

# *Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD*

May 15, 2009 Lesson #19 Background: Day Of Atonement

The 7<sup>th</sup> month began at the time of the new moon on Tishri 1, Yom Teruah.

Tishri: 27 references to the 7<sup>th</sup> month in the Bible - all in the Old Testament.

Ten of the 27 describe the 3 feasts of the 7<sup>th</sup> month. The Feast of Trumpets [Yom Teruah], Day of Atonement [Yom Kippur] and Feast of Tabernacles [Booths] are observed over 22 days. There are also 4 extra Sabbaths, 4 holy convocations, 10 offerings, a day of "afflicting your soul," a Succoth and blowing the shofar. Add the normal Sabbaths, offerings and gatherings plus the Rosh-chodesh, New Moon, offerings and observances in the 7<sup>th</sup> month.

Consider: God definitely wanted their attention in the 7<sup>th</sup> month. It seems He wanted them together, resting, giving and celebrating in His presence, focusing on Him the majority of the month.

Consider: This is the opposite of the God we sometimes think wants us to try harder, do more, and use every minute for ministry and perform better.

Note: Eight of the 10 references to the 7<sup>th</sup> month have to do with the process of Rebuilding The Temple. Two of those eight having to do with the Temple took place on Tishri 1.

Remember: God places great importance on the first day of every sacred month.

The themes illustrated were: rebuild, refresh, renew and repair.

Event #1: Ezra 3:6 The high priest brought the 1st offering to the rebuilt altar of the LORD.

"From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, but the foundation of the temple had not been laid."

- Built the altar ahead of time, so they could begin the daily offerings on Tishri 1.

Event #2: Neh. 8:2 Ezra read the law to the returned exiles.

"Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month."

- ❖ God raised up Ezra to rebuild, cleanse and fill The Temple with the worship of God.
- ❖ He read...from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.
- ❖ <sup>5</sup>And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people:...and when he opened it, all the people stood up:
- ❖ <sup>6</sup> And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.
- ❖ The people wept when they realized how far they had strayed from the teachings that were in the Torah.
- ❖ The people of Israel renewed their covenant with God and accepted the Torah as their basic law.

- ❖ The return of the remnant to Jerusalem was at the same time a return to God's Word and His will. The people woke up when they heard the "trumpet-call of God's Word."
- ❖ On this first day of the seventh month the Word of God was given a prominent place in the midst of God's people.
- ❖ God's Word was given its rightful place and its light was put on the lampstand again.

Tishri: Time To Rebuild   Repair   Renew   Refresh   Time Of Spiritual Renewal

- ❖ Time to set apart to prepare for the presence of God
- ❖ Reconnect with God and His purpose for us
- ❖ Day of purification = required to be clean before the LORD
- ❖ Instructions given to possess your land: your inheritance

A worship leader announced the hymn, "Take Time To Be Holy." We will sing verses one and four. Wiersbe: If I had been sitting with the congregation instead of on the platform, I might have laughed out loud. Imagine a Christian congregation singing "Take Time to Be Holy" and not even taking time to sing the entire song! If we can't take the time (less than 4 minutes) to sing a song about holiness, we're not likely to take time to devote ourselves to "perfecting holiness in the fear of God"

II Cor. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Wiersbe: Happiness, not holiness, is the chief pursuit of most people today. They want Jesus to solve their problems and carry their burdens, but they don't want Him to control their lives and change their character.

A.W. Tozer: The true Christian ideal is not to be happy, but to be Holy. The whole purpose of God in redemption is to make us holy and restore us to the image of God. To accomplish this, He disengages us from earthly ambitions and draws us away from the cheap and unworthy prizes that worldly men set their hearts upon.

God said 8 times to His people in His Word, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Spurgeon: "If I had my choice of all the blessings I can conceive of, I would choose perfect conformity to the Lord Jesus, or, in one word, holiness."

Consider: Personal holiness, likeness to Jesus Christ, is the most important thing in the world.

Leviticus is quoted or referred to over 100 times in the New Testament. It explains 5 basic themes: a holy God; a holy priesthood; a holy people; a holy land and a holy Savior.

Holiness is used 91 times in Leviticus. Words connected with cleansing are used 71 times.

References to uncleanness number 128.

The key verses of Leviticus—"Be holy, for I am holy" [Lev. 11:44-45]—are applied to the New Testament church in I Peter 1:15-16 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; <sup>16</sup> Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

The Bible's has more emphasis on the Holiness of God than the Love of God.

The Hebrew word for "holy" that Moses used in Leviticus means "that which is set apart and marked off, that which is different."

- The Sabbath was holy because God set it apart for His people. Ex. 16:23
- The priests were holy because they were set apart to minister to the Lord. Lev. 21:7-8
- Their garments were holy and could not be duplicated for common use. Ex. 28:2
- The tithe that the people brought was holy. Lev. 27:30
- Anything that God said was holy had to be treated differently from the common things of life in the Hebrew camp. In fact, the camp of Israel was holy, because the Lord dwelt there with His people. Deut. 23:14

Our English word "holy" comes from the Old English word halig which means "to be whole, to be healthy." What health is to the body, holiness is to the inner person. The related word "sanctify" comes from the Latin sanctus which means "consecrated, sacred, blameless." "Sanctification" describes the process of growing to become more like Christ, and "Holy" to describe the result of that process.

### The Day Of Atonement: Tishri 10 - Holiest Day On God's Calendar: Background

It may be surprising to learn that God's instructions to Noah concerning the Ark's design contain the first reference in the Bible to the great Doctrine of Atonement.

Genesis 6:14 Make thee an ark [tebah] of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark and shall pitch it [kaphar] within and without with pitch. [kopher] [literally, shalt cover it with a covering]

Cover = Strong's #3722 = kaphar = to cover over, pacify, make propitiation

Pitch = Strong's #3724 = kopher = the price of a life, ransom; a covering

The pitch [kopher] was a substance used to waterproof the ark.

It is from the root word used for "atonement" or "covering."

- The ark is symbolic of how people "enter the door" to be saved by Jesus. [John 10:9]
- The pitch, blood of Jesus, prevented anyone from entering the Ark who was not covered by the "blood of Jesus."
- The pitch covered the ark and protected the people and animals inside from the waters of judgment. It assured physical deliverance.
- In essence, this is the first mention of "atonement" in the Bible.
- Lev. 17:11 On the sacrificial altar, "it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul" keeping the fires of God's wrath away from the sinner for whom the sacrifice was substituted and slain.

However, not even the shed blood on the altar could really produce salvation.

Heb. 10:4 "the blood of bulls and of goats" could never "take away sins."

- The blood of the Lamb provides the Perfect Atonement or covering for our sins on the cross. The blood of Christ seals the believer from the flood of God's eternal judgment.

Through faith in Christ, our sins are "covered" under the blood, forgiven by God, and replaced by His own perfect righteousness, by all of which we become finally and fully reconciled to God.

Recall: There was another ark that was covered with "pitch."

Ex. 2:3 And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark [tebah] of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and with pitch [kopher] and put the child therein; and she laid it among the reeds by the river's brink.

Both arks were covered in pitch or tar to keep them from sinking.

Both arks represented God's means of saving humanity.

Both arks were life preservers for everyone on board, leading the world to the ultimate ark, Jesus Christ.

Interesting: In the case of Noah and Moses, the Ark was used to deliver someone through water who in turn would bring deliverance to others.

### Background of Day of Atonement [Tishri 10]: Ex. 30:1-10

- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> reference to Day of Atonement

Ex. 30:1a And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon...

Verses 1-9 detail the plans for the Altar of Incense.

- ❖ The Altar of Incense was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold.
- ❖ It stood before the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy place.
- ❖ It was in the Holy Place with the Table of Shewbread and the Menorah, Lampstand.
- ❖ The priest burned incense on it each morning and evening when he trimmed the lamps.
- ❖ Burning incense is a picture of prayer.

Ps. 141:2a Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense...

Rev. 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

Luke 1:8-10 When the priest burned the incense, it was a call to the people for a time of prayer.

### The Fire For Burning The Incense:

- ❖ The fire came from the brazen altar outside the sanctuary where the sacrifices were offered to God. [Lev. 16:12-13; Num. 16:46]

Consider: True prayer must be based on the work of Christ on the cross and our complete dedication to Him. A true fervency in prayer is not a religious emotion that we work up ourselves. It's a blessing God sends down as we yield ourselves to Him.

### Please God & Not Be In Danger Of Death:

- ❖ The priest had to use not only the right fire on the altar but also the prescribed mixture of spices for the incense. [Ex. 30:34-38]
- ❖ Any Israelite who tried to duplicate this special incense for his own personal use would be cut off or put to death.

Consider: Prayer is not a jumble of words we mix together and hope God hears. The Bible gives us some of the ingredients: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, petition and submission.

- ❖ The priest did not rush in, quickly burn the incense and rush out.
- ❖ He prepared himself and reverently approached the altar because he knew he was in the presence of the holy God.

### Warning To Priests:

- ❖ Do not use this golden altar for anything other than burning incense [v. 9] for there are no substitutes for prayer.
- ❖ No amount of sacrifice can take the place of true prayer.
- ❖ It wasn't a place for making bargains with God or trying to change His mind.
- ❖ It was a place for adoring Him and praying, "Thy will be done."

### The Special Incense:

- ❖ Must be salted = a symbol of purity and of a covenant relationship. [Lev. 2:13]

Ps. 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

I Tim. 2:8 I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Word of Warning: <sup>9</sup>Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. <sup>10</sup> And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.

Note: The warning about offering strange incense immediately precedes reference to the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16 introduces the instructions concerning the offerings by referring to the death of Nadab and Abihu, who were smitten of God for offering "strange fire." [Lev. 10:1]

Lev. 16:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;

### Death of Nadab & Abihu: Lev. 10:1-2

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

Note: Their unauthorized offering could not be ignored, especially at the institution of the system of worship they were to supervise.

- The punishment did not come without warning. Moses on orders from Jehovah had told Aaron and his sons...

Lev. 8:33-34 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you.

<sup>34</sup> As he hath done this day, so the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you. Aaron and his sons should have drawn two conclusions from those words:

1. The command did not originate with Moses but came from God.
2. Any departure from God's commands would result in death.

Nadab and Abihu proceeded to act according to their own ideas instead of God's.

Does it seem strange that God would kill Nadab & Abihu instead of warning them?

Consider: Often at the beginning of a new era in salvation history, the LORD brought judgment to warn the people.

In Lev. 10, where the death of Nadab and Abihu are recorded, the Mosaic Covenant has just been instituted, along with the tabernacle and Aaronic priesthood.

- ❖ The priestly ministry at the Tabernacle was just about to begin.
- ❖ The LORD wanted to be sure the priests understood the seriousness of their work.
- ❖ Otherwise, all of the carefully constructed rituals of Israel that Jehovah had designed to teach divine truths would be corrupted and their meaning destroyed. Therefore, Jehovah's response was sudden and drastic.
- ❖ When Israel entered the Promised Land under Joshua, God used Achan's disobedience as a warning. [Joshua 7]
- ❖ The death of Uzzah was His warning when the Ark was brought to Jerusalem. [II Sam. 6]
- ❖ Early in the church age, the death of Ananias and Sapphira served as a warning to the saints not to try to lie to God. [Acts 5]

Consider: When Ananias and Sapphira were judged of God, the Church Age had just commenced with Pentecost in Acts 2.

- The death of God's people is designed to set a precedent, so those who enter into the new dispensation would grasp the significance of the holiness of God in relation to the institutions which He had just created.

### Nadab & Abihu

- A. They were the wrong people to handle the incense and present it to the LORD.
  - Task of high priest. [Ex. 30:7-10]
- B. Used the wrong instruments.
  - Used their own censers instead of the censer of the high priest which was sanctified by the special anointing oil. [40:9]
  - Nadab & Abihu tried to worship God with "false fire" and were killed. [Lev. 10]
- C. Wrong Time
  - High priest was permitted to take incense into the Holy of Holies ONLY on the Day of Atonement. He must first submit to a special ritual. [Lev. 16:1ff]
- D. Acted Under Wrong Authority
  - Didn't consult Moses, their father or follow God's instructions given to Moses
- E. Used the Wrong Fire
  - Commanded to burn the incense on coals taken from the brazen altar [16:12], but Nadab & Abihu supplied their own fire and God rejected it.
- F. Acted With The Wrong Motive
  - Didn't seek to glorify God alone [Lev. 10:3]
  - Seemed to be a willful act of pride
- G. Depended On The Wrong Energy
  - Verses 9-10 suggest they were under the influence of alcohol

Eph. 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;  
Consider: If every child of God were killed who substituted fleshly energy for the power of the Spirit, not many would be left.

Tozer: "If God were to take His Holy Spirit out of the world, much of what the church is currently doing would go right on and nobody would know the difference."

Don't Forget: Nadab & Abihu had a legacy of great spiritual experiences.

- ❖ Saw first-hand: all the miracles God performed in the Exodus out of Egypt.
- ❖ Heard the voice of God, saw the fire, lightning, smoke and felt the thunder and the earthquake at Mt. Sinai.
- ❖ Nadab and Abihu were not outsiders. They were anointed priests who had seen God on the mountain. [Ex. 24:1-11]
- You would think this experience would have etched in their minds a sense of holy fear of God.

Ps. 2:11 Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Consider: "Mountain Top" experiences are no guarantee of sinful decisions in the valley!

- Their father was the high priest.
- They were trained in the service of the LORD.
- They were killed for disobedience.

It wasn't enough for the priests to merely teach the people the difference between holy and unholy; they were to practice it in their lives.

- Even a legacy of great spiritual experiences will not keep us right with God.
- Only an abiding relationship grounded in the truth of God's Word can.

Note: This seems to be their very first day of priestly service after their seven days of consecration. A spiritual high in Lev 9:22-24:

- ❖ Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them,...
- ❖ And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.
- ❖ And there came a fire out from before the LORD and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Lev. 10:1-2 AND Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

<sup>2</sup> And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

Note: For the second time in a few minutes fire burst forth from The Tabernacle.

- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> time: Fire showed God's acceptance of the offerings He commanded.
- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> time: Fire showed God's wrath on an offering He had not commanded.
- ❖ God's fire could either approve or disapprove. It could empower or destroy.
- ❖ God's use of His power depended on the relationship the worshiper had to Him.

After times of spiritual high, of "mountain top experiences," be on guard lest you fall.

I Cor. 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Principle: Our service must be empowered by His Spirit and controlled by His Word.

We must serve God acceptably with reverence and "godly fear." Our God is a consuming fire.

Note: We are not informed of the precise nature of the sin. They "offered strange fire before the LORD."

- ❖ It was clearly designated as an act of direct disobedience to God's commands.
- ❖ V. 1: They did that which He had NOT commanded them.
- ❖ Perhaps God declined from giving us a precise description of the sin to emphasize the general nature of the sin: DISOBEDIENCE.
- ❖ They disobeyed some of God's specific requirements.

God's primary desire for His people is that they be holy. Simply going through the rituals required by the Law—including the burning of incense on the altar of incense—was not enough to make the Israelites right with God. The Lord wanted their hearts and lives to be right, not just their formalities.

During Isaiah's time, the people were disobedient to God, yet they still maintained the temple rites. God said through the prophet, "Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me" [Isaiah 1:13]. More important than burning the proper incense at the proper time with the proper fire with the proper implements was having a proper heart before God.

Tozer: Many Christians are satisfied with their destination, but they neglect the journey.

Application:

1. We are to dedicate ourselves to the Lord and He consecrates us for His service. He wants servants who are clean, obedient and yielded.
2. Apart from the finished work of Christ and the power of the Spirit, we cannot serve God acceptably. [I Peter 2:5]
3. No amount of fleshly zeal or "false fire" can substitute for Spirit-filled devotion to the LORD. Be sure the "fire" of your ministry comes from God's altar and not your flesh.
4. No matter how much we serve and sacrifice, if God does not receive the glory, there will be no blessing.
5. The privileges of ministry bring many responsibilities.
6. My greatest joy in life should be to serve the Lord and bring glory to His name.