



ROSH HASHANAH, THE TEN DAYS OF AWE AND YOM KIPPUR

Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are two of the seven “Feasts of the Lord” that were given to the children of Israel while they were in the Wilderness.

I have previously written essays on both of them.

You can review them at -

<https://simplysimpleworship.com/Rosh%20HaShanah.pdf>

and <https://simplysimpleworship.com/Yom%20Kippur.pdf>.

We are presently in the season when these feasts are being celebrated by the Jewish people. Rosh HaShanah comes first and then, 10 days later, comes Yom Kippur. In between these two feasts is a ten day period which is known as the “Ten Days of Awe.”

Rosh HaShanah is the beginning of the civil new year on the Jewish “civil calendar.” In Jewish tradition, Rosh Hashanah commemorates the sixth day of creation when Adam and Eve were created. Therefore, according to this tradition, Rosh HaShanah becomes the “birthday” of all people. However, in Jewish tradition, they also use this day to remember the “fall” of Adam and Eve. Rosh HaShanah, therefore, becomes both, a day of celebration of life being created but also it is a solemn day of reflection and repentance of sin that brings death and separation from God.

This points us to the fact that we are all physically born and have life when we are conceived within the womb. This refers to our annual “civil” birthday. Unfortunately, this life that we have is controlled by a sinful nature that leads to spiritual death. When we are saved from the sting of death by the blood of the Lamb (Jesus), we are “born again” and our new “spiritual life” begins as represented by what God established in Exodus 14 through the Passover lamb.

Passover is the beginning of the Jewish “religious” calendar which points to the beginning of our “new life in Christ.” Jesus expressed this in John 3:6 when He told Nicodemus, “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh (civil birthday-Rosh HaShanah); and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*” (being born again-Passover). There are “two births” for the true believer.

If you are a child of God, through the blood of Jesus, you are now living in the “spiritual calendar” of your faith. In the Jewish “religious calendar,” Passover comes first. As we know, that was the day Jesus was crucified. Then you have the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

In the midst of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the first day of the week, which for the Jewish people is our Sunday, you have Bikkurim. On Bikkurim, the High Priest offered specific gifts unto God. Bikkurim is actually the day that Jesus rose from the grave. It is our "Resurrection Sunday." Jesus rose and He went to the Father to offer onto Him the gifts that were to be presented to God. All believers, because of Jesus' resurrection, now have "new life" in Him.

The next feast was the Feast of Pentecost on which the Holy Spirit was given to the believers. There is then a span of about six months after which we begin the last of the Feasts of the Lord – Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur and then the last feast which is the Feast of Tabernacles.

That being said, Rosh HaShanah, the 10 Days of Awe and the Yom Kippur should now be looked upon in the way that God intended. He tells Moses to write of all the Feast Days of the Lord in this order – the new "religious" calendar of the Children of Israel. You can read of this in Leviticus 23. Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur and the 10 days of Awe in between those two, truly take on a new spiritual context to those who have Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord.

Yom Kippur is the most solemn of all the Lord's feast days. It is referred to as the "Day of Atonement." In Jewish understanding it is the last day of redemption for those who had passed away during that past year. What the Jewish people now do between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, are mitzvahs or good deeds, both for their own selves and they would also do these good deeds in the name of those who died that previous year. In other words they would do works to both, keep themselves, and to get their loved ones, into God's presence. This is what "the 10 Days of Awe" are for and why the Jewish people keep this tradition.

On Rosh HaShanah it is traditionally believed that the "Gates of heaven" and the "books" of that past year are opened. The "Ten days of Awe" are to be days of solemn reflection, self examination, true repentance, as well to be used to perform charitable deeds (mitzvahs) in preparation for Yom Kippur. At the conclusion of Yom Kippur, there is the sounding of the shofar, the "last trump," which signifies that the "Gates of heaven" are then closed for that year.

On Rosh HaShana, you will see the Jewish people doing a ritual called, "Tashlich." "Tashlich" means "casting off" and involves symbolically "casting off" the sins of the previous year by tossing pieces of bread into a body of flowing water. As the water carries away the bits of bread, so too are their sins symbolically carried away. In this way the person hopes to start the "New Year" with a "clean slate." This tradition began in the 2nd century AD and is inspired from Micah 7:19 - *"He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."*

As mentioned, Yom Kippur is the culmination of the "Ten Days of Awe" leading up to how God will judge one's life and lot for the coming year. On Yom Kippur it is traditionally believed that the "Gates of Heaven," as well as the "books" of one's life for the past year, are then closed. After doing your "good deeds," they believe that God is satisfied and you would be "judged" worthy by the Living God. Hence the term used, "Day of Judgment."

God is "sounding the alarm" to His people and to the entire world to awake from our slumber and prepare ourselves. I believe, we are about to hear the heavenly sound of the shofar. The "Gates of Heaven" will be opened and Jesus will be preparing to come for His people who are here on this earth. Jesus will be ultimately coming in the clouds - the King, our Bridegroom. Yes, Jesus will come to rule on this earth for 1000 years.

However, prior to all of that we will first enter into the spiritual aspects of "Rosh HaShanah," the "Ten Days of Awe" and "Yom Kippur." God will give everyone on this earth, time to truly repent and to turn towards Him – if they truly want to and if they truly believe in Jesus and all that He has done and will do. Could this be happening now? Hmm.....

The last three of Jesus parables as found in Matthew 25, were used by Jesus to emphasize the importance of being a true believer and a true disciple of His as they would be awaiting His second coming. The "Parable of the Ten Virgins" found in Matthew 25:1-13 Jesus speaks, in parable form, concerning the time of Rosh HaShanah and the Ten Days of Awe.

We see that there are "ten" virgins" which I believe can refer and correspond to the "Ten days of Awe." Remember, that it is during these "Ten Days of Awe" that the people are to prepare themselves and be ready. This is done through a heart of true repentance and a lifestyle that reflects the character of God.

Unfortunately, we see in Matthew 25:5, that all of the virgins were slumbering while awaiting the Bridegroom. Unfortunately, all ten of the virgins were asleep which represents a "slumbering" church today. It is time for the "slumbering church" to "awaken." God is giving us a "sounding of the shofar" in many ways in these days so that we awaken from our slumber.

Five of these virgins were "prepared" with "oil" within their lamps and five were not. This is symbolic of the "oil of the Holy Spirit" which represents the Holy Spirit's work in the regenerative work of salvation. The ones with the "oil" had a true heart of repentance and their lifestyle reflected the character of Jesus who is the "Light of the world." Jesus calls all of His disciples to be the "light of the world" in His stead until He comes. (Matthew 5:14) That "light" will light the way for Jesus' return. Yes, those five virgins who had the "oil" were made new creatures in Christ through their faith in the Son of God, Jesus.

The five that had no oil were not prepared to meet the Bridegroom when He came. It is important to note that though they were with those that were ready, their heart was not one of repentance and their lifestyle was not reflecting the character of God. In other words, they were deceived into thinking that they were ready to meet their God but the Holy Spirit could not make them into new creatures because they did not truly believe in Jesus.

The fact of the matter is that everyone needs to be "born again" and renewed by and with the Holy Spirit. These five virgins were waiting for the Bridegroom but yet they were not really ready for Him with the "oil" of the redemptive, regenerating power of the Holy Spirit which meant that they were not truly saved, they were not truly born again. How sad!!!

In Matthew 25:6, a "*cry was made*." This refers to the "awaken blast" (either a shofar or a loud shout) that would be blown on Rosh HaShanah. It was declaring that the "Gates of Heaven" were now opened and that the "Bridegroom" was coming. Those who were waiting and ready for His coming would rejoice and celebrate. As the Bridegroom came, those that were "ready" and had their "lamps trimmed and lit" would join in the procession and follow Him into the place where the "wedding feast" was held.

Matthew 25:10 tells us that the Bridegroom came and the five virgins that were "ready and prepared" went in with Him to the "wedding feast" and the door was "shut." The others

knocked and knocked and begged to be let in but to no avail. The Bridegroom answered and told them the words that none of us would want to hear, "*Verily I say unto you, I **know you not.***" This "shutting of the door" refers to Yom Kippur, when, according to Jewish tradition, the "Gates of Heaven" are closed. There will be a "separating" of those who are His and those who are not. Hmmm.....

The next parable Jesus gave at that same time was "The Parable of the Talents." (Matthew 25:14-30) Jesus was telling His disciples through this parable that they were to not only to be watchful of His return but they were also to "occupy" and bring forth the works of the Kingdom and preach the Good News until He returns.

By "works" He did not just mean healing, and other signs and wonders. He meant that they were truly to be His ambassadors in their character and lifestyle of love, grace and mercy. That is what the "talents" really represented. It is our lifestyle that matters, not the works that we do. However, we must remember that if we are a child of God then we will be doing His works. Faith without works is dead!!!

The last parable in Matthew 25:31-46, the "Parable of the Sheep and the Goats" brings a concluding thought to it all. It reveals what will take place just prior to the "closing of Heaven's gates" as expressed through Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur points to the "Day of Judgment." Yom Kippur is also referred to as the "Day of Face to Face."

This was the only day that the High Priest would be able to "meet with God face to face" as a representative of the people. He would enter the Holy of Holy and sprinkle the "mercy seat" of the "Ark of the Covenant" with the blood of the sacrificed lamb. Jesus, through His final atonement, tore the "veil of separation" that separated people from their God. (Mark 15:38) Yom Kippur points to the day when we each shall truly behold our God, face to face. On this day that Yom Kippur represents, those who know Jesus - His sheep, His joint-heirs, the children of the Living God, will be allowed into God's Kingdom – forever.

In bringing these feast days to your attention, that is all I really intended to do – simply bring them to your attention. We must not forget about them nor neglect them. We are not to celebrate them as the Jewish people continue to do in ritualistic worship. However, we are to

continue to look to them now through the eyes of a child of God who is waiting for the return of our Savior and Lord – Jesus Christ. They are spiritually significant to every born again child of God.

There is the final feast, the “Feast of Tabernacles” that is coming and will come to pass, ultimately, in the spiritual realm for all of God’s people in God’s perfect timing. This will be the conclusion and **total fulfillment of God’s covenant with us**. This is a celebration of that time when we will be in His presence, beholding Him face to face, forever and ever.

We see this expressed in Revelation 21:1-4 *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and **He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

Oh!!! What a day that will be!!!

I pray that, *“...those that have ears to hear; let them hear.”*