

Are You Trading the Substance for the Shadow?

We just came through Rosh Hashanah (from nightfall on Wednesday to nightfall on Friday, Sept 20-22)—the Jewish New Year. This happens concurrently with the Feast of Trumpets (the first day of the seventh month in the Jewish calendar). Next, come the “Ten Days of Awe and Repentance” leading up to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. On that notable day, under the Old Covenant, the high priest entered the holy of holies (only once a year) to sprinkle the blood of a sacrificial goat on the mercy seat to atone for the national sins of Israel. This prepared the hearts of God’s people for the third and greatest of all the Feasts of Israel: Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles).

I believe in the value of celebrating the feasts of Lord. (I have preached in Jerusalem six times during the Christian Embassy function of the Feast of Tabernacles.) However, I have also seen a tendency through the years I want to address. Sometimes, when Christians begin to understand the symbolism of the feasts of the Lord, they become completely enamored with all the details of the rituals, commandments and traditions associated with these feasts in ancient times—to the point where Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven get pushed backstage.

But the feasts were all simply a revelation of something much greater that was yet to come: The Lord Jesus Christ Himself and His redemptive plan. In Him we celebrate a continual, daily and moment-by-moment celebration of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. He went through the veil into the holy of holies and sprinkled the throne in heaven with His own blood that we might have access to God. This is infinitely more important than any goat that temporarily represented him under the old covenant.

Remember, even though we honor the feasts, it is not required that we celebrate them in order to be righteous. It is a good thing, but be wary of becoming too legalistic. It is all fulfilled on a much higher in the Messiah. And ask yourself this question—Which is more important: the shadow or the substance? I will answer that by asking another question: Which is more important: the picture of my shadow on the pavement, or the substance of who I am?

I think the answer is obvious. Don't lose sight of what is most important. {eoa}

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