

Lev 05-08-07b

Let's resume our study in Leviticus chapter 23, verse 23. The Feast of Trumpets. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 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.

You shall do no customary work on it, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. Now this is all it says. In these three verses, 23, 24, and 25, you have the entire set of instructions for the Feast of Trumpets as it's given in this chapter.

We do have some elaboration elsewhere. In the book of Numbers, for example, Numbers chapter 10 and verse 10, we have a reference to this day, also in the day of your gladness in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, and they shall be a memorial to you, for you, before the Lord your God. I am the Lord your God.

In Numbers chapter 29, verses 1 through 6, you have a specific reference to this, slightly more detailed. And in the seventh month, again this is Numbers 29, in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work, for you it is a day of blowing of the trumpets.

You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to the Lord, one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year without blemish. Their grain offering shall be fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs. Also one kid of the goats as a sin offering to make atonement for you, besides the burnt offering with its grain offering for the new moon, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord.

There has been this long period of waiting between the four spring feasts and the inception of the fall feast that is marked by the day of trumpets, or the feast of trumpets, and this cannot help but bring to our minds the interval of time between the first advent and the second advent, where for Israel there is so much silence. The period of time that has elapsed since the coming of the Lord Jesus in the day of Pentecost is the longest period in human history without a supernatural revelation of God. You look at any other period from Adam to the present, and there has never been a time when God did not speak in a supernatural way by vision or prophet or smoke and fire on Mount Sinai or whatever.

There has never been nearly 2,000 years pass as we have had with no incursion of God into human history. But we see that reflected in that gap of time between the feast of Pentecost and the feast of trumpets because in that feast schedule we see similarly an uninterrupted period of time where there is no unusual event to mark the passing of time. The silence of God in this

period is significant.

Why is it that God has not spoken in some remarkable way? A lot of people are led to dismiss faith in Christ and faith in God because they say, well, isn't it convenient that all of your revelation is old and can't be verified? Nobody in living memory saw a vision or encountered an angel or received inspired communication from God, so it's conveniently old and mythological. If God is around, why doesn't he do that kind of thing today? Well, this is exactly the nature of the test, isn't it, for us, is to believe without having seen. This is also a unique time because it is not the age of Israel and God is not dealing with us as he dealt with Israel, which is very much in the material and tangible realm.

Israel is sort of the earthly, the fleshly people of God, the church, or the heavenly and spiritual people of God. It's not a commentary on quality but of role and function in God's plan. So, when we finally do come to the seventh month on the first day of the month, it sort of reminds us of the seventh thousand of years, and on the first day of that you have the blowing of the trumpet and the gathering together of Israel in resurrection.

2 Peter 3, verses 8 and 9, Peter says, Beloved, do not be ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And it's also significant that you have this blowing of the trumpet and then you have ten days of examination followed by the day of atonement.

And you have a lot to review and a lot to think about in anticipation of the day of atonement. But God's space of time, this fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles, Peter says, is because God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. In verse 15 of that same chapter, Peter says, Consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is deliverance, salvation, as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you.

So Peter and Paul both talk about the fact that the delay in the fulfillment of human history is to give people time to think. I was thinking about this while I was running yesterday, and we had a storm blow up and there was a lot of thunder, and there was lightning and lightning was striking in our area. And I was out there, you know, padding my way down the trail, thinking, you know, in these open spots, I'm probably as good a target as any.

And if God wanted to take me home, He could easily just send a bolt my way and turn me, you know, into a little crispy critter. And why does He not? Why does He put up with me and my failures and my faults, my shortcomings and my inefficient use of time and my bad stewardship of all the things that He's given me? The longsuffering of God is deliverance. He is not willing that we should perish, but that we come to salvation, that we come to deliverance.

And God is longsuffering. He's patient. Well, that principle is reflected in the feast schedule by that gap, by that period of time.

It is not a time where we should be idle or lack a sense of responsibility. Just the opposite. This is the space of time that God's given us.

We live in a great time. We live in a great age. We live in a great place.

We are not oppressed. You read stories and it just makes you almost feel guilty at what other believers have gone through in other places in the world, at other times in history. And we face none of that.

And so it is incumbent on us not to grow slack, not to lose our first love, not to become indifferent and apathetic, not to be poor, miserable, blind and naked, but to avail ourselves of the opportunity to redeem the time, to heed the warnings and the encouragements and the exhortations in Scripture to the church in general. We've looked recently, by way of review, at Jesus' words to the seven churches of Asia. And we want to take that to heart and make use of this time.

The days are evil, but we can convert them into something good. So you have this principle as you come to the Feast of Trumpets. It is both marking the end of something and the beginning of something.

Just as we have New Year's Day, we mark the end of one year, out with the old, in with the new. The Feast of Trumpets marks a time of new opportunity, a time of rebirth. It is a new moon every month.

And this is the new moon in the first month, which is, of course, the seventh month when you adjust the calendar for Passover. So it is a memorial of blowing of trumpets. Why is it called a memorial of blowing of trumpets? Well, the sound of the horn is a call to assemble.

It can be a call to war. It can be a call to celebration. In 1 Chronicles 15, when Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, it was with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.

In 2 Chronicles 5.13, when the trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endures forever. That's when the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with the glory cloud. It was when the trumpeters and singers were united, when they made one sound that was heard in praising and thanking the Lord, when they lifted up their voice and praised the Lord, saying, He is good and his mercy endures forever.

That is the point at which the glory cloud filled the temple. 2 Chronicles 5.13. We've already talked about the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This morning in our Scripture reading, if you go to the book of Ezra, chapter 3 and verse 6, Ezra notes that from the first day of the seventh month, they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, although the foundation of the temple of the Lord had not been laid.

And that's the same day that we just noted this morning in Nehemiah, chapter 8. Psalm 81, verses 1 through 4. Sing aloud to God our strength, make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob, raise a song and strike the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the lute, blow the trumpet at the time of the new moon, at the full moon on our solemn feast day, for this is a statute for Israel, a law of the God of Jacob. It reminds us, looking prophetically, that the feast of trumpets speaks of something that pertains to Israel. Our time is in the gap between Pentecost and trumpets.

The church began on the day of Pentecost, on the feast of Pentecost, but our time marches through those months of no feast. And when you come to the feast of trumpets, this is a call for Israel. This is a commandment and a law of the God of Jacob.

And it's important to note, we're going to see this in our Revelation study, that the language throughout Revelation, chapters 6 through 19, is exclusively the language of Israel. You have talk of altars, you have talk of synagogues, you have talk of tribes of Israel. There's nothing of churches, there's nothing of the body and bride of Christ, no mention is made of the church in those.

It is all addressed to those who will be living in the 70th week of Daniel. So the feast of trumpets is no different. The idea is to celebrate.

We saw in Nehemiah chapter 8 that they went around and said, you've got to stop mourning, you've got to stop weeping, this is a day of celebration. Psalm 98 verse 6, with trumpets and the sound of a horn, shout joyfully before the Lord, the King. And at the same time that you blow this horn for celebration of the new year, it is also a recognition of the Lord, the King.

And that of course is going to be literally fulfilled at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. Isaiah 27 verse 13, So it shall be in that day the great trumpet will be blown. They will come who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

So this talks about those who have been scattered to the north, and those who have been scattered to the south, those who are outside the land. They are outcasts in the land of Egypt to the south, and of course Egypt represents the unbelieving world. Those who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, Assyria represents divine discipline.

The fate of the ten northern tribes, the northern kingdom, was defined by the Assyrian captivity. So those who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, those who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem, in the day when the great trumpet is blown. Of course, the assembly of God's people is marked by the sound of a trumpet.

Many are confused by 1 Corinthians 15, 1 Corinthians 15.52 for example, where Paul says, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Well, that is not the trumpet that sounds

for Israel. This is a trumpet that sounds for the church.

And they are not the same trumpet, and it's not the same day. They are seven years apart. Same thing in 1 Thessalonians 4.16, The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God.

And the dead in Christ will rise first. This seventh month is after the first three months. You have Aviv or Nisan, where you begin the year with Passover.

And you remember you count the 50 days to get to Pentecost. And this covers the rest of the first month, into the second month, and into the third month. And then you have Pentecost celebrated, which is you've already had the first fruits of the barley harvest, and then that's the first fruits of the wheat harvest.

And then you have four months that are the agricultural season in Israel. This is noted by Jesus talking to the disciples in John 4.35. Jesus says to them, Do you not say there are still four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest. So, where they say, well, we have four months in which to grow this grain, and we'll do the harvest in the fall.

Jesus says, look, you can harvest now. And he says that during this four months, the fields are already white for harvest. And it's a good message for us to remember, that we don't have to wait for the return of the Lord to serve him, and to glorify him, we can do it now.

The idea here of a memorial, blowing of trumpets, holy convocation, is the belief by the Israelites, and later the Jewish faith believes that the world was created on the first of Tishri, the first of the seventh month. And the Bible does not say this, but it was a long held traditional belief, and it is symmetrical in the sense that, assuming for the moment that the world cranks up in the seventh month, and the new world, the new kingdom is going to crank up in the seventh month, you celebrate that after the seven days of creation, that's when human history really begins. And after the seven months of the religious calendar, then you have the secular calendar beginning.

And so they had this belief, that this was a memorial of the creation of the world, where the new kingdom is going to be a re-creation, or a restoration of the perfection of that time. The idea of a memorial is important, because it is not just to remember what God has done, but to remember his presence. If you look in Isaiah 49, 14-16, Zion said, the Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me.

And God says, no. Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands, your walls are continually before me.

It isn't a matter of God forgetting us, it's a matter of us remembering God. And these feasts and times of assembly for the men of Israel, three times a year, were to memorialize, to remind

them of God's place. And yet we saw in Nehemiah, that the Feast of Tabernacles, the last great feast of the year, had been forgotten and gone unobserved for centuries.

Not since the time of Joshua, circa 1400 B.C. And these people are circa 520 B.C. So, how many years is that? It's a long time. 900 years, give or take, that they have not observed this feast that was given to Moses. How soon it was forgotten, and how long it was disregarded.

We saw this in Ezekiel chapter 16 and verse 60, where God says, Nevertheless, I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. And so, what is it that Israel is supposed to remember? What is it that you and I are supposed to remember when we are encouraged to observe a memorial? It really boils down to the faithfulness of God. The surety of the fulfillment of His promises.

This is one of the hardest things for Christians in the modern world to implement, to remember and to apply. How many times have you talked with believers or moved in Christian circles and seen a disconnect between what the Bible says and what you know about God and what we actually believe? Do we actually trust God to provide? Do we actually trust God to protect? Do we actually believe that His will is best? Or do we go off in our own strength and say, I have to make this happen. I have to ensure.

I have to worry. I have to pretty well fend for myself. God helps those who help themselves.

And so, I've got to make an incursion into the things that belong to God. There are six days in which we labor and do our work. But the distinction, the understanding we have to have is where is my work and where is God's work? If we wait for God to do our work, we are in error.

If we try to do God's work, we are in error. It is essential for us to know what our assigned work is. How do we find that out? This afternoon, we'll fold up our Bibles and go our ways.

And we'll do things for the rest of the hours of this day. How do we choose what to do? And how can we make sure that it is a part of our assigned effort? Because we don't believe that Sunday is the Sabbath. Every day is the Sabbath and every day is a work day, right? In the church.

I thought about it yesterday while I was mowing my lawn, thinking, you know, I'm working on the Sabbath. I'm violating the Fourth Commandment. How do I have a license to do that? Seventh-day Adventists, you won't find them mowing their lawn on Saturday.

How do we know that it's okay for us to engage in labor any day of the week, including Sunday? Well, we study the Word of God, don't we? We regard every day alike. It's like being in the Marine Corps. Every day is a holiday and every meal is a feast.

And at the same time, every day is a work day and you wind up subsisting on sea rations. You have to reach into what you're carrying with you to find your subsistence. There's a sense in which we sit down at the banquet table and we feast from God's Word.

There's another sense in which we're carrying it with us. We reach into our alicia pack and we pull out a can of beans and we open it up and eat on the trail, in the fighting hole, wherever it is we find ourselves. We have both.

We fulfill both aspects simultaneously. Every day is a Sabbath. Every day is a work day.

Every day is a day of regular work and every day is a day to cease from work. And it requires much more discernment from us than it did from an Israelite who all he had to do was look at the calendar, check the day of the week, check the day of the month. Not for us.

So, it is important to discern. If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God. This is a function of wisdom, to know what is our part.

And we have to be willing to do our part. We are to work with our hands. We are to wash the feet of the saints.

We are to live quietly and mind our own business and follow the example of the Apostle Paul who sustained himself. And yet, at the same time, we know that there are things that are out of our control, that are in God's hands, in terms of what opportunities come our way and we have to be sensitive to that and not try to create opportunities that aren't there. Well, the trumpet is blown on the first day of the seventh month, signals the new year, foreshadows the trumpet that will raise the dead of the Old Testament age to be restored in the flesh, to live in the Millennial Kingdom.

This same trumpet was blown ten days later on the Day of Atonement. Verse 26 of Leviticus 23, 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. Afflict is really not the best word here. This is more like examine closely your souls.

It's not self-flagellation. You see these people that make a branch and whip themselves and wear a hair shirt. This is subject your soul to a rigorous examination.

Some people might call that affliction. Kids in school think it's an affliction. But it is an examination.

And offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. You shall do no work on that same day for it is the Day of Atonement to make atonement to you before the Lord your God. Every fifty years there was also a trumpet blown on this day.

In the year of Jubilee, you have a trumpet blown to signal the fact that it is a year of restoration of all things. Leviticus 25.9, you go a couple of chapters forward here. You shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month.

On the Day of Atonement, you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. And

that was another sign of renewal. The blowing of the trumpet, there is a renewal.

We are going to hear the trumpet and we will all be changed. A moment in the twinkling of an eye. Israel will hear the trumpet and be transformed.

Every fiftieth year in Israel was supposed to be a year of Jubilee and there was a trumpet blown because everybody gets their land back. Those who were slaves are no longer slaves. Everything is restored to a former happy state.

And so the blowing of the trumpet speaks of this. This is the blowing of the shofar by the way, the ram's horn. There are some silver trumpets that you find made mention of in Numbers chapter 10, verse 2 and verse 9. They are made of silver.

And if they went to war, they blew these silver trumpets. When they were to assemble for worship, they would blow these silver trumpets for directing the movement of the camp. This was kind of like what the cavalry uses, bugle calls to let people who are scattered hear the instructions.

But the day of atonement, a day of examination of the soul, do no work. Any person who is not examining their soul on that day shall be cut off from his people. It reminds us of the exhortation when we celebrate the Lord's Table.

It says if you partake of it in an unworthy manner, you can eat and drink damnation to yourself. And the whole time I was growing up and much of my adult life, I thought, well, that means that when they hand out the crackers and the grape juice, you really have to be somber and solemn and make sure you're thinking holy thoughts and don't drink the grape juice and don't eat the cracker unless you've afflicted your soul, so to speak. And in studying the actual passage in Corinthians, what Paul is talking about, the Lord's Table there is the fellowship of believers.

And if you get together with believers and eat and drink in an unworthy manner, what were they doing? They were elbowing each other out of the way. Those who were hungry were eating and there were others that got no food. The Lord's Table that he compares to the upper room meal that the Lord Jesus had with the disciples is the fellowship meal.

It's the time of gathering and communication with fellow believers. And he said, if you abuse your fellow believers, in the picture, it's the fellowship meal. You eat and drink damnation to yourself, you bring condemnation on yourself.

If you don't forgive one another, you're not forgiven. A lot of our spiritual life depends on how we treat each other. And it's not the ritual of the cracker and the grape juice.

It is the daily interaction that we have with each other that ought to be the subject of our scrutiny and our examination of self to make sure that we do that right. We can take each other for granted. We can lord it over one another.

We can fail to consider others ahead of ourselves. And over and over and over again in the New Testament, we are exhorted to love one another, to consider one another, to encourage one another. And all of those 50 odd one another passages in the New Testament are represented in the idea of not eating and drinking damnation to ourselves, condemnation to ourselves.

You cannot love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength without also loving your neighbor as yourself. The two are inextricably linked and they are an expression of the same soul. You can't do one without the other.

So, in the Day of Atonement, any person who is not afflicted in soul on that day shall be cut off from his people. Notice the penalty if you don't pay attention to who you are and why you exist in the nation of Israel. You are excised from the assembly.

Why? Is it a punishment for the person? Or is it a preservation for the assembly? What's the point? God says if you are not willing, if you are not proactive, if you don't have the attitude of the people that assemble to hear Nehemiah, actually hear Ezra in the days of Nehemiah, read the scriptures and have them explained. If that's not your heart, get out of the group. Get out of town.

You are cut off from the people. It's not to punish the person, it's to bless the people. Get the dead wood out.

Get the disobedient and the apathetic and the indifferent out. Now, when it says they shall be cut off from his people, I wonder how this actually is implemented. Could somebody walk up and look in your face and say, you know, I don't really think you're afflicting your soul.

We're dragging you outside the gates. God says on that same day, any person who is not afflicted in soul shall be cut off from his people. There are certain obvious things.

If somebody is celebrating, if somebody is three sheets in the wind with a jug of wine, kind of like the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath, if it's obvious that you're not memorializing and hallowing the day, the officials could haul you out. But, in a spiritual sense, God takes note, doesn't he? God knows. And in the books that are kept in heaven, in the day that you no longer hallow the things of God and no longer recognize the importance of the atonement, you're cut off from the people.

It is as though there is an administrative change made. The clerk in heaven blots your name out of one book and you are cut off from the people. I would expect that the fulfillment of this in the kingdom days will be the distinction between those who are in the land and in Jerusalem and those who are out.

Those who, in the course of their life as Israelites, as Jews, did not respect the Word of God, did not respect the coming of the Son of God, either in prospect or in actuality, they are cut off from the people. It doesn't mean they're not saved, but they're not going to be in that inner assembly. They're not going to enjoy inheritance in the land.

What is the application for us? It's the same thing. If we become casual, if we are callous, if we're indifferent to our identity as believers in the daily tasks of life, if we do not, as it says here, afflict our souls, you wind up being cut off from the place of blessing. You wind up being cut off from the place of fellowship.

You wind up being cut off from the place where God is at work and His glory is reflected. Any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. God is keeping track.

God is taking note. You shall do no manner of work. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations and all your dwellings.

It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest and you shall afflict your souls. On the ninth day of the month, that evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath. So the idea of afflict here really is to examine, to operate in humility, to have objectivity and recognize your place in God's plan and purpose.

Well, this finally brings us in verse 33 to the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 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. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation.

You shall do no customary work. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. This pictures the time of Christ tabernacling with His people in the Millennial Kingdom.

The seven days speaks not of a reflection of the thousand years, but of the completeness and the perfection of that time. All of God's purposes in fulfilling His covenant promises to Israel will be fulfilled in that time. Each of those seven days, there is an offering made by fire to the Lord.

We know from the latter chapters of Ezekiel that there will be a Millennial Temple. There will be a Millennial Priesthood. There will be Millennial offerings made.

Why? Christ has already come on the cross and fulfilled the Levitical offerings. Then why are there offerings made? Because Israel is the focus in the Millennial Kingdom. It is the fulfillment of promises to them.

And this is the heritage of Israel. And the feasts and the sacrifices will be honored and will be implemented in the Millennial Kingdom because you have Israel in their humanity living for that thousand years. And these will be celebrated in a memorial fashion.

Seven days offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation. You shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord.

It is a sacred assembly. You shall do no customary work on it. That eighth day is a rebirth day.

It is a rebirth day. It puts us in mind of the circumcision of babies in Israel on the eighth day.

The male child.

The eighth day for the healed leper in Leviticus chapter 14. It is a day of all things becoming new. And in this last feast and the last day of the feast you have this celebration.

Sacred assembly. And this looks forward to the kingdom of the Father. You have the seven days of booths.

And on the eighth day you are finished with booths. But you have this holy Sabbath. And it speaks of the renewal of all things.

It foreshadows the new heavens and the new earth. The feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim into the holy convocations to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. Burn offering and a grain offering.

Sacrifice and a drink offering. Everything on its day. Besides the Sabbath of the Lord.

Besides your gifts. Beside all your vows. And beside all your free will offerings which you give to the Lord.

There is a recognition that we have a daily duty and a regular responsibility. And then there is a larger framework. You step back and look at the bigger picture.

And so we have to be conscientious in our daily life to be faithful, to be obedient, to think and decide in a way that is pleasing to God. But there is also a time to step back and look at our place in history. How close are we to the end of the church age? What is coming up? Are we going to be ready in the day of judgment? And so you have these near perspective and far perspective injunctions.

Every week has a Sabbath. But then there are higher Sabbaths. We have our daily responsibilities, our daily challenges.

But we have to step back and look at our lives in the context of history. It is critical that we do so. It is a part of our hope.

It is a part of our motivation. He reiterates in verse 39 the Feast of Booths. 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. On the eighth day a Sabbath rest. 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.

You shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. These are the very words that Ezra read over in Nehemiah chapter 8. This is the passage that those people stood and heard. 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. You shall dwell in booths for seven days.

All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths. Remember on the twenty-fourth day when they said we've got to separate ourselves? Where did they get that? Right here. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths 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. So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord. And you note that when the generation in Nehemiah's day heard the word of God regarding the feast, it spurred them to action.

They made a change, didn't they? They stood and heard the word of the Lord. They assembled themselves. They came back and said, tell me more so I can explain it.

They cut the branches. They observed the feast. And even after the feast was over, they were a changed people.

They put dust on their heads, sackcloth on their bodies, and they said we have got to separate ourselves and get back to being the people that God brought out of the land of Egypt. And that's exactly what I hope our study of the feasts will do, is remind us that we are to be out from the human race. There ought to be a difference in our lives.

We ought to be a reflection of the glory of God on this earth. And it ought to be a joyful reflection. It ought to be a rejoicing.

It ought to be something that draws people to the light and not drives them away. So, we take a lesson from Nehemiah and Ezra. It all centers on understanding the word of God.

The more we understand it, the better it is explained and satisfactorily understood in our souls. The more clearly we will see our duty and our responsibility and the reason for joy that we have in our lives as believers. Well, let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the revelation of truth that we find in the Old Testament that pertains to us as New Testament and Church Age believers. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister these truths to our hearts. Help us to remember day by day that we do have a commission, we do have an opportunity, we do have an anointing and a calling and it is possible to fulfill it moment by moment as we face the rather mundane challenges of daily life.

We pray that in all things our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be glorified. We ask it in His name. Amen.