May God smile upon you and yours!

*How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the law of the Lord.
How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
Who seek Him with all their heart.*

 Psalm 119:1-2

How can our way be blameless? Only by Christ Jesus. When we accept the sacrifice that Jesus was on our behalf, we are cleansed of all our sins and all our guilt is removed. We are declared “Not Guilty” by God the Father. We are blameless.

Of course, this does not give us a free pass to sin. Once we accept Christ, the Holy Spirit will work to bring about a change in us. We want to walk in the law of the LORD, it is freedom to us. We want to be blameless in His sight. We desire the blessing that comes with observing His testimonies; with living His word. This is the evidence of our acceptance of Jesus.

This all comes from having faith *in Jesus*. If we believe in Him and believe in all the terror of His work on the cross; we will seek Him. We will search for a closer relationship with Him. And we will do it with all of our heart.

In Christ’s love

John

 10-3-21

Numbers 29:1-6

So far in our study of the festivals ordained by God for the people of Israel, we have looked at the four spring feasts and how they have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The first is Passover, which celebrates the death angel passing over the houses of Israelites as he passed through Egypt killing all the first born. A lamb was sacrificed in place of the first born of the Jews; the lamb redeemed the first born. In the same way, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice to redeem any who accept Him from eternal death.

Passover began the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which reminded the Israelites of their flight from Egypt; of their deliverance from slavery. Jesus fulfilled this in that He is the One who delivers us from slavery to sin. Make no mistake, engaging in sin is not freedom, it is submission to slavery; and sin is a horrible master. It is far better to submit to Jesus. Submission to Him is true freedom and He is the perfect loving Master.

During the Feast of Unleavened Bread came the Feast of First Fruits. This was an offering of the first fruits of the barley harvest. Jesus was resurrected from the dead. He was the first to do so; but He is the promise of many more to be bodily resurrected when the time comes. By this, Jesus is the first fruits of eternal life after death.

While these three took place almost simultaneously, the fourth celebration took place 50 days later. This was the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost; and it was the offering of the first fruits of the wheat harvest. This was fulfilled when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon the 120 disciples in Jerusalem; giving birth to the Christian church. They were the first fruits of the church and that day it grew by 3000 from their evangelizing. Of course, it continues to grow to this day.

The Lord God ordained that the Passover would take place in the first month of the Jewish year and this was in the spring. Following these feasts were several months with no special feasts to the Lord. The remaining three feasts take place in the seventh month of the Jewish year: Tishri. This is the fall of the year and this is the month of the grape harvest.

We have looked at how the spring celebrations have already been fulfilled by Jesus. The three fall feasts have not yet been fulfilled, but the Bible shows us how Jesus will fulfill them when the time comes. The period of time between the spring and fall feasts is thought to represent the church age; the time we are in now.

The celebration we are looking at today is called the Feast of Trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets is a one-day feast that takes place on the first day of the seventh month of the Jewish year set by God. This day serves several functions. It is the beginning of the grape harvest, a very busy time of year with all the gathering, crushing to make wine, and drying to make raisins. More importantly, it heralds the Day of Atonement that is coming in ten days.

This was a day of holy Convocation; it was celebrated as a Sabbath regardless of what day it fell on. No work was done on this day; it was both a day of rest and a day dedicated to the LORD. As we read, a number of sacrifices were to be offered to God on that day. There were special sacrifices prescribed for the Feast of Trumpets, including a sin offering. The first day of every month in the Jewish calendar was on a new moon which required its own sacrifices. Plus, there were the daily sacrifices the priests had to offer. It was a busy day for the priests.

Trumpets show up regularly in the Bible. They are used for celebration or to announce something. The celebrations are praising the Lord. In Psalm 98:6 it says, “*With trumpets and the sound of the horn Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord*.” And Psalm 150:3 tells us, “*Praise Him with trumpet sound; Praise Him with harp and lyre*.” The sound of the trumpet goes along with making a joyful noise to the Lord; it is a way of expressing His majesty and honor.

More often, the trumpet is used to announce something. It was used to announce God’s presence on Mount Sanai. At the temple it called the people to come worship the Lord. It was a call to war. Often, with the call of the trumpet, there was a theme of judgement.

When Joshua led the people against Jericho, the priests blew trumpets as part of bringing down the walls of the city. This was the beginning of God’s judgement on the land of Canaan. Back in Genesis 15:16, God told Abram that his descendants would be captives before they entered the Promised Land. But, “*Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete*.” The people of Canaan were terribly sinful, but God was still mercifully giving them time to turn from their sin. A point was coming when their time was up and God’s patience had run out; at this time, He would bring judgement on them. This is why Israel was to completely destroy the population of Canaan.

This is a learning point for us. God is very patient; more patient than any of us could ever be. But that patience will come to an end. There will come a day when history will end and God will bring judgement on the people of the earth; both the living and the dead; no-one will escape. For we who are Christians, there should be no desire to try the patience of God. Because of our sinful human nature, we do presume upon His patience. But we repent of those times because it is our desire to please our Saviour and be people of delight to Him.

This day of blowing the trumpets was a day of calling the people. It reminded them that the solemn Day of Atonement was only ten days away. The Feast of Trumpets began what came to be called “Ten Days of Repentance” or “Days of Awe”. The days that followed were to be a time of considering personal sins and shortcomings; preparing one’s heart in repentance for the Day of Atonement when sacrifices were made on behalf of the nation of Israel. Again, the idea of judgement is here. The trumpets called the people to repent so as to avoid the coming judgement of God.

We know that a big part of the office of prophet was to warn the people to turn away from their rebellion against Yahweh so they would not be judged according to their sins. Although the prophets spoke to the people of their day, what they said carries through to the end times. The idea of the trumpet showed up in their prophecies of what is to come upon the earth. Joel 2:1,

*Blow a trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm on My holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
For the day of the Lord is coming;
Surely it is near*

Joel is using the idea of the blowing of the trumpet to get the attention of the people and call them to action. We understand this as the second coming of Jesus when He will rule the earth with an iron scepter; He came the first time as a servant, next He will come as Judge and King.

Also, in Zephaniah 1:14-16,

*Near is the great day of the Lord,
Near and coming very quickly;
Listen, the day of the Lord!
In it the warrior cries out bitterly.
A day of wrath is that day,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of destruction and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
A day of trumpet and battle cry
Against the fortified cities
And the high corner towers.*

Here the trumpet again speaks of the day of the Lord and probably refers to the seven-year tribulation along with the actual return of Jesus. Zephaniah doesn’t sugar coat what’s going to happen; the Lord really does want all to turn to Him and gives very specific warning about what is coming. Distress is part of life but we can avoid the eternal wrath of God by coming to Jesus Christ.

Trumpets have a prominent place in the New Testament. They bring forth judgement. Jesus will fulfill this as shown in Revelation chapter 8 where Jesus opens the seventh seal of the scroll. This seventh seal unleashes the seven trumpet judgements. Seven angels each blow a trumpet and each trumpet brings a different judgement on the earth. This will be a terrible time on the earth like what was described in the prophecy we read by Zephaniah.

Additionally, Jesus will fulfill the trumpet as a call to gather His people together; what we call the Rapture. The first mention of this is in Matthew 24:31. *And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other*. At the sound of a trumpet, all those who have believed upon Jesus to salvation will be gathered to Him to be with Him forever.

Paul gives more detail about this fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets. In 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 he writes, “*Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed*.” Also, in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, “*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words*.”

Christ fulfills the idea of the trumpet calling His people; calling His people to Him. Jesus will physically come for His people and gather them to Himself. Those who have already died will experience a bodily resurrection and be rejoined with their spirits already in heaven. Those who are alive will be carried up to Jesus in the clouds and their bodies will be changed to match that of Christ. As the apostle John tells us in 1 John 3:2, “*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is*.”

The Feast of Trumpets both calls God’s people to Him and reminds them of necessary repentance because of the inescapable fact of judgement. Jesus fulfills both in releasing judgement on an unrepentant earth; still in hopes that maybe a few will be saved by understanding that God is showing them their eternity if they don’t turn. And by calling His people to Himself in the Rapture; the bodily gathering of the saints. A harvest for the Lord.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, there are many things in the Old Testament that stand alone as marvelous things; things that are according to the will and purpose of God the Father. But in the light of the New Testament, we come to understand that these things go much further and point to You and Your work. It is thrilling to see how the pictures painted in antiquity shine so brightly and clearly when the Holy Spirit illumines them.

Holy Spirit, please continue to open our eyes to the interconnectedness of the Father’s holy word. We believe in Jesus, that He is the Christ, that He is the only way to salvation. Still, to see the Bible prove itself, to see what God has arranged work itself out in the person of Christ, is a joy to us. How delightful is Your word. Write Your word upon our hearts and upon our minds.

Merciful Father, the Bible unfolds Your continuing work to benefit Your rebellious creation. We deserve no good thing from You, yet You offer to us the chance to be co-heirs with Your only begotten Son, Jesus. We chose to be Your enemies, yet You offer to us a way for eternal fellowship with You. We were due punishment that would require us an eternity to endure, yet You took that punishment at the cost of the life of Your Son.

You are glorious God, worthy of all praise and honor; mysteriously one God existing as three Persons. So far beyond us; greatly surpassing our understanding. What a blessing it is to simply be able to trust You, no matter what goes on in this life. Thank You Lord.

In Jesus’ name we pray

Amen