OVERVIEW of God's FALL HOLYDAYS
Trumpets thru 8TH DAY of the Feast

Light on the Rock
by Philip Shields

Abstract: God's holydays are like a key that unlocks His plan of salvation for mankind. This message gives a thorough overview of each of 7 holydays, with emphasis on the final 4 holydays of God in the Fall starting Sept 13 this year. Listening to this message will help you get geared up and ready for the Feasts that are almost here and excited about what lies ahead of us.

Have you ever watched a mystery movie where people are trying to unlock a hidden code – and finally find the key or the formula? Did you realize God has given us such a "key" to unlocking the overview at least of what He is planning for humanity? That key is to understand the meaning of His holydays! It unlocks prophecy and brings the whole Bible into a clearer understanding.

Starting the eve of Thursday, September 13, in 2007, we begin a new round of God's fall holydays with Yom Teruah, the Feast of Trumpets – followed by the Days of Awe and repentance leading to the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. The autumn holydays are particularly exciting, because they foretell and unlock the code for future events in God's plan of Salvation, as well as they look back to some past events, as we shall see. I suggest if you are new to this website that you check out the fall holyday series I gave in 2006 on this Lightontherock.com website.

Today, I'll give an overview of God's fall holydays – so you are mentally and spiritually ready for this exciting part of God's calendar.

Greetings brothers and sisters, this is your brother with the GOOD NEWS of the coming return of Jesus Christ, pictured by the Feast of Trumpets – all the way to through the 1000 year Millennial reign of King Jesus, to the period after that when God the Father comes to earth with Heavenly Jerusalem after the new heavens and the new earth have been created.

The final four of God's seven holydays ALL occur in the 7th month of the Hebrew calendar, starting with the Feast of Trumpets, or Yom Teruw'ah or Yom Teruah, the memorial of blowing of trumpets. Seven is the number used so often in the Bible to depict perfection. Seven holydays, seven days in a week, 7,000 year plan, 7 last plagues, 7 trumpets, on and on. So the fact that the final high days, annual sabbaths, all occur in the 7th month of God's calendar tell us God is perfecting His plan for mankind in this month.

Many Jews have resorted to calling the first autumn feast day or high day, "Rosh Hashanah", meaning "head of the year", but that has no Biblical support to call it that. Neither do the modern Jewish observances of Rosh Hashanah bear any resemblance to the Biblical directives of how to observe the holyday.

We believe the holydays of God have not been "done away" with or fulfilled. The first three holydays in the Spring *have* been largely fulfilled in their spiritual meaning – but the Fall holydays are still about future events as well as some past events. It is possible there is yet a fuller completion

to be seen even yet of the earlier spring holydays and days to remember, especially the Wavesheaf day and Pentecost.

There is no record that Peter, Paul or the apostles quit observing the holydays, or surely there'd be some mention of it – as when they taught circumcision was no longer required. In fact, one of the most important events of the New Testament was the giving of Holy Spirit, which occurred on a holyday – the Feast of Pentecost! What if the 120 had not assembled on that day? Some huge events yet to be fulfilled, will most likely yet occur on future holydays.

Here are the remaining holydays in 2007, and they each start at around sundown the night before:

- **Feast of Trumpets, Thursday Sept 13** (kept Wednesday night at sundown to Thurs night at sunset). We do not keep it for 2 days as many Jews do. That is adding to what God said.

- **Day of Atonement Sept 22, Saturday, a day of fasting without food or water for 24 hours; Yom Kippur.**

- **1st day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Sept 27**, Thursday. The 7-day "Feast of Tabernacles" runs Sept 27-October 3. Only the first day is holy, though we usually are all together worshiping God on all the days.

- **The 8th day Feast,** next to but a separate holyday from the Feast of Tabernacles, OCT. 4. This 8th day is often called "The Last Great Day" by many.

Why are there "holydays of God"?

- God's holydays are called annual sabbaths or "high days". They are not "holidays", but days that God puts His presence into, making them holy. They were ordained by God, commanded to be kept, and were days of worship and rest from normal, regular work. You can read about them in Leviticus 23 and other places. They are God's feast days, not "feasts of the Jews". In Lev. 23:1-2, GOD says, "these are feasts of the Eternal (YHWH)…. these are MY feasts." I want all hearing my voice to really get that point. They are God's feasts. These feasts begin with the weekly Sabbath (Lev. 23:1-2), which God personally instituted at Creation. That was the Logos, the One who became Jesus Christ, who created the Sabbath by resting (Gen. 2:1-3). He was the One who walked in the garden with Adam and Eve. That is also how Jesus could claim to be Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28): He created it. All things were created by Jesus and for Jesus (Col. 1:15-17). Jesus certainly knew how to keep the Sabbath!

- Keeping God's holydays give us the key that unlocks the code to His true Plan of salvation for mankind, as each one in God's order and God's time, starting with Jesus' sacrifice on Passover. Those who don't keep the holydays won't grasp the nuances of God's plan, and will start to teach and believe error about God's plan. Those who don't observe God's holydays have to conclude that Satan is winning the battle of good vs. evil. Those who don't observe God's holydays believe the error of eternal torture from a so-called loving God for all those who have not either had the opportunity to know the true God or rejected it.

- The holydays reveal in more detail part of the purpose of the Church – God's assembly of called-out ones – which Jesus said HE would build. The Greek for "build" is the same word one would use for erecting a building or house, which is a Spiritual house, a spiritual

organism. We are living stones being built into a brilliant spiritual House of God, a better term to use than "Church". God is in the process of bringing together the various parts needed to put His house in order and to finish its assembly. We are the House of God. We are God's building. We are also the Bride of Christ, and the holydays help us understand that.

- The pagan holidays, though labeled Christian, are still pagan, Christmas and Easter being the primary examples. Don't be fooled into keeping pagan holidays that have the "Safe" label of Christianity. They're falsely labeled. They have nothing to do with Christianity and are an abomination to God. Christ was not born on Dec 25 and even any quick research will show you how pagan are the roots of Christmas. Ditto for Easter. Both celebrated the Sun God, or so-called relatives of the sun God, in one form or another. Look up my sermon last year about the True Story of the Birth of Christ.

- I warn you who wish to obey God: you will be persecuted for obeying God and for keeping the true holydays. You will be persecuted as you reject the Babylonian pagan days of Easter and Christmas.

So let's look at a quick review of the 7 holydays, starting with the Spring holydays we've already kept this year. The Spring holydays depict events that have already happened:

The meaning of the previous Feasts of the Eternal reviewed

The feast days of the Eternal are listed in Leviticus 23 and are mentioned numerous other places. The early church in the New Covenant times *watched* the meaning of the **Passover** as they watched Jesus being crucified as the Lamb of God on the 14th of God's first calendar month, which corresponds to our spring season. So did the ancient Israelites in Egypt, as they slaughtered *their* lambs also on the 14th. The Passover is a feast day, but not a holyday or rest day**. It pictures Jesus, the Lamb of God**. This Feast day, though not a holyday, pictures us being bought with a price – the most expensive price paid possible: the blood of the Son of God paying the purchase price. You and I are now bond slaves of God for the rest of our lives, bought in His blood, to now live a life of righteousness and to put off the sins of the flesh.

We keep Passover following Jesus' example of eating it during the eve of the 14th.

Then during the evening early hours after midnight which began the 15th of Abib or Nisan, long after the sun had set on the 14th, Israel marched out of Egypt as a freed people, because of the effect of 10th plague and the safety afforded those who earlier had killed a Passover lamb according to God's instructions. They marched out at night, after midnight, but in the wee hours of the morning, while it was still night time, and before light. The **7 days of Unleavened Bread** began with that march out of Egypt, picturing God's people living a new way of life after they eat the Passover. We too now, after accepting Jesus' sacrifice, walk in newness of life, eating daily and completely of Christ, for He is our Unleavened Bread, HE is the manna from heaven. We should be sure to be "eating our manna" daily, early, seeking God earnestly at the start of each day.

The Days of Unleavened Bread picture us putting sin out, and desiring a new life in Christ. Our righteousness is not our own – but the righteousness of Christ (Phil 3:9-11) which is a great gift from God (Rom 5:17) – the "gift of righteousness" that is imputed to us who choose to receive it (Rom.

5:18-19; 4:23-25). I spoke at length on this topic in the recent 3 part sermon on "God's Righteousness".

After accepting the covering of the blood of Passover – picturing Jesus' sacrifice for us on the stake – they had to leave Egypt. In the same way, as children of Abraham, we are also to leave spiritual Egypt and spiritual Babylon, just as Abraham was called to leave Babylon, or Ur of the Chaldees. I will give a full sermon soon titled "Come out of her, My People" (Rev. 18:4). In the same way, YHWH leads us out of modern spiritual Babylon, pictured by the time they walked out at night out of Egypt.

The next feast after that is a special day but not a holyday or day of rest. This day falls within the days of Unleavened Bread, and I've started calling it "the forgotten feast" – **the <u>Wavesheaf Sunday</u>** offering of firstfruit barley, picturing the next step in the plan of Salvation: Jesus had to die for us, symbolized by the innocent lambs slain for the people, but then that dead Lamb of God had to be resurrected and accepted by God the Father in our behalf. I'm sure that was a wondrous event in heaven as the angelic choirs sang hosannas to honor the Son of God and of course the Father, who resurrected Him. Now in Him we know we have life, for since Christ was resurrected from the dead, we know we can be and will be, as well. So wavesheaf Sunday pictures Jesus and His ascent to heaven to see His father, so that the harvest could begin. WE are the rest of the first harvest, after Christ was accepted to heaven as our fulfillment of the Wavesheaf waved to heaven. Without the death and resurrection of Jesus, there would be no plan of God! Without Jesus, there would be no "good news" or Gospel. Without Jesus, there would be no future for all of us. So that is why the story about Jesus' life, His sacrifice and His grace, and His resurrection is the central part of Good news – paving the way for the kingdom of God to ever be a reality (Rom. 1:3-4; 1 Cor. 15:1-6). That is why there are so many verses about the apostles preaching Christ, as well as preaching the kingdom of God.

The next holyday is **<u>Pentecost</u>**, which pictures the end of the barley harvest and the beginning of the wheat harvest – the first real harvests in the land. The big harvest of all the fruits and other plants comes in the Fall**.** This pictures those being called now as <u>God's first fruits of his salvation</u>. The *first* harvests, for those who will become a part of the first resurrection later on. Pentecost means "fifty" or "fiftieth". Be sure to listen to my sermon on Pentecost on the web. I believe Pentecost also pictures other things:

- God's covenant with Israel with the giving of His Torah, the Law, at Mt. Sinai, which Paul says was a tutor to bring us to Christ. God married Israel at Sinai on Pentecost – the assembly in the wilderness (**Acts 7:38**). It was also in the season of Pentecost when Boaz married Ruth – and therefore a possible time when the King will marry His Bride, the House of God.

- Pentecost also pictures sending the promised gift, the *arrabon* or earnest, of God's **Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)**. This is God's *arrabona* – the engagement ring, if you will, of His promise. I've covered all this in detail before.

Just as Isaac took Rebekah into Sarah's tent after Rebekah went back to Isaac, who was with His FATHER – we too will go back to and with Jesus, who will return with us to HIS Father in heaven, and *we* will enter "Sarah's tent" which symbolized – are you ready for this – <u>*heavenly Jerusalem*</u> (Gal. 4:21-26).

So it makes sense that these pictured Jesus returning for His bride, the church, and taking her (us) to Father in heaven to marry the church. This is clearly shown in the parable of 10 virgins in Matthew 25:1-12. This was also pictured by Rebekah, who was of the house of Bethuel – meaning "house of God"-- coming back to where Isaac was – and then Isaac took Rebekah into his mother's tent and there consummated the marriage (**Gen. 24:67**). The Bible makes it clear that Sarah represents Jerusalem above, the mother of us all. Think about it: Rebekah pictures us – the Bride of Christ – going to Isaac, who pictures Jesus. Isaac is with his father Abraham. Isaac takes Rebekah into his mother's tent, picturing Jerusalem above. Read it yourself in **Galatians 4:22-26**, which I covered on Pentecost earlier this year and last year.

> **Galatians 4:21-27**
> "Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar -- 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children -- 26 **but** the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all"

Our heavenly Father performs the wedding (**Matthew 22:1-2**).

Jesus is the way to the Father **(John 14:6**). We assume He primarily meant it *spiritually* right now – but there's coming a time, I believe, when He will also *literally* be our way to the Father, in person, face-to-face with the God the Highest. Jesus will personally present His Bride in her beautiful wedding garments of righteousness to His Father, who was the one who chose the Bride in the first place (**John 6:44**). So in **John 14:6** Jesus tells us, "no one comes to the Father but by me" -- so He is the way, to where He was going, back to His Father in heaven. I know He meant it more spiritually, but it may also be that He was speaking very literally as well.

Jesus has to marry like "kind" as He is. We shall be just like Him (1 John 3:1-2). So we have to be changed from mortal to immortal, from flesh to spirit, from human to of the same family as God. And we go to the city above – God's city, our city – the new Jerusalem prepared for the Bride of Christ. That's our home. Jesus is taking us there for the wedding and to let us each see our new home up there.

We will have offices, titles and positions in God's kingdom --, but the word in John 14:2-3 is "abode, a home, a dwelling place" – not just a title, not just an office, as some have been taught. It's the same word Jesus used to talk about God making HIS abode with us, in us, by the Spirit. He dwells in us. So we're just like Christ at that point, also sons of God as HE is the Son of God, of the same kind, same type of Being that He is.

I went into detail on all of this and I suggest you go back and hear it – Part 3, of "The Mystery of Christ and the Church", given in March, 2004. It's one of my favorite sermons. I recommend it along with the details I gave in my Pentecost sermon in June 2006.

Some have therefore also concluded that it is very possible that the wedding of Jesus Christ will also occur on a day of Pentecost in the future. I'll address that some more in a minute, but be sure to hear my **Pentecost sermon 2006** for more information.

I personally subscribe to the belief that Christ and His new Bride will land on the Mt. Of Olives on the Feast of Trumpets, in the year He returns, but that He is coming first some time before that to take His Bride to heaven to be married by His Father (Matt. 22:1). When is He coming? He doesn't say. I think it could be some time before Pentecost, or on Pentecost. If it's before Pentecost of that year, we certainly would be counting the days to the wedding – like "counting the Omer" that the Jews do pre-Pentecost. I think it is clear that Jesus returns to earth as already a married king, which means He comes earlier to collect His bride, some time before He lands on the Mt. of Olives.

It also fits into what Jesus says that it will be impossible to predict the exact day that He comes for his people.

The first time Jesus came, He came on the foal of a donkey, humble, as a sacrifice, the Lamb of God. When He comes the *next* time, it will be as the conquering king, to stop the carnage on earth, to establish the holy Kingdom of God on earth as the ruling kings over this earth. The Kingdom is the spirit family of God. This time He comes with power and might and glory and honor! This time, though He is at first once again rejected by humanity, He will conquer the earth and then win the world over to God's way of doing things.

Many have believed the first resurrection occurs on the Feast of Trumpets, though the Bible nowhere says that. Let me speculate a minute. I'll be thrilled whenever the first resurrection occurs. So understanding exactly when the 1st resurrection happens is not a salvational issue, but bear with me a second.

The reason we believed the resurrection is on Yom Teruah, the Feast of Trumpets, is that it says Christ returns with the trumpet of God and that when the last trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ are raised first. But then the assumption was, that Jesus would remain here on earth with His saints and set up the kingdom of God – and presumably have the wedding at a later date on earth. But who would perform it? Matthew 22:1 says the KING performs it for His Son. That surely has to mean God the Father, for His Son Jesus Christ. God the Father does not return to earth for 1000 years.. And how can all the events of the 7 last plagues occur on one day? They can't possibly! You're not going to move 200 million soldiers across the Euphrates and assemble them around Har Megiddo in one day! And that's just ONE of the 7 last plagues!

When you combine all that with the FACT that we are the first fruits after Christ, the first of the firstfruits, and that all happens in the spring, I suspect a case can be made that Christ will return in the spring for us, we count the days to Pentecost while in Heaven, get married in heaven on Pentecost, and have a big feast and celebration until the fall holydays. In the meantime, the 7 last plagues are being poured out on earth. After the 7 last plagues – which takes months to occur -- we all return with Christ on the 1st day of the 7th month: the Feast of Trumpets, on the day of the blowing of trumpets. But keep in mind that a trumpet is blown on all the holydays of God.

The earth, moon, sun will be out of kilter. It will be difficult to determine day and night if much of our electronics are ruined by events in the solar system and by our own doing. It will be difficult to SEE day and night when it will be a time of deep darkness and gloominess. So it will be very

difficult to be certain of the exact passage of time on earth during those days of woe that are coming. One thing I know for sure: I would rather be in heaven with my Beloved, getting married to Him, than to be on the earth where God's wrath is being poured out, as outlined in the book of Revelation.

After the 7th trumpet is blown, we are resurrected to changed to spirit, but there are still 7 last plagues which will take months to play out. The 7th trumpet could be blown at any time. It doesn't have to be blown on the Feast of Trumpets. But we could still return to the mount of Olives on the Feast of Trumpets. And by the way, neither should we necessarily mix up the 7 trumpets of Revelation with the trumpets that are blown on each of the holydays, though there certainly could be some overlap.

After the saints are resurrected or changed to glorious spirit beings and taken up to be with the Lord, they are then raised up – like ***the 2 leavened barley loaves were on Pentecost*** by the High Priest – raised to heaven. And just as the barley loaves were then brought back down as the high priest lowered his arms back down, so will the Bride be eventually brought back to earth – but now united in marriage to Jesus Christ and they will be *one*. Fully one with Christ, fully one *in* Christ, flawless, perfect, sinless, incorruptible spirit beings.

We're resurrected to become a full part of the God family. One God, not "gods" – but composed now of many individuals. Just as Jesus was God, with God – and Jesus is called "God', never is he called "a god". There is one God. There always will be only one God – but somehow God sees his entire family as part of that oneness. That's how God the Father is God, and Jesus is God (John 1:1-2), and yet there is only one God. It is incorrect to say there are "gods". That is pagan and unscriptural. Those who are children of God will also be worshiped (Rev. 3:9 – read it yourself) in the future. Only God can be worshiped.

Let's now continue with the Feast of Trumpets and outline the meaning of the 4 Fall holydays in the time remaining.

THE FALL HOLYDAYS

FEAST OF TRUMPETS, YOM TERUAH

As we read about dates, "seventh month" means the Hebrew calendar's 7th month (TISHRI). It matches with our calendar usually with mid to late September to the mid October in most years. In Jewish tradition, Adam was created on the 1st of Tishri, the Feast of Trumpets. I think it is interesting that many speculate Jesus was born on the 1st of Tishri, as the 2nd Adam. That also fits into his 3-1/2 year ministry. If Jesus began His ministry at age 30, and preached for 3-1/2 years, we know He died in the Spring, so 3-1/2 years before that fateful Passover would put you around the Feast of Trumpets, as the starting point of his ministry. In any case, we know Jesus was not born Dec. 25th.

> **Leviticus 23:23-25**
> "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 24 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 25 You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'"

In Hebrew it is *Yom Teruah* – a memorial of Blowing. The trumpet is blown on all the holydays, but this day was much more than just a trumpet.

This Feast of Trumpets begins what the Jews call the "Days of Awe". These start Tishri 3, after Trumpets and end the day before Atonement, Tishri 3-9 in other words. It is traditionally a time for careful introspection, self-analysis, repentance, seeing how much we still have to change in our lives to be pleasing to YHWH. Jesus Himself says that the time just preceding His return will be "worst time of trouble ever seen" (Matt. 24:21). For at least three and a half years before His return, the saints of God will be persecuted, tortured, attacked and killed wherever they can be found. There may be some who are taken to a physical place of safety. Those who believe in a pre-Tribulation rapture should read what Jesus clearly said, that He comes for His saints AFTER the tribulation, not before.

> **Matthew 24:29-31** "Immediately ***after the tribulation*** of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 ***And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His*** elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Apparently the elect brethren are still on earth when Jesus comes for them AFTER the Tribulation. There may be a place of safety for some of God's people in a wilderness area (Revelation 12:14) but that is not the same as a rapture to heaven. The word "rapture" is nowhere in the Bible.

The point Jesus stresses over and over: BE ready to meet God, have a strong relationship going now. All relationships take time and nurturing to remain strong.

In Nehemiah 8:1-2 we can read of them meeting on this day and how the Torah was read to the Jews from morning til mid-day. Other instructions are found in Numbers 29:1. On these high days, the silver trumpets were blown. The rabbis believe the shofar, or ram's horn, was intended, but what scripture actually says is the blowing of the silver trumpets.

On most of the other holydays, there's a lot of light. Certainly that's true around the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles when there's a great big full moon out there. But on Trumpets, there's a new moon -- just the tiniest sliver of moon visible. A time of darkness. It pictures the meaning that leading up to this day is a time of trouble. It's the time the Bible calls "God's wrath" being poured out on unrepentant humanity when King Jesus returns to rule as King of kings.

> **Amos 5:18-20** "***Woe* to you who desire the day of the LORD!** For what good is the day of the LORD to ***you***? It will be darkness, and not light.
> 19 It will be as though a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him!
> Or as though he went into the house, Leaned his hand on the wall, And a serpent bit him!
> 20 ***Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it?"***

So to some people, the Day of the Lord will be a terrible time. And yet we are commanded to pray "Thy Kingdom come". We who are on the right side of God can desire it, looking for it, because it signals the beginning of the end of this world's evil ways and the start of a wondrous rule of God. Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24 that just before His coming there would be – on a scale never before

seen – worldwide famines, Earthquakes so strong that they move mountains and demolish whole nations, meteor showers and signs in the skies, devastating war and times of terror, captivity, devastating weather, and on and on. When this all starts happening, be sure you remember this message and get on your knees and ask God to forgive you and watch over you and your family.

If you want more on this being a day of darkness and gloominess, you can read Zephaniah 1:14-16 and Joel 2, especially verses 1-2. So its a day of cloud and gloominess, blowing of trumpets and shouting and a day of alarm and war and – get this – the gathering of the children of Israel from around the world, where many will have been sent into captivity. We teach that Israel is not lost to history. "Israel" is more than just the one tiny nation of Israel in the Middle East. The ancient tribes of Israel – who were prophesied to be mighty in the end time – are none other than the United States of America, Britain, Canada, Australia – and many of the northwestern nations of Europe such as France, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, and Belgium, and so on. But not Germany, and the central and eastern European countries. The US and Britain and Jews in particular are going into captivity to every nation under heaven. Your Bible prophesies that, over and over, as God spanks our nations for our wickedness and drives us to our knees in heart-felt repentance.

Please hear the full-length 2-sermon explanation I gave in Sept 2006 on the meaning of Trumpets. I go in depth on the website into the marriage of the Lamb, the 144,000, the sea of glass, the 7 last plagues, all of that!

The ultimate meaning of the Feast of Trumpets is that it culminates in the great day of battle called Armageddon. You want to be changed to spirit and with Jesus' team on that day, brethren – not on the earth. You can read all about that in Rev. 19:11-21. There will be so much carnage that it will take 7 months to bury all the bodies. The birds of the air will be feasting on the corpses, scripture says. **Read it – Rev. 19:11-21; all of Zechariah 14** – where it describes the Mt. of Olives splitting in two and a way opened up for the Dead Sea to get some fresh water, and the freeing of the terrorized children of God. It's all there. Read it yourself. Remember today's sermon is just an overview of all 4 holydays. I also addressed last year that I thought it is very possible Jesus will return in a Jubilee year, but we have lost track of when those years are. It pictures the release of captives and forgiving ones debts. It makes imminent sense to me that Jesus could come back in a Jubilee year.

Another big meaning to the Feast of Trumpets: another great trumpet is blown which announces the beginning of the freeing of the captive descendants of Israel, who will have been in 3-1/2 years of slavery before Jesus returns. I gave an in-depth explanation of this in Sept 2006, in the sermon "The Coming Great Exodus". I recommend you hear it. You can read about this massive Exodus and the trumpet – in **Is. 27:12-13; Jer. 23:3-8 and Zech. 9:9-17** (especially verse 14) and other passages. You and I will have a major hand in reuniting families, giving people hope, healing those suffering from the effects of war, torture, nuclear fallout, depression –everything. What a time! You and I will be a part of solutions, the good news, if we are on Jesus' team.

So by the end of the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets, King Jesus is on the earth and He's set His hand to bring back the captive Israelites. But now the biggest enemy of all mankind has to be removed: Satan, the Adversary, the Slanderer, the great enemy of God's people. That's pictured by the next holyday – the Day of Atonement, known among Jews as Yom Kippur, the Day of Covering. It is a day of total fasting – no food or water – for 24 hours.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Yom Kippur)

Please be turning to Lev. 23:26. The Day of Atonement concludes the Yamim Noraim, the Days of Awe, from the feast of Trumpets to Atonement. Atonement comes form the Hebrew "Kippur" meaning "covering". The blood of Christ covers our sins. On this day there was other blood of animals spilled, but we know they only pictured the blood of Christ, for the blood of bulls and goats cannot forgive sin (Heb. 10:4; 9:13-14).

> **Leviticus 23:26-32**
> "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 27 **"Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation** for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. 28 And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. 29 For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. 30 And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. 31 You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath."

Let's note several things here about the Day of Atonement so far (and more to come):

- 10TH day of the Hebrew 7th month
- A day to afflict your soul – meaning to fast
- A day of total, 100% rest. No cooking allowed, as was allowed on the other high days. This command to do absolutely NO work is repeated several times.
- The sabbath, in verse 32, is described as being "from evening to evening". Most think that means from sunset to sunset. It certainly means from the time it is starting to get dark.

On this Day of Atonement, and only on this one day a year, the High Priest entered the Most Holy place, the Holy of Holies. You can read all about it in Leviticus 16. I went into it in detail in my Sept 2006 message about the Day of Atonement. In there I discussed the Azazel goat, and the goat that was sacrificed.

Also on Atonement, every 50th year, the trumpet was sounded to begin **the Year of Jubilee** – a year of forgiving debts, releasing slaves to freedom and returning land to the original families. It was a wonderful time for many, and a major financial adjustment for those who were releasing the debts and the slaves. It was God's way of equalizing things somewhat, every 50 years. With the destruction of the temple and the dismantling of the Sanhedrin, the exact count of the Jubilee has been lost. I'm sure Jesus will tell us when it correctly is, when He returns.

Again, it was a time of fasting. THIS year, when you fast, do the fasting with purpose and meaning. Don't just do without food. Use the day to do extra prayer, extra seeking after God. Use the day to commit to a life of real change this coming year, of letting Jesus really live in you.

> **Isaiah 58:1-12**
> "Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.

2 "Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God. 3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

"In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers. 4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high. 5 Is it a fast that *I* have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

6 "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

8 "**Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you;** The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. 9 **Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer**; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'
"If you take away the yoke from your midst, **The pointing of the finger**, and speaking wickedness, 10 **If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul,** Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday."

I went into some depth in 2005 about why we fast, in that Atonement sermon. **But right now, my emphasis is we fast to *repent,* to humble ourselves, to seek our God and to *change* our ways**. We have become so self-righteous and don't see how we are falling short! When *was* the last time you helped a poor man or woman? When was the last time you lifted up the downcast? When was the last time we pointed the finger?

You wonder why we don't have more healings and answered prayers? He tells us right there in verse 9. *This* year, rather than just go hungry, fast with *purpose*. Fast – during the Day of Atonement – and get up early enough to pray a deep prayer of repentance for our lethargy and for falling asleep spiritually. Fast to ask forgiveness for our gossip, for our hard heartedness in not forgiving people who have repented, keeping them away from the Body of Christ. Fast for our personal areas we fall short in.

I think it *is* a good idea to spend the time between now and Atonement for introspection and soul searching. You Church of God folks may think this is a pre-Passover thing we do, but it's something that should be done periodically and IS traditionally understood as a very important part of preparing for Atonement and then the joyous Feast of Ingathering or Feast of Tabernacles.

True repentance leads to change and overcoming. Paul says in **2 Corinthians 7** that their repentance brought zeal, real change, wanting to get it right. That's what our fasting with repentance should do also. We shouldn't be fasting on Atonement just to be fasting. We should be fasting with purpose.

We are the "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). Do you remember what "Israel" means? It means "Overcomer", "Prevailer" – we are those who Overcome of God, we are the Champions with God, our God. And our battle, our war, is against Satan – **Ephesians 6:11-13**. And so we fight – and fight hard, we must. We can't stay as we are. We must be overcomers. We must be growing and changing.

But a warning, brethren: too many of us among the people of God are *not* fighting Satan. ***We have fallen asleep.*** We have become a part of the world. Some of us are participating in the sins of the world. Some of us are enjoying the world too much. We are sent *into* the world, but not be OF it.

Fasting and humbling are supposed to go together. So we humble ourselves with fasting (Psalm 35:13). It is those whom God considers humble who will be promoted to be kings and rulers in the kingdom of God (James 4:10).

When we fast, we should not just be fasting because it is a fasting day – but use the fasting to come to a true repentance, to make some real changes – or else, get this, our fasting is meaningless!

True repentance is followed by a life of changes. We stop doing the old way. That's why it's a Sabbath rest. It's a stop sign to the working the old way of life – and now we rest from our wicked past and start a new life. A life that is at peace with God and obedient (2 Cor. 2:7-10).

We also fast on this day to remind ourselves that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. We've got to get our priorities right. (Deut 8:1-4)

The prophetic fulfillment of the Day of Atonement

The meaning of Atonement in prophecy: Satan is bound and put away for 1,000 years, so he cannot adversely affect society during the Millennium. We are remembering how one like Heylel, the correct name of the fallen cherub (NOT Lucifer), became proud and lost all his potential. A lesson for all of us. He will be bound and thrown out for 1,000 years, so we can have a peaceful Millennial reign.

> **Revelation 20:1-3**
> "Then I saw an angel [probably Michael the arch-angel] coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 **He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;** 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more *till the thousand years were finished*. But after these things he must be released for a little while."

A chain here is probably symbolic of something we can understand – in some way Satan will be "bound", restrained, for 1,000 years. Out of the way. A literal steel chain would not hold a spirit being, please understand. But the victory will be complete at this point, because of King Jesus, the Lamb of God and High Priest of the New Melchizedek order.

All praise and honor and glory to King Jesus! It's all about what HE is doing, and what our loving Father in heaven plotted out long ago, to give the Family of God the complete victory.

NOW, the 1,000 year reign of King Jesus and His Bride can now begin!

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (also called "Feast of Ingathering")

Every year, God's people go to a Feast site where they assemble with many others to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. How do they afford it? All year long we save 10% of our income as "2nd tithe" that we spend for the Feast expenses – lodging, travel, food, and so on. That can be found in Deut 14:22-27, where we are told to consume the tithe. Elsewhere, the tithe is specifically for the priests. So this has to be a separate tithe, hence the name "2nd tithe".

The Feast of Tabernacles is 7 days long plus an 8th day holyday on the end, which is really a separate Feast and holyday. The 1st and 8th days are holy annual sabbaths. We usually meet on each of the 8 days for worship services in the morning, and then use the rest of the day for fellowship, time with family, and just a great time to be with God's people.

We keep the Feast of Tabernacles because:

- God says to! He says it's a feast kept to Him, "unto the Eternal". There's no scripture that says the feast was ever done away. If it is done away, why are we told that in the Millennium, they'll be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles, and those who don't are punished?

  Zech 14:16-17

  "And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles." V. 17- no rain on those who don't obey.

- We go to the Feast to worship God. That's the primary purpose (Zech 14:16-17; John 12:20). In other places it tells us that we go in order to learn to fear God, and we also go to rejoice before Him as we celebrate our great God and all He does for His people.

- It reminds us of the temporary nature of our existence here on earth. The "tabernacles" or booths remind us that our earthly bodies are only booths, tabernacles.

- Related to that, it reminds us of our ancestors leaving Egypt and dwelling in booths as we'll shortly read.

- It's a celebration of the large harvest of the land, depicting the time God sets His hand to call, save and convert the whole world. God is not in a losing struggle against Satan. When God determines to save the world, He will – in a huge spiritual harvest of the spiritual FRUIT.

The holydays, remember, were centered around the harvests of Palestine, as a way to picture what God was doing in His plan of salvation for all of mankind – each in his/her time. First the early barley harvest after Christ the first of the firstfruits, followed by the wheat harvest of Pentecost, then the huge fruit and vegetable harvest of the Fall.

Leviticus 23:33-36, 39-43

"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 34 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the

LORD. 35 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. [a holyday]"

SKIP TO VERSE 39.

39 "Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. 40 And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 41 You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 43 *that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt*: I am the LORD your God.'"

After King Jesus returns, and after He has put Satan away, Rev. 20 says we see the start of 1,000 years of God's reign on earth. One by one, nations are converted to God's way of life. The kingdom of God is the spirit FAMILY of God that is ruling the earth at that time. I like to remind everyone that the Millennium itself is not the full kingdom of God. The lion lying beside the lamb is a nice peaceful picture during this time, but it's not the kingdom per se. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, remember! The Kingdom is God's family growing larger – with more and more sons and daughters. The flesh-and-blood world is ruled by God's kingdom – but the physical millennium is not the goal in itself.

So the Feast of Tabernacles pictures this temporary time before the final end – that's also one reason we dwell in motels or temporary dwellings during the Feast: to picture that even the Millennium is only temporary. After the Millennium is the final judgment and the beginning of a new day: so we come to the 8th Day Feast.

THE 8TH DAY OF THE FEAST (Many call it "The Last Great Day")

Leviticus 23:36, 39-40, 44

"For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it. verse 39: "Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on **the eighth day a sabbath-rest**. ….. v.44: So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD."

I gave a full length sermon on the 8th day feast last year. I suggest you listen to it.
After the Millennium is the Judgment, the Great resurrection of all who have ever been born – and they will have the books opened. Their minds will be opened to see God's truth for the first time for most of them. Those who reject it, will be burnt up and die at the end of their judgment period. Those who accept it will be brought into God's spirit, immortal family. It's all there in the end of Rev. 20. God is having children. His children will be like Him. And we will all be ONE. One God, one God family, ruled by the supreme God the Father over all. He who sanctifies and they who are

being sanctified are all of one (Heb. 2:11). Jesus prayed that we could all be one in Him and In the Father, as Jesus and the Father were one. Think about that one! (John 17:20-23—read it!).

> **John 17:20-23**
> "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

Then Rev. 21 and 22 give us a glimpse of what comes next: This earth is burnt up and replaced with a new earth. It won't directly affect "humanity" because no one will be flesh and blood any longer at that time – except of course any rebellious, unrepentant humans, who will be burnt up in this expanding lake of fire, never to live again. The universe as we know it will collapse into itself and dissolve in a fervent heat, and then God the Father will create a new heavens and new a new earth: a brand new universe. This earth that is coming may be very different from the one we know today. It will be a new earth. Perhaps a lot larger. Certainly it will be perfectly beautiful.

Rev. 21-22 tell us that after this, God the Father brings heavenly Jerusalem to this new earth. It is a glorious city, so big that if it were to come to earth now, it would cover ½ of the space used by the United States alone. That's just one city! That's the Bride's city. Mt. Everest is almost 8 miles high. THIS city, heavenly Jerusalem, is 1,500 miles high. Are you getting it? It's a massive city on a scale never imagined before. It's all there in Rev. 21-22.

After that, the Bible is silent. God doesn't want to spoil us by telling us everything! No doubt God has some very, very exciting plans for His family after that. We do know that "of His kingdom there shall be no end" – so perhaps that gives us a clue.

All I know is that this is not the end, but just the beginning of ever more glorious revelations from our father, who is God in the Highest, and our Beloved – the King of Kings, who is also YHWH Himself, King Jesus – by whom God created all things, and FOR whom God created all things (Col. 1:15-17). Those who are part of the Bride will rule in this kingdom with the King, just as He promises over and over. Those who are being called now are part of the "better Resurrection" (Heb. 11:35), the First resurrection. Rev. 20:5-6 says those in the first resurrection are "holy" and "blessed", because they're part of the first resurrection, and death has no power over them – for they are now immortal spirit as well, as Paul so clearly explains in 1 Cor. 15.

Brethren, God's plan of salvation for mankind is a glorious plan: just as various harvests come through the year – God will harvest lives for His kingdom each in his/her own order, at God's right time. No one is burning in a hell fire right now. There IS a hell fire coming – but not right now. And though our reward awaits us from heaven, no one but Christ has gone to heaven (John 3:13), not even King David (Acts 2:29,34). But the righteous will be resurrected at the 7th trumpet and at that time will shine like the very sun in brightness (Dan. 12:2-3) – in the first resurrection. Then after the thousand year millennium, the rest of humanity will be resurrected to human life and given a chance to choose God's way. Those who do are welcomed into the family. Those who rebel, will be burnt up in the lake of fire that consumes this whole planet. But there's no everlasting torture going on. Dante's inferno is a fake, is not real. God is a loving God.

People can choose life – or death. But there's no such thing as eternal life in a torture chamber! That's not in the Bible, nor is that the kind of God I serve.

Brethren, have a wonderful autumn Feast season, and God be with you as we go to the Feast to worship the king and to rejoice in His bounty!

Until next time, this is your brother in Christ, Philip Shields.