

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

Text: Leviticus 23:23-25

Introduction:

1. The feasts commanded by God were physical observances that had mental and emotional benefits.
2. Of course, they also taught important spiritual lessons.
3. The Passover was instituted to remind the Israelites of the price paid for their deliverance from Egyptian slavery – and the bondage of sin.
4. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to remind Israel of God's deliverance and the danger of corruption.
5. The Feast of Firstfruits was to remind them of God's promises and to express gratitude for His faithfulness.
6. The Feast of Pentecost demonstrated the faithfulness of God – in providing for both the rich and the poor, in providing His Law, and in providing the church.
7. The Year of Jubilee was to teach them faith, forgiveness, freedom, and family.
8. The Feast of Trumpets marked the beginning of the most important time of the year for the children of Israel...

- I. Instruction for the Feast (Leviticus 23:23-25)
 - A. The Feast of Trumpets took place on the first day of the seventh month.
 1. The previous feasts had taken place in the springtime.
 2. The Feast of Trumpets began the autumn celebrations.
 3. It took place in what modern calendars call late September, occasionally occurring in the first week of October.
 - B. In fact, it was celebrated as the beginning of a new year.
 1. Today, this feast is known as Rosh HaShanah.
 2. It is the beginning of the Jewish civil year.
 3. How could it be the beginning of a new year if it was in the seventh month of the year?
 4. The Jewish ecclesiastical year began in the month Nisan (late March) with the Feast of Passover (Exodus 12:2). [Cf. Fiscal Year or School Year]
 - C. It is described as “a memorial of blowing of trumpets.”
 1. The Hebrew word means: “Alarm, signal, shout; shout or blast of war, alarm, or joy; shout of joy; battle-cry; especially clangor of trumpets, as an alarm.”
 2. The word “trumpet” is not used but implied.
 3. The trumpet used was the curved horn of an animal.
 - a. The ram's horn was known as a *shofar*.

Bible Feasts

- b. There was also a *cornet* made of metal, similar to a modern trumpet, which may have been used.
 - c. The two trumpets for the calling of an assembly – later used in the Temple – were long, straight, and made of silver (Numbers 10:2ff).
 - D. Tradition has related this feast to the Creation of the world and the shout of joy by the angels (cf. Job 38:7). [September 21, 4004 BC]
 - E. No work was to be done on this day, but there was to be an assembly.
 - F. A sacrifice was to be offered, detailed in Numbers 29:1-6.
- II. The Meaning of the Trumpets (Nehemiah 7:73 – 8:12)
 - A. The Feast of Trumpets was a celebration of the fall harvest (olives, figs, and grapes) and the beginning of a new year.
 - 1. It was a reminder of God’s faithfulness through another year.
 - 2. It was also a reminder of God’s faithfulness in past triumphs.
 - B. Yet the sounding of the trumpets also served as a warning and a call to preparation.
 - 1. The reaction of the people in Nehemiah’s time demonstrates both aspects of this feast.
 - 2. For them, it was compounded by their recent return from captivity and desire to correct the mistakes of their ancestors.
 - C. The warning was a call to prepare for the Day of Atonement, on the tenth day of the month (Leviticus 23:27).
 - 1. Their hearts had to be right – humbled and afflicted (23:29).
 - 2. Their focus had to be right – contemplating their sins.
 - 3. Their actions had to be right – correcting wrongdoings.
 - D. Jewish tradition called this time the Ten Days of Remembrance.
 - 1. They would remember their wrongs and seek to make them right.
 - 2. Many would do good deeds to have their names written in God’s “Book of Life” on the Day of Atonement.
 - E. It is said that the shofar is blown 100 times during the synagogue services on Rosh Hashanah.
- III. The Message of the Feast (Mark 16:15-16)
 - A. To proclaim the Gospel is to herald the Good News of salvation!
 - 1. It celebrates God’s faithfulness in triumph over sin.
 - 2. It announces God’s faithfulness in providing salvation.
 - B. Yet, it also warns of the need for preparation.
 - 1. Counting the cost (Luke 9:62)
 - 2. Obedience (Acts 2:38)
 - 3. Faithfulness (Revelation 2:10)
 - 4. Judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10)
 - C. The trumpet has sounded – are we ready?