

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?****Should we observe the feasts as Christians? - posted by reformer, on: 2009/11/28 11:10**

I have been thinking about this lately and wanted to hear what others may think. Let me just say not to observe in order to obtain righteous, justification or salvation. We know that Christ is the atonement and sacrifice. But now that we are crafted into Abraham...should we not observe these traditions? Christians have established their own traditions, which seem to be un-biblical. So why shouldn't we observe them?

There is a verse in Matthew 23:3, "therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them."

When Christ says, keep my commands, if you love me you will keep my commands. What commands if we are no longer to keep the law? Not oral law, traditions, but the laws of the OT. But then in Galatians 5:14, "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You Shall love your neighbor as yourself."

So if one feels they should observe the feasts and subject themselves to the law, but still follow Christ as savior by faith through His grace and mercy...is there harm in that? Leaves me with the same question, should we observe the feasts, if Christ and the apostles observed?

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?, on: 2009/11/28 11:52

It has always been a little strange to me, why the Jerusalem apostles appeared to keep portions of the Law, and chose to allow the gentile believers the freedom to abstain.

There is no merit in the keeping of the feasts, for God looks upon the heart, not outward appearances. To me, it is neither good, or bad. If your heart is right, you may indeed glean revelation from a myriad of symbolic events in a particular feast.

"It is neither him who runs, or he who wills, but God who shows mercy."

"So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy."
Romans 9-16

There is no justification in the keeping of the law. Paul said that those who were justified by the keeping of it, had fallen from grace. This, to me, also shows the negative consequences of keeping feasts, if you believe that doing so enhances your obedience and devotion to the Father.

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians? - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2009/11/28 12:42

Hi reformer...

I have been thinking about this question lately. I am reminded in what seems to be conflicted instructions about special days and feasts in the New Testament (Galatians 4:10-11 and Romans 14:5-8).

However, we also see that Paul, on at least one occasion, told people to keep at least one feast (...with sincerity - I Corinthians 5:8). In fact, the Passover was the feast with which we associate "communion." This was not a simple meal. This was a feast that was in observance with the Law of Moses. Yet we continue to "observe" the fulfillment of Christ's sacrifice with each communion (or Passover Seder) "as oft as ye drink it" (I Corinthians 11:24-26). In fact, we are instructed by our Lord to "do this in remembrance" of him. So, in a way, we are observing the true principle of the Passover -- that

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?

our Lord would leave His throne in Eternity to walk amongst the men that He created and become the sacrificial Lamb that was necessary for the forgiveness of sin.

While these were required observations of feasts from the Law of Moses, we also know that Jesus appeared to have observed the Feast of Dedication (or Hanukkah). This "holiday" was NOT a part of the Law of Moses but dates from Maccabees. There was no apparent fulfillment of this feast in the New Testament (other than the obvious realization that God supernaturally preserves those who are dedicated to him). Yet this is included in John 10:22-23 in which Jesus went to the Temple.

This is an interesting topic! I look forward to hearing from the views of others.

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?, on: 2009/11/28 12:47

Quote:
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According to the measure of faith that has been given you, one is able to partake. But if your weak and can't differentiate between law and grace, don't.

Quote:
-----It has always been a little strange to me, why the Jerusalem apostles appeared to keep portions of the Law, and chose to allow the gentile believers the freedom to abstain.

They appeared to keep portions of it because of Tradition. They went from law to grace literally overnight. And it's something that wasn't easy to let go overnight. They continued to practice without the sacrifice seeing that Christ fulfilled that, but everything else was still going on until they understood that those things they were observing were fulfilled as well. The Holy Ghost being with them was leading them into all truth, so it was a gradual departure of the old and embracing the new.

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2009/11/28 13:46

Quote:
-----While these were required observations of feasts from the Law of Moses, we also know that Jesus appeared to have observed the Feast of Dedication (or Hanukkah). This "holiday" was NOT a part of the Law of Moses but dates from Maccabees.

Interesting..did not know that.

Chris you brought up good points and I agree with what you are saying. But here is a thought I had concerning Galatians 4:10-11. Could Paul have been talking about pagan gods they worshiped or traditions that became idols? Verse 8 says, "However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods." But then in verse 9, "In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world." Could the world mean the things that are direct contradiction to the law of God? Could it be the traditions or gods, by the "worlds" standards? Things they made up to follow or observe?

Hope that makes sense??

I agree I think this could be a enjoyable topic to discuss.

reformer

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?

Re: - posted by Leo_Grace, on: 2009/11/28 13:50

Quote:

DeepThinker wrote:

Quote:
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They appeared to keep portions of it because of Tradition. They went from law to grace literally overnight. And it's something that wasn't easy to let go overnight.

They were already circumcised, so there were some aspects of the law that they could not undo even if it these were no longer required. Maybe this was why some of them insisted that new believers be required to undergo circumcision also --so that they wouldn't feel as if they were left holding the shorter end of the stick, so to speak. :-P :-D 8-)

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians? - posted by divdasunder (), on: 2009/11/28 18:26

Should we observe the feasts as Christians?

The two passages that stick out to me about this question are Hebrews 14:5,6 and Colossians 2:16

Heb 14:5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day . Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.
Heb 14:6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard . He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

Col 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath :

Not sure if these clear anything up or not!!

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/11/29 12:37

We live very near a messianic Christian congregation where we occasionally drop in for a visit. They have, interestingly enough, a Jewish (by birth), spirit filled rabbi and a spirit filled pastor who serve side by side as leadership in the body.

Anyway, they still have services beginning close to sundown on Friday evening and call them sabbath services. They use quite a bit of Jewish symbolism, and they celebrate all of the feasts.

They do this, not out of any compulsion to keep the law, but simply because they see the way these feasts point to Christ and want to celebrate Him through the feasts.

Jesus celebrated them, and you can be sure He did not do it in some sort of legalistic way. In fact, He used the Passover meal as a way to teach the disciples about Himself, and commanded them to continue the tradition. We still continue this in the form of our communion, but I would imagine the early Jewish believers probably incorporated Christ into Passover to fulfill this command (maybe some of you well studied historians can verify that fact or tell me I don't know what I am talking about. Either is fine.)

Sooooo, I would say if you want to celebrate them and you don't do it out of some type of legalistic compulsion, go right ahead and enjoy doing it. They all pointed to Christ in one way or another. (Hanukah on the other hand, as was already stated, has its origins in the Maccabean period. When Jerusalem was under siege and oil for the menorah in the temple could not be obtained, the story goes that God supernaturally multiplied the oil and the lamps did not go out. This was not one of the original feasts described under the law.)

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should we observe the feasts as Christians?

You can check out how they view this at: <http://www.houseofdauid.us/Holidays.html>

Re: , on: 2009/11/29 14:21

We should observe any feast that involves food. Christians love to eat. :-P

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2009/11/29 16:25

Quote:

DeepThinker wrote:

We should observe any feast that involves food. Christians love to eat. :-P

:-P

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/11/29 21:34

Quote:

-----We should observe any feast that involves food. Christians love to eat.

Well, Paul did tell us to buffet ourselves daily while it is called today. :lol:

Re: - posted by kathleen1 (), on: 2009/12/2 6:33

Quote:

-----However, we also see that Paul, on at least one occasion, told people to keep at least one feast (...with sincerity - I Corinthians 5:8).
In fact, the Passover was the feast with which we associate "communion."

I have heard a lot lately from Christians devoutly supporting the keeping of OT feasts, and have been troubled by it. In the birth of the New Testament Church, I know they kept the Passover. I think these traditions were slowly let go of, because I don't think we can let go of things so ingrained in us quickly. Jesus came to fulfill the law. Everything God does is to teach us. These OT feasts when we go to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to teach us their significance, He will. They point to spiritual principles. I truly believe the Scripture in 1 Cor 5:8 is the one feast we must keep. Because Christ is our Passover, and remember He said He that doesn't eat my flesh and drink my blood has no life in him. (Joh 6:53) How do we do that? Do we kill a lamb and sprinkle blood and bake unleavened bread? No. He was the Word of God made flesh. When He was pierced, blood and water came out. The life blood of the church is the Holy Spirit. When we set ourselves apart and reverently come before Him, open His Word, and carefully begin to with prayer, and hunger, and reverence read His Holy Word, and seek to be filled with His Spirit, to seek the Spirit of God to minister this Word to us (which only HE CAN) then we are keeping this feast-eating the passover lamb and drinking the wine of the Holy Spirit...simply because He wants us to understand we must partake of His divine nature and let it become our life, not the life of carnal ordinances, fleshly service and reasoning. The life of a Christian-Christ in us, the hope of glory is a supernatural life, and so we must feed on supernatural-on things above. Everytime I carefully study my Bible, prayerfully depending on the Holy Spirit to make it alive to me, to open my understanding, to take more of me cos I must decrease so He can increase, oh, hallelujah that at feast-of communion with the Lord, where I eat His Word, listen to His Spirit teach me, and pray and communicate with Him THAT is living the Word "You shall know (intimately aware of with understanding) the TRUTH (JESUS CHRIST) and the TRUTH Shall make you free" Free from everything of the flesh, the world and the devil. That Word is a Sword and it cuts and breaks, separates between the pure (Spirit) and the vile (flesh). Glory to God. That's the Passover Feast personally celebrated in the prayer closet, and that's going to make us more like Christ. If what we are doing is not Christ centered and isn't making us more like Him, it's a waste. God's ultimate thing with us to make us more like Christ-which we can never be if we do not spend quality time with Him, beholding Him. How can we be like someone we never spend time with? I think studying these OT feasts would be a wonderful thing to do, under the direction and teaching of the Holy S

pirit. We could learn much. I have only studied in depth the Passover feast, so that is the only one I can really remark on e. But I hope to study the others at some point.

Re: Should we observe the feasts as Christians? - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2009/12/5 21:37

Christian's Observance of Jewish Holidays - Michael Brown

"It is increasingly common for Gentile Christians to celebrate the biblical, Jewish holidays, and there are many commendable reasons for doing so. Here are a few:

(1) The biblical holy days are infused with spiritual and prophetic significance. Passover corresponds to Yeshua's death (1 Corinthians 5:7-8), Firstfruits to His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20), and the Festival of Weeks (Shavu'ot, or Pentecost) corresponds to the giving of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). Trumpets points to the Lord's return with the sound of the trumpet (see Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 11:15), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) points to Israel's final cleansing (Zechariah 13:1, which follows from Zechariah 12:10 ff.), and Tabernacles (Sukkot) points to the final ingathering of the nations (see Zechariah 14:16-19; see also Revelation 7:9 and Leviticus 23:40, for palm branches and Tabernacles).

(2) The biblical holy days have great historic significance. Although the Messianic significance of the biblical holy days is certainly of greater significance to Christians than is the historical significance, the origin and meaning of these holy days in Israel's history is also important. So, if it is okay to celebrate Thanksgiving and July 4th in America and to remember the events connected with those days, how can it be wrong to remember Israel's deliverance from Egypt in the Passover? When connecting this season to the death and resurrection of Yeshua, it can be very powerful.

(3) Celebrating the biblical holy days is a good way to teach about God's acts of redemption. Paul freely made reference to the holy days when writing to the Corinthians, making a spiritual application of Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 and possibly referencing Firstfruits directly in 1 Corinthians 15:20; notice also how Luke casually made reference to Yom Kippur (the Fast) in Acts 27:9, assuming his readers would understand. Yet many Christians today do not understand these references, being so divorced from the Jewish roots of the faith. Celebration of the holy days-or at the least, annual teaching about them-is a good way to educate a whole congregation, from the young to the old.

(4) Celebrating the biblical holy days is a good way to recover the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. It is absolutely clear that everything that God does is summed up in His Son Jesus, that our Messiah and King is to have centrality in every way, and that our fullness is found in Him rather than in celebrating holy days or observing special seasons. That being said, the Church has become so Gentilized, so detached from its biblical, Jewish origins, that an appreciation for the biblical, Jewish calendar-the calendar of Yeshua and the apostles-is certainly helpful. To give one example, think of the positive benefits of calling churches to fast and pray for the salvation of Jewish people worldwide on the Day of Atonement, a day when millions of Jews are fasting and asking God to forgive their sins. What's wrong with doing that?

Having said all this, it is important to emphasize that many believers do get caught up in unhealthy practices associated with the celebration of the feasts, and there are some direct warnings in the New Testament. In light of this, it is important to remember that: (1) Celebration of the biblical feasts is not a means for a Gentile believer to "become Jewish." Jews and Gentiles have equal standing in the Lord, and Jews are not called to become Gentiles nor are Gentiles called to become Jews. (2) Jesus must be central in everything we do (this cannot be overemphasized.) (3) Celebration of the feasts is not commanded in the New Testament and should not be practiced in a binding or legalistic way.

This was addressed by Paul when expressing his concern about the Galatians: "You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you" (Galatians 4:10-11).

What was the problem? While commentators point out different nuances of the text, it seems clear that the Galatians thought that they were required to observe "special days and months and seasons and years," and, worse still, they thought that in doing so, they would increase their spiritual standing in the Lord. Neither of these is true!

Paul addressed a related phenomenon in Colossians 2:16-17 (NLT): "So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality." (When Paul called on the Corinthians to "keep the Passover" in 1 Corinthians 5, he was clearly speaking of this in spiritual terms.)

So, let everything we do as believers find its fullness in Yeshua, let no celebration or observance be done in a binding way, let no believers judge one other based on their observance or non-observance, let no one feel "unspiritual" if they

get nothing out of the celebration of the feasts-and if the Lord puts it in your heart to celebrate the feasts, then be blessed in that celebration.

As for Jewish believers in Jesus, it is my view that similar principles apply, since we are not required by God to follow the biblical calendar as new covenant believers. (I'm sure some of you differ with me here, so feel free and email me with your differences, bearing in mind that in the course of a short article like this, I cannot get into lengthy theological and exegetical discussions to back up every point I make.)

That being said, many Messianic Jews do feel a calling to follow the biblical calendar for the purposes of covenantal solidarity with the Jewish community, preservation of their heritage, Jewish outreach, and family life cycle, among other things. I would only urge my fellow Messianic Jews to reflect on the previous paragraphs, regardless of their particular convictions, since it is God's will that "in everything might be preeminent" (Col 1:18, ESV). Therefore whatever we do must ultimately glorify Him."

I believe that this article brings a good balance concerning the observance of the Jewish holidays and feasts by believers. Many Christians do not take the Jewish holidays seriously and are missing out on the significance of them, while others go to the other extreme, becoming very legalistic, not seeing the purpose of these holidays and feasts in the mind of God, which is to make Jesus Christ preeminent in everything that we do.

Mike

Re:The Feasts of the Lord, on: 2009/12/6 1:29

The Feasts of the Lord, as commanded by God, to be celebrated forever, are a picture/stick diagram of God's divine plan for this earth.

The Feasts of the Lord are more than quaint Jewish Traditions; they are more than just Jewish rituals that are performed every year. The 7 Feasts of Israel celebrated by our Jewish Brethren are 7 waypoints in God's timetable for the: 1) redemption; 2) equipping; 3) and the witness and glorification of the Covenant people of God. The feasts are also an introduction into the Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah with the 7th feast- the Feast of Tabernacles.

So, if we want to see the beauty of God's plan, laid out in advance for all to see, then by all means they are worth studying. The Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Firstfruits and the Feast of Pentecost have already been fulfilled by Jesus Christ, at His first coming.

What awaits us is the Feasts of Trumpets, the Feast of Atonement & the Feast of Tabernacles.

This is a great link- with an excellent video introduction, plus a study to go along with it:
(<http://endtimepilgrim.org/feastslord.htm>) The Feasts of The Lord

Sincerely,

Walter