

Lesson 5

Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles

Leviticus 16, Leviticus 23:23-44, Numbers 29
and Deuteronomy 16:13-15

Begin today's lesson by asking the Holy Spirit to illumine your mind and to teach you His precepts.

1. What concept from last week's lesson was especially helpful or thought provoking to you?
2. Read Leviticus 16, Leviticus 23:23-44, Numbers 29 and Deuteronomy 16:13-15. What strikes you as you first read these verses?

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

The spring feasts are separated from the autumn feasts by the three and a half months of summer. In the agrarian cycle summer is the time of ripening in the fields. It is also a time of waiting for the harvest. If the spring feasts are prophetic of the first coming of Christ, and the autumn feasts are prophetic of the second coming of Christ, then the summer season is the church age - the period of time in which we live.

3. What does Jesus instruct us to do during this season in Luke 10:1-2?
4. What does Paul teach in Ephesians 4:14-16?

Once the Israelites were in the promised land and the temple was complete, the ceremonies and Scriptural readings associated with the feasts became formalized and embellished. After the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., alterations were made to the way the feasts were celebrated. These are recorded in the Talmud.

Rosh Hashanah

On the first day of the sixth month (*Elul*) of the Jewish religious calendar, a forty day period of repentance begins in preparation for the fall feasts. This time is called *Teshuvah* in Hebrew, meaning to return or repent.

Rosh Hashanah takes place thirty days into Teshuva, on the first day of the seventh month (*Tishri*). It begins the final ten days of repentance culminating in Yom Kippur.

Rosh in Hebrew means “head” or “chief.” *Shanah* means “year.” This day marks the new year of the Jewish civil calendar. Rosh Hashanah is celebrated for two days, which are referred to as “one long day” - the first and second days of *Tishri* (September/October). The Talmud teaches that it was on the first day of Tishri that Adam was created.

Read Leviticus 23:23-25, Numbers 29:1-6 and Ezra 3:1-3.

Rosh Hashanah is also known as Yom Teruah, the Day of the Sounding of the Shofar (or the Day of the Awakening Blast). One of the main themes of this feast is to awaken.

5. Read Isaiah 60:1-3, Ephesians 5:14 and Romans 13:11. Discuss what these verses mean to you.

6. Read Exodus 19:16-19 (the trumpet here is a shofar). What is the response of the people to the blowing of the shofar?

7. In traditional Jewish services on Rosh Hashanah, the shofar is blown. The shofar that is blown on Rosh Hashanah is called the “last trump.” How can you see this connected to the next event on the prophetic calendar that Paul teaches about in I Thessalonians 4:16-17 and I Corinthians 15:51-53?

8. Read Matthew 24:42-44. As you consider your own spiritual life, are you awake or asleep / alert or dull? How are you responding to His call on your life?

9. Another name for Rosh Hashanah is Yom HaDin, which means the Day of Judgment. There are several different judgments set forth in the Bible. This particular judgment may deal with believers who have been summoned by the “last trump.” Read I Corinthians 3:11-15 and II Corinthians 5:10. Who is judged? What is judged? And what is the result?

10. Take some time to judge your own life. Are you building your life out of “wood, hay and stubble” or with “gold, silver and precious stones”? Discuss.

11. Rosh Hashanah is also associated with the coronation of the Messiah, which may happen in heaven before His return to earth. In the Jewish services on Rosh Hashanah, Psalm 47, a coronation psalm, is read seven times. Read Daniel 7:9-14 and Revelation 4:1-2. Describe what these verses depict.

Rosh Hashanah is celebrated on the new moon of the seventh month. That moon is called *Chevlai Shel Mashiach* in Hebrew, which means “birth pangs” of the Messiah. This may refer to a seven year period of time depicted by various prophets in the scriptures. It is also called the time of Jacob’s trouble and the Tribulation. It is understood to be a seven year period which will bring great testing and trials to the people of Israel.

It seems that some day Rosh Hashanah may initiate the time of Tribulation.

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of a ten-day period called the Days of Awe, a time of national repenting. These ten days complete the forty days of repentance called Teshuvah and culminate in the next feast day, which is actually a fast - the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur

Read Leviticus 16, Leviticus 23:26-32 and Numbers 29:7-11.

12. When is the Day of Atonement?

13. Briefly describe what happens on the Day of Atonement, which is the most solemn day of the Jewish year, according to Leviticus 16.

14. Who do the high priest and the sacrifices prophetically point to in John 19:17-20, Hebrews 9:11-28 and Hebrews 13:10-13?

15. What else do you learn from the Hebrews 9:11-28 passage?

The Hebrew word *kapporet* means “mercy seat” and comes from the same root word as atonement. It suggests covering, canceling, pardoning or reconciling. The Greek word *hilasmos* has the same meaning, but is translated “propitiation.”

16. Who is our propitiation according to Romans 3:24-25, I John 2:2 and I John 4:9-10?

Certainly the Day of Atonement pictures the work of Christ on the cross, but there are other components of this most solemn day that take its prophetic meaning beyond the first coming of Christ. It is a fast day. It is the culmination of forty days of fasting and ten days of national repentance. It is considered a day of judgment and is often referred to as “the Day” or “that Day.”

17. Read Isaiah 52:15; Ezekiel 37:25-27; Joel 2:15-17; Zechariah 12:10, 13:1, 14:3-4; Matthew 24:27-31 and Revelation 1:7. Tell what is pictured in these verses that may tie into the prophetic fulfillment of the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement is also called “Face to Face” because on that day the High Priest, who must first be cleansed by the blood of the sacrifice, entered the Holy of Holies where God’s presence dwelt over the mercy seat.

18. Discuss how we can come to the place in our lives where we are “face to face” with the Lord. See II Corinthians 3:18.

The Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Booths

The Hebrew word for tabernacle is *sukkah*. It means a booth, hut, covering, pavilion or tent.

Read Leviticus 23:33-44, Numbers 29:12-40 and Deuteronomy 16:13-15.

19. The Feast of Tabernacles was the most joyous festival of the whole year. Describe this feast - when it occurs and what is celebrated.

20. What were the Israelites remembering? See Deuteronomy 29:5, Exodus 16:35, 25:22 and 29:43 and discuss.

21. What were they celebrating from the agrarian year? (See the chart in Appendix II.)

22. Read Nehemiah 8:14-18 and discuss.

Once the Israelites were in the promised land and the temple was built, the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles became formalized. It included the special sacrifices, specific readings from Scripture and daily ceremonies.

23. Study the Scripture reading from the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles from Zechariah 14:8-11 and 14:16 and discuss.

There was also a daily ceremony, which included dancers with willow branches, simulating the wind, and the priests pouring out wine and “living water” into a receptacle at the altar.

24. Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles during His ministry. Read John 7:14 and 7:37-39. What does Jesus teach about the living water?

At night during the Feast of Tabernacles, huge golden candlesticks illuminated the entire temple and its surrounds.

25. Read John 8:1-2 and 8:12. What does Jesus teach about light even as the giant candlesticks were being extinguished?

26. Prophetically, the Feast of Tabernacles looks forward to a time when the Messiah will return to the earth and “tabernacle” with us. Read Isaiah 2:1-4 and Isaiah 65:17-25. Discuss what this time will be like.

27. Discuss how John 14:21 and John 15:1-10 may depict how each of our lives can be a fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, the feast that celebrates the harvest of fruit.

28. How can you bear fruit as Jesus says?

Prepare for Life

29. Based on your study this week, what do you think God is teaching you or inviting you to do or be?

30. Based on the entire study of Christ in the Tabernacle and Feasts what do you think God is teaching you or inviting you to do or be?