

Are You Losing Your Battle? You Might Be on the Wrong Battlefield

The fall appointed times can help us to understand an eternal truth. Almost all believers are at least aware to some extent of the biblical fall Holy Days: Rosh HaShanah/Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and Sukkot (Tabernacles). Over the years, more and more churches have begun to incorporate, or in some way recognize, these days as a part of their calendar of observances. Shofars have begun to appear in services and messages about Yom Kippur and the entry of the high priest into the holy of holies have become commonplace in churches of almost every denomination. And more churches are inviting Messianic Rabbis like myself to share about these days and their meaning, both real and symbolic, with their congregations.

Our focus on these scriptural Holy Days, especially in the light of our faith in Yeshua as Messiah, too often focuses on the here and now. Most often in Judaism, these days are spoken of in terms of asking for forgiveness and having our sins covered through the substitutionary sacrifice made on Yom Kippur that covered our sins from one year to the next.

However, when we read and study these days in the full context of Scripture, we learn that the most important component of these days is not about the here and now, but about the eternal. These days, as well as all of the other appointed times, were provided so that we would have a temporal symbol to help us be mindful of the eternal. The eternal is the focus and the goal, not the temporary. It is the heavenly, not the earthly. We must always remember that we are an eternal soul living in a temporary body.

Because we have been taught to think and act in terms of this world, we have been led to believe that our spiritual battles are between “good and evil,” or “right and wrong.” While these are an aspect of the war in which we are soldiers, our real battle is not between “good and evil.” It is between “present and eternal.” The mindset of “good versus evil” is one of the biggest reasons we lose so many battles. You cannot win a battle if you are fighting on the wrong field. Good and evil are the result of living for the eternal or living for the present.

If one is living for the present, then his heart is on things of this world. Addictions, fornication, greed, envy, gluttony, adultery and all other sins are only possible when one is living for the present.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the boasting of life—is not from the Father but from the world. The world is passing away along with its desire, but the one who does the will of God abides forever (1 John 2:15-17, TLV).

Also, “for the carnal mind is hostile toward God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can it be, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:7-8).

But Romans 8 doesn’t end there. It goes on to say in verse 9: “However, you are not in the flesh but in the Ruach (Spirit)—if indeed the Ruach Elohim dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Ruach of Messiah, he does not belong to Him (Rom. 8:9).

This dichotomy between the temporal of ‘the Flesh’ and the Eternal of “the Spirit” is also brought out in Galatians 5:16-17:

But I say, walk by the Ruach, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Ruach, but the Ruach sets its desire against the flesh—for these are in opposition to one another, so that you cannot do what you want.

As we can see, the battle is not about being good or bad. It is about living for the temporal or eternal. Or, as it says in Colossians 3:1-2:

Therefore, if you have been raised up with Messiah, keep seeking the things above—where Messiah is, sitting at the right hand of God. Focus your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

The fall appointed times are intended to remind us each year that everything we say or do must be done for eternal reasons because our words and actions have eternal results or consequences. {eoa}

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