

Looking Forward to the Fall

Isaiah 22:1-24:23 Summer is my least favorite season, so I always search for reasons I can be thankful for this time. I hate to sweat, and Georgia in the summer is no place someone who hates to sweat.

The other evening, as I was watching the sunset, I began to think of reasons to thank the Lord for the summer. I came up with this list: the sights of lightening flies, sparkling skies on warm summer nights, the tastes of lemonade and ice tea, the warmth of sun bathing by the beach, and the sounds of katydids, July flies, June bugs and crickets in the night. I used to be so thankful for summers, because it meant being home from school, sleeping in late and just plain vegging out. I always looked forward, however, to that first crisp coolness in the air that comes to Georgia about mid-September. I look forward now to the trees being dressed in their coat of many colors and the crunch of leaves under foot as I walk with my husband by the river. As I look forward to the radiant foliage and then later to the snow-covered pines in the winter, I think of this scripture in Isaiah: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18).

Then as I see the leaves fall to the earth and thick clouds gather to usher in winter rains and an occasional snow, this verse comes to mind: "I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins. Return to me; for I have redeemed you" (Isa. 44:22).

Fall is always the season when the High Holy Days are celebrated by the Jews, and the days of awe, which are the days of inward reflection, culminate in the Day of Atonement. The sad part of the Jewish faith is that they have no kippur (covering for their sin). Only God can open their hearts to understand the truth that Jesus died to provide the covering for their sin. His shed blood is their covering as well as

ours for all sin, but they do not understand this. Today's scripture tell us also that Jesus holds the keys of David: "The key of the house of David I will lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and no one shall shut; and he shall shut, and no one shall open" (Isa. 22:22).

Only Jesus has the key that will turn the hearts of our Jewish friends to know Him as their personal Messiah and Savior. Jesus holds this key; we do not. Pray that He will open the hearts of your Jewish friends and unveil their eyes to behold Him and know Him as their Messiah.

Lord, I pray You will open the hearts of the many Jews who need to know You. Just as Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers who sought to kill him, please reveal Yourself to Your Jewish brethren. They are Your brothers.

**READ: Isaiah 22:1-24:23; Galatians 2:17-3:7; Psalm 60:1-12;
Proverbs 23:15-16**