

I. The Biblical Holidays of the Fall

- A. The sounding of the shofar at Feast of Trumpets signaled the beginning of the fall feasts of God. This season of the fall has been considered, throughout the history of the people of Israel, as the highest holy days of the year. Three of the Seven consecrated times that God ordained for His people happen in a 19-day period.
- B. Understanding and participating in the Feasts of Remembrance that are deeply engrained in our faith is important and revelatory for all believers. We place a far greater weight upon the heart behind these feasts rather than the methodology of their structure. (Is. 1:10-13)

We are.....

- 1. Positioning ourselves to encounter Jesus through the historical and spiritual meanings in the feasts of God.
- 2. Gaining insight of Hebraic thought and culture help to us understand the context of the Word.
- 3. Expecting the Holy Spirit to reveal Jesus, and to unify us as we participate in these unique expressions of our faith.
- 4. Desiring to understand more of the timeline of God in conjunction with His plan in redemptive history and future.

We are not.....

- 1. Participating in these feasts because we think it will cause us to be more righteous in God's eyes. You cannot improve on the right standing you have with God through the blood of Jesus.
 - 2. Better than other believers because we are celebrating the feasts.
 - 3. Going to have the same expression as other church families or individuals.
 - 4. Attempting to be or act Jewish for the sake of culturally relevant evangelism.
- C. Earlier this year we participated in and taught on the spring feasts that are part of the biblical calendar. We learned how Jesus ultimately fulfilled the spring feasts of God through His restorative and redemptive work in His first coming. It is in this light, we should expect these fall feasts to point to Him and find their fulfillment in Him. It is a widely held belief that Jesus will fulfill these feasts through His return to the earth in His second coming. (Col. 2:16-17)

II. Overview of the Fall Feasts (Lev. 23:23-44)

Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles

- A. The Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) – Takes place on the 1st day of the 7th month of the biblical calendar. This feast was observed by the blowing of a shofar and an offering of fire.
- B. 10 Days of Awe – The 10-day period between Feast of Trumpets and Day of Atonement. This was considered a time of serious repentance and reconciliation.
- C. Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) – Takes place on the 10th day of the 7th Month of the biblical calendar. This feast was observed by a 24-hour day of fasting and solemn assemblies.
- D. Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) – Takes place on the 15th day of the 7th month of the biblical calendar. This was a time of great joy and celebration of the fall harvest. Celebrated by building and staying in a temporary dwelling for you and your family for 7 days.

III. Feasts of Trumpets – (Lev. 23:23-24)

- A. Historical Context - Jewish Rabbis gave such significance to this first feast of the fall high holy days, that they eventually considered it as the “spiritual new year”. They changed the name of this feast to “Rosh HaShanah” or “the head of the year”. (Most will observe this feast at sundown Sept. 20th into the 21st)
 - 1. The purpose of this day is corporate repentance and introspection. It is the day when the people of Israel took stock of their spiritual condition and made necessary changes, to insure that they were starting the new spiritual year off on a firm foundation. There is a strong emphasis given to making peace with our fellow man on this day, before we come to the Day of Atonement. (Mat. 5:22-26)
- B. Traditional Observance – This feast was celebrated by offering sacrifices along with the blasts of a trumpet. The shofar is sounded at the gathering place, using different blasts or notes that symbolize different heart postures or focuses, as they set their hearts to encounter God.
 - 1. The liturgy, music, prayers, and baptisms during this feast day would emphasize the theme of turning to God with all our hearts. It is customary to take the day off from work or school, in order to observe the entire day in consecration.

Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles

2. Many will gather near bodies of water and cast bread crumbs or pebbles into the water as a symbolic gesture of God hurling all their iniquities into the sea. New Year blessing cards are given to family and friends. (Mic. 7:19)
- C. Prophetic Fulfillment – I believe, just as the other feasts of God, this feast is rich with prophetic hope and meaning. As it characterizes a time of ingathering in unity and spiritual preparation for a new season, many believe this feast will be fulfilled through the coming of Jesus the Christ (Messiah). More specifically, many believers point to the event of the rapture of believers to meet the Lord in the sky upon His return, thus ushering in a true and eternal new year. (Is. 27:12-13, Zec. 9:14-17, Mat. 24:29-31, 1 Cor. 15:50-53, 1 Thes. 4:16-18, Rev. 11:15-19 and 14:14-16)

IV. Day of Atonement – (Lev. 23:26-32)

- A. Historical Context – This feast is known as the feast of fasting, and I believe it is the only biblically mandated recurring corporate fasting day. As the feast of trumpets was about repentance and turning to the Lord, this feast is about being forgiven. Fasting on this day is symbolic of the spiritual cleansing by the forgiveness of God. As the nation fasted, this was the one time per year that the high priest would enter the holy of holies and make atonement for the nation (Lev. 16). Most observers will do a 24 hour fast starting sundown on Sept. 29th to sundown Sept. 30th.
- B. Traditional Observance – This feast is observed by a 24 hour fast. Most Jews will forgo all food and water.
1. A few hours before the fast begins, it is customary to have a commemorative meal. The table is set with the best linens and dishes, to set the meal apart. White is worn to represent the cleansing from our sins. The next day, the fast continues with services focused upon forgiveness and cleansing.
 2. The 24 hour fast is closed with a final shofar blast, speaking of the accomplishment of God's forgiveness and atonement for sin. A meal to break the fast commences with joy and sweet tasting food and drink. For us who have been cleansed from all sin through faith in Jesus, we fast for intimacy and wholeheartedness, not forgiveness from sin. (Look to our fasting guide on the info table)

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- C. Prophetic Fulfillment – Many understand this feast to be ultimately fulfilled when Jesus removes all sin and Satan from the earth upon His return. The prophetic scriptures point to a time when final atonement is realized, received, and manifested to all His people. (Is: 52, Zec. 12:10-13:2, Mat. 13:41, Rom. 11:25-27, Rev. 20:10, 21:27)

V. Feast of Tabernacles - (Lev. 23:33-44)

- A. Historical Context – As with the other feast days, the name tells of its purpose and meaning. It is the 7th feast in the 7th month, and it lasts for 7 days. Seven biblically signifies completion and perfection. God instructed His people to celebrate the fall harvest through building temporary shelters (booths) and dwelling in them for a week. These booths were to remind them of when He dwelt with them in the wilderness and took care of their every need. It is also widely held, that the birth of Jesus was in accordance with this feast. (Exodus, Neh. 8:14-18) (Sundown Oct 4th – 11th)
- B. Traditional Observance – The first fruits of the fall harvest were brought before the Lord, representing the bringing in of the entirety of the year's crop. A shelter is built and picnic style meals are eaten in a relaxed and happy atmosphere with family and friends. You would invite others over to share meals with in your shelter. These gatherings provide opportunity to share your faith, love, and prosperity with others.
1. Some type of thankful first fruits offering is made in a corporate setting to thank, honor, and bless God for His provision of the year's crop. Generally, a symbolic offering of total harvest is held up to the Lord and waved before Him.
 2. A water pouring ceremony also commonly accompanies this feast speaking of God providing water from the rock. Priests would draw water from the pool of Siloam and go back into temple and pour it out upon the alter while singing (Is. 12:2-3) speaking of the water of Gods salvation. (Jhn 7:37-38, 1 Cor. 10:1-4)
- C. Prophetic Fulfillment – Most believe this feast is ultimately fulfilled when the kingdom of God is once again fully established on the earth. This reality is also ushered in by Jesus upon His return to earth. The long-forgotten reality of the God physically dwelling upon the earth with man will be fully restored never to be forgotten again. This is the pinnacle of the narrative of humanity's redemption, the day burning in the heart of our bridegroom God. (Zech. 14:16-17, Mat. 17:1-8, Jhn 1:14, Rev. 21:1-3)