

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 09.05.2021

TRUE WORSHIP: ACTS 21:21-40

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

This week we celebrate the Jewish dress rehearsal known as the feast of trumpets. This is the next event to be fulfilled on the prophetic calendar. The feast tells us about the fulfillment of the ancient prophets' visions surrounding the rapture of the church. The trumpet is poised, ready to herald the end of the summer harvest and the beginning of a new year. This year is a little unique because it is a Shmitah, a year of REST. The Shmitah is the final year in a seven-year cycle of debt forgiveness and land rest prescribed for Israel in the Old Testament. It is also a Jewish "leap year". This "leap year" occurs seven times in a 19-year cycle and has 13 months instead of the regular year's 12. The added month is called "Adar I" and is inserted before the month of Adar (termed "Adar II" in leap years). Every year on the 14th of Adar, Jewish people celebrate Purim. Traditions include the public reading or chanting of the entire Scroll of Esther, which tells how God delivered the people from a wicked prime minister named Haman through the intercession of Esther. This new year, may we find a divine rest in God's deliverance from this fallen world through our Lord Jesus. Let's get into our study...

1. Describe general essence of a celebration? Where you able to attend the Feast of Trumpets this week? If so, describe the essence of that celebration.
2. How might the Feast of Trumpets and the Jewish "leap year", including the double Purim celebration, encourage you?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ Acts 21:17-26

Paul reports his Gentile ministry in detail to James and the elders of Jerusalem. The Jerusalem leaders had agreed years before that Paul should minister to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:7-10) and the elders rejoiced at what they heard. However, no sooner had he finished his report than the elders brought up the rumors that were being circulated about Paul among the Jewish Christians. These false allegations against Paul were almost the same things they had said about Jesus and Stephen. They insinuated Paul was teaching the Jews to forsake the laws and customs given by Moses and the fathers. The leaders were especially concerned that Paul's presence in the city would cause division or disruption "among the thousands of Jews... zealous for the law" (Acts 21:20).

1. A rumor is an unconfirmed, widely spread story or statement. Scripture warns against spreading rumors and those who engage in gossip (Proverbs 20:19). How do we avoid spreading rumors and gossip amongst the church? (Proverbs 18:21, James 3:2-12).
2. Rather than spreading rumors and gossip, how should we use our words amongst the church? (Psalms 34:1, 10:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Ephesians 4:29).
3. What was Paul's reaction to this misunderstanding? What did his reaction reveal about him?
4. When we are falsely attacked, we should not agree with it or let the words take dominion over us. How might we stand firm in the Lord when falsely attacked? (Ephesians 6:13)

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 21:26-40

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

The leaders in Jerusalem suggested Paul demonstrate publicly his reverence for the Jewish law. They asked him to identify himself with four men under a Nazarite vow (Num 6), pay for their sacrifices, and be with them in the temple for their time of purification. Paul agreed to this, although he knew he was no longer a slave to the law. Alternatively, he was under the grace and rest found only in the work Jesus did on the cross (Hebrews 4:9-10). However, this was a matter of personal conviction on the part of Jewish believers, who were also given the freedom to accept or reject the customs. The whole plan appeared to be safe and wise, but it did not work. Instead of bringing peace, it caused an uproar, and Paul ended up a prisoner.

5. Many brethren in Jerusalem were still clinging to the Law of Moses. In fact, one day God would have to send a special letter to the Jews, the epistle to the Hebrews, to explain the relationship between the old and new covenants. Why do you think old traditions and customs difficult to change?
6. Although Paul was not obligated to publicly demonstrate his reverence for the Jewish law, he did it anyway. What does this reveal about the character of Paul? (Phil 3:4-6, 2 Corinthians 11:22-3, 1 Cor. 15:9-10)
7. Paul understood he was no longer under the law, but under the grace and rest found only in the work Jesus did on the cross. Compare and contrast the law and grace. (Gal. 4:22-25)
8. Rest is not inactivity, but to be harmoniously involved in the will of God. How does entering into God's rest provide the very best thing for us? (Rom. 8:28)
9. The plan of the leaders in Jerusalem failed. Instead of bringing peace, it caused an uproar, and Paul ended up a prisoner. Many may characterize the last few years as extremely difficult. How might we enter into a divine rest in difficult times? (Deuteronomy 31:8, Rom. 8:31)

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Paul was harmoniously involved in the will of God and found rest difficult times. It must have comforted him to know that in a twinkling of an eye, Jesus would someday return for His church. There are still many who need to hear the good news of Christ. The rapture could happen at any time and may very well happen on the Feast of Trumpets. Jesus gave many parables on readiness (The 10 virgins Matt. 25:1-13. The Door Keeper Lk 12:25-36, and the Thief vs. Owner of House (Lk 12:39-40). Jesus warned us that we must always be ready for His coming. We can see the nearness of signs and seasons, but we don't know the hour of His return.

1. What are the things that prevent you from entering into God's rest?
2. How can you overcome these things and keep your heart and mind ready for His coming? (Heb. 12:1)
3. How can you effectively warn and tell others so that they don't miss out on the Rapture? (1 Thes. 4:16-18, 1 Cor. 15:51, John 14).

PRAYER

Thank You for loving us so much that You gave Your only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Thank You that we may find a divine rest in You through our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for the love, joy, peace, and hope found only in You. Lord, as we start this new Jewish year, help us to rest in the victory You have already provided us. You have already won the battle for us. Strengthen our relationship with You and help us to be ready for whatever You may have for us. Maranatha, come quickly Lord!

"The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." (Deuteronomy 31:8)