



Articles and Sermons :: How Should Christians Keep the Feasts of Israel?

How Should Christians Keep the Feasts of Israel? - posted by enduretoend, on: 2011/2/1 9:05

The study of most importance regarding the Feasts of Israel is that of Christ being foretold, typified and taught to us through the annual festivals of Israel that were ordained for them in the wilderness of Sinai in Arabia, at the mountain of God.

How should Christians observe the feasts of Israel who don't live by the Old Testament Law but by Grace (New Testament)? Do we still have to observe the ordinances of the Feasts?

If you research you will find that the Jewish year has changed since ancient times. People in the Hebrew Roots Movement believe that Christians should observe the feasts, at least three times in the year, celebrating Christ having come (Pesach - Passover), the Holy Spirit having come (Shavu'ot - Pentecost) and Jesus coming again (Feast of Trumpets).

They will tell you that the Bible says that these ordinances of the feasts were given to Israel as everlasting statutes and that Jesus did not come to do away with them. Their explanation is that the church has made a mistake in forgetting the Feast traditions and the dates of the year in which to celebrate them.

In reality, the feasts are made everlasting statutes, just so long as we live by the Old Covenant. Once the New Covenant has entered which supercedes the old they can no longer be statutory for the New Covenant believer. Christ came not to rub them out but to fulfill them in Himself. Very important to understand that HE FULFILLED THEM IN HIMSELF. They served their purpose in foreshadowing Him and to make a people ready to receive Him. Now Christ is our feast. We do not need the shadow anymore because we have Christ. He is the Bread of Life and the Water of Life that we "feast" on daily.

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Heb 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Heb 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Heb 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

Heb 8:9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Heb 8:11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

The Christian is made free in the grace of God and we do not have to hold the Feast days sacredly and solemnly as the

children of Israel did (up until the days that Romans destroyed Jerusalem). We can look into the Feasts and know the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to fulfill every type ordained in them. We can learn of His purpose and the work He came to do to redeem us from every nation to God the Father and to eternal life. The people awaiting the Messiah in Old Testament times could have learned also from the Feasts—and especially the Jews who witnessed the works of Jesus when He came. Truly we can greatly benefit in our faith if we recognize that He came and lived out (in his own body) the law of the temple festivals that brought the people close to the Lord God.

I do not say that Christian should not know about the Feasts and the typology and meaning of them. On the contrary, I believe we should understand all of God's Word. But I contend with anyone that says we should observe and celebrate the Feasts. Now, if a Believer wants to celebrate an Old Testament feast, he/she is free to, but don't make it a law for others. In addition, if they really understood the Old and New Covenant, how the feasts are shadows and types of Christ and that Christ is now here, then they won't even bother to celebrate the Feasts, because they will be too busy celebrating Jesus Christ - THE FEAST.

Jesus has made us free from the burden of the law in that He removed the actual feasts from their places. For if the feasts were held every year to remind the Israelites of the One Coming who would lead them to God in truth and grace, would the feasts be held any more once He had come—He who fulfilled every type of offering of the feasts with His own body at Calvary?

And would we need to continue to offer to God the fruits of the earth when these offerings of the barley and wheat and fruits were also only types, now being fulfilled in the resurrection of the Lord and of the harvests of souls in the age of grace?

In practical ways the feasts are removed, because 1) there is no more altar of burnt offering at Jerusalem, since the Temple was destroyed; the Lord commanded the children of Israel to come before Him at Jerusalem three times a year and worship with offerings. The festivals require an altar at Jerusalem with the ordained priesthood of Aaron to make the offerings for the people. So without these there can be no Feast according to the statutes which Moses gave Israel.

But Christ has become a High Priest and has made an offering to end all offerings!

2) God has made it impossible for any man to keep the Feast as they did in the days of the Law. God has disrupted the Calendar! He has hidden from us in the age of Grace where we are on the Jewish Calendar—and we will never know where we are in regard to the Jewish months until Jesus returns.

We Do Not Know the Days of the Feasts Now -

This is quite technical and I will talk about this in an upcoming post.

But basically, the modern Jewish Calendar was adopted in 358 AD, adding the extra lunar month to the Ancient Jewish Calendar (AJC) every three or four years to keep up with the Solar year. This change was made largely for the convenience of the Jews living outside the land of Israel, to keep up with the solar and seasonal calendar of other nations. WHY? Because the Jews laid aside the commandment. This present day Jewish calendar is similar to the Chinese Calendar. It is not the same Calendar that the Bible always refers to! It therefore should not be used in any teaching of Biblical matters—and there may be few who know this.

Seeing that the modern Jewish Calendar has been in use now for hundreds of years it would be impossible for us to go back to the AJC, or rather, to know where we are on the AJC today—which month and day—so that we could hold the feasts on the statutory dates. Perhaps if we knew the date of Jesus' death (being the Passover) we could calculate the days since then and find our bearings with the Feasts today. But we don't know when Jesus was born (scholars only speculate and make guesses) nor the date of His crucifixion. The years since then, dated as AD years, have fallen into errors because the Bible has not been counting since Christ, only men have been counting.

We find then that the feast dates are unknown to us because even the Jews left the proper system and began to celebrate the feasts according to a new system that keeps up with the Gregorian year.

Christ is Revealed in the Feasts

Paul said to the Galatians (who were non-Jews), So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17)

He did not want them to be coaxed (bewitched) by the legalists into observing the religious days of Israel like the Jews.

He wanted them to know their freedom from the Law and the importance of following Christ whom the Law only pointed to.

He said to the Corinthians, "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5:7-8)

He points to Christ being our Passover sacrifice and that we as believers are to be the unleavened bread of the feast, as lives without sin—we too, fulfilling the types of the Feast.

The feasts were given to Israel by the hand of Moses to set the identification of the Messiah—who, when He came, would meet every requirement and fulfill each ordinance by His own life. Though this was not plainly told by Moses (the gospel was kept a mystery) that the Messiah would walk in these fore-types, because these festivals were drilled into the lives of each generation, they would recognize His coming as the Holy Spirit would open their eyes to see Him.

For indeed, He came and announced who He was at each of the major feast days at Jerusalem—and John's Gospel brilliantly sets before us a play of the Lord revealing His person at the feasts of Israel. (Read John again)

It is the Word become flesh and come to do the works of Father. All the ordinance of the feasts and so forth was the Word of the Lord operating through His prophet to establish in the earth the promise and commandment that would bring the goodness of God into the earth when fully believed and obeyed.

So with these things spoken by God, the Word was active in the earth until the Spirit moved upon Mary and she brought forth her son, Jesus; the Word came in the likeness of sinful men, and He was all that the Word had spoken before, so He did all the works of Father. Jesus was the Word of God and that Word was the fervent desire of God's heart to love this world, to father His creation, to command those things that are not as though they were. He commanded life forever and the kingdom of righteousness on earth.

So if we recognize Jesus in the feasts and come to a fuller understanding of His coming—His sacrifice as a Passover Lamb for us, His sending of the Spirit to give us the law of love in our hearts, His giving of the water of life, His giving light to the world, His coming with trumpets to rule on the earth—we will surely worship Him for He is our Feast.

We no longer celebrate individual feasts that speak of the shadow, for we now have the substance of that shadow, Jesus Christ.

Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

I hope this helps those a little bit, who have sometimes wondered about the Feasts of Israel.

Re: How Should Christians Keep the Feasts of Israel? - posted by knitefall, on: 2011/2/1 10:25

Amen! said well and enjoyed the reading!