

This is Section 26 in the course, History of Christianity.

What's next on the Agenda?

We have come to the end of looking back in history. We have previously learned that history is linear. It has a beginning and it will have a conclusion. So from our vantage point, what is coming next in the history of the church?

Obviously, we cannot know the future. Only God knows what will happen tomorrow. However, the Bible does give us a "perspective" from which we can view what is happening in our world with confidence in the fact that God is SOVEREIGN over everything that has happened and will be happening next month and next year. Remember, History is HIS STORY.

In this lesson, as we conclude our study of church history, we want to take this last opportunity to establish our paths as we move into the future. What you do with your life will one day become history. Your future is God's past. So plan to make your future "history" one that brings great honor to our Savior.

Where are we at today?

Most Bible scholars today place our generation in the "last days" of the Bible. Why? Because of the hundreds of prophecies concerning the last days, we have seen many now fulfilled. For example, Israel has not been a nation for over 2,500 years, but the Bible predicts that in the last days, the people of Israel will once again become an independent nation on earth. In 1948 we saw that prophecy fulfilled. The Bible talks about the federation of nations in Europe from which the Antichrist will arise. That federation in Europe is now complete. So we see daily the world's political structures aligning up as predicted in the Bible.

Another indication that signifies that we are in the last days is the condition of mankind morally. Check out these verses in 2 Timothy 3:1-5:

***3** But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. **2** For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, **4** treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.*

Never before in history, no matter how decadent mankind has been, have we seen the lot of mankind better described by these verses. As we watch the news, daily we see these descriptions lived out in the lives of our politicians and even our spiritual leaders.

I read this recently on Facebook:

Can you imagine working for a company that has a little more than 500 employees and has the following statistics:

- 29 have been accused of spousal abuse
- 7 have been arrested for fraud
- 19 have been accused of writing bad checks
- 117 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 business

- 3 have done time for assault
- 71 cannot get a credit card due to bad credit
- 14 have been arrested on drug-related charges
- 8 have been arrested for shoplifting
- 21 are currently defendants in lawsuits
- 84 have been arrested for drunk driving in the last year...

These people and these statistics represent the 535 members of the United State Congress – those men and women to lead the USA.

The casual reading of the daily news clearly indicates that most of the world has rejected God. The world's greatest scientists can't even figure out the difference between a boy and a girl. The gay and lesbian voice proudly taunts and insists that their debased morality be respected and protected as a fundamental human right. Since Row vs. Wade (just over 50 years) over 60 MILLION babies have been murdered in the wombs of women in the US. To make this even more frightening, over 56 million abortions occurred worldwide each year in 2010 to 2014 and the rate has been static since then. Many, if not most, of these unwanted children is a result of promiscuous behavior. Currently it is estimated that over 30 million women and girls are slaves within the human trafficking industry in the world. The "forced labor" statistics indicate that over \$150 BILLION is made in illegal profits per year.¹

Can you see that 2 Timothy 3:1-5 is as true today, and more so, than any time in history?

The Next Biblical Event in History

While we don't know all the events that will take place shortly, we do know that the next unfulfilled event to take place with the church is the Rapture. We do not know when it will happen. The expectation of Paul was that it could happen at any time.

We believe that this event will take place preceding the revelation of the Antichrist and the events of the tribulation as described in the book of Revelation.

What we know about the rapture is that it will happen very quickly and unexpectedly. I Thessalonians 4:13-18 are probably the most clear and complete presentation of this event in all of Scripture.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (NIV84) 13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage each other with these words.

¹ <https://www.safehorizon.org/get-informed/human-trafficking-statistics-facts/#statistics-and-facts/>

In several places in Scripture, we are told that a **sound of the trumpet** will initiate this event. Once the trumpet is heard, the dead who have died during the church age will be raised from their graves, then all living believers will instantly, “in the twinkling of an eye” disappear to meet Christ in the clouds.

The Rapture is initiated by the sounding of Trumpets.



In both the I Thess. 4:16 and I Cor. 15:52 the Bible states clearly that **trumpets will sound to** initiate the event of the Rapture. The sound of trumpets announces Christ’s coming in the clouds for all believers.

Leviticus 23 is the single chapter in the Scriptures that sums up everything. God’s eternal plan from chaos to eternity is ingeniously revealed through the nature and timing of the Seven Annual Feasts of the Lord.

Leviticus 23:1-2 *And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, ² Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The set feasts of Jehovah, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my set feasts.*

It was on Mount Sinai that God gave Moses the dates and observances for the seven major feasts for the Jewish people to observe.

The Hebrew word for feast is *miqra* (mik-raw) and it means “something called out, that is, a public meeting; a rehearsal for what is to come; an assembly, calling, convocation, reading...”²

The word *rehearsal* means to practice in preparation for a public performance. Evidently these feasts were a way Israel could practice the significance of each feast until GOD performed the truth of the feast in reality. Each feast can be associated with something God had done historically or is going to do in the future.

Seven Annual Feasts

The Spring Feasts

1. **Passover** (*Pesach*) – Nisan 14:
2. **Unleavened Bread** (*Chag hamotzi*) Nisan 15-22
3. **First Fruits** (*Yom habikkurim*) – Nisan 16
4. **Pentecost** (*Shavu’ot*) – Silvan 6

The Fall Feasts

5. **Trumpets** (*Yom Teru’ah*) – Tishri 1
6. **Atonement** (*Yom Kippur*) – Tishri 10
7. **Tabernacles** (*Sukkot*) – Tishri 15

It is also interesting that God commanded Israel to rehearse a future event by celebrating Feasts. As we see, seven Feasts were commanded by God to be rehearsed.

² <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?t=kjv&strongs=h4744>

Details about the Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets is first spoken of in Leviticus 23:23-25. At this time, the Israelites had been brought out of Egypt and Moses received the covenant from God. The Israelites had built the Tabernacle, and God gave instructions to be told to the Israelites by Moses.

The Feast of Trumpets was instituted by the Lord to announce to Israel that the Lord at Mount Saini was presenting Himself to His people. The trumpets of this feast are an announcement of the Lord's gathering of His people and a presentation of Himself to them.

We find the Feast of Trumpets listed as one of the holy days for the Israelites to keep. God tells Moses the exact time the Israelites are to celebrate, and how the people should celebrate. During the feast, the people would bring various offerings to the Lord. In Numbers 29:1-6, we read about these offerings. Here we can find specific instructions about what to offer and how to offer it.

This feast was a call to stop work and remember the Lord. The people were to hold the feast on the first day of the seventh month and were to present a fire offering (burnt offering) to the Lord. Throughout the day, the Israelites could hear the sound of a trumpet or shofar, hence the name Feast of Trumpets.

No daily work was completed on this day. It was a sacred time. The Feast of Trumpets was an outward expression of the feeling of anticipation the Israelites had. The Lord had shown himself to Moses at Mount Sinai, and the people anticipated the Lord showing himself again.

This feast is also a beautiful rehearsal of the second coming of Christ, and Jews around the world continue to celebrate the Feast of Trumpets today, looking for the coming of their Messiah.

The Feast of Trumpets is better known today as Rosh Hashana. Jews celebrate it in the same way and at the same time. Rosh Hashana literally means "head of the year." Jews believe that on this day God created the heavens and the earth. They also believe other biblical events happened on this day. For example, they believe that Adam was created on this day and that Samuel was born on this day. Jews also believe the first temple was dedicated on this day.³

Jews continue to use trumpets in the celebration of Rosh Hashana. Jews of the Bible and today use an instrument called a shofar – a trumpet made from a ram's horn. This was the ancient version of the trumpet. During the Feast of Trumpets, they blow the shofar in certain sound patterns that represent different reasons for the celebration.

Trumpets are mentioned throughout Scripture; they are a call to action. Blowing the trumpet could mean a call to war, a call to assemble, or call to march.⁴

In the Old and New Testaments, we can find many references to the sound of a trumpet. In Joshua 6:4-20, the walls of Jericho collapse after seven days of trumpet blowing. Zechariah 9:14-16 references the coming of the Lord with a trumpet sound. In Revelation, we read about the seven trumpets that will sound as the end times approach.

³ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/what-is-the-feast-of-trumpets.html>

⁴ Ibid.

What Does This Mean for the End Times?

Regarding trumpet sounds, Scripture is clear. We will hear trumpets in the events of the end times.

In Revelation, beginning in chapter eight, we read about trumpets in the hands of angels. There are seven angels and there will be seven trumpets. As each angel sounds a trumpet, an event will occur. These events include portions of the Earth burning, stars falling from the sky, water becoming bitter, and locusts harming people.

When the seventh trumpet has sounded, the kingdom of the world will have become the Kingdom of God. Rosh Hashana, or the Feast of Trumpets, is an Old Testament picture of what the rapture will be like.

In the New Testament, Paul refers to the trumpet sound of the rapture in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. The apostle Paul is telling us that as the last trumpet sounds, the dead will rise and we will be changed. We must understand that trumpets will signal the people of God to gather and be ready to meet our Savior.

Just as trumpets were sounded to call God's people together, the trumpets sounded at the end times are a call for God's people to remember. They are calling for all people to repent of their sins. They are the sound of anticipation for the return of our Lord.

Do we know when this will happen?

The answer to that question is no, but maybe.

In Matthew 24:36, Jesus was asked by His disciples when He would return and reign as King of kings. He responded, "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." This verse is quite often used to say that no one knows when the rapture will take place, but that was not the question that Jesus was answering. In context, Jesus was talking about His SECOND coming to earth to initiate the Millennial Kingdom.

2 Peters 3:10 says that the day of the Lord will come like a thief. In other words, no one will be able to anticipate the time of the coming of the "day of the Lord." According to Joel 2:31, the "day of the Lord" is that day that the sun is turned to darkness and the moon to blood. Joel is referring to the day of great tribulation on earth, a time of Jacob's troubles.

There are no verses in context that indicates that we cannot anticipate the coming of the Lord in the clouds to rapture us. In fact, we should declare daily, maranatha, "even so, come Lord Jesus." This event ought to sit in the fore fronts of our thoughts daily so that we might live circumspectly in anticipation of seeing our Lord's face with our eyes. So in a sense, no, we do not know when He is coming, and we anticipate His return daily.

However, this maybe is interesting. Remember, the Hebrew word for feast is *miqra* (mik-raw) and it means "something called out, that is, a public meeting; a rehearsal for what is to come; an assembly, calling, convocation, reading..."

In review, the word *rehearsal* means to practice in preparation for a public performance. Evidently these feasts were a way Israel could practice the significance of each feast until GOD performed the

truth of the feast in reality. Each feast, when instituted by the Lord, was a rehearsal for what God was going to do in the future. He was telling Israel when and where a prophetic event would occur.

So let's look at the feasts in more detail.

God instituted SEVEN feasts. They were divided into two periods in each Jewish year: spring feasts and fall feasts. There were four spring feasts: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost. Three of the feasts were to be continually rehearsed in the fall: The Feast of Trumpets, the Feast of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

As you study the fulfillment of each of the feasts, things get really interesting. Let's look at the spring feasts.



Passover (*Pesach*) – Nisan 14 was instituted by God to remember that the death angel passed over the houses whose door posts were marked with the blood of a perfect one-year-old male lamb and very importantly, they were not to break a single bone of the lamb. The families were to roast the lamb and eat it completely by daybreak. We know this was the rehearsal for the coming of the lamb of God who would offer Himself as a sacrifice by shedding His blood for the sin of man. Not a bone in his body would be broken. By symbolically partaking (eating) the lamb of God, salvation comes to any person who by faith trusts in Him.

It is interesting that at 3:00 PM on the day that Passover would begin (at or about 6:00 PM) the Israelites were commanded to sacrifice their Passover Lamb, the EXACT time when Jesus said, "It is finished." The lamb of God gave up His life at the exact time the Passover lambs were killed! Was that a coincidence, or was it a fulfillment of the Passover rehearsal?

The Passover was a rehearsal for picture of Jesus's death on the cross. Jesus died ON Passover. Immediately after the Passover comes a festival that depicts the next step in the fulfillment of God's master plan.

Unleavened Bread (*Chag hamotzi*) Nisan 15-22: was symbolic that when God freed Israel from Egypt, during the next seven days, they ate bread that was baked without leaven. Leaven is an agent such as yeast that causes bread dough to rise. Leavening of the bread takes time. When Israel departed from Egypt, they did so quickly. There was no time to bake, so they ate flat bread or unleavened bread.



Now notice Jesus Christ's teaching about leaven, which expands the meaning of this feast. During Christ's ministry He performed two miracles in which He fed thousands of people. After one of these incidents, when His disciples had gone around the Sea of Galilee, they forgot to bring bread with them. So Jesus told them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matthew 16:5-6, NASB).

The disciples thought Jesus was referring to their lack of bread. However, He was using the occasion to teach them by calling on the symbolism of leaven. Christ asked them: "How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then the disciples "understood that He did not say to beware of the *leaven of bread*, but of *the teaching* of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matthew 16:11-12, NASB).

Leaven is symbolic of sin. The leaven of the Pharisees was that their teachings were in error or sinful. They were untruthful and they lied.

The Days of Unleavened Bread remind us that with God's help we must remove and avoid all sin—symbolized by leaven—and live genuinely by God's commandments in all areas of our life. But the greater significance is that Jesus had made a once and for all payment for sin. Once they placed Jesus in the tomb, he again became sinless; the sacrifice was complete, and the tomb held no leaven. The feast of Unleavened Bread was a picture of the burial of Jesus. Jesus had paid the sin debt in total! This feast was a rehearsal that the Son of God would become sin for us, and that we could become righteous in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21:

*²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

First Fruits (*Yom habikkurim*) – Nisan 16 – 22. This was a feast in which God commanded Israel to bring the spring harvest and wave a sheaf of grain (omer) before the Lord. It was to be waved the DAY AFTER THE SABBATH or on Sunday. The week Jesus died, the Passover occurred on a High Sabbath, not the weekly sabbath (Saturday).⁵ In 33 AD, the High Sabbath began on Wednesday evening and concluded Thursday evening. Friday was a normal day, but then the weekly sabbath began on Friday evening to Saturday evening. The third day since Passover would be on Sunday morning, three days and nights after Jesus was placed in the tomb. Isn't it amazing that Jesus Christ was in the tomb, as He told us He would be, three days and three nights, and arose on the very day that the sheaf of grain was waved before the Lord? The Feast of First Fruits was a rehearsal for the resurrection of Christ, on the VERY DAY!

Pentecost (*Shavu'ot*) – Silvan 6: The Feast of Weeks.

According to the Old Testament, they would go to the day of the celebration of Firstfruits, and beginning with that day, and then count forward 49 days. The next day would be the Feast of Pentecost. So Firstfruits is the beginning of the barley harvest and Pentecost the celebration of the beginning of the wheat harvest. Since on the 50th day it was honored, it was seven (7 days) weeks or 49 days or a week of weeks. That's how it got its name: Feast of Weeks.

The Jews celebrated God's gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, the Old Covenant of God to His people. But Christ fulfilled the law or Old Covenant and brought to us a New Covenant under grace. The Holy Spirit was to come as a validation of the New Covenant to seal every believer in Christ. Pentecost was a rehearsal of the coming of a New Covenant. And on that EXACT DAY, the Holy Spirit baptized believers by indwelling those who trusted in Him by faith.



⁵ https://www.hebrew4christians.com/Holidays/Spring_Holidays/First_Fruits/first_fruits.html

One Fall Feast which was fulfilled in Christ

There are three fall feasts, but one in particular had its fulfillment in the coming of Christ. Let's see why.

We celebrate Jesus's birth on Christmas each year. But it is doubtful that Jesus was born on December 25th. The earliest mention of December 25 as Jesus' birthday comes from a mid-fourth-century Roman almanac that lists the death dates of various Christian bishops and martyrs. The first date listed, December 25, is marked: *natus Christus in Betleem Judeae*: "Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea."⁶ It was almost 300 years after Jesus was born, we finally find people observing his birth mid-winter on or around December 25th to January 6th.

So do we know when Jesus was actually born? Well, close to it. No one knows precisely when Jesus was born. Even the year of his birth is an educated guess based on what extra-biblical information is available. The Jewish historian Josephus places the death of Herod the Great in 4 BC and both Gospels say Herod was king at the time of Jesus' birth and we do know that Herod died shortly after Jesus' birth. Herod became king of Palestine in 37 BC and died in 4 BC, but maybe 1 BC. Josephus's date of 4 BC is based on a lunar eclipse the year Herod died, but there also was a total lunar eclipse in 1 BC. Josephus may have gotten the wrong eclipse. Outside the book of Matthew, the slaughter of innocent babies is not mentioned in any historical writings, but certainly is consistent with other atrocities that Herod committed. Since Herod's calculations led him to target boys under two years of age, Jesus was probably born shortly before Herod's death.

So what's wrong with the 4 BC date? There is a real problem with that date, because we do know when Jesus was crucified: 33 AD. How do we know that? Luke tells us in Luke 3:1 that John began his ministry in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. He began his reign in 14 AD. So John began his ministry in 29 AD. Jesus began his ministry shortly after, probably in late 29 AD or early 30 AD. Luke 3:23 tells us that Jesus was 30 years old when He began his ministry.

If He was born in 4 BC, that would make Jesus between 36 and 37 years old when He died. Luke says Jesus was 30 years old at the start of his ministry. The Gospels describe a 3 to 4-year ministry of Jesus before His death. See the problem?

If Jesus was born in 1 BC, he would have begun His ministry in 29 AD when He was 30 years old. His death in 33 AD would fit with a 3 to 4-year ministry. By the way, from 1 BC to 1 AD is one year. So our best guess for a year of birth was 1 BC.

To guesstimate a date when Jesus was born begins with the service of Zacharias in the temple. Zacharias was a Levite who burned incense in the Holy Place in the temple generally only once per year for a week. About a thousand years earlier, King David had organized the Levitical priesthood into 24 "courses" or "divisions". As explained in 1 Chronicles 24 and more specifically in verses 3, 10 and 19, there was an abundance of priests to serve in the various temple functions.

Not wanting any to be left out of serving, David's solution was to divide the priests into 24 courses. Each priest would then serve for a specified week-long term twice during the year, plus the three festival

⁶ <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/jesus-historical-jesus/how-december-25-became-christmas/>

seasons (Deuteronomy 16:16) when all the priests would serve. At the time of Zacharias, there were about 8,000 priests who served at the temple in various capacities.

Extra-biblical evidence points to Zacharias' week of service (the course of Abijah) described by Luke being around Pentecost, which generally falls in late May to mid-June on our calendar. Although they fall at specific times on God's sacred calendar, the dates of His annual Holy Days and festivals vary up to several weeks on the Gregorian calendar we use today.

It seems we can ascertain when Zacharias was serving in the temple. One resource, *The Companion Bible*, calculates it to the week of June 13-19 in the determined year.⁷ Another Jewish calendar places Pentecost on June 8th of 2 BC.⁸ These and many other resources confirm mid-June as the approximate date when Pentecost was observed in 2 BC. This starts our clock ticking...

“So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; *and she hid herself five months*” (Luke 1:23-24). Since Zacharias' temple course was in mid-June, assuming she became pregnant within a couple of weeks, five months would put this into mid- to late November. This will be handy information later when we consider the date of Jesus' birth.

We know that it was Elizabeth's sixth month, perhaps late December or a little beyond. *“Now Mary arose in those days [the same basic time frame] and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb”* (verses 39-41).

Elizabeth at this time was in her sixth month of pregnancy with John the Baptist. It would not be a stretch to understand from the previous passage that Mary was now also pregnant with Jesus. Elizabeth even speaks of Mary as though she knows Mary is an expectant mother: *“But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy”* (verses 43-44).

Verse 56 says, *“And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house”*. Time wise it was now late March. Mary stayed with Elizabeth right to the birth of John the Baptist. *“Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son”* (verse 57).

We see, then, that Mary was probably three months pregnant when John was born. John was probably born in late March or early April. So, when was Jesus Christ born? Six months later would be middle September or early October! In 1 BC, that would put Jesus's birth at around the middle of Tishri. That would put his birth on or around the Feast of Atonement. The date of the day of Atonement in 1 BC was September 27th.⁹

While we cannot definitely know the exact date of His birth, because it is not revealed in the Bible or in extra-Biblical literature. But wouldn't it had made sense, since all the feasts were REHEARSALS of what was to come, that God sent His Son on the very day that the High Priest was to enter the Holy of Holies, and offer a sacrifice for the sins of the people. *“Behold, the lamb of God, which takes away the sin of*

⁷ *The Companion Bible*, 1974, Appendix 179, p. 200

⁸ <http://www.cgsf.org/dbeattie/calendar/?roman=2bc>

⁹ *Ibid.*

the world!” John 1:29 Our best guess is that Jesus was born on the Day of Atonement. Jesus was born to die as a sacrifice for the sin of mankind.

Here is something to add to the significance that Jesus may have been born on the Day of Atonement.

Twice in the Old Testament, a place called Migdal Eder or the “Tower of Eder” or the “Tower of the Flock” is referenced as a place near Bethlehem.

Genesis 35:21 *Jacob buried Rachel “Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the “tower of Eder.” This tower was located just outside of Bethlehem was also called “the tower of the flock” (Migdal Eder in Hebrew).*

Micah 4:7-8 *“And the lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion (Jerusalem) from this time forth and forevermore. **And you, O tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it (he – Messiah) come, kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem.***



The Tower of the Flock – Migdal Eder

The Old Testament scholars looked for the Messiah to be revealed from Migdal Eder. This was a tower built specially to care for the flocks which were birthed there and destined for the Temple sacrifices. The shepherds who watched over them were not ordinary shepherds; they watched over the Temple sheep year-round.

“This shall be a sign unto you...” The shepherds already knew the spot, for the sign of a manger meant the manger at Migdal Eder – “the tower of the flock!” The entire life of the Messiah was pictured at Migdal Eder -- a lamb born on the Day of Atonement and prepared for death in Jerusalem on Passover as a sacrifice for sin.

What about the other two Fall feasts?

All the previous feasts were REHEARSALS of actual events that took place on the VERY DAY and VERY HOUR of those feasts. But two feasts, while observed yearly, have not had a “God-event” occur during them. So evidently, even today they will have a future fulfillment.

Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teru’ah) – Tishri 1: This feast is a rehearsal for the coming of Messiah. A trumpet will sound, and then God’s people are to come before Him as He presents Himself to them. Israel today celebrated this feast, blowing the rams horn to call for the Messiah to come. But Scripture says that the trumpets will blow when Jesus calls His church to come be united with Him forever. If God chose to reveal Himself on the EXACT DAY of the previous five feasts, would it not make sense for Him to do so on the remaining two feasts? Who knows? The feast of Trumpets may be a REHEARSAL for the Rapture of the Church.



On our calendar, this feast occurs early September but is not always the same days every year. If Christ would return on the Feast of Tabernacles in 2021, it would happen sometime between September 7 – 8. But God could have other plans!

Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) – Tishri 15: The Feast of Tabernacles is also called ‘Sukkot’ which is the Hebrew word for ‘booths’ or ‘tents’. The Jewish people constructed makeshift tents, just as the Israelites while roaming in the desert, for the feast to commemorate their liberation from Egypt by the hand of God. This joyful holiday is a recognition of God's salvation, shelter, provision, and trustworthiness. The Feast of Tabernacles is a 7-day autumn celebration honoring the 40-year pilgrimage of the Israelites in the desert. Along with Passover and the Festival of Weeks, Sukkot is one of three notable pilgrimage feasts found in the Bible when all Jewish men were expected to come before the Lord in the Temple in Jerusalem.¹⁰

Biblical mentions of this holiday are found throughout the Old Testament, including **Exodus 23:16, 34:22; Leviticus 23:34-43; Numbers 29:12-40; Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Ezra 3:4; and Nehemiah 8:13-18.**

Jesus was in the temple on the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles. It was during the height of this ceremony, on the final day of the feast, that Jesus chose to stand up and say in a loud voice: “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them” (**John 7:37-38**).

Jesus was telling them the solution to their spiritual drought is found in him, the true water of life – what a declaration! No wonder when he said this, some declared, “This is the Messiah” (**John 7:41**).

The ceremony was a reassurance that God had vowed to send a light to restore Israel's glory, deliver them from bondage, and renew their joy. This was the connection for Jesus saying: “*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*” (**John 8:12**).¹¹

The Feast of Tabernacles celebrates a future time when God will again *tabernacle* with us on earth when Jesus appears and renews all things. It is a rehearsal for the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ will tabernacle (dwell) with us on earth as King of kings, and Lord of lords. It yet has a future fulfillment.



“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (**Revelation 21:3-4**)

¹⁰ <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/what-is-the-feast-of-tabernacles-bible-story-and-christian-meaning.html>

¹¹Ibid.

Maranatha!¹²

Maranatha is an Aramaic word that means “the Lord is coming” or “come, O Lord.” The early church faced much persecution, and life for a Christian under Roman rule was not easy. The Romans required everyone to declare that Caesar was god. The early Christians knew that there is only one God and one Lord—Jesus Christ—and in all good conscience they could not call Caesar “Lord,” so the Romans looked upon them as traitors, persecuted them, and put them to death.

Living under those adverse conditions, the believers’ morale was lifted by the hope of the coming of the Lord. “Maranatha!” became the common greeting of the oppressed believers, replacing the Jewish greeting *shalom* (“peace”). The followers of Jesus knew there would be no peace because Jesus had told them so ([Matthew 10:34](#); [Luke 12:51](#)). But they also knew the Lord would be returning to set up His kingdom, and from that truth they drew great comfort. They were constantly reminding and being reminded that the Lord is coming ([Luke 21:28](#); [Revelation 22:12](#)). Jesus taught several parables on this same theme of watching and waiting and being prepared for His return ([Matthew 25:1-13](#); [Luke 12:35-40](#)).

Today, believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ live our lives in the light of the knowledge that He can come at any time. We are to be ready when the call comes. Every day we should expect Him to come, and every day we should long for Him to come. Maranatha reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Spirit. To dwell on material things is to be in constant mental turmoil. Looking down, we see the earth; looking around, we see earthly things. But looking up, we see the hope of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To those who are discouraged today, Maranatha! To those who are worried today, Maranatha! To those who are filled with anxiety over the problems they are facing, Maranatha! Look up! Our Lord is coming soon!



¹² <https://www.gotquestions.org/maranatha.html> (Used by permission)