

The High Holy Days and the New Covenant

Yom Teruah (Day of Trumpets, also known as Rosh HaShanah), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and Sukkot (Tabernacles) are known as the High Holy Days, or fall holy days, and, in Judaism, these three appointed times are thought of as sacred days. On these days, Jews all over the world, even those who don't regularly attend services, will gather in synagogues for times of prayer focused on repentance, judgment and deliverance.

G-D's basic instructions for these eternal holy days can be found in Leviticus 23, with continued details provided throughout Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. While these days are of the utmost importance to Jewish people, they are not held to the same level of importance by Christians, even though Christians proclaim they believe the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, which includes G-D's instructions concerning these appointed times.

Some Christians nearly ignore these days completely, viewing them as part of the Old Covenant and irrelevant to New Covenant believers. Other Christians, while not observing these days as a part of their faith walk, view them in a prophetic way and use them as a basis for their end-time prophecy scenarios: The rapture will take place when the Trumpet sounds on Yom Teruah, the judgment will take place on Yom Kippur and the Millennial reign will take place as a symbolic Sukkot.

While there may be a basis for viewing these days in prophetic ways connected to the return of Yeshua (Jesus), these days were not given simply so we could look back at them as examples of what would happen in the future. G-D did not give these days just to the Israel who lived before the destruction of the temple, and He did not give these days so Jews around

the world would gather in synagogues and say prayers of repentance and forgiveness, although I believe both of those are a part of the reason.

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God spoke about these days in this verse: “You are to celebrate it as a festival to Adonai for seven days in the year. It is a statute forever throughout your generations—you are to celebrate it in the seventh month” (Lev. 23:41, TLV). They are just as valid and important for believers in Messiah today as they were in the times of the tabernacle and as they were in the times of the temple, and I believe the apostle Paul thought so also. After all, even after he became a believer in Yeshua and began to travel to the nations to share the Good News, Paul continued to travel back to Jerusalem to observe these appointed times, even at the risk of shipwreck and death.

These fall holy days are more than just prophetic glimpses about the return of the Messiah but have meaning, significance and purpose for us as believers today. Let me explain.

If we look at the appointed times listed in Leviticus 23, we find they start with Shabbat, the importance for which I will write a separate blog. We then read about Passover and unleavened bread, both of which take place within an eight-day period of time. When we read about these days, we find that they commemorate the time when Israel was in Egypt in slavery and cried out to G-D. He then delivered Israel while at the same time judging Egypt. We also read about those who left Egypt living in the wilderness in tabernacles. The next appointed time we read about is Shavuot, also known as Pentecost, which is the day that commemorates the Torah being given at Mount Sinai.

So we read about a day where a sound was heard, when Israel

cried out. Next we read about a day when some were judged, and some were set free to live in the wilderness in tabernacles. Then we read about those who, while dwelling in the wilderness, entered into a covenant with G-D. These all happen in the springtime, and then comes summer. After the summer, we read about the fall appointed times, which mirror the spring appointed times.

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There is a day when a sound is heard, Yom Teruah. There is a day when judgment takes place, Yom Kippur, when one goat is judged and one goat is set free into the wilderness. Then comes Sukkot, when the people of Israel live in tabernacles to remember the wilderness. However, you will notice that in the fall, there is no mirror for Shavuot in the spring after Sukkot, the day the Torah covenant was entered.

This is because, as the Bible says: in Jeremiah 31:30-32, and in Hebrews 8:8-10:

“Behold, days are coming” –it is a declaration of Adonai–“when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah–not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they broke My covenant, though I was a husband to them”–it is a declaration of Adonai. “But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days” –it is a declaration of Adonai– “I will put My Torah within them. Yes, I will write it on their heart. I will be their God and they will be My people.”

For finding fault with them, He says, “Behold, days are coming, says Adonai, when I will inaugurate a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will

not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not remain in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says Adonai. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Adonai. I will put My Torah into their mind, and upon their hearts I will write it. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

These days are eternal because they were given not just for the Old Testament people, but they were purposely given also for the New Testament people, the people who were prophesied to be there after the prophetic summer. The spring holy days tell us about the first giving of the covenant, but the fall holy days speak directly to those who are a part of the New Covenant.

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