

JESUS IN THE FEASTS OF ISRAEL

Week 8 – Harvest Time/Don't Shmeer the Shmutz with the Shmatta

ROMANS 11:11-36

In Lev. 23 we read of the spring feasts and the fall feasts. What about the summer feasts?

Jer. 8:20 – *The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!*

The harvest was a time of abundance in Israel. Abundance speaks to a season of GRACE.

Within the chapter concerning the feasts of the Lord in Leviticus 23, there is a most curious verse that we find directly following the spring feasts, directly before the fall feasts.

Lev. 23:22 - *When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.*

Harvest time – when the Jews didn't clear the corners of their fields – to provide for the poor and the stranger – to provide for the Gentiles. How do we know in the Hebrew Scriptures that “stranger” is referring to a Gentile?

Ex. 12:48 - *And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.* (Also – Lev. 19:33-34; Dt. 10:19; Isa. 56:6-7)

This was a law that God gave the children of Israel to provide for the poor and the stranger. How appropriate for Lev. 23:22 to follow the Feast of Pentecost which believers in Jesus celebrate as the birth of the Church! The Church is God's redemptive tool at this point in history. Jesus sent out the Jewish disciples – in the Great Commission – to the nations! Millions of Gentiles have come to faith in Jesus – the Messiah – Who is a Jew (Rev. 5:5). Gentiles have been provided for – regarding the Gospel – by the Jews.

How have the Jewish people provided for the Church?

- God gave the Jewish people His word – for the world. Repeatedly in the Hebrew Scriptures as God works in and through the Jewish people, God's intent is proclaimed, . . . *that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.* (Joshua 4:24; I Samuel 17:46; I Kings 8:43; II Kings 19:19; Isaiah 52:10).
- Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4:22 that . . . *salvation is of the Jews.* How?
 - In Genesis 12:3, we read that God told Abram in cutting the covenant with him that He, God, would . . . *and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* The Messiah would come through the Jewish line and bless the world.

- Isaiah 49:6 tells us, . . . *It is indeed too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.*

Leviticus 23:22 is speaking of the Church Age – a parenthesis in God’s calendar for Israel – a time for the Gentiles. God is using the Church, one new man (Eph. 2:15), comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus, as His redemptive tool now. Because God’s will, His plan, is never thwarted, He will pick up with the Jewish people as His redemptive tool following the Church Age, at the beginning of the fall feasts.

God’s plan of redemption is for the world – for both Jew and Gentile!

We need to know that Israel’s rejection is not total – Rom. 11:5: *Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

What about now? Paul tells us. . .

Rom. 11:11-15 - *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall (pipto - permanent fall; to come to an end; to disappear)? Certainly not! But through their fall (paraptoma – to lapse or deviate) to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.* ¹² *Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! . . .* ¹⁵ *For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be (when they are restored; when the third of the Jews left alive at the end of the Tribulation will be saved) but life from the dead?*

When Israel is saved, it will be as life from the dead for the world because Jesus will return and set up His kingdom on earth – and the curse on the earth will be removed.

What do we say when God places Jewish people in our lives? We tell them – “Don’t shmeer the shmutz with the shmatta”!

Shmeer – wipe; shmutz – dirt; shmatta – rag.

Terminology

- instead of Christ – say Jesus or Yeshua
- instead of church – say congregation
- instead of Christian – say believer
- instead of Old Testament/New Testament – say Old Covenant/New Covenant or Hebrew Scriptures
- instead of converted – say forgiven

Quick comments/responses:

- “Oh, I believe in God”
- “Can you describe your God to me? How did you come to believe in this God? What is your source?”

- “Your God is a God of judgment; my God is a God of love”
 - “My God is judgmental when it comes to sin. BUT, He paid the ultimate price for sin – that is ultimate love”
- “I’m still waiting for the Messiah”
 - “I’m waiting for the Messiah – the second time”
 - If Jesus is not the Messiah, we have no Messiah because Hebrew Scripture specifically states that the Messiah would come BEFORE the second Temple was destroyed (Dan. 9:26, Mal. 3:1, Gen. 49:10 [rule in Judah will not depart until He comes – so the Messiah would have to come before 70 AD])
- “I believe parts of the Scripture”
 - “Oh yeah? Which parts?”
- “I don’t believe the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God”
 - “What do you believe about your deed to the land?” (Deut. 34; Gen. 15:18)
- “Jews don’t believe in Jesus”
 - Jesus was Jewish, the Bible was written by 39 Jewish authors, the Bible’s audience – Jewish, the disciples – Jewish, the early church – Jewish
 - Jews have always believed in Jesus; the first believers in Jesus were Jewish!
- “Jesus is for the Gentiles “
 - Isa. 49:5-7
 - Isa. 60:1-3
 - Gal. 3:8
- “If I believe in Jesus, I’ll no longer be Jewish”
 - Jesus was Jewish; He will return as a Jew – Rev. 5:5, Rev. 22:16
 - Rom. 11:12; Acts 22:3 – Paul considered himself Jewish
 - You are Jewish by blood. Being Jewish is your lineage. You were born Jewish, you’ll die Jewish. No one can take your Jewishness away.
- “There’s no such thing as original sin”
 - Psa. 51
 - Jer. 17:9
 - Jewish thought: their descendants were in their loins. As a descendant of Adam, we inherit the stain of sin.
- “I’m hoping my good deeds will outweigh my bad deeds”
 - Jer. 17:9; Isa. 59:2; Isa. 64:6; Eccl. 7:20
 - God requires blood to atone for sin (Lev. 17:11). Who gave the Rabbis the right to change the rules?
- “Christians believe in 3 gods; Jews believe in one God”
 - The Hebrew Scriptures clearly denote three distinct personalities in the Godhead:
 - The Lord Jehovah (YHVH) – noted throughout the Hebrew Scriptures
 - The Angel of Jehovah (YHVH) – Gen. 16:7-14; Gen. 22:9-16; Gen. 31:11-13, Gen. 32:24-30; Ex. 3:1-5; Judges 2:1; Judges 6:11-24; Judges 13:2-24
 - The Spirit of God – Gen. 1:2; Gen. 6:3; Job 33:4; Psa. 51:11; Psa. 139:7; Isa. 11:2; Isa. 63:10; Isa. 63:14.
 - Name for God – Elohim (plural)

- Deut. 6:4 – the Hebrew word for “one” in this verse is *echad* which means “composite unity.” *Echad* is also used in Gen. 2:24 - husband and wife shall become one flesh!
- Genesis 19:24 (and the LORD [Jehovah] rained down fire and brimstone from the LORD [Jehovah] in heaven)
- Genesis 22:11-12 (the Angel of the Lord states that Abraham didn’t withhold Isaac from Him)
- Genesis 31:11-13 (Jacob’s dream; the Angel of the Lord speaks – “I am the God of Bethel. . . .”)
- Genesis 32:24-30 (Jacob wrestles with the Angel and he says, “I have striven with God”; and Jacob said he saw God face-to-face)
- Isa. 48:16 – tri-unity of God
- “If God loves us, why did He allow 6,000,000 to die?” (This is one of the hardest subjects to discuss when talking with a Jewish person)
 - God is not directly responsible for the Holocaust.
 - God created man with the ability to choose. The choices we make on a spiritual level, as well as on a physical level, will produce a result. If we choose to love and obey God, we will receive His blessings (Mosaic covenant – blessings and curses; conditional covenant). If we choose to rebel against God, we will experience the removal of the blessings. This is esp. clear for the nation of Israel in Deut. 28.
 - God loves the Jewish people – Jer. 31:3, Isa. 49:16, Isa. 54:6-8
 - God has promised to preserve His people
 - God used that terrible event – the Holocaust – to create the nation of Israel
 - Spiritual warfare. Satan went after God’s chosen people. Satan hates whom God loves. God loves the Jewish people (Jer. 3:3). God promised to establish His Kingdom for the Jewish people. Satan is attempting to annihilate the Jewish people which would make God unfaithful/a liar!! God is faithful always. He will deliver on His promises to the Jewish people!
- “Our Messiah has not come as yet”
 - If Jesus isn’t the Messiah – we don’t have a Messiah. The Messiah had to come, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, before the destruction of the 2nd Temple.
 - Dan. 9:26 – the Messiah would come before the Temple was destroyed
 - How will you know when the Messiah comes? The Temple has been destroyed – the records have been destroyed.
 - Mal. 3:1 – the Lord, the Messiah, would come to the Temple! Jesus came to the Temple!
- “Our Messiah will bring peace; Jesus brought a sword. . . .”
 - This objection is based on the false premise that the Messiah will come only once to set up His Kingdom and will reign forever in peace.
 - Firstly explain that peace starts within the heart. Jesus promised the peace of God to rule in our hearts at His first coming (Jer. 31:33 [God is focused on the internal over the external], Isa. 26:3, Num. 6:26 [the Aaronic blessing speaks to knowing peace now], John 14:27)

- Matthew 10:34-39 – “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword” – His first coming. Must stress the two comings of the Messiah (not two Messiahs).
- Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you – Matt. 6:33 – first the internal then the external.
- “Jewish people don’t think much about the Messiah”
 - The Talmud states that “All the prophets prophesied only of the days of the Messiah.” “The world was not created but for the Messiah.”
 - The Messiah is spoken of throughout the Prophets.
 - Moses spoke of God raising up the Prophet (Deut. 18)
 - Among the Lubavitchers there are those who are called the “Messianists” (or Moshichists) – this is a name they adopted for themselves. **Within this movement also exists the expectation that this Messiah will be more than Israel’s Anointed One – He will be God/Adonai Himself.
- “The Messiah is not deity; God would not become a man”
 - “. . . Jews cannot believe that a man can be God.” Fruchtenbaum, “Jesus Was a Jew”
 - “The NT knows Jesus as the son of God and as Messiah. Judaism, however, does not acknowledge a son of God who was set apart and elevated above other human beings. The Jewish conviction is that all men are equal before God and no mortal can claim divinity.” – whoever said this was referring to modern-day Judaism.
 - We have to look at what the ancient Rabbis believed about the Messiah’s preexistence. The modern Rabbis believe that the Messiah is only a man (other than the Messianists under the Lubavitcher sect).
 - Peter said, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Matt. 16:16 – while that’s recorded in the New Covenant – it had to come from Jewish teaching!
 - “I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God” John 1:49
 - The Sanhedrin asked Jesus, “Are You then the Son of God?” in Luke 22:70-23:3. (See separate notes for a discussion re: the Sadducees, Pharisees, and the Sanhedrin)
 - “Son of God”:
 - Jesus is the Eternal Son in the Godhead; in the one undivided essence of God there are three persons.
 - Messianic title - The Messiah is the Son of God as Israel was the son of God [Ex. 4:22; Hos. 11:1]; Israel is a type of the Messiah. Jesus is the One in Whom true destiny of Israel is to be fulfilled.
 - Psalm 2 indicates that Jehovah is calling the Messiah His Son.
 - Isa. 55:8 – “My thoughts are not your thoughts; My ways are not your ways.”
 - Gen. 18:24 - “Is anything too hard for Me?” (Jer. 32:27)
 - Early rabbinical beliefs (450 BC/BCE to 400 AD/CE) about the mission, character, origin and destiny of the Messiah were radically different from the beliefs held today.
 - Dozens of passages in the Tanakh – that the ancient Rabbis believed referred to the Messiah --are interpreted by modern Rabbis as non-Messianic.

- Some 20th Century Jewish scholars have accused Christians of fabricating the belief that the Messiah would be God, born of a virgin and that He would come, suffer and die for the sins of the people and then come again. BUT, the ancient views are in almost perfect agreement with Christian beliefs regarding the character, lineage, birth, mission and destiny of the Messiah.
- “Messiah” means “anointed” – many were anointed in the Hebrew Scriptures. But only One fulfilled the prophecies of prophet (Deut. 18:15; John 6:14), priest (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 6:20), and King (Isa. 9:7; Matt. 1:1, 6/Dan. 2:44; Rev. 17:14)
- Micah 5:2 – He is from everlasting (eternal) – only God is eternal.
- Isaiah 9:6 – He is the Mighty God, the everlasting Father.
- Jeremiah 23:5-6 – He shall be called the LORD our righteousness – Jehovah Tsidkenu. God is speaking of the Branch in this passage. The Branch was recognized as the Messiah. The Branch is Jehovah in this passage; He is God!
- Zechariah 12:8-10 – God is speaking, “. . . and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced. . . “
- Isaiah 7:14 – “Immanuel” – God with us!
 - The virgin birth is Jewish!
 - God excels at creating out of nothing – Genesis 1:1; Sarah’s empty womb. . . Hannah’s empty womb, Rachel’s empty womb. . .
 - “Almah” – pure, chaste woman ready for marriage
 - Septuagint – (Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) 70 Rabbis who translated the Hebrew into Greek used the Gk. word, Parthenos which exclusively means “virgin” (that’s saying a lot when typically the “saying” goes, “you have 2 Jews, you have 3 opinions”!)
 - Genesis 24:16 – “betulah” – commonly considered to mean virgin exclusively. Rabbis today say that if Isaiah had meant “virgin” he would’ve used this word. But, this word does not always mean “virgin:
 - Joel 1:8 – it’s used in reference to a widow.
 - Gen. 24:16 – because it doesn’t exclusively mean virgin, the phrase, “had never known a man” was added.
 - “Almah” is found to be sufficient as “virgin” in Gen. 24:43 as it describes Rebekah who was obviously a virgin when she married Isaac.
- “Why have Christians persecuted the Jewish people? Why do the Christians hate the Jews?”
 - Most Jewish people relate the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Pogroms, the Holocaust, etc. to Christians. The problem stems from a misunderstanding of what a “Biblical Christian” is compared to a “professing Christian”.
 - Explain the meaning of “Christian” – little Christ, follower of Christ. If someone is truly a follower of Jesus the Messiah, he will act like Jesus. Jesus loves everyone. A true Christian loves the Jewish people (Matt. 23:37; Mark 5:19; John 15:12).
- “Why are the Jewish people blamed for the death of Christ?”
 - Historically, the Romans nailed Jesus to the cross and the crowds demanded the crucifixion. Crucifixion was the mode of execution under the Romans. Capital

- punishment had been transferred to Rome. Had it remained under Jewish authority, Jesus would have been stoned.
- The sin of the world killed Jesus. It was not an act of maliciousness that caused Jesus to die; it was the love of God for mankind that resulted in Jesus' death.
 - It pleased God the Father to bruise His Son – Isa. 53:10
 - Jesus went willingly to the cross – John 10:17, 18.
 - Scripture specifically states that the Gentiles mocked, scourged and crucified Jesus – Matt. 20:19.
 - Acts 4:27 - *For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together.*
 - “The Bible was written by men; it’s full of errors and contradictions. How do we know that the Bible hasn’t been changed over the years?”
 - Zechariah 7:12 – the inspiration of the Spirit of God upon the prophets.
 - Within the prophets – “the Lord saith. . . .”
 - 66 books written over 1500 years by 40 different authors (39 of whom were Jewish) – one theme.
 - Why would man condemn himself in the Scriptures?
 - Approx. 333 prophecies were fulfilled – by the Messiah.
 - The Dead Sea Scrolls has proven the purity of the Bible through the years. They date back to 200-300 BC and contain the oldest manuscripts of the Old Covenant available today – and are as much as word-for-word in relation to our manuscripts today.
 - I Peter 1:11 – the prophets didn’t know what they were writing – they were led by the Spirit of the Messiah.
 - “What about my relatives who died?”
 - Do not tell them if this question is raised that their loved ones have gone to hell. State that you don’t know the spiritual condition of someone that you never met.
 - Share God’s love with them.
 - Luke 16:19-31 – there is an afterlife in which there is consciousness. “Wherever your loved ones are, they now know the truth and would want you to believe the Scriptures and accept Jesus as your Messiah.”
 - “Jews don’t need to accept Jesus; we’re under the covenant”
 - Which covenant? (They’ll most likely respond with the Mosaic Covenant) Jer. 31:32 – the children of Israel broke the covenant.
 - God will make a new covenant with Israel – He will write the law upon their hearts – Jer. 31:33.
 - (Malachi 3:1- - the Lord shall come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant - would come BEFORE the second temple was destroyed)
 - A requirement of the covenant – blood sacrifice. . . . How are you atoning for your sins now – since the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD?
 - “We have our own religion. Why don’t you preach to the Gentiles?”
 - Convey that what you’re sharing is not a religion but a relationship with the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

- Religions are man-made – a way of reaching God.
- Emphasize that you're not looking for him/her to join a religion or a church – but to know God personally through the Messiah.
- God has called you to be a faithful Jew – Deut. 6:5. How are you going to love Whom you don't know? Putting trust in God is believing in all His promises including the promises of the Messiah that are throughout the Tanakh.
- “Your Bible is the Christian Bible, it is not our Bible. The New Testament is a Gentile book”
- Often Jewish people think that our Bible is different from theirs. The Hebrew Scriptures have the same verses in them as the Old Testament we use. The only difference is the way they are arranged.
- The comment that the NT is a Gentile book comes from ignorance never having read it. It is very much a “Jewish Book”. And, it has Jewish authorship.
- Matthew begins with, “The book of the generation of Jesus the Messiah (Christ), son of David, the son of Abraham.”
- “We believe the Talmud is equal to the Bible”
- Jewish people who accept and study the Talmud consider it to be equal to the Bible in authority. They believe Moses did not write down all that God gave him, and that much of it was passed down by word of mouth. The spoken word was referred to as the Oral Law. The Talmud, written between 200 AD and 500 AD is a commentary on the Oral Law – it was written by men not by God.
- Ex. 24:3-4, 7 – Moses told the people ALL the words of the Lord.
- Joshua 8:34-35 – Joshua read the children of Israel ALL the words of the law – according to all that was WRITTEN in the book of the law.
- “If I accept Jesus as my Messiah, how will this affect my relationship with my family?”
- Jesus told us to count the cost if we are going to be His disciple.
- God will enable him/her to handle any situation through Him. But – they need to make a choice.
- If Jesus is the true Messiah, God, there should be no decision about what one should do.
- Isa. 55:6-7 - *Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*
- Proverbs 3:5-6 - *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct^[a] your paths.*
- I Kings 18:21 – Elijah asked the people when they were going to decide – if the Lord is God – follow Him.
- “When the Messiah comes He will raise the dead. Jesus didn't raise the dead.”
- Matthew 27:50-53 – after Jesus' resurrection, before His ascension, the dead were raised and they walked in the city of Jerusalem.
- Although this is not a common objection, it is one that is occasionally brought up.

- What about Lazarus?!
- “Jesus was an illegitimate child so he couldn’t have been the Messiah”
- Deut. 23:2, John 7:14 – the Mosaic Law taught that an illegitimate child couldn’t enter the Temple until the tenth generation. The Rabbis of Jesus’ day allowed Him to teach in the Temple; they proved He wasn’t illegitimate!

THE GREATEST FORM OF ANTI-SEMITISM IS WITHHOLDING THE GOSPEL FROM THE JEWISH PEOPLE – FOR WHATEVER REASON!

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread the handout – or read it for the first time. These questions and answers speak to what we believe the Bible teaches.

Pray about sharing with a Jewish person God has placed in your life. You might begin by asking them questions re: what they believe.

If you don’t know any Jewish people, ask God to place Jewish people in your life!

If you have questions, contact me!

www.jewishrootsofchristianity.org

JESUS IN THE FEASTS OF ISRAEL

Week 8 – Harvest Time/Don't Shmeer the Shmutz with the Shmatta

QUESTIONS:

What is your general observation re: Lev. 23:22?

How would the book of Ruth enter into the explanation that God has allowed for the Jews to provide for the Gentiles?

How does that impact you?

What is your general observation re: standard Jewish objections to Jesus and the responses from the Bible?

What do you think about taking one of these objections with the answers and begin a study in the Bible so that it solidifies your belief re: the Biblical answer?

What is the difference between what the Hebrew Scriptures teach and what the Rabbis today teach?

How has this eight-week series impacted your views about the Bible, Israel, and the Jewish people?