**THE THREE FALL FEASTS OF THE LORD Pastor Raphael Giglio**

**WHY do we study the Feasts of the Lord?**

I take extra care to teach the Word from the contextual basis of the Hebrew Scripture and the Jewish roots, **because,**

In order to understand the basis of which the entire Bible was written upon, you need to understand the faith of God’s people (the Hebrews) and the religion of the Prophets, Kings and people of God in the Old Testament, as well as Jesus and all the Apostles in the New Testament.

When you try to avoid the Hebrew foundation and the Jewish roots, it becomes confusing and error-prone, when you look at the Bible through it’s contextual lens, it all makes sense.

*(It’s like looking under the hood of a car to see how the engine works or reading the architectural blueprints of a house to see the foundation and the supporting beams.)*

If we are a “CHRISTIAN” church…;

*Q: Why observe or celebrate the “Hebrew” Feasts?*

*A: Because they are the “Feasts of the LORD”*

All holidays help us remember something important; (Memorial Day, 4th of July, Thanksgiving, etc.)

Christian Holidays help us remember and celebrate important events in our faith; Christmas – Jesus’ Birth, Easter – His Resurrection, Palm Sunday – Triumphal Entry, etc.

The Hebrew Feasts are given to us by the Lord to help us remember and celebrate important days and events in the Bible as well. These Holidays are now especially illuminated and important to followers of Jesus, because we know that He not only kept them, but fulfilled each one of them as well.

*Did Jesus Observe the Feasts? Yes, He did because Jesus was very very Jewish.*

Our faith is centered on our belief that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah). When we say that he is the Christ/Messiah, we are saying that we believe that He is the “Holy one of Israel”. “The Anointed One” whom the Hebrew prophets wrote about that would come and fulfill all of the Messianic scriptures that were written about Him.

During His entire life we see Jesus entering the temple, observing the feasts and even being asked to speak in synagogues (which would have been only reserved for Observant Jews).

Jesus Observed Feast of Tabernacles in John 7, Passover at the Last Supper and even Hannukah in John 10.

He was even called “Rabbi”, or “teacher” by not only his followers, but by the Herodians, Sadducees and even Nicodemus the Pharisee.

Even after he was arrested, the *Jewish Authorities* tried to find fault with Jesus, any places where he transgressed or dishonored their laws, but could not find anything wrong.

**Mark 14:55-56** -**“**The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any.Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.”

*What were the Apostles and the Early church like?*

*All of the Apostles were Jewish and worshiped in the most Orthodox Jewish city in the World – Jerusalem.*

*The book of Acts begins with the Apostles saying goodbye to Jesus at the Ascension and then begins to tell the story of what the followers of Jesus did AFTER he departed (The Acts of the Apostles).*

The first thing they did was to celebrate Shavuot (Pentecost), one of the three Big Feasts (Passover, Pentecost and Sukkot)

Immediately after Pentecost ion Acts 2, (which some Christians call “the birth of the Church’), we get a chance to see whether or not they jettisoned their Jewishness in the very next chapter (Acts 3)…

**Acts 3:1** “Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth *hour.”*

*(Not only were they observing Shavuot, they were also observing the daily prayer tradition, even AFTER the Pentecost. )*

*When Paul was leaving Ephesus, he said:*

**Acts 18:21***:* **“**Hetook leave of them, saying, “I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.” And he sailed from Ephesus.

Probably the best insight into the identity of the early church came from a lawyer for the The High Priest Ananias named Tertullis to the Roman Governor, Felix.

Here’s how he described not only Paul, but the entire Christian movement in its early stages.

**Acts 24:5**"We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect. *A sect of Judaism.*

(There were many sects of Judaism in that time; Pharisees/Sadducees, Herodians, Gnostics, Hellenists, Essenes, etc. The early church was known as “Nazarenes”.)

In Acts 11, we read that in Antioch they were called “Christians”

But this just basically means “Messianic” (of the Messiah).

It’s very clear that the men and woman of God in both the Old and New testament were all observant Jews and kept the feasts.

But it’s very important that we know that we are under no obligation to keep the feasts or follow the Hebraic law in order to gain or secure our salvation.

Jesus told us that He came to Fulfill the law (not abolish the Law), and He offered us a New Covenant of grace through faith.

**Matt 5:17** “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

Jesus *fulfilled the law* through His death on the cross.

So, please understand that I, in no way teach that adherence or even observance of the law is required by the believer for salvation. I do, however, believe that there is great richness in understanding the Feasts of the Lord and the Hebrew foundation of our faith.

Just like Christmas, Easter, Palm Sunday, and Good Friday, there is much to learn and celebrate from the Holidays. The Fall Feasts in particular are special because they are Significant Biblical Holidays to be observed this time each year.

***THE FEASTS OF “THE LORD”***

*We call them Biblical Holidays not Jewish holidays, because they are all taken from our Bible, the Old Testament a.k.a. “The Hebrew Scriptures”. (not the Jewish Talmud or Midrash)*

*Leviticus 23 lists all seven of the annual feasts in an easy-to-follow chapter describing each one.*

**Lev. 23:1-2**The Lord said to Moses, **2**“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘These **are my appointed festivals**, the appointed festivals of the Lord, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.

THE FALL FEASTS of

* **Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)**
* **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)**
* **Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)**

Are when God commands His people to gather together AFTER the hard work of the season of planting and reaping is over.

They began the season in the Spring with planting and first fruits - Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits,

They check in with Him in the Summer with Pentecost (Shavuot)

But in the Fall, He commands Three Major Holidays, where he wants His people to stop their daily work, make a special time to get away with Him, and spend precious, undistracted time with him.

1. **THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS - ROSH HASHANAH (*Head of the Year*)**

(from Lev.23:23-25 - Friday Sept 6th this year)

**Time between the feasts:**   ***“10 DAYS of AWE”***

The ten days starting with [Rosh Hashanah](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/holiday2.html) and ending with [Yom Kippur](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/holiday4.html) are commonly known as the Days of Awe or the Days of Repentance. This is a time for serious introspection, a time to consider the sins of the previous year and repent before Yom Kippur.

1. **THE DAY OF ATONEMENT - YOM KIPPUR (Holiest Day of the Year)**

***A day of Fasting and prayer – Sept 15th this year***

Yom = Day, Kippur= Atonement

**Lev.. 23:26-32**

**26**The Lord said to Moses, **27**“The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus%2023&version=NIV#fen-NIV-3430d)] and present a food offering to the Lord. **28**Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God. **29**Those who do not deny themselves on that day must be cut off from their people. **30**I will destroy from among their people anyone who does any work on that day. **31**You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. **32**It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath.”

The Fall feasts begin in the Seventh month of Tishrei. Rosh Hashanah takes place on the *first* day of Tishrei, Yom Kippur takes place on the *tenth* day of that month.

*In 2020, Yom Kippur takes place Sun Sept 15th - Sundown to Mon Sept 16th*

The Hebrew months are based on a lunar calendar, new moon to new moon. *(Unlike the Gregorian Calendar which we follow that has 30 or 31 days every month except February which has 28 days unless it’s a leap year.)*

Known as **YOM KIPPUR** (Day of Atonement). During the times of the Tabernacle and the Temple, this is the ONE DAY each year that the High Priest could enter beyond the Veil of the Temple, into the Holy of Holies, to make atonement for the sins of the people through the sacrifice of a goat.

Lev. 16 tells us that two goats were selected, one would be the sacrifice, the other would be the scapegoat and set free in the wilderness.

Jesus fulfilled commandment as is described in Hebrews;

**Heb 9:11-12** “But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. **12**He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtainingeternal redemption.”

**Jesus was the once and for all sacrifice for our sins, so we do not need any other atonement on Yom Kippur**, however it is a good day to “deny yourself” – fast and pray and thank God for His Atonement on the cross (the way we do at Good Friday).

*IMPORTANT: Jesus is our Atonement, once and for all. No other sacrifice for sin is valid or necessary.*

**1 John 2:2** But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. **2**He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

*Yom Kippur is a perfect time to remember, reflect upon and show gratitude for His atonement.*

**Lev 23:26-27“**The Lord said to Moses, **27**“The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves and present a food offering to the Lord. **28**Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God.”

Jews all over the world end the 10 days of awe with Yom Kippur, where they will do no work, not even anything that resembles work, and engage in a 25-hr. fast, ending at sundown after Yom Kippur.

Many of us who believe in Jesus as Messiah will also fast on this day.

Once again, fasting on Yom Kippur (or any other day) is not required by believers in Jesus the Messiah, however, He does expect us to fast from time to time.

Matt 6:**16**“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **17**But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, **18**so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Jesus seemed to fast regularly, and the Apostle in Acts did as well.

Fasting is the act of denying your flesh it’s cravings, and to focus on your spiritual self.

*(at first fasting seems to have the opposite effect, but deeper into the fast you’ll sense a keener spiritual sense as you pray and seek the Lord.)*

It’s a time to pray and earnestly seek God, with clarity of Spirit and a heightened awareness of God’s presence.

*On the day of Atonement, let’s consider celebrating in these* ***three ways****;*

1. Thank the Lord for His atonement, His death on the Cross which fulfilled the righteous Requirement of the Law to give you forgiveness of Sins and Eternal Life.
2. Fast. Consider fasting from food for a day, or sunrise to sunset. Perhaps fast from electronics or social media, the best fast is a Fast from something that will best help you focus on God.
3. PRAY! Take Yom Kippur as a day of prayer, praying for yourself, your family, our church, the nation, the World and everything that God brings to mind. Spend significant time in prayer, not just pop-prayers, praying for the big things in your life that need God’s power and provision; healing, resources, reconciliation.

Take this opportunity to “get down to business” with God regarding your own weaknesses, failings and doubt. Pray big prayers and give God an opportunity to respond any way He chooses.

There is no “*magic”* in Yom Kippur or blowing the Shofar, and you can’t *“force God’s hand*” by fasting or keeping the feasts, however….Hebrews tells us that;

**Heb 11:6** “…He rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

(This is a way of earnestly seeking him.)

1. **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES** (v.33-44) **SUKKOT Sept 20-27**

***a.k.a.: Feast of “Booths” or “Shelters”***

*Sukkah – Booth, Sukkot – Booths (plural - also spelled Succoth)*

**Lev 23:33-36, & 40-43**

**33**The Lord said to Moses, **34**“Say to the Israelites: ‘On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord’s Festival of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. **35**The first day is a sacred assembly; do no regular work. **36**For seven days present food offerings to the Lord, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present a food offering to the Lord. It is the closing special assembly; do no regular work.

**40**On the first day you are to take branches from luxuriant trees—from palms, willows and other leafy trees—and rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. **41**Celebrate this as a festival to the Lord for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. **42**Live in temporary shelters for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in such shelters **43**so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.’”

This is a week where observant Jewish people live out in a Sukkah (Booth) for seven days. It’s a fun holiday to re-enact what it must have been like for the children of Israel out in the wilderness. Also a great time to fellowship together and with God.



I believe that God wants us to celebrate Feast of Tabernacles, most importantly in our hearts, but it’s also nice to come together and celebrate outdoors as a church.

This Occasion is a time for God to reminisce with his people about the Early Days.

A time during the 40 years in the wilderness, when the Children of Israel were almost like pre-school children. They had no land, no Palaces, no homes and no food.

They were completely dependent on the Lord to provide for them, protect them, feed them every day with manna and watch over them, the way a Father watches over his little children. They lived in little booths (almost like cribs) and would cover them from the sun with a cloud by day, and warm them with a Pillar of Fire by night.

We are in the midst of special and set-apart days of the Lord in the Biblical Calendar,

The Three Fall Feasts;

Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Sukkot.

***Let’s take this special time to “earnestly Seek” Him and allow Him to reward us according to His will, and according to His riches in glory .***