

Place: Lurgan Baptist: 12:2:2008

Reading: Leviticus 23:23-25

FOCUS ON THE FEASTS

6. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

The first four feasts that are brought before us in (Lev Ch 23) describe for us *the past work* that God has done. The Passover, Christ died for our sins. The Feast of Unleavened Bread, what the Lord Jesus did enables us to cleanse our lives, to feast on Him and to have the spiritual sustenance that we need for our pilgrim journey. The Feast of First-fruits speaks to us of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and fifty days later was the feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. Now these four feasts picture events in past history. *We are living to day between the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Trumpets.* Now remember these seven feasts in Israel were clustered together in the spring and autumn. The spring feasts were Passover (23:5) Unleavened Bread (23:6) and First Fruits (23:10) They fell within days of each other in the months of March and April. Fifty days later came Pentecost (23:16) in the month of May and June. The autumn feasts were Trumpets (23:24) the Day of Atonement (23:27) and Tabernacles (23:34) and they occurred in the months of September and October.

Now I want you to notice that the first four feasts, the spring feasts, describe what *God has done in the past*, the

last three feasts, the autumn feasts describe *what God will do in the future*. Now do you recall that in our opening study we said we should for three things in relation to these feasts.

1. The Primary Association of the Passage:

To whom was it spoken ? Why did God speak like this ?

2. The Prophetic Anticipation of the Passage:

Does it contain a prediction of the future ?

3. The Personal Application of the Passage:

Is there a message for the Christian today in the feasts of Jehovah ? Now we know that (Lev Ch 23) was given originally to the Jewish people. That fact stands out time and again. Look if you will at (23:1, 9-10, 23-24) You see, these feasts were memorials of God's dealings with them in grace. Undoubtedly trumpets was a memorial of the time when the nation was gathered as the foot of Sinai to meet with God. (Ex 19:16-19) But of course these feasts were not only memorials of past events they were foreshadowings of future events. While this feast perpetuated in the memory of Israel the descent of the Lord to the top of Mount Sinai, it also foreshadowed the descent of the Lord to the top of Mount Olivet. (Zech 14:4) So for Israel these three feasts have a definite application.

You see, Israel has a three fold problem. *Israel is a*

Scattered People, a Sinful People and a Suffering People. The Feast of Trumpets speaks of a time of gathering, when God shall call His scattered people together. Israel is a Sinful People. The Day of Atonement speaks of that time when Israel shall be cleansed and born again. *So the Scattered People shall be called and the Sinful People shall be Cleansed, and the Suffering People shall be comforted and that's what the Feast of Tabernacles speaks of.* We are looking this at the Feast of Trumpets. We are living today in a world of communication, where an event taking place in any part of the world can be brought live into our homes with sound and sight. In ancient times God gave to Israel a communication system. The first mention of the trumpet in the Bible is connected with the giving of the Ten Commandments at Sinai (Ex 19:13) The Trumpet was used to assemble the people to work, to worship, and to war. Look at (Num 10:1-10) for here the Lord gives us an explanation as to how the trumpets were used.

The Trumpets were used to **assemble** the people (10:2) to blow an **alarm** (10:5) to announce **war** (10:9) to announce **special days** in Israel's calendar (10:10) The Trumpets were God's method of communication, they were God's radio, God's newspaper. When God wanted announce something to His people, or to get His people to do something he told the priests to blow the trumpets. The Trumpets revealed the mind of God to His people. *They speak to us of the Regathering of the Nation and the Return of the Lord.* Now put all that at the back of your mind as we look at three things relative to this feast.

(1) THE AGE IN WHICH WE LIVE

For the time gap between the feast of Pentecost and the feast of trumpets speaks to us of the age in which we live. Pentecost took place on the 3rd month, while trumpets took place on the 1st day of the seventh month. Now that 3 to 4 month interval speaks to me of this present age. This is where we are this evening. We are living between Pentecost and Trumpets. Now it's important that we distinguish between the ages. Augustine said, "*Distinguish between the ages and Scripture will harmonise.*" Paul speaks in (Eph 3:11 J.N.D.) about the "*purpose of the ages.*" That word, is also used in connection with the orderly arrangement of the twelve loaves on the table of showbread in the Tabernacle in the wilderness. H.K. Downie says, "*there is the same orderly arrangement in the ages, nothing haphazard, or uncertain about them. There is a divine purpose concerning the world, Israel, the Church, and Christ, in whom all these purposes will be fully realised.*"

Now Paul's division of the ages is very concise and has much to commend it. Paul speaks about

- **Other ages:** (Eph 3:5)
- **This age:** (Eph 2:2 R.V.)
- **The ages to come:** (Eph 2:7)

Paul describes this age further when he speaks of "*the dispensation of the grace of God.*" (Eph 3:2) Now did you notice that as far as (Lev Ch 23) was concerned there were no feasts or fresh revelations from God

between the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Trumpets. The same is true concerning this “*present age*.” Despite what the Charismatics tell us there are no fresh revelations from God during this age. The canon of Scripture has been completed. If this were fully grasped then “*false cults*,” which owe their beginnings to a supposedly fresh revelation would never have made any headway. Now we are thinking about the age in which we live and I want you to see,

(a) THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THIS AGE:

What is God’s purpose for this age ? Well at the Jerusalem council speaking of this present church age, James reminded them “*how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.*” (Acts 15:14) Did this therefore mean that there was no future for Israel ? Not at all for James continues his message with the words, “*And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.*” (Acts 15:15-16) Now do you see the purpose of God for this age ? God is visiting the nations taking out of them a people for His name. (a) But don’t stop there,

(b) THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THIS AGE:

Where are we living now ? My ... are we not living between Pentecost and Trumpets ? What are we to be doing now ? Well, what were the Jewish people doing at that time ? They were sharing in the harvest. You see, Passover

and First-fruits were associated with the barley harvest, but between Pentecost and Trumpets was the wheat harvest. The people were working in the harvest field. Did you notice that after Moses talked about the feast of Pentecost he immediately talked about the harvest. Look if you will at (23:22) Is this not what we should be doing today ? So many believers are watching the harvest or neglecting the harvest yet our Lord tells us that “*they, the fields are white unto harvest.*” (Jn 4:35) Are you criticising the harvesters when you ought to be bringing in the sheaves ? Are you part of the harvest crew today ?

(c) THE PROGRAMME OF GOD IN THIS AGE:

For God’s programme is connected with two outstanding mysteries in this age. One is the mystery of Israel’s blindness (Rom 11:25) and the second is the mystery of the Church. Paul speaks about the nation of Israel in (Rom Ch 11:1-2) Do you see what Paul says ? “*God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.*” Yet if you turn to (11:15) it talks about “*the casting away of them.*” One verse says they have been cast off, while the other states exactly the opposite. ***The explanation is that God has cast off Israel nationally, but not individually and not finally.*** Individuals Israelites, like Paul are reached by the gospel, saved by the grace of God, and form part of the remnant, according to (11:5) The phrase “*blindness in part is happened to Israel,*” (11:25) suggests the same idea.

This blindness is **not total**, it is “*only in part,*” for the other part who respond to the gospel have the veil taken

from their minds. This blindness is **not permanent** for it is only “*until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.*” (11:25) When the church is completed and the Lord comes to take His people to Himself, the fullness of the Gentiles will be realised. Then God will resume His dealings with His earthly people and the veil will be taken away from their minds. Therefore, while Israel is temporally set aside we have *the Mystery of the Church.* (Eph 3:3) Paul speaking about God says to the Ephesian believers “*By revelation He made unto me, the mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs and of the same body.*” (3:3) Is this not what God is doing in this age ? He is visiting the nations and taking out of them a people for His name, and each one who is saved by the grace of God is at once added to that church which is the body and bride of Christ. (Eph 5:25)

Then the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout and take His blood bought, Spirit sealed church home to Himself. Then this age with all its privileges and responsibilities will come to an end and another age different in every respect will be ushered in. (1)

(2) THE NATION TO WHICH WE LOOK

Dr. Hyman Appleman said, “*If you want to know about the coming of the Lord keep one eye on heaven and the other eye on the Jew.*” A story is told of the Prime Minister of Israel exchanging visits with the President of the U.S.A. On the Presidents desk there were three telephones, one red, one white and one blue. When the

Prime minister inquired about them, the President replied that the red one was a direct line to Moscow, the blue one a direct line to London, and the white one a direct line to God. Asked if he used the white one often the President replied that he used it rarely since calls to the Lord were long distant and therefore expensive. The Israeli Prime Minister remarked that he also had three such telephones. The red one was to Paris, the blue one to London and the white one went directly to heaven. The President asked if he used the white one often. “*Sometimes a number of times each day,*” the Prime Minister replied. Surprised, the President asked how the Israeli government could handle such a large telephone call. “*It really is not that expensive to call the Lord.*” the Prime Minister said, “***you see in Jerusalem it’s a local call.***” Although being in Jerusalem will not automatically make you closer to God, the city and the nation occupies a central place in the divine purpose.

You cannot understand the future, you cannot understand Bible prophecy, you cannot even understand the ways and workings of God if you don’t understand Israel. The Jew is God’s yardstick, God’s measuring rod, God’s blueprint, God’s outline, God’s plan for the future. Indeed God has divided the human race into three categories, Jew, Gentile, and the Church of God. (1 Cor 10:32) These three categories are distinct from one another and we must not mix them up. *If we take prophecies belonging to the nation and apply them to the church, much confusion will be the result.* Now as I have said these 7 feasts in their primary association were given to the Children of Israel. So it is to that nation that we must look to see the type’s

fulfilment. Think with me about,

(a) THE ELECTION OF THIS NATION:

How odd of God to choose the Jews. Although God is no respecter of persons, yet He has selected this race for a unique role in His redemptive purpose for the world. The nation of Israel was elected in Abraham according to (Gen 12:1-3) “ *Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy fathers house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*” Moses indicated that Israel was to be a worshipping and a witnessing nation. God laid before this nation some laws. Look if you will at (Deut 28:1, 15) Here we see blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, but look at (28:25) Well, what happened to this nation, well there was,

(b) THE DEFECTION OF THIS NATION:

For after the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, the scattering of Israel began. In the book of Judges we read, “ *they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*” (2:13) What was God’s response ? The Lord punished Israel in the land, and He used different nations to do it. (3:8, 4:2) Then when the nation continued to disobey, God conveyed Israel out of the land. The Northern Kingdom was taken captive into Assyria in 722 BC

(2 Kings 18:9-11) In 586 BC the Southern Kingdom was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and taken captive into Babylon. (2 Kings 25:1-11) Seventy years later the Lord permitted the captives from Judah to return home from Babylon and rebuild Jerusalem. Then Jews remained in the Promised Land for the next six hundred years, but in AD 70 Titus the Roman general, razed the Holy City to the ground. The Jews then entered into what is commonly known as “ **The Dispersion.**” So the next phase in its chequered history was,

(c) THE REJECTION OF THIS NATION:

The reason of course for Israel’s rejection by God is their rejection of Jesus Christ as their Messiah. John says, “ *He came unto His own and His own received Him not.*” (Jn 1:12) Thus this nation that crucified their Messiah became wanderers upon the face of this earth. As the Saviour predicted, their house was left unto them desolate, their Temple was destroyed and the Jewish people were scattered into many parts of the world. Now while it is true that God punished Israel for their wilful disobedience and they still live in blindness, yet He will by no means permit their complete destruction. (Rom 11:25) You see, Israel’s present rejection is only temporary for think of,

(d) THE PROSPECTION OF THIS NATION:

What is the prospect for Israel ? Was Martin Luther right when he said, “ *God is done with the Jews as a nation.*” Is God through with the Jew ? No. For the feast of Trumpets proclaims their regathering and their restoration

to their own land. Now this truth is set forth in at least three ways. It is set forth,

- **PROPHETICALLY:**

Look if you will at (Is 11:11-12) Some teach that this prophecy was fulfilled by the return of the Jews from Babylon. However, it should not be overlooked that Isaiah spoke of the Lord laying his hand upon the people a “*second time.*” Clearly the return from the Babylonian captivity was the first time, therefore there must needs be another return to the land. Moreover according to Isaiah, they are to be recovered from the islands of the sea and gathered from the four corners of the earth. This is a return from a worldwide dispersion rather than just a relatively regional return from Babylonian Captivity. Look at (Is 27:12-13) If you read the book of Joel you will find several references to that future “*day of the Lord,*” when the trumpet will be blown. We read in (2:15) “*Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast call a solemn assembly.*” Joel is talking about the time when the people of Israel shall be gathered together and God shall bring them back to the land and restore them to their kingdom.

The Lord Jesus made reference to both Israel’s present rejection and prospective restoration when he cried, “*O Jerusalem. Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto*

you, ye shall not see henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

(Matt 23:37-39 24:29-31) My one day there is going to be a great blowing of the trumpet for the nation of Israel and that nation will be regathered.

- **FIGURATIVELY:**

The prophets not only foretold of Israel’s captivity among the nations but also of their future blessing. In Ezekiel (Ch 37) the restoration of Israel is spoken of in figurative language Those dry bones are a picture of Israel today, dead spiritually buried in the graves of the world but the day is coming when the bones will be brought together and Paul reminds us “*the receiving of them will be life from the dead.*” (Rom 11:15) Look at what Ezekiel states in (Ch 37)

- They will be **Regathered:** (36:24)
- They will be **Reinstated:** (37:21)
- They will be **Reunited:** (37:22)
- They will be **Spiritually Regenerated:** (36:25-28)

(Jer 31:35-36 33: 19-26 23:5-8)

- **CURRENTLY:**

Even today we see the future of this Israelite regathering. Until the end of the 19th century there was no move among Jews to return to Palestine nor to reclaim it and make it their national homeland again. That all changed in 1879 when Theodore Hertzl, an Austrian Jew, with some

others officially launched what has become known as the Zionist Movement. The Balfour Declaration following World War 1 assured them of a foothold in the land of their fathers. *Today Israel is back on the map, that great miracle took place on the 14th May 1948 when Israel was constituted as a nation.* In 1967, in that famous war now called The Sixth Day War, Israel, this time outnumbered eighty to one in just six days defeated Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, and when the war was finished they had amassed three times the land mass of their original territory. Moshe Dyan, the brilliant Israeli Commander, placed in the crevice of the Western Wall a piece of paper on which was scribbled a prayer with the remark, “ *we have reached the holiest of our holy places never to go back.* ” Today, Israel with a population of only 4-5 million, is the only middle eastern nation that produces its own tanks, planes and weapons. My ***there is an invisible hand on these people, and it is the hand of God.*** They have returned to their own and they are still returning. (1) (2) But surely there is an application here for the church.

(3) THE EVENT FOR WHICH WE WAIT

What is the event for which we wait ? My “ *we wait for His Son from heaven even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.* ” (1 Thes 1:19) The trumpet has significance for us, for this long indefinite period from Pentecost to Trumpets is illustrative of this whole church age that is to be brought to an end by the sound of a trumpet. “ *For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ shall rise*

first. ” (1 Thes 4:15-6) Think of,

(a) ***THE CERTAINTY OF THIS EVENT:***

The coming of Christ is certain because of His own promise, “ *I will come again.* ” (Jn 14:3) This is one of the strong confident “ *I wills,* ” none of which has ever failed. Christ says, “ *Surely I come quickly.* ” (Rev 22:20)

(b) ***THE CHARACTER OF THIS EVENT:***

The phrase “ *the Second Coming of Christ,* ” is all inclusive and embraces the two undoubted stages of that coming. ***There are not two comings but one coming in two stages.*** In essence the Rapture will introduce the Tribulation while the Second Advent will conclude it. At the Rapture Christ in the air (1 Thes 4:16) but at the Second Advent Christ comes to the earth (Zech 14:4) At the Rapture He comes for His saints, at the second advent He comes with His saints. (1 Thes 3:13) Christ’s coming for His saints is never said to be heralded by celestial signs, but Christ’s coming with His saints will be heralded by celestial signs. (Matt 24:29-30) The Rapture is presented as a time of blessing (1 Thes 4:18) while the Second Advent is presented as a time of judgement. (2 Thes 2:8-12) The Rapture seems to involve the church primarily (1 Cor 15:51)

The Second Advent seems to Israel primarily and the Gentile nations. (Matt 24:1 25:46) Biblically speaking, the “ *come up hither,* ” of (Rev 4:1) is the Rapture, while the appearance of the white horse rider and his armies in

(Rev 19:11) is the Revelation of the Lord Jesus. ***So there is the Pre-Tribulation Appearing in the Air, that's what we call the Rapture, and then there is the Post-Tribulation Appearing on the Earth, that's what we call the Revelation.*** (a) (b) But what about,

(c) THE COMFORT OF THIS EVENT:

For Paul concludes his explanation of the Rapture with these words, “ *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.* ” (1 Thes 4:18) This comfort was needed by the Thessalonian believers because they were anxious regarding their friends who had fallen asleep in Christ. My when we are in the midst of sorrow and bereavement what is the source of greatest comfort ? What is it that sustains us as we walk the road of loneliness, sadness and gloom ? Is it not the cheering hope of His coming ? Separation is the order of this day, but reunion is the order of that day.

***Jesus is coming the dead shall arise
Loved ones shall meet in a joyful surprise
Caught up together to Him in the skies
Jesus is coming again***

(d) THE CHALLENGE OF THIS EVENT:

For the truth of the Lord's Coming is one of the most practical truths in all of Scripture. Do you recall what we said about the trumpets in Israel ? They were used to regulate all the movements of the Children of Israel in the wilderness. By them they worshipped, marched,

assembled, went to war. My we are waiting for the trumpet to sound. Paul says, “ *for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.* ” (1 Cor 15:52) It will sound to herald the end of the church era, when all believers will be removed from earth at the Rapture. In light of all this, God's trumpet, His Word is calling us,

• **To WORSHIP:**

The priests in the Old Testament, were to blow the trumpets to assemble the people for worship. (Num 10:3) What about your worship ? Do you attend the services regularly ? (Heb 10:25) Do you observe the Lord's Table weekly ? Paul says, “ *for as often as ye eat this bread and drink ye this cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come.* ” (1 Cor 11:26)

• **To WARFARE:**

You see, in Israel when they were going to war, they blew an alarm and they were delivered. (Num 10:9) In these last days when Satan is making a last ditch effort against the church, let us stand clothed, courageous and confident in Him.

• **To WATCH:**

The Lord Jesus said, “ *Watch therefore for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.* ” (Matt 24:42)

• **TO WORK:**

Listen to what the Trumpet, the Word is saying to

1. PREACHERS:

“ I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus who shall judge the quick and dead at His appearing preach the Word.” (2 Tim 4:1-2)

2. ELDERS:

“ Feed the flock of God and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” (1 Pet 5:2)

3. SOUL-WINNERS:

“ For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing ? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming.” (1 Thes 2:19-20)

4. BELIEVERS:

“ Occupy till I come.” (Lk 19:13)

**Oh, may we keep in view
The day above all days
That at the Judgement Seat of Christ
We may receive His praise**