

Lord of the Sabbath

Program #32

Meaning of Yom Teruah

Kenny Kitzke

LawstSheep Ministries

Last Sabbath, I began a discussion of the next annual holy day Sabbath of the Lord. It is often called the Feast of Trumpets or Rosh Hashanah. Probably the best name is the Hebrew one of Yom Teruah used by God.

Today, I am going to focus on the meaning of this holy day to the three groups of men who will be affected by it when it is fulfilled in Christ. Those groups are the Jews, the church of God and the Gentiles. Why break mankind out this way? Because the Apostle Paul did. Let's look at this in your own Bible. It is found in 1 Cor. 10: 32 and 11: 1:

Give no offense, either to the Jews, or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

The Jews generally refers to the chosen people of the blood line of Jacob to whom the promises of God were originally given down from Abraham and Isaac. Greeks refers to all non-Jewish people and is often translated as Gentiles. So, who are the church of God? It is any Jew or Gentile who has accepted the call of God to His Son as Savior and Lord of their life.

If you still have doubt about thinking about the future of mankind this way, you might also note what Paul said in Gal. 3: 26-29:

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Do you think of yourself as Abraham's seed and heir to the promise God made to him? Do you believe what the Apostle Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles by the word of Jesus, said to you? I do. Whether you are a naturally born Jew or a Gentile makes no difference IF you are later baptized into Christ and have the Holy Spirit of God. Amen, brethren!

Let's start our search for the meaning of Yom Teruah from the Jewish perspective. How would Jesus, as a Jew, and Paul and Peter as Jews, have looked at and understood this holy day of the LORD? Remember the "Bible" they had was the sacred, hand-scribed Hebrew scrolls that were kept at and read from the synagogues each Sabbath day. They did not have a personal copy of the Bible as we do. This explains why it was the custom of Jesus and His Apostles and all Jews to go to the synagogue each Sabbath day where

they would hear Moses preached each week. Remember too, that the Greek Septuagint version scrolls of the Old Testament (translated in about 300 BC), was also available to the Apostles for teaching to the Greek speaking world of the Gentiles.

So, my first point is that all that the Jews at the time of Christ knew about keeping the Feasts and holy days of the LORD came from the Old Testament. Jesus kept these holy days of the LORD perfectly in accordance with the Law of Moses. Did Jesus provide any new or additional knowledge or understanding about LORD's fall holy days to His disciples. You bet He did! But, it is knowledge given to the church of God which we will get into a bit later.

In the Jewish understanding, Yom Teruah starts a ten day period of repentance, a time to return to the God of Abraham and to keep His commandments. It ends on Yom Kippur. Yom Teruah is NOT a stand alone holy day. It is part of a seasonal time, a period of several weeks for the harvest of the summer crops in the agricultural cycle in the holy land of Israel. Yom Teruah is intimately connected to the rest of the fall holy days and what they foretell. Have you been made aware of what they foretell in your Church?

If you think repentance is not part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, you have missed His Gospel completely. It was the central focus of the ministry of Jesus and what He Himself preached. Read it for yourself in Mat. 4: 17:

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

This happened after the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist and Christ's temptation by Satan. It is just before His ministry begins when He selects His apostles. It is the same message given by John the Baptist who was to prepare the way for the Lamb of God. Check it out in Mat. 3: 2. The words of John are identical to those of his cousin Jesus.

Do you realize that many Christian Church leaders today DO NOT emphasize and preach what Jesus preached. It is not popular to call for repentance from sin and keeping the law of God in spirit and truth BEFORE the Kingdom of God comes. Instead, they preach a fuzzy gospel about some kind of belief in Jesus. They teach a gospel mostly about Jesus; NOT the Gospel Jesus preached. They celebrate a holiday for His birth and for His resurrection; NOT the holy days God commanded for His people. Most of these ordained Church leaders probably do not even know what Yom Teruah is. But God thought it was important and commanded His people to keep it holy forever. Jesus kept the holy days of the LORD and preached repentance. Isn't it time you found out why?

Here is an overview summary of the Jewish understanding of this holy season. It is wonderful and educational for Christians as well. The blast of a ram's horn on Yom Teruah is a wake-up call to repent from your ways and return to God's ways. It is a required time to examine how you are living each year. Are you living to please man, or to please God?

Actually, orthodox Jews call for a daily repentance starting with the previous month called Elul. Each morning a shofar is blown. The idea is to repent before Yom Teruah when the last trump is blown. Why? Because if you don't, you will go through the Ten Days of Awe, the period from Yom Teruah to Yom Kippur. This is a 40-day repentance.

Yom Teruah is seen as the day that heaven is opened for the saints. Yom Kippur is understood to be the day when the gates of heaven are closed. There is no more time to repent after Yom Kippur and you will miss the Kingdom of God, a heaven on earth. This is the Kingdom that Jesus said was near or at hand. In order to enter it, you must repent.

Another Hebrew name for Yom Teruah used in the Jewish Talmud is Yom HaDin. That is, the Day of Judgment. On this future day all men would pass before God and be judged. Should we keep this in mind each year?

According to some in Judaism, there will be three books opened during this judgment. Every man's name would be entered into one of the books. One book is for those found wholly righteous who are sealed for life in the world to come. They would probably be protected during the Great Tribulation. These could be the 144,000 Jews of the twelve tribes of Israel who are sealed by God BEFORE the earth is harmed as stated in Rev. 7.

The second book is for the wholly wicked Jews who will suffer in the Great Tribulation and never repent. I suspect they will incur the wrath of God and be destroyed forever.

The third book is that for the Intermediates, those neither wholly righteous nor wholly wicked. This could well be the preponderance of Jews alive at the time. In other words both the wholly righteous and wholly wicked will be small fractions of all Jews alive. The multitude of Intermediates will also go through the Great Tribulation and Days of Awe. Some will repent and return to God before Yom Kippur. They will be saved.

This seems consistent with Zech. 12: 10 describing the deliverance or redemption of at least some of the House of Judah:

And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

I would think the references to an "only son" who was pierced would refer to Jesus and His first coming. Some of these Jews will indeed see the second coming of Jesus descending to the earth on the Mount of Olives in great power and majesty. They will finally see their Messiah come to them, believe in Him as Savior and Lord and be saved. They may well enter into the Kingdom of God on earth as physical humans with their natural, corruptible bodies.

Now, what do these holy days of the LORD tell us about the Gentiles in the end times shortly before the return of Jesus as King? Well, these people will neither have the

Commandments of God nor the testimony of Jesus written in their hearts. They will most likely take the mark of the beast finding a false form of godliness, spirituality and religion but denying its power through the Holy Spirit. The fruit of these deceived Gentiles will be just the opposite of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

We get a picture of these Gentiles in 2 Tim. 3: 1-5:

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

If this sounds like the trend in world society today, it may be that these last days are nearer than we think. Have you turned away from men as these? And, the last trump of God could sound at any time! When it does the Gentiles will suffer under the unrelenting wrath and vengeance of God; but will not repent. These terrible times are described in vivid detail in Revelation and many Old Testament prophecies of the end of the age; the end of the world as we had known it. According to Matt. 24: 21:

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

By the time the fifth trumpet of Revelation is blown, the Gentiles who remain on the earth will wish they were dead rather than be tormented any more as described in Rev. 9:

In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

Well, isn't there some good news when the last trump is blown? Yes, there is! The last trump on Yom Teruah will be the best day ever for everyone called to be in the church of God. This will include all who died in Christ and those still alive who have endured in Christ to the end of this age.

These Christians not only believe in Christ, and His second coming, they will be looking for Him and be waiting for Him to return for them and start the Kingdom of God on earth. Will the Gentiles be looking for Him to return? No way! Will the Jews be looking for Him to return on Yom Teruah? No way! Why? Because the Jews will be looking for the signs of the end that will occur only AFTER the last trump is blown. The SECOND coming of Jesus remains a mystery to them.

Let's make sure of this from scripture. Hear what is said in Hebrews 9: 27-28 to those who are the physical seed of Abraham and knew the Old Testament promises of God:

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

My friends, you have an appointment from God Himself to die. He will literally take your breadth of life, your life spirit, away. The next event after your death will be the judgment pictured by Yom Teruah. This is the day Christ will appear a second time for your salvation. Will you be ready? Are you eagerly waiting for the Lord of this Sabbath to return?

Each weekly Sabbath day, at your holy convocation, do you pray for God's Kingdom to come on earth as Jesus said you should pray? Do you pray each Sabbath with the last words of hope in the Bible in response to its last words of Christ? Do you have eyes to see and ears to hear and the mind of Christ to understand the last words spoken by Jesus to any man? They are revealed by the testimony of Christ to Apostle John in Rev. 22: 20:

He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I come quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Let us hear again the command of God to remember His Sabbath day and remind us of His plan for His people in the second verse of the song "Remember the Sabbath Day" sung by Melissa Ising:

Verse

Six days to work, six days to do our labor;
Christ said He made the Sabbath just for man.
The seventh day of rest, the Lord He gave us
The Sabbath to remind us all of His plan.

Chorus

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy:
A rest for the people of God, a true delight.
The Son of Man, He reigns as Lord of the Sabbath,
And shows His brethren how to do what's right.

And, this my dear friends, what Yom Teruah reveals, is His plan. Keeping Yom Teruah is what is right. The dead in Christ will hear this last trumpet blast on Yom Teruah. It will literally awake them from their sleep in death. It is the day of resurrection; the day of redemption of our souls as the firstfruits in Christ.

Those still alive in Christ will also look up to see Him descend from heaven with a shout and appear in the clouds in the same manner as He ascended. See Acts 1: 11. They will be changed in the blink of an eye to receive their new incorruptible and eternal "spirit" bodies not made of flesh and blood. They will follow the dead up to meet our Lord in the air. See the proof of all this in your Bible. Read 1 Cor. 15, especially verses 51-52.

Write it down if you do not have your Bible handy. Read it after the program. See when death will be swallowed up and the grave will no longer have its apparent victory over you. That chapter again is 1 Cor. 15.

Know this promise of God: on a future Yom Teruah we will finally see Him face to face and so be forever with Him. We will ascend like He did to the Father's house in heaven. Jesus will take the church of God, called His bride, to the place in His Father's house that he went to prepare for us after He rose to heaven. Amen! Rejoice!

These blessed and holy thoughts will all be with me and with all those who keep holy this upcoming annual Yom Teruah Sabbath. Praise the Almighty! I pray you will be one of these Christians. Contact me if you need help in how and when to celebrate Yom Teruah.

It is by understanding Yom Teruah that you can know how and when the resurrection of the saints will occur. Many call this the "Pre-Tribulation Rapture." Neither the Gentiles nor the Jews are eagerly waiting for His SECOND appearing. Unfortunately, many Christians are not watching and waiting for His second appearing either. And, why not?

Many Christians think that when they die they will immediately ascend into heaven. Their teachers have told them so. I hear it every day on Christian radio and television. If the dead in Christ are already up in heaven with the Lord, why do they have to be resurrected to meet Him in the air? Doesn't this teaching trouble you? Doesn't it make you wonder about its truthfulness? What is this teaching based upon?

There is no Scripture anywhere in your Bible that says the moment after you die you will go to heaven or hell. It is a teaching of men who do not understand the difference between heaven and the Paradise of God. Men have told you that to be absent from the body and present with the Lord means that when you die, you will go to be present with the Lord in heaven. Read the words of Paul in 2 Cor. 5: 8 carefully. There is nothing there about going to be with the Lord in heaven immediately after death. What we do find is an understanding that is totally consistent with Yom Teruah. We can and will rise in the future to be with the Lord in a new body not made of flesh and blood. When will this happen? At the last trump blown on Yom Teruah, NOT at the moment of death.

Is Peter or Paul alive and up in heaven right now worshipping and singing praises to the God? Show me that verse. Show me where the Apostle John acknowledges this since they had both died. No, my friends, Peter and Paul are dead in their graves resting in peace, just like King David. Jesus referred to this state of the dead as being asleep. Why? Because He knew they would be awakened from their sleep by the shout and trumpet of God from heaven on a future Yom Teruah. They are waiting for their resurrection at the last trump. This is the word of God.

Pleased, don't be deceived and pray to these saints, or to Mary the mother of God, in heaven. They are NOT there YET. If you believe otherwise, I hope you will contact me and explain from Scripture where you find this prophecy of God's plan of salvation and glorification of His people.

It is tempting to get into prophecy at this time and to emphasize the difference in time between the resurrection of the church and the return of Jesus to the earth as King. However, I have only a short time left today to conclude about Yom Teruah.

I will cover three other names for Yom Teruah used by God in the Old Testament for His people Israel and what they should portend for us Christians. The first is Yom HaZikkaron. In Leviticus 23: 24, the first day of the seventh month is called a day of memorial. The Hebrew word translated as memorial is “zikkaron.”

Each year, on Yom Teruah, we are to remember not only this Sabbath, but what it foretells about Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. For this is the day that He will come for His church, His bride, and take her to heaven for the marriage of the Lamb of God. However, this is a day of judgment of all men: Jews, Gentiles and the church of God.

The prophet Daniel clearly prophesied about this future day of judgment he saw before the court of Jesus in Daniel 7: 9-10:

I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

I urge you to read Daniel’s entire prophecy account. It is amazing! This is the judgment of God. The court is seated. We see Him address the end times and the beasts that arise out of the earth. The seven seals of Revelation will be opened, the seven trumpets will be sounded and the seven vials of the wrath of God will be poured out on the inhabitants of the whole earth in this judgment.

But, in heaven at this time we find Daniel describing a multitude standing before Him. It is time for their judgment as well. It is not a judgment of salvation to eternal life. That has already been made in the resurrection. This is a judgment of the saved church of God before Christ in heaven. It is a time when the rewards of God based on our works will be handed out to the bride of Christ. They will all be with Christ and watch from heaven the wrath of God being poured out on the unbelieving and travailing earth. When these days of awe and tribulation are finished, they shall return with Him to the earth to rule and reign with Him, according to their personal reward, in His Kingdom forever.

This judgment of the church of God is clear from the New Testament in several verses. Let us just look at 2 Cor. 5: 9-10:

Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent [from this body of flesh], to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of

Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body [as in the earthly body of Christ], according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Do you see it? Whether we are present and alive in this flesh body when the last trumpet sounds, or whether we have left that dead body and are sleeping in the dust of the earth, we need to be judged as well-pleasing to God. Recall that God was well-pleased with His Son as Lord of the Sabbath at the time He was baptized by John the Baptist.

Do you see yourself standing before that judgment seat of Christ? Are you waiting for the sound of the last trumpet of God and the second appearing of Jesus, the Lamb of God? Do you understand from the Feasts of the Lord and His holy days how and why Peter said in 1 Peter 2: 4:

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Well we know the end of those who do not obey the good news that is available to those in the church of God who obey God and follow the Lord of the Sabbath. The destruction of the lawless was later revealed in gory detail in the revelation of Jesus to the Apostle John. It will be horrible beyond imagination. We can be safe in heaven with our Groom and when the judgment on the earth has been poured out from heaven, we will follow Him as King on white horses back to the earth to rule and reign with Him for 1,000 years.

I assume you can grasp why keeping Yom Teruah is such a great and joyful holy day of the Lord. I can hardly wait. I will close with the other fascinating name associated with Yom Teruah and its marvelous meaning for us in the church of God.

This day is also called Yom Hakeseh, or the Day of Hiding. A day which is concealed. Let's look at what King David wrote about the coming Great Tribulation in Psalm 27: 5:

For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

David got it right. David will rise from the dead on Yom Teruah and be hid in the Father's house, high in heaven set upon the rock that is Christ; the Lord of the Sabbath.

This is also the hidden day that Jesus spoke of regarding His Kingdom whose day and hour no man knew, not even the angels in heaven. That would include Satan, who if he knew would try to prevent the last trumpet being sounded or heard. I had previously explained why we do not know the day to observe Yom Teruah until we observe the new moon of the seventh month. This is the only such holy day of the LORD. Jesus was speaking of Yom Teruah! Will you be keeping it holy this year?

Next Sabbath, we will discuss Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement and what it means in Christ for us Christians in the church of God