

## Fall Feast Lessons

### What are We Supposed to Learn?

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 03-Sep-94; Sermon #146

If there is one overall lesson or two to this season of the year, it is that this time has been set apart so that we might understand the judgment of God. There are lessons for this—overall lessons that have to do with the plan of God—but these fall holy days have very much to do with God's judgment. In these four holy days we see various aspects of His judgment and they are set forth in each one of the days so that we can intensify our understanding in this area.

The word *judgment* has several applications in English, and most—if not all—of them are used in the Bible in reference to God. This is what these explanations or definitions or uses of the word judgment magnify during this holy day season: judgment is used of *sense*. When we say a person has good or bad judgment, it is another way of saying he has good or bad—or maybe *no* sense at all. We talk about people having *common sense* or *horse sense*.

In the Bible, good judgment is frequently referred to as *wisdom*. If a person has wisdom, they know the right application of principles or truth. Thus judgment, when it is used in this manner, has to do with one's ability to weigh matters (weigh being a synonym in this case for the word judgment). So we are faced with situations, and the situations present us with alternatives. It is either, "Go this way or that way." We consider: if we go this way, this will occur and if we go that way, something else will occur. In this manner, we weigh alternatives back and forth. We are making judgments. We are using our *sense* to determine which direction or which alternative we are going to choose.

It is also used in reference to the announcement of a legal decision, an opinion or a decree. We hear in movies, for example, that when a sentence is handed down, somebody, usually the judge, will intone, "My judgment is. . . ." So, judgment is being used in the making of a legal decision, an opinion.

There is a third application which does not always appear in English dictionaries. Usually, in a very good dictionary, it will appear. It definitely appears in the Bible. It is the actual process of judging. All three of these appear within the context of the four holy days that we are going to be observing this month.

Here is a question for you: What book in the Old Testament has the *most* to do with the end time? What book has the most vital information for us to understand? If you think of a book that you would turn to that would give you a great deal of information about the end time, which one would it be? In all likelihood, it is going to be Daniel. I did not say the most specific information, but one that has the most vital information for us for the end time.

Daniel gives us an overview. Do you know what *Daniel* means? It means "God is Judge" or "God judges." In Daniel 4:17, Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and he could not understand the dream and so Daniel has been called to interpret his dream. We are going to look at verse 17 and see how everything unfolded. I just want you to see the crux of this book of Daniel.

**Daniel 4:17** "This decision [this judgment] is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence [this judgment] by the word of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, [Brethren, what is the Feast of Trumpets about? Is mankind going to know when the Feast of Trumpets is over that God rules in the Kingdom of man?] and He gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men."

Think about that—"the lowest of men." What does I Corinthians 1:26-28 talk about?

**I Corinthians 1:26** For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

God is going to give the Kingdom to the lowest of men and women. We see this happening all the way back in the book of Daniel, and of course the

lesson is to know that God rules. This has been the issue right from the very beginning. Adam and Eve did not act as though they knew that God rules. They acted as though Satan or *they* rule.

They rejected the rule of God, and from that time on God has turned His attention to this very fact. Mankind is going to learn that God rules, and in order to do that, God is going to have to judge. God is going to have to issue decrees. God is going to have to hand down sentences.

The sentences that are going to come—I know you understand because of your understanding of the Feast of Trumpets—are going to be very stiff indeed, because it is very likely that the population of the earth is going to be decimated to such an extent that it looks as though there will only be about 10% of all of mankind who live through it. There are about 5½ billion people right now. The carnage that will result from God's judgments being handed out, in order that mankind will know that God rules, is going to be bloody to an extreme. There is going to be an awful lot of pain in the execution of this sentence when it is carried out. God judges, and it is going to begin at the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets.

To most on earth—if God even exists in their thoughts—He is, at best, a rather remote personality who acted a long time ago, but seems to have grown disinterested because nothing has happened for quite a long period of time. But the Bible shows Him to actually be a hands-on ruler. He is overseeing Planet Earth and He is doing it for the purpose of fulfilling His purpose of establishing His Kingdom.

**Daniel 4:24-25** . . .this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king [here is God's judgment on Nebuchadnezzar]: They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

Has God chosen you to reign with His Son? In order to set us on those thrones with Jesus Christ, He is going to have to hand out judgments on

those who now rule over the kingdoms of man in order to convince mankind that it is in their best interest that they allow God to rule them. God handed down a judgment, and it is not the last judgment that we see in the book of Daniel because much of what we read in Daniel consists of a king making a decree and then God frustrating the carrying out of that decree by issuing a decree of His own and then acting. If we would go back a little bit earlier, what do we find in chapter 3? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. Nebuchadnezzar issues a decree. God nullifies the decree. God saves Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. Who is really ruling the earth and whose judgment really counts?

That is what the book of Daniel is showing you and me so that we might have faith in His judgments. Although it may look as though things are out of control, they are not out of control at all, because there is a God who is watching over the events that men bring about in order that His purpose is fulfilled.

Daniel is involved again in chapter 5, this time with King Belshazzar.

**Daniel 5:18-20** "O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar, your father, a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. [That is the subject] And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. [God gave Nebuchadnezzar that authority] "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him."

God's sentence was carried out. This was all reiterated to Belshazzar because he forgot the lesson that his own ancestry had gone through. Now jumping up to verse 24, after Daniel pronounced this before Belshazzar:

**Daniel 5:24-26** "Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him [God], and this writing was written. And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. "This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: [look at this!] God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it.

What does the word *numbered* suggest to you? He has added it up; He has taken an accounting of it; He has judged it. "Belteshazzar, you have had it, for your failure to recognize the lesson that I taught your ancestor, Nebuchadnezzar." This is probably where the saying, "his number was up," came from. I do not know, but it very well could have.

We find much the same thing in the sixth chapter. We find another king making a decision. Daniel's life was put into jeopardy and God, who really rules over things, overrode the king's decree. His judgment was, "Daniel, you live, even though you are thrown in with the lions."

Do not forget this lesson from the book of Daniel: God judges. The book of Daniel has much to do with the end time. It gives us an overview of the events that are going to lead to the time when God deposes all rulers that are opposed to the Kingdom of God and establishes those in agreement with him on the throne of the earth.

Proverbs 19:21 contains good lessons to understand.

**Proverbs 19:21** There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand.

You probably have heard, "man proposes but God disposes." God does not want us to stop making plans, but He always wants us to understand that those plans are subject to His will. They are subject to His purpose, and God is judging the thoughts of our hearts. He is judging the plans that we make and if they are not in harmony with His plan, then His judgment may result in something that might be emotionally or physically painful to us in order that we are put back on the track.

**Psalms 33:8-15** Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He has chosen as His own

inheritance. The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth; He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works.

Remember that as we go through this season: "He fashions their hearts individually." God judges. He has not gone way off somewhere. He is working out His purpose and just because He is the Great God, He is not interested *only* in the big nations, He is not interested in *only* in the big things, rather He is also interested in little old you and me as well.

We make many plans, but only His counsel is going to stand. It is His judgment that counts, and it is very likely that He is going to bend and shape your plans to fit His purpose.

Remember Mr. Armstrong used to say, "God has a way of turning lemons into lemonade." God's judgment will stand. It is a vital lesson of this holy day season.

**Isaiah 27:12-13** And it shall come to pass in that day [that is always a good indicator of the time in which the context of these verses is set] that the LORD will thresh, from the channel of the River [whenever you see the river it almost invariably means the Euphrates River. Be careful because once in a while it will mean the Nile. It will mean one or the other, but most of the time it will mean the Euphrates] to the Brook of Egypt [he is talking about a certain piece of land now that goes from what is today Iran all the way to Egypt. What falls in that territory is the land that God gave to Abraham]; and you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. 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.

There is no doubt about the context then in which this appears. A great trumpet is going to be blown and that is undoubtedly the seventh trumpet. Now what is going to happen at the seventh trumpet? He tells you right in the context that He is going to bring the children of Israel back into their

land. So the verse shows God making a judgment at that time that involves not only the people of Israel but also the land of Israel.

The word that is translated here "thresh" is not the ordinary word for that activity. Ordinarily whenever threshing is done, the grain is either shown in the Bible to be beaten by a stick—it will be laid on a fairly firm surface and then somebody hits it with a stick—or they will take a handful of stocks of the grain (wheat, barley, whatever it happens to be) and beat it against something that is solid, like a wall. The purpose for this is to break the wheat berries away from the stock, and it generally takes a fair amount of force to do this.

I went through this because the word *thresh* here is a little bit different. It does not indicate that kind of threshing. Instead, what it indicates is a method of threshing that is very careful and gentle. Here is God's judgment. At that time the children of Israel are not going to be in a condition where they need to be beaten. If we would add all of the scriptures together, we would find that they are going to be returning to their land weeping. Their wild spirit is broken. It has been broken, of course, through the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. So as He is gathering, it tells us that He is doing it one by one. He is leading them, as it were, by the hand.

The word *thresh* in this case is a term applied whenever one gently strikes a piece of fruit—a fruit like an apple, peach, or a pear—individually from the branch, or maybe the tree is gently shaken so that the fruit falls out.

At that time it is God's judgment that the children of Israel will need more than the usual amount of concern. What He is then indicating is not just a separation from the nations, or the separation from a fruit tree. In this case Israel is being separated from the nations, but also an act of purification is going on as well.

**Revelation 11:15-18** Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and

the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth."

The seventh trumpet sounds and the Son of God's active reign begins. It is announced and immediately after that the word *judged* appears. Connect this with I Peter 4:17 where it said that judgment is already on the church.

What we are looking at here in Revelation 11:15-18 is a different judgment. He tells us, in verse 18, that the nations are judged. The giving of a reward implies judgment, does it not? How much does one know how to give unless one evaluates or judges the situation? Then, another judgment is also implied: the destroying of those who destroy the earth. There are three judgments spoken of in verse 18 alone.

The Feast of Trumpets is a time of judgment. That judgment, the judgment of the church, ends at the sounding of the seventh trumpet and a decision, regarding each person being judged, will have been reached. Anybody who fits within the parameters of verse 18, "you should reward the servants the prophets and the saints" will have made it into the Kingdom of God, and then what? Another judgment begins with the reign of the King and the destruction of the destroyers.

There is judgment all over these last four holy days, as we will see.

**Revelation 14:7** . . . saying with a loud voice [this is an angel saying that], "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

At the time depicted here in the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation, if one has made it to this point, it is going to be the best of times for them, because they have passed God's scrutiny and they have been declared fit for the Kingdom of God by Him. They are going to be a part of it. But for anyone who does not fit within the parameters of that judgment, it is going to be the worst of times.

**Revelation 14:17-18** Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another

angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe."

A harvest is just about to take place.

**Revelation 14:20** The winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs [it is pretty gruesome to consider].

As we move away from Trumpets and toward Atonement, judgment also shifts gears into another mode.

**Acts 3:19-21** "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

The result of the overturn of authority on earth from unconverted man under the dominion of Satan is going to be the first really apparent and visible step toward at-one-ment with God. A reconciliation of God and man has been necessary ever since Adam and Eve sinned, and all mankind through them. Mankind has been separated from God.

I want you to notice how the verse points out that the times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord. When He comes restoration will take place, and when something is restored, it indicates a bringing back of something that had been taken away. When an old automobile is restored, its former beauty is brought back.

In Isaiah 59, we have a statement, and incidentally one of the few statements in the Bible, as to why this restoration must take place.

**Isaiah 59:1-2** Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.

Despite the fact that man is separated from God, the Bible says very little about it. I think the reason is because the writers of the Bible assume that since the separation began at the very beginning of the Book, everybody who is reading the Book with any kind of understanding will recognize that man and God are not on the same wavelength. They are separated from one another. So very little is written about the separation, while a great deal is written about how the two are going to be reconciled.

That is why I said Isaiah 59:1-2 is one of the very few places that actually clearly states why the separation exists; it exists because of man's hostility toward God. Paul states in Romans 8:7 that the carnal mind is enmity, hostile, against God and that hostility, Paul writes in another place, is motivated by the prince of the power of the air. Satan has deceived all of mankind.

**Revelation 20:1-3** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Notice that the reason that this is done is that Satan shall no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years are finished. This is God's judgment. Why is that judgment made? The judgment is made so that he will no longer deceive. Why is man separated from God? Because he was deceived into sinning, thus rejecting the government of God, and through the rejection of the government of God, he became separated from God. As long as Satan is free to do his deceptions, mankind will never be reconciled to God.

So God, then, has to make a judgment and the judgment is that even though Jesus Christ would be on earth, unless Satan is gotten out of the way, atonement can never take place. So the first order of business, after Jesus Christ returns, is to make a judgment against Satan in order that man might be reconciled to God. The judgments of God are continuing. They do not stop with Trumpets, but they keep right on rolling.

We will not go too deeply into the Day of Atonement, but it is good to see a couple of highlights of it.

**Matthew 12:41** "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment . . ."

A specific judgment. In this case, if you are following me and remembering the definitions and the usages of the word "judgment,"—we are not talking here about a decree; we are not talking about a sentence; we are not talking about good sense. We are talking about the third usage of that word, the actual act of judging, of evaluating. So we have the definite article, "*the* judgment." He is talking about a period of time in which the act of judging is taking place.

**Matthew 12:41-42** ". . . with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in **the judgment** with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

I just used this example so that you will see that after Satan has a sentence carried out against him, then a process of judgment begins. It begins in what we call the Millennium and it continues right through what we call the Great White Throne period. The judgment that is being spoken of in Matthew 12: 41-42 is the Great White Throne, during which the act of evaluation, by God, of those people who are living at that time, is taking place.

Do the last four holy days have to do with judgment, the judgments of God? Oh yes, very much to do with them. But they are seen in a different light.

Each holy day comes at it from a little bit different perspective, but each one has an aspect of judgment.

**Leviticus 25:8-13** 'And you shall count seven Sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then [the end of forty-nine years] you shall cause the trumpet [Which trumpet is this? The shofar.] of the Jubilee [Do you know what Jubilee means? It means the blowing of the ram's horn. Does this have anything to do with Trumpets? Does it have anything to do with Atonement?] 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 you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field. In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession.'

Whenever the Day of Atonement arrives at the beginning of that fiftieth year, the shofar is sounded and I imagine the high priest proclaimed liberty and people were returned to their possession, that they might be reunited with it.

Not only was the Jubilee one of God's economic laws, its spiritual application involves liberty from bondage to Satan and reclaiming the inheritance of each family, because true freedom begins whenever Satan is cast into that pit. God's purpose, God's plan, can then really begin to pick up speed. The binding of Satan is the practical step which moves Atonement out of merely being a legal process, to a literal reality, and it happens because Christ is ruling on earth, Satan is bound, and Israel is returned to its rightful possession. Thus reconciliation with God begins, and the whole nation begins to be reconciled to him.

**Leviticus 16:27-34** "The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in

the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal. Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. It is a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, [Notice how often the word atonement is coming up here. Atonement means at-one-ment, atonement is what occurs after reconciliation.] and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

This is a lesson for all ages. Israel was merely a model and what we are looking at is the process by which all of the sins that separate mankind from God—that keep us from being reconciled and made at-one with Him—must be accounted for.

What the Day of Atonement, combined with Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, show is that in an ever-widening circle, the people of this world are going to be reconciled to God. The whole community in Israel was reconciled to Him once a year. I think we can understand that Israel was just the seed through which the whole world will be reconciled to God through Christ.

Jubilee is the concept that is behind, at the base of, or implied in Isaiah 61:1-3. Those are the verses that Jesus quoted at the very beginning of His ministry, there in Luke 4:16-19. These are the verses that end with the acceptable year of the Lord. Do you know what He means by that? The

acceptable year of the Lord is that time when we are acceptable to God. His mind is such that He is willing to reconcile with us through Christ.

This was not literally possible until Christ began His ministry and then shed His blood for our sins. This made reconciliation possible. What Jesus was introducing through His ministry was the means of reconciliation that would make us acceptable to God, so that we can become one with God.

Let us follow the process of what is going to occur through the Bible.

**Romans 11:13-15** For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

The "whole world" he is picturing here, as it were, being resurrected because Israel is saved, because Israel is reconciled to God.

**Romans 11:25-26** For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Hold that thought in your mind and let us go back to Isaiah 2. It is a wonderful process. This is God's judgment of the way these things are going to be carried out.

**Isaiah 2:2** Now it shall come to pass in the latter days [What is he talking about? He is talking about our period of time, life.] that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.

**Isaiah 2:4** He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

What period of time is being talked about? We are talking, here, about the Millennium. What do these verses show Christ doing during the Millennium? Judging. Hang on to that thought.

**Zechariah 14:16** And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Let us put this together. What we see here is a very unusual sequence used to bring the whole world into "at-one-ment" with God.

Let us go back all the way back to the beginning. Adam and Eve sinned. Adam and Eve are separated from God. God makes a judgment, explained in Romans 5. As Adam and Eve have done, all of mankind will do. In other words, each person will sin in his own right and bring the death penalty upon themselves. They will separate themselves from Him. God's judgment was correct: "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

But God has a creation that He is working out. He is creating sons in His image that His purpose might go on. God is not thwarted in anything that He does.

How is He going to save or salvage the damage that has occurred? God knew it would occur, thus He had Plan B ready to go into operation. We find the beginning of God's plan really starting when He called Abraham, then Isaac, and then Jacob.

God first approached the patriarchs of Israel and made a covenant with them. Then we find God making a covenant with the descendants of Israel after He released them from their bondage in Egypt. He purposed the covenant, they

accepted it, but in the course of history we find that they rejected Him and that covenant.

He sends His Son. His Son is rejected. And then we find, as Paul is writing in Romans 11, that God turned to the Gentiles. Israel is rejected and God turned to the Gentiles. But Paul reminds the Gentiles that if the rejection of the Gentiles is the reconciling of the world, what is their revival going to mean? So what happens?

Beginning with the Feast of Trumpets, God turns back to the Israelites and He begins to bring them back into their own land. And once they are established there, God turns back again to the Gentiles, because they begin to flow into that area of the world, and they learn of the God of Jacob. But this time Israel and the Gentiles are converted, and we see an ever-widening circle of reconciliation to God bringing the whole world into at-one-ment with Him.

**Jeremiah 30:3** 'For behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the LORD. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.'"

**Jeremiah 30:7** Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble. [We can see the context of the time]

**Jeremiah 30:10** 'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the LORD, 'nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid.'

The context continues.

**Jeremiah 31:10-11** "Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him [that is God's judgment, to scatter Israel, we see actually

a judgment that begins with scattering, going into captivity and then a re-gathering.], and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.' For the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he. [When we understand, it is Satan the Devil.]

That is God's judgment of how He is going to begin the conversion of the whole world. Once His Son Jesus Christ is established on the throne of this earth, Israel will be re-gathered. They will be the means through which all of the rest of the nations of the world will be brought into at-one-ment with God.

The Bible actually shows seven reconcilements or at-one-ments that are going to take place once the events of the Feast of Trumpets are in place. Here will be the results of the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets:

**John 1:10-11** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

In verse 10, it is saying that Christ came into the present order of things—the world—and the verse goes on to show that there was not even a flash of recognition of who He was. They did not recognize Him as Creator—not even a flash of recognition.

In verse 11 is one of the most poignant verses in the whole Bible. I know that John wrote this in order to help us to understand what it must have felt like from Christ's point of view. It says in the Bible that He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was rejected.

How would you like to be in a position where you had information, you had news, you had the instruction that every person needed in order to make life meaningful and worthwhile. You had the way to good health, physically, mentally, spiritually, morally, and economically.

He had the keys that everyone needs to make the most out of life, to have life really be enjoyable. But, we have to repent and we have to submit our life to God. We have to keep His commands because in keeping the commands, it opens up the way to all the good things in life.

Here He was brimming with this concern. He could teach everybody, not just from the standpoint of God, but also in the standpoint of man.

"He came to His own" means that He came to His own family, He came to His own people, He came to His own property—and they rejected Him.

Most of us do not take rejection very well. We do not like to be rejected. We like to be paid attention to, and there is nothing wrong with that. He came to His own, and you would expect that the world in general would have no flash of recognition of Him, but surely the Jews—the people to whom the revelation of God came—would know Him. They did not.

It says in Matthew 23, "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have brought you under my wings, you who killed the prophets." Well, do you know what God says is going to happen? The first thing that is going to occur at Christ's return is that Judah will be reconciled to Christ. His own will recognize and be reconciled to Him. They will become the leaders in Israel.

I hope anybody who is not a Jew does not feel bad about that. This is God's judgment. God chose David, David was a Jew, and Jesus Christ came from the family of David. So by God's decree, they are going to occupy the highest positions of leadership in Israel. That is one reconciliation—Judah will be reconciled to Christ.

The second reconciliation is that Israel and Judah will be reconciled.

**Isaiah 11:11-13** It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the

outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah [Ephraim standing for Israel], and Judah shall not harass Ephraim.

There is a great deal of enmity right now between the Israelitish people, Ephraim and Manasseh, and the Jews. We do not like one another; there is a mutual hatred that is going to be dissolved. The only reason that this will occur is because individuals are repenting and being converted. As each individual becomes one with God, gradually the nations become one with each other. That is the way it works.

The third reconciliation that will occur is that Israel, Assyria, and Egypt are going to be reconciled. These three, down through the annals of time, have been enemies of one another. We find in Isaiah 19:18-25, that this is God's judgment. He says, "I'm going to bring them together," and these three nations are going to be the pipeline to the conversion to all the other nations. They are going to be the three leading nations in the world, Israel, Assyria, and Egypt.

The fourth reconciliation is that all nations will be reconciled to each other. We find the beginning of this in Zechariah 14, where all nations will come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Once again we see God judging there. We see God judging Egypt, but if Egypt does not come up, God is going to send a judgment on them.

That is His job. He is the King, He is the Ruler, and He is going to judge. They are not going to get rain in due season. They are going to recognize their punishment, and they are going to come up and keep the Feast after that.

Micah 4:1-4 shows that all nations are going to flow into Zion.

There is another one in Daniel 2:34-35. Daniel shows the Kingdom of God arriving as a stone, but as it hits the earth, hits the beast on the feet, the stone grows into a great mountain which fills the whole earth. Then all nations are at one and the whole earth becomes the Kingdom of God, and all are at one with God.

There is another symbolic aspect to this in Isaiah 11:6-9. The animals that are mentioned are types of nations, and it is shown that the animals begin to cooperate with one another, because they are acting on the knowledge of God.

The fifth reconciliation is between man and nature. Revelation 11:18 shows that God is going to destroy and punish those who destroy the earth. For 6,000 years mankind has abused God's wonderful creation; and creation, nature, has no recourse but to defend itself.

How does it do this? The land does it by refusing to grow food. When mankind turns areas that had formally been verdant with growth into deserts, what happens? Or if man cuts down far too many trees, then what happens? Weather patterns become disrupted, erosion takes place, the fertile soil washes into the ocean, the land cannot grow food, and so we have violent weather and the land vomiting us out, because it cannot support life. It all goes back to the abuse that man perpetrated against the land.

Do you know that the Sahara desert used to be verdant forests all the way across the top of North Africa? Today virtually nothing grows there. Do you know why? Because that is where the timber that built Rome came from. They just cut all the trees down, shipped it across the Mediterranean, and turned northern Africa into a desert.

So man and nature are going to be reconciled. There is a wealth of scriptures on this: Hosea 2:18; Joel 2:23-27; Ezekiel 34:25-31; Amos 9:13-15. There are dozens of scriptures on how nature and man are going to be reconciled.

The sixth reconciliation is families will be reconciled to each other. Everybody knows that the major social problem in the United States is its family circumstance. It has been devastated by a combination of wrong spiritual, moral, and ethical teaching, and horrible social, educational, and economic programs.

We are reaping what we have sown, but the time is coming, God shows (Zechariah 8:1-5; Isaiah 65:20-23; it is beautiful and awesome in regard to the family), when He is going to bring the family back together again. It will once again be the backbone of society.

The seventh reconciliation is the most obvious one of all. God and man are going to be reconciled.

**Psalm 145:8-9** The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

This is a statement that one can easily overlook in the press of everyday events. We become burdened by the ordinary cares of this life. Added to that are the burdens, the pressures, of being in Christ (even Jesus said that the way is difficult). But this statement becomes clearer when we look at God's purpose and understand it in its overall sense. Despite all of what mankind has done to God's creation, including what we have done to other human beings, He is still going to give everybody an opportunity to be at one with Him.

If any of you have ever had your house ransacked by a thief, if you have ever had a piece of property of yours trashed, where it looks as though whoever did what they did, just did it out of sheer meanness, orneriness, it was nonsensical what they did. What do you feel like? You feel abused. You feel as though you do not mean a thing. You feel as though you do not matter, and even though you personally may not have been injured in the thievery, or whatever it was that occurred to you, you feel as though you were attacked.

Think about what mankind has done to God for 6,000 years, what mankind has done to His property, what mankind has done to His representatives, what mankind has done to His Son, and He **still** is willing to reconcile with us. How hard is it for you to reconcile to somebody that has abused you? It is awfully hard. His tender mercies are over all His works.

Let us consider this as we close.

**John 17:11, 20-23** "Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep [guard, protect] through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. . . . I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

The collective lesson or theme of the fall feasts is the judgment of God. They cover punishment, resurrection, reward, forgiveness of sin, reconciliation, and atonement. Two periods of time are included in God's judgment—the one we call the Millennium and the one we call the Last Great Day. They are both periods of evaluation and growth designed to bring all of creation into at-one-ment with God. Christ's prayer is being answered and we stand near the threshold of the next big step in that direction. So as we keep these fall holy days, let us remember that the major theme is the judgment of God and as we act them out, as it were, let us do it with understanding.