

THE FEASTS OF GOD

By Don Finto

We have just celebrated the biblical fall feasts, and I am increasingly saddened by the fact that many of today's believers are unaware of their significance for the people of faith.

It is true that the Gentile believers, according to the agreement in Acts 15, were not specifically commanded to keep the feasts, but the only "Bible" these new believers had was the Hebrew Scriptures. They had to learn about their new family of faith. As one of my young pastor friends said, "I found out I am adopted, and I want to know about my family's history."

These new believers from the nations learned names otherwise unknown to them, names like Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Sarah, Moses, Deborah, David, Isaiah, and all the prophets. These had now become their family of heritage.

In learning of this legacy, they also learned of "my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the LORD." To what extent they began to celebrate these feasts, we may not be sure, but we do know, through Paul's admonition, that even the believers in the former totally pagan city of Corinth were Passover celebrants (See 1 Corinthians 5:7-8). When Paul spoke to the Colossians about the deepest meaning of the Sabbath and the New Moon celebrations, he said that they were a "shadow of things that were to come" (2:16-17). A good look at the other feasts affirms this truth.

Jesus was crucified at Pesach (Passover). He was and is the true Passover Lamb. Every lamb that was slain from the foundation of the earth was a foreshadowing of this one Lamb who was to be slain for the sins of the world. John, the forerunner of Jesus, affirmed this truth. When he saw Jesus coming toward him, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) Jesus' death happened at the exact moment that others lambs were being slain throughout Jerusalem. His blood was taken into the true Holy of Holies that had been foreshadowed through the earthly Holy Place.

The day following the Sabbath is Bikkurim (Festival of First Fruits) when a single sheaf of barley predicted the coming harvest. Paul calls Jesus "the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20. See also verse 23).

Shavuot (Pentecost), fifty days later, celebrated the anniversary of the giving of the Law on Sinai. God chose this day to pour out His Spirit, according to the promise of Joel 2, a day to write His law on the hearts of men.

If Jesus fulfilled the spring feasts when He came the first time, does it not stand to reason that He will land on the fall feasts when he comes the next time? This becomes increasingly clear when we begin to look at these feasts and what they depict. Rosh Hashana, (head of the year) the first of the fall feasts, is also called Yom Teruah which means the "Day of" or "Feast of" Trumpets.

Trumpets? Now that should get the attention of every believer! Did not John hear seven trumpets being sounded, trumpets that brought plagues (See Revelation 9:20), plagues that would be reminiscent of God's people being freed from centuries of bondage? And what happened when that last trumpet sounded? "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his [Messiah] and he will reign for ever and ever" (11:15). Does this not also remind us of Paul's first Corinthian letter when he describes the resurrection of

the dead “at the last trumpet” (15:52)? Or of his first letter to the Thessalonians when he spoke of the “trumpet call of God” when “the dead in Christ will rise first” (4:16)?

And what about Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)? A day of judgment when fates were sealed and the high priest took blood into the Holy of Holies.

What about Tabernacles/Booths? Does this have any meaning for us believers? Did not Jesus tabernacle with us for a season as John described in the opening of his gospel (1:14)? And is not the coming millennium a time when Jesus again tabernacles with us for a thousand years of peace (See Revelation 20:4 as well as Zechariah 14:9)? And even eternity future, as described in the closing chapters of John’s Revelation, is the forever living together of God and man who are again face to face as in the Garden, yet this time freed from sin. Can you understand why believers from the nations have in recent years begun to pay more attention to the biblical calendar?

Some of you have asked for books that help to understand the significance of these feasts. Three books that I have enjoyed are: Edward Chumney’s [The Seven Festivals of the Messiah](#) (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House, An Imprint of Destiny Image), 1994, 1998; Mitch and Zhava Glaser’s [The Fall Feasts of Israel](#) (Chicago: Moody Press), 1987; David Brickner: [Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles](#) (Chicago: Moody Publishers), 2006.

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