

Lev. 23:23-25 tells us that on the **Feast of Trumpets**, trumpets will be blown. This day in the Jewish community is called Rosh Hashanah.

From a cultural perspective, from studying Jewish sources, we know that at sundown on the Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish people are called to worship with the blast of the shofar. 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.

What's a shofar? Ram's horn.

In the synagogues on Rosh Hashanah, Genesis 22 is read – the account of God instructing Abraham to take his 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 that was sacrificed on Passover in 30 AD (give or take a year).

At Rosh Hashanah in traditional/Rabbinical Judaism today the ram's horn is blown to call the people to repentance. At Rosh Hashanah – Jewish people seek reconciliation with man. At Yom Kippur – Jewish people seek reconciliation with God.

This is a serious time of introspection. It's a time when Jewish people consider the sins of the previous year and are called to repent before Yom Kippur. Because at Yom Kippur, according to

Jewish tradition, the books they believe were opened at Rosh Hashanah are sealed for the next year – and so is one's fate.

What books?

Traditional Judaism teaches that at the blast of the shofar at RH, 3 books are opened in the heavenly courts

The book of the completely righteous

The book of the completely wicked

The book of the intermediates - (average persons) who are kept in suspense from Rosh Hashanah until the Day of Yom Kippur. If their good deeds outweigh their bad, they are then inscribed in the book of life – maybe – for the next year – for ONE year!

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?

What is God's standard? PERFECTION.

The Jewish prophet, Isaiah, answered the “how good is good enough” question. He 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.

Our hope **MUST** be based on **GOD** and what He has done for us! **GOD** alone is perfect.

The Feast of Trumpets is a holy day of gathering. God is gathering His people into the land of Israel – for a time of repentance. What is that time of repentance? The **TRIBULATION** – the time of Jacob's Trouble (Jer. 30:7) – which is yet to occur.

The Feast of Trumpets will be fulfilled in the Tribulation.

As we read about the time of Jacob's Trouble in Scripture, we see at the end of 7 years of Tribulation, a time of restoration for Israel, following their repentance.

Scripture teaches that repentance **MUST** precede restoration!

THERE IS A FUTURE RESTORATION FOR ISRAEL.

Zechariah 12:10 says that God will pour out His Spirit upon the house of David and they will mourn for their sins. . .

Yom Kippur, the 6th feast of the Lord, is the Day of Atonement – when Jewish people cry out for forgiveness.

Lev. 16 tells us that each year Israel offered a blood sacrifice on that day.

The Lord's goat was killed and its blood sprinkled on the mercy seat by the High Priest in the Holy of Holies.

Then the High Priest placed his hands on the scapegoat and confessed the sins of Israel. The scapegoat was then led into the desert – and escorted to a precipice over which it was thrown to its death. That was a picture of Israel's sins being forgiven – through the blood that was shed.

There is a Jewish tradition that states that a scarlete ribbon was tied to the horn of the scapegoat and a scarlet ribbon was also tied to the Tabernacle/Temple door.

The Rabbis wrote in the Talmud (Rabbinic commentary) that as the scapegoat was led into the wilderness, that ribbon turned white.

The Talmud also states that approx. 40 years before the Temple was destroyed (30 AD-ish) – the ribbon stopped turning white! The ultimate sacrifice, Jesus had been given.

Yom Kippur – as observed in Biblical times – was not necessary – the Messiah had come and provided the ULTIMATE sacrifice for sins.

Lev. 17:11 – God required blood for the atonement of sin.

Where is the blood today in the observance of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement?

There is no Temple (70 AD), no altar, no sacrifice, no blood.

There is no atonement in Rabbinical Judaism today – because the way of forgiveness through the blood of the Messiah is ignored.

While Yom Kippur speaks to restoration – there is no restoration in Judaism today w/out the blood.

In Rabbinical Judaism today – when the shofar is blown at the end of Yom Kippur, they believe their fate is sealed for – ONE YEAR. And, the next year our Jewish friends will go through the entire ritual again – hoping to be restored.

I know my name is written in the Book of Life (Rev. 20:12; 21:27) based on what God has provided through the Feasts of Israel – because the Messiah Jesus, the Passover Lamb, shed His blood to remove my sins FOREVER!

What about Israel? There will be a future restoration for the nation of Israel.

Yom Kippur will be fulfilled at the Second Coming of Jesus, when Israel repents and God pours out His Spirit and the Messiah comes again to rule from Jerusalem.

But what about today? What about a person's personal relationship with God?

Scripture tells us that only those who have been forgiven their sin through the blood of God's ultimate sacrifice – the Messiah – JESUS - will see God face-to-face.

The last Fall Feast of Israel is **the Feast of Tabernacles** – which is also called the Feast of Ingathering, the Feast, and the Season of Our Rejoicing. . . . Jewish people call this feast – Sukkot.

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!

What is the message of the Feast of Tabernacles? In Ex. 25:8 God told the Jewish people He desired to dwell with them.

God instructed the children of Israel in the wilderness to dwell in booths called sukkahs (woven) for 7 days. Temporary dwellings w/ leafy roofs. These flimsy booths symbolized man's need to depend upon God for EVERYTHING! These booths were a reminder that God would shelter His people as they obeyed Him.

The Feast of Tabernacles celebrates God dwelling with man – and this feast will be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom – the Messianic Kingdom - when God delivers the Kingdom to Israel – when He dwells with man.

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."

Messianic fervor was heightened due to the oppression by Rome. The cry for a DELIVERER was constant.

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.

Israel was an agricultural society. This was a water drawing ceremony. Rain was seen as necessary for the life of their crops. They were crying out for rain – but they were also crying out for deliverance.

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. WHY? What did Jesus tell Nicodemus in John 3:8 after He told him that he must be born again? “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.

So – 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, “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.” (John 7:37-38)

Jesus – God incarnate – God in the flesh – dwelling among men – offered Himself at this great feast – 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 us.

When we realize that we are sinners and that He, as the perfect Passover Lamb, shed His blood for us and when we accept His gift

of forgiveness – we are redeemed – we are delivered from sin and we can come before God in heaven when we die.

Jesus promises forgiveness FOREVER – He promises and provides for us ETERNAL LIFE.

God tells us that today is the day of salvation.

We are on the VERGE! THE TIME IS NOW! We may not be here tomorrow. You may not be here tomorrow.

What are you going to do – today – w/ the message of the feasts of Israel?

My prayer is that if anyone is here who doesn't know Jesus as their Messiah – their Lord – that you will ask Him to forgive you of your sins – trust Him for your salvation – KNOWING – being ASSURED - that He is able to give you eternal life.

God is not remote – He is not distant. He has invaded the world – and He can invade your life!

The Gospel is very Jewish: There is one God – the Jewish God. There is one Messiah – the Jewish Messiah. Gentiles must accept the Jewish Messiah or they will suffer the same consequences as Jewish people who do not accept the Jewish Messiah.

