

Chosen by God^{Topic}

The Jewish Roots of Christianity

Shemini Atzeret

Eighth Day

Shemini Atzeret, or the Eighth Day of the Solemn Assembly, immediately follows the Feast of Tabernacles, but is considered a festival in its own right. Everything from the beginning points to the end, which according to God's design is also a new beginning. After the seventh day, comes the eighth day, which is also the first day of a new week, a new beginning.

What day of the week did the Christians meet? _____

According to Jewish thought, the timetable for the world parallels the days of the week. After the seven "days", thought to correlate to thousand year periods of time, comes the eighth day, or the new reign of the Messiah. The seventh day, the perfect number, is the day of the Lord. The day of the Lord is mentioned many times in Scripture as a judgment call, the separation of the sheep from the goats.

What does 2 Pet. 3:12,13 say will occur on this "day of the Lord"? _____

Who will spend eternity falling on their face in joy at the presence of God, and who will spend eternity in the agony of His fire? In Jewish history, there are many equivalents to this. For seven days, the firstborn animals remained with their mother. On the eighth day they were given to the Lord. (Ex.22:30) For seven days, newborn Israelite boys remained in their "natural" state, but on the eighth day were dedicated and marked as one of God's own.

This is the subject matter of the eighth day, even during the solemn assembly after the seven day Feast of Tabernacles.

God uses the same words to speak of the natural world and the spiritual world. This makes our understanding both simple and challenging. It calls us to an understanding from the heart rather than with just our minds.

On what day were the offerings accepted in Ezek. 43:27? _____

What was God's response? _____

What will gain that response in the final Eighth Day? _____

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JEWISH EIGHTH DAY SACRED ASSEMBLY

What description is given for the eighth day, following the seven day observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, in Lev. 23:36? _____

What kind of assembly is to be held according to Num. 29:35? _____

How does this compare with the seven day Feast of Tabernacles? _____

What did Solomon do the day after the dedication of the temple, and the Feast of Tabernacles had been completed? (1 Kings 8:65-66) _____

What was the attitude of the people? _____

In Hezekiah's restoration of the temple in 2 Chron. 29, the Levites went to work purifying it of everything unclean. In verse 17, when do we find that this occurred? _____

On what day was it completed? _____

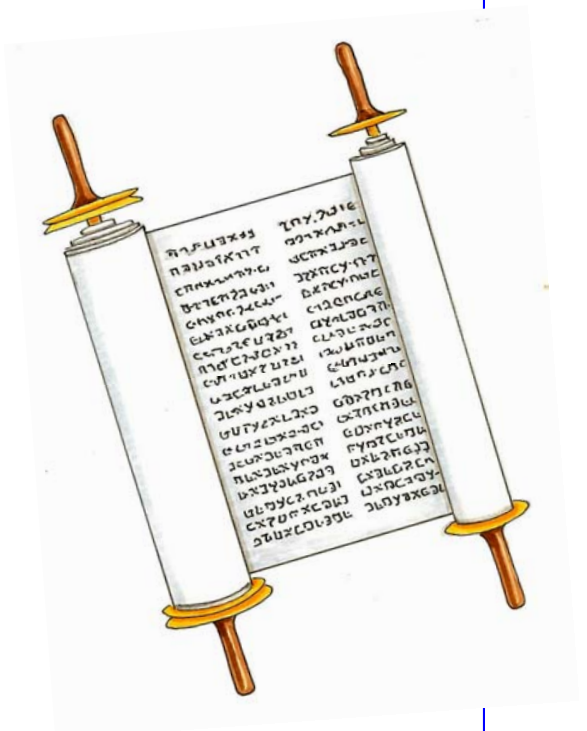
In Neh. 8:18, how careful were the people to follow the proper observance? _____

On observance of this day, the story of the dedication of the Temple is read from 1 Kings 8:54-9:1. What is meaningful about pairing this event with the Eighth Day? _____

After this Torah reading, memorial prayers are said for the deceased, and prayers for the winter rains are offered. A brief farewell prayer may be said for the Succoth.

Added as late as the ninth century BC, **Simhat Torah** has become another important part of the Eighth Day observances, celebrated on the same day in Israel, though on the following day among Jews in the rest of the world. It is a joyous celebration of the Torah, where verses are animatedly recited, scrolls carried around the room, and flags are waved by children. What aspects of celebrating the Torah are included in Deut. 31:10-12? _____

The customary Torah reading is Deut. 33:1-36. Why do you think that particular selection was made? _____



The Last EIGHTH DAY

What will go forth from Jerusalem in the last days according to Is. 2:1-5? _____

In Micah 4:1,2, what will be established in the last days? _____

What does God compare His words to in Deut. 32:2? _____

THE LIGHTING OF THE TEMPLE

When the torches were lit in the temple, the city on the hill (Jerusalem) would be visible from quite a distance. What did Jesus compare Himself to in John 8:12, apparently still at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles mentioned in chapter 7? _____

How is that idea introduced in John 1: 4,5? _____

How is it related to us in Matt. 5:14? _____

Interesting that the word translated hill in this verse is from an obsolete word (*oros*) to rise, or rear. Kind of implies something God will raise up rather than something already there.

In what ways does both the history, and the future, of Jerusalem make it a city on a hill? _____

WATER DRAWING FESTIVAL

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was called Hoshanah Rabbah, which means the Day of Great Hosanna, or in English, “save now” or “deliver us”. It was a day when the Jews would pray for rain as well as for God’s salvation through the Messiah. (Booker 146) Rain was a big deal in Israel and in addition for being crucial at this time of year for the next crop, it was also a sign of God’s care and provision as delivered through the Living Water.

A priest would draw water from the Pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher, which would be taken to the High Priest at the Temple where the water would be poured into a basin at the foot of the altar. As this was being done, priests were blowing their trumpets and the people were waving their palm branches and singing to the Lord the words from Isaiah 12:3. What were those words? _____

According to rabbinic tradition, the practice of carrying water to the temple was to serve as a reminder of the event recorded in Num. 20:2-13. What was that event? _____

Considering that the “festival” referred to by John in John 7:37-39 was the Feast of Tabernacles, what becomes very significant about the words of Jesus? _____

How does that fulfill the words of Isaiah 44:3? _____

How are God’s blessings and teachings related to water, and the rain prayed for during this season, in the following passages?

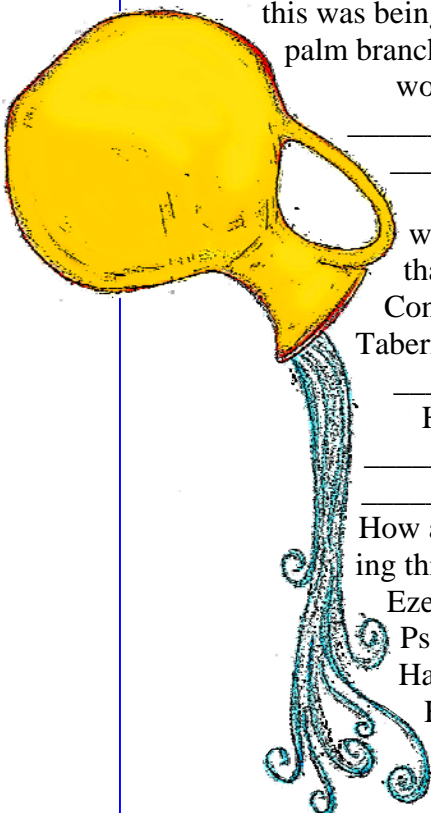
Eze.34:26 _____

Psalms 72:6-8 _____

Hab. 2:14 _____

Hosea 6:3 _____

How is this fulfilled in Rev. 21:1-6? _____



The Eighth Day

Before God had even initiated the Feasts of Tabernacles, culminating in the observances on the eighth day, the eighth day had special meaning. Not only did the circumcision of Israelite boys occur on the eighth day, but so did the completion of the ordination of priests. Leviticus chapter 8 describes the ordination of Aaron and his sons as the first priests of the nation of Israel, fresh out of Egypt.

In Lev. 8:31-36, where were Aaron and his sons to eat the meat and the bread? _____

How long were they to stay there? _____

What were they to do while they were waiting there? _____

Why? _____

Immediately following, on the eighth day, a fellowship offering was to be given. (Lev. 9:1-6)

According to 4, who would be present? _____

What does v. 6 indicated is the reason for doing as He had commanded in this? _____

In. Lev. 9:23-24, what did Moses and Aaron do? _____

What happened next? (v.24) _____

What was the response of the people? _____

It was following this, in Lev. 10:1-3, that Nadab and Abihu offered “unauthorized” (NIV) or “strange” (KJV) fire before the Lord, contrary to His commands. So, what came out of the presence of the Lord? _____

What was the response of Nadab and Abihu? _____

So, we see two quite different responses to the eighth day, firey presence of God in a short span of verses. Why the difference? _____

I find the Hebrew word translated unauthorized, or strange, quite telling. It is *zur* (say it zoor) and means to become estranged, or an enemy or loathsome. In its root it means to commit adultery. It seems that Nadab and Abihu may have been more than just careless with their incense recipe. The word used implies more of a turning away from, a distancing of themselves from God. I doubt that it was just the occurrence on this day, but probably a way of life that had been going on for awhile.

But on the eighth day, the day God’s presence arrived in fire, it all came due.

On the eighth day, a new thing was beginning, and while that would bring joy to many, it would also be devastating to others. How is this contrast described in Rev. 21:6-8? _____

In Lev. 10:3, Moses spoke to Aaron after the loss of his sons. What was his explanation for the events that had happened? _____

Ex. 19 describes another time that Moses had been witness to God’s holy presence. In Ex. 19:18, how is the appearance of God described? _____



What was the warning that God gave to Moses to deliver to the people in verses 20-22? _____

In what way would the people be likely to *force* (NIV), or *breakthrough* (KJV) to see God? _____

The Hebrew *haras* is an interesting word choice here, as it means to destroy. What was in danger of being destroyed? _____

What did even the priests need to do? _____

What would happen if they were in God's presence without doing that? _____

What was repeated in Ex. 19:22? _____

What immediately follows in chapter 20? _____

In 1 Kings 12:32-33, how did King Jeroboam try to "force" God's presence? _____

What are some damaging ways we might try to "force" ourselves into God's presence? _____

Do you think Cain may have been "forcing" his way into God's presence with his offering? (Gen. 4:2-5) _____

In what way may Ananias and Sapphira have been guilty of the same thing? (Acts 5:1-11) _____

How were these points in time also a new beginning or turning point? _____

In the last day, when Christ comes again, and God makes all things new, we will be at another turning point where God's presence with us will change. What do you think God has indicated in Scripture is the best way to prepare for being in His presence? _____

How does Heb. 12:18-29 describe that Presence? _____

What does Rev. 21:23 say that Presence will do for us in the time of completion? _____

Who did Jesus say would be blessed at His return in Rev. 22:7,12-16? _____

Even the Animals

In Ex. 22:29-30, what belonged to the Lord? _____

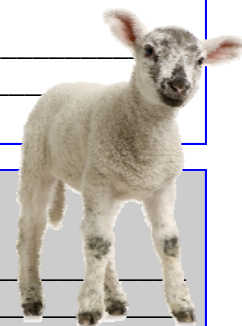
How many days was it to stay with its mother? _____

What was to happen on the eighth day? _____

How was this offering to be made according to Lev. 22:27? _____

Why do you think the animal was to stay with its mother for this period of time? _____

Mother Nature has creation for seven "days", but on the eighth day, we all go before our Father along with all of creation!



CIRCUMCISION

In Ex. 4:22, who does God say is His firstborn? _____

What happened to the firstborn of Egypt? (Ex. 12:29-30) _____

In Gen. 17:10-14, what does God instruct for every Israelite male? _____

When is it to be done? _____

What if it is not done? _____

In Ex. 22:29-30, what does God ask be given to Him? _____

Exodus 22 continues on into Exodus 23 with expectations for the behavior of this 'kingdom of priests'.

How would you summarize those expectations? _____

Do these seem easy or difficult to keep? In what way? _____

In Lev. 12:3, how was the mother described during the seven days before her sons circumcision? _____

In what way does that correspond to the seven "days" or periods of time that are the span of the earth before God initiates a new earth? _____

How does God introduce us to the parallel spiritual meaning of circumcision in Deut. 30:6? _____

In what ways does Ezek. 36:24-27 reinforce that idea? _____

What two groups of people are contrasted in Rom 2:25-29? _____

What is the difference between being circumcised by God, and being circumcised by the hands of man? _____

Who are considered "true" Jews? _____

What false security had the Jews found in the rite of circumcision? _____

What does James 2:10 inform about such an attitude? _____

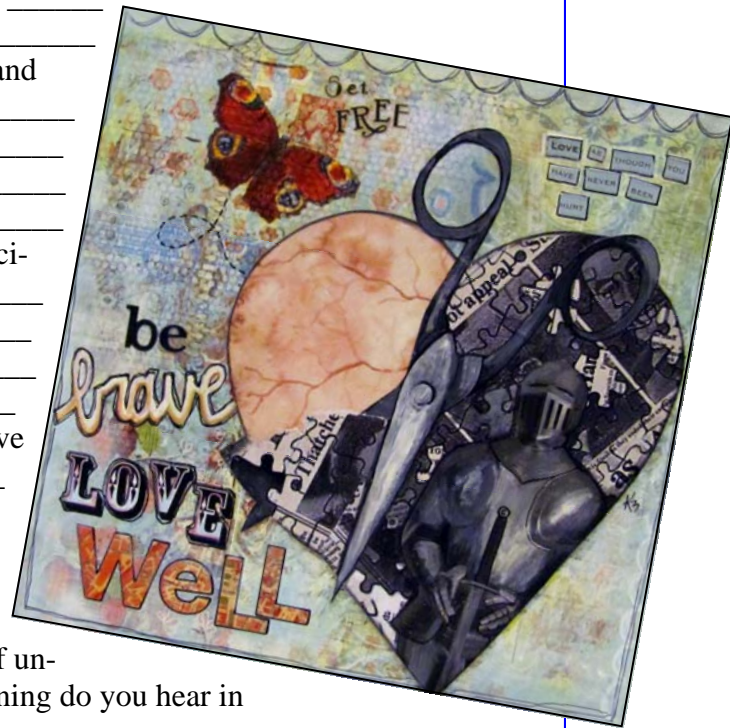
What rite of cleansing, and becoming God's holy people have you undergone? _____

Are there ways that those rites could become a false security? _____

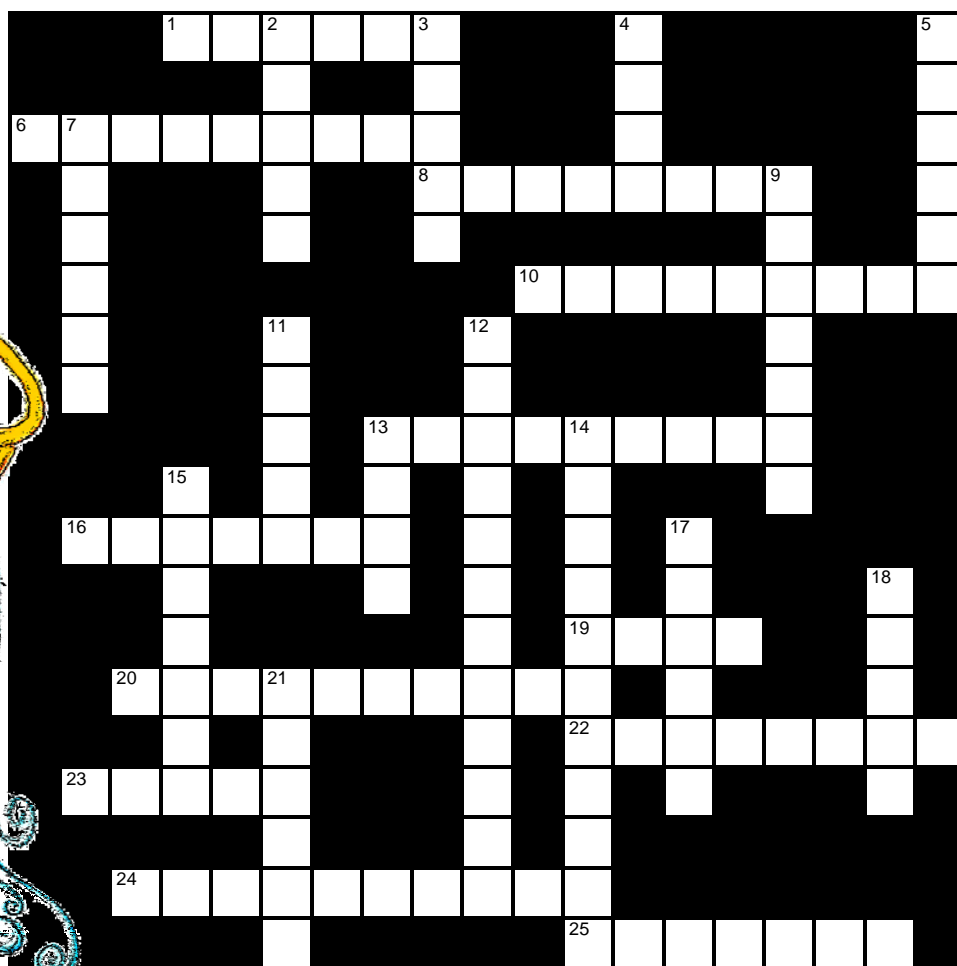
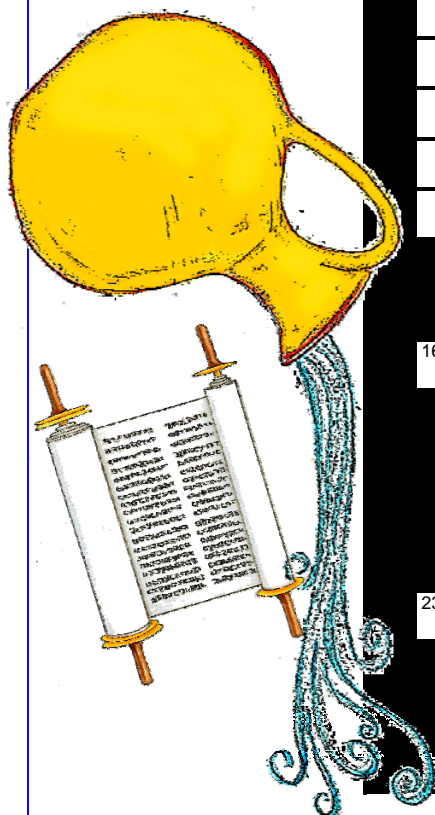
In Stephen's message to the Jews, he accuses his listeners of uncircumcised hearts and ears (Acts 7:51). What personal warning do you hear in those words? _____

How are circumcision and baptism related to one another in Col. 2:8-17? _____

What is the "sign" we have of being God's holy people? _____



Puzzle Page— Eighth Day



Across

- 1 where the lighting ceremony took place (6)
- 6 brought to temple for this on eighth day (Lev.14:23) (9)
- 8 king who consecrated restored temple on eighth day (8)
- 10 city on a hill (9)
- 13 animals sacrificed on the eighth day (9)
- 16 water was gathered in a golden one (7)
- 19 prayed for on the Eighth Day (4)
- 20 of the priests was on the Eighth Day (10)
- 22 the Eighth Day was a solemn one (8)
- 23 where the water was poured (5)
- 24 receive God's on the Eighth Day (10)
- 25 fire offered to God by Nadab and Abihu on eighth day (7)

Down

- 2 gathered Aaron, his sons, and the elders on the eighth day (5)
- 3 number after perfect (5)
- 4 none of this done on the eighth day (4)
- 5 pool where water was drawn from for the water ceremony (6)
- 7 water provided by the Messiah (6)
- 9 new _____ and earth on eighth "day" (7)
- 11 also celebrated on the Eighth Day (5)
- 12 practiced on the eighth day after a boys birth (12)
- 13 _____ offering (4)
- 14 Feast of the Lord followed by the Eighth Day (11)
- 15 Shimini _____ the Eighth Day (7)
- 17 only the high one poured the water (6)
- 18 the Messiah is the light of the _____ (5)
- 21 firstborn of God (6)