



And He will lift up a standard for the nations,
and will assemble the banished ones of Israel,
and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the
four corners of the earth. Isaiah 11:12

RESCUE | RETURN | RESTORE



September 2015

Appointments? What Appointments?

By Rev. Gary Cristofaro

Imagine for a moment that you received an invitation to meet a member of the royal family, a Hollywood celebrity or an all-star athlete. Would you go and keep the appointment? How about your doctor? When you schedule a time to see him or her, do you make every effort to be there at the appointed time? I believe the vast majority of us would. Yet did you know that every year for hundreds of years most of the Christian world has skipped out on their appointments with the Creator of the Universe?

The word “moedim” is translated in our English Bibles as “feasts”. But a more appropriate translation would be *appointments or appointed times*. Leviticus 23:1-2 says; *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts (appointments) of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts (appointed times).*



Thus God summons His children to gather and meet with Him at appointed times during the year. Would loving children want to ignore our Father in heaven’s call to gather and spend time with Him? The answer of course should be no! Yet for almost two millennia these appointments have been absent from most Christian’s calendars. Why? What happened? How did so many opportunities get neglected?

Leviticus 23 details these appointed times and in order to keep it simple I’ll just refer to them in their English names. They are the weekly Sabbath, Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Weeks, Trumpets, The Day of Atonement and The Feast of Tabernacles.

Some might be thinking right about now; I thought these were Jewish Festivals. Yet that’s not what the sovereign Lord called them. He said these are “My feasts” or My Appointments”. Of course faithful Jewish people have been keeping these appointed times for thousands of years but don’t you and I serve the same God?

How did the Gentile Christian church miss it? Listen to what the prophet Jeremiah says in chapter 16 verse 19. *The Gentiles shall come to you from the ends of the earth and say, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthless and unprofitable things”*. Now keep in mind this is the same narrative in which he tells us that the aliyah or the re-gathering of Jewish people back to the land of Israel in the last days would exceed the scope the exodus from Egypt. That’s today! So in other words we are living in the day when many will discover that they have been misled.

I am grateful that in recent years many more churches are having Passover Seders and recognize the significance of this feast. However it's also important to recognize that Passover is only one of the annual feasts. If Passover has been re-discovered and it's true that it continues to hold significance for us still today, then what about the other feasts?

I understand that there are challenges. We are faced with the question of how to observe these ancient feasts in our modern world and especially outside the land of Israel? A great place to start is always the text of scripture. Firstly the word moed from which we derive the word feast, also means a gathering or an assembly. God calls for holy convocations at His set times. So one thing we can do is get together with like hearted family and friends and worship The Holy One of Israel.

Secondly, study the text for instructions to what He requires of His children during these times. One might follow some of the ancient traditions of Judaism or others might be creative and begin new traditions! I have friends who have held fun community events that also help teach children how to honor God during these appointed times.

This is not about legalism; this is about a love response to Abba's beckoning. Remember, the feasts are not a burden they are time set-apart for God. Thus they are holy! What could be more holy than presenting yourself before **THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL** when He summons you?