishri which is in the Sept./Oct. timeframe. Seven speaks to COMPLETION. The fall feasts speak to Israel’s PURGING, their REDEMPTION and RESTORATION. The fall feasts find their fulfillment in the Tribulation, Jesus’ physical Second Coming, and the Millennial Kingdom!

Lev. 23:23-25 - *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. ²⁵ You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.’*

Rosh Hashana is known – BIBLICALLY – as the Feast of Trumpets. My Jewish friends don't know about the Feast of Trumpets. They know Rosh Hashanah.

At sundown on the first evening of Rosh Hashanah the shofar, the ram's horn, is blown from synagogues to gather the Jewish community together. God has been gathering and will continue to gather the Jewish people to the land of Israel.

The trumpet has also been blown in Jewish history for the purpose of:

- Signaling the children of Israel re: impending danger (Amos 3:6; Jer. 6:1; Eze. 33:6)
- Calling them to war (Judges 3:27; II Sam. 20:1).
- The shofar was blown when a king ascended to his throne.
- The trumpets were also blown as a call to REPENTANCE. It was a call to the dead to arise and live again – to wake them up from sin to regeneration through repentance.

There are many contrasts within the feast of Rosh Hashanah. On the surface it is a happy time for Jewish people. They eat apples and honey for a sweet year. They are not focused on eternal life. They are focused on living another physical year here – on this earth. **YET** - the Jewish community believes that at Rosh Hashanah all Israel appears before God as KING in anticipation of personal judgment. Rosh Hashanah is a time of reflection and teshuvah/repentance for Jewish people. They consider the sins of the previous year. They are called to repent and to look ahead to the next feast which is Yom Kippur/the Day Atonement which they hope will bring restoration. Their hope is based on good works!

The Jewish community believes when the shofar is blown, three books are open in heaven:

- The book of the completely righteous
- The book of the completely wicked
- The book of the intermediates

The completely righteous are immediately inscribed in the book of life.

The completely wicked are immediately inscribed in the book of death.

The intermediates (average persons) are kept in suspense from Rosh Hashanah until the Day of Yom Kippur.

Jewish mindset - If their good deeds outweigh their bad, they are then inscribed in the book of life – MAYBE – for the next year – for ONE year – of PHYSICAL LIFE!

On the Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur which occurs 7 days following Rosh Hashanah – when the shofar is blasted at the end of the High Holy Days – THE BOOKS ARE SLAMMED SHUT and their fate is sealed.

How is a person to know into which book they'll be inscribed? If reconciliation (a relationship w/ God) is based on mitzvahs – on good deeds – how good is good enough? The Jewish prophet, Isaiah, wrote in Isaiah 64:6, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. . . ." in God's sight. There's no assurance of eternal life when you're basing your hope on good works.

In the synagogues on Rosh Hashanah, Genesis 22 is read. Genesis 22 is the account of God instructing Abraham to take his son, his only son whom he LOVED (the father taking the son whom he LOVED) to the region called Moriah and to offer him as a sacrifice. In Gen. 22:8 we read that Abraham told Isaac that God would provide HIMSELF – the lamb. God HIMSELF would be the Lamb! What was caught in the thicket as a substitute for Isaac? A ram. What happened to the lamb? GOD HIMSELF was that lamb Who was sacrificed on Passover in 30 AD (give or take a year). And that Lamb, the perfect Son of God, GOD the Son, the Messiah Jesus provides forgiveness forever to those who believe in Him. That Lamb, Jesus, rescues us from the wrath of God against sin. He rescues us from an eternity apart from God – in hell. We need to get right with God/to be reconciled with God – to be TRANSFORMED.

When we acknowledge Who Jesus is, GOD, and acknowledge who we are – sinners...and BELIEVE in Him TRUST in Him, submit to Him, God will restore us to a right relationship with Him WHEN we accept His forgiveness through HIS provision – through the blood of the Messiah Jesus. This is what we need to share with Jewish people.

JESUS is missing in Rabbinical Judaism today. True repentance and the gift of forgiveness forever is missing in what the Rabbis are teaching.

On the Jewish Feast of Trumpets the shofar is blown and the people assemble. It is a holy day of gathering for repentance.

God is gathering His people into the land of Israel for a time of repentance. The Hebrew Scriptures call this time – the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jer. 30:7). Jacob’s name was changed to Israel. Israel means “striving with God.” I’m suggesting that this time of Jacob’s trouble is what we know as the Tribulation.

Eze. 20:33-34, 37-38 - God told Israel, *surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.* ³⁴ *I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out...* ³⁷ *“I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;* ³⁸ *I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.*

During the Tribulation...God...

Mal. 3:3 - *...will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.*

During the Tribulation for Israel – those who don’t know Jesus, there will be purging and refining. God will prepare them for the Messiah’s Second Coming.

Lev. 23:27 - *the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement* -- which is known in Hebrew as Yom Kippur.

How does THE DAY OF ATONEMENT fit into end times?

Lev. 16 tells us what God instructed the Jewish people to do EACH YEAR at this most solemn holy day. Lev. 16 tells us that each year Israel offered a BLOOD SACRIFICE on that day. Aaron, the High Priest, sacrificed a bull for his sins and his family's sins. Aaron then took two goats. The Lord's goat was killed and its blood sprinkled on the MERCY SEAT in the Holy of Holies making atonement for the sanctuary. Aaron then placed his hands on the scapegoat and confessed over it the sins of Israel. The sins of the people were placed on this scapegoat. What's a "scapegoat" in modern language? One who takes the blame for wrongdoings of others.

The scapegoat at Yom Kippur was then led into the desert/into the wilderness by "a suitable man" who would escort the scapegoat. Tradition teaches that this man would bring the scapegoat to a precipice over which the scapegoat was thrown to its death. The scapegoat not returning to the camp typified that the sins of Israel had been COVERED – ATONED FOR.

The OT speaks of ATONEMENT – a covering for sin. In the OT we read that the animal sacrifices would COVER sin. Heb. 10:4 – the blood of bulls and goats could NEVER take away sin.

BUT GOD was going to make a NEW COVENANT with the people – the Messiah would come and TAKE AWAY SIN (Jer. 31:31-34).

John 1:29 – *Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.*

There is a tradition noted in the Talmud, NOT inspired Scripture...the Talmud is Rabbinic commentary – and Rabbis debating one another. The Talmud states that a scarlet ribbon was tied to the horn of the scapegoat and a scarlet ribbon was also attached to the door of the tabernacle in the wilderness and then to the door of the temple in Jerusalem. As the scapegoat was led into the wilderness, that ribbon turned white – indicating to the Jewish people that their sin had been COVERED/ATONED FOR.

The Rabbis then make mention of something very odd occurring. They have written in the Talmud that 40 years BEFORE the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD...40 years before 70 AD – that would be 30 AD. What happened in 30 AD? In 30 AD – the Rabbis wrote – that scarlet ribbon stopped turning white!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WHY? The ULTIMATE SACRIFICE had been made. There was NO LONGER the need to sacrifice animals!!!

What is occurring within the Jewish community during Yom Kippur today? The way of atonement – through the blood – is not followed. Lev. 17:11 – God required blood for the atonement of sin. Are God's instructions to be OBEYED? YES! Have they been obeyed at Yom Kippur today? NO! Therefore, there is not even atonement, not even a covering for sin, during the Day of Atonement in what the Rabbis are teaching today.

Those of us who have acknowledged our sin and have placed our trust in JESUS – JESUS Who REDEEMS us – WHO TAKES AWAY OUR SIN – we are ASSURED of ETERNAL LIFE with GOD!

The fulfillment of Yom Kippur: in the END TIMES, how glorious that Scripture tells us that Jesus, the ultimate sacrifice for sin, will return at His physical SECOND COMING on the day of Yom Kippur and it will be the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9-10; Isa. 61:1-3).

God will mercifully pour His Spirit upon the one third of the Jewish people who are alive at the end of the Tribulation. Two thirds of the Jewish population will die during the Tribulation (Zech. 13:8-9). When God pours out His Spirit on the Jewish people still alive, they will MOURN for Jesus (Zech. 12:10) and He will return:

Zech. 13:8-9 - *“That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, I will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; and each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’ ”*

Zech. 14:8-9 - *And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem,...⁹ And the LORD shall be King over all the earth...And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.*

These verses are speaking of Jesus’ physical Second Coming.

We’ve come to the last feast

The Feast of Tabernacles – which is also called the feast of booths, the feast of ingathering, the feast, and the season of our rejoicing. .

In Ex. 25:8 God told the Jewish people He desired to dwell with them. We see this promise of God dwelling with man throughout Scripture.

AND, as a visual aid...God instructed the children of Israel in the wilderness – on their way to the Promised Land - to dwell in booths called sukkahs (woven) for 7 days.

Sukkahs were temporary dwellings w/ leafy roofs. The rooves with palm branches allowed the Israelites to look up – see the sky/the heavens – and acknowledge GOD – and THANK HIM for His provisions, protection, His shelter.

These flimsy booths symbolized man’s need to depend upon God for EVERYTHING!

We find the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Millennial Kingdom - the Messianic Kingdom - when God dwells with man - when Jesus will establish His Kingdom and will rule and reign from King David’s throne for 1,000 years in Jerusalem (Rev. 20).

The Feast of Trumpets looks forward to a gathering and judgment during the Tribulation and ultimately repentance.

Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement looks forward to restoration at Jesus’ Second Coming.

Because of Israel’s restoration – they will rejoice at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Isn’t that always God’s way – judgment, repentance, restoration – REJOICING in what HE has done!

In Jesus’ day the Feast of Tabernacles had grown to a festival of grand proportions. Jerusalem was crowded with Jewish pilgrims.

The water-drawing ceremony had become part of the Feast in Jesus’ day. An assigned Levitical priest, accompanied by a throng of worshippers, descended to the Pool of

Siloam and filled his golden pitcher w/ water while the people chanted from Isa. 12:3, “Therefore, with joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

The crowd then returned to the Temple from the Pool of Siloam and the priest circled the altar and poured the water into a silver basin upon the altar while the crowds chanted the words of Psalm 118:25, “O Lord, do save, we beseech Thee.” (Hallel [praise]).

On the last day of the feast the priest would once again draw the water but instead of circling the altar once, he would circle it 7 times while the crowd continued to call out to God to save them. Messianic fervor was heightened due to the oppression by Rome. The cry for a DELIVERER was constant.

Israel was an agricultural society. This was a water drawing ceremony. Rain was seen as necessary for the life of their crops. Yes, they were crying out for rain – but they were also crying out for deliverance for them as a people. This water drawing ceremony held a significance much deeper than the agricultural implications.

Water represents the Holy Spirit. The water drawing pointed to that day when, according to Joel 2:28, God would rain His Spirit upon the children of Israel. (Eze. 36:25 – “I will sprinkle you with clean water.”) The people were crying out for salvation – they were crying out for deliverance – they were crying out for the Messiah..

On the last day of the feast, after the water was poured, there was a hush as the people listened. For what? They listened for the wind.

Jesus had told Nicodemus, the Teacher of Israel, that he must be born again. Jesus said, *The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you cannot tell from where it comes and where it goes. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.* The invisible wind brings visible results – so it is with the Holy Spirit. They listened for the wind. . . . for the Holy Spirit of God!

At this point in the ceremony, amongst thousands of worshippers who were silent – waiting upon God to deliver His Spirit - a young Rabbi stepped forward and proclaimed, (John 7:37-38) “If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”

Jesus – God incarnate – God in the flesh – dwelling among men – offered Himself at this great feast – the Feast of Tabernacles - the feast which finds its fulfillment in God dwelling with us! The message of the Feasts is all about Jesus. AND - He continues to offer Himself to those who have not yet acknowledged their sin and placed their trust in Him for their salvation. WHAT a PRIVILEGE – what an ABSOLUTE JOY it is to share JESUS with all people – FOR GOD’S GLORY!

Rev. 21:1-3 John the Apostle wrote, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor*

crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

Rev. 21:22-27 - In the New Jerusalem, the Apostle John ²² *saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. ²⁴ And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ²⁵ Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶ And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷ But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.*