

The title of this morning's sermon is, "*Not Appointed to Wrath.*"

On Sunday mornings we took a brief pause in our verse-by-verse study through Luke's Gospel to look at the seven OT feasts. The seventh feast will relate to the Transfiguration, which is where we're at in Luke.

Up to this point we have examined the first five feasts. I left them on your bulletins if you briefly look with me...

LESSON 1: THE SEVEN OLD TESTAMENT FEASTS:

- (Part I) Passover looked forward to Jesus' crucifixion.
- (Part II) Unleavened Bread looked forward to Jesus' unleavened body in the grave.
- (Part III) Firstfruits looked forward to Jesus' resurrection.
- (Part IV) Pentecost (or Weeks) looked forward to the "harvest" of the church.
- (Part V) The "Gap" between Pentecost and Trumpets looked forward to the Church Age.
- (Part VI) Trumpets looks forward to the Rapture.

Look at **Rom 11:25**...

Rom 11:25 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel (referring to their rejection of Christ), until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Paul says the Jews' rejection of Christ is only going to last **until the fullness** – or **full number - of Gentiles has come in**, and he means come in to the church, or come to salvation.

When that last Gentile is saved, a few things take place:

1. The Church Age will come to an end...or you could say the time of the Gentiles will come to an end.
2. God will remove the Church from the earth in the event we know as the Rapture. This is when the Feast of Trumpets finds its true and greatest fulfillment.
3. God will take His focus off the Gentiles and puts it back on the Jews.

Look back at **verse 25**...

Paul said Israel's **hardening** was only **partial**. This doesn't mean:

- They're partially hard and partially soft.
- Or partially blind and partially able to see.

They wanted to crucify Jesus. You can't get **harder** or **blinder** than that.

Instead, the word **partial** is meant two other ways...

1. First, the **hardening is partial** in that it doesn't contain every single Jew. As we've already discussed, there is a believing remnant:
 - a. Paul himself is part of it.

- b. The thousands of Jews saved in **Acts 2** and **Acts 4** are part of it.
2. Second, the **hardening is partial** in that it doesn't last forever. There will be a point the blindness or hardness comes to an end. At that point the Jews will embrace Jesus as their Messiah.

That's not my opinion. Look at **verse 26**, which we're going to break up piece-by-piece to make sure it's clear...

Rom 11:26a And in this way all Israel will be saved,

You can't get much clearer language that God isn't done w/ His people...and this brings us to Lesson 2...

LESSON 2: GOD IS NOT FINISHED WITH ISRAEL.

God has a future plan for the nation of Israel.

It's important to understand that **all Israel will be saved** doesn't mean every single last Jew will be saved:

- Just like when Paul said Israel was hardened, it didn't mean every single Jew was hardened. There was a remnant of saved Jews, and when **all Israel is saved**, there will be a remnant of unsaved Jews.
- It's similar to the Gentiles during the Church Age. The Church Age is when God has his focus on the Gentiles and we come to salvation, but it doesn't mean every Gentile is saved. It simply means it's the time for us to be saved...and later Israel will have their time to be saved.

The rest of **verse 26** makes this clear...

**Rom 11:26b as it is written,
"The Deliverer (this is Jesus) will come from Zion,**

This is referring to Jesus' Second Coming. **Zion** is heaven: **Heb 12:22** says **Mount Zion [is] the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, [where there are] innumerable angels.**

Listen to this amazing prophecy...

Zech 12:10 [Jesus says], "I will pour out on the [Jews] a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, THEY SHALL MOURN FOR HIM, AS ONE MOURNS FOR AN ONLY CHILD, AND WEEP BITTERLY OVER HIM, AS ONE WEEPS OVER A FIRSTBORN.

So Jesus is saying when the Jews see Him at His Second Coming they will **mourn and weep bitterly over** rejecting Him.

The fact that it says **on Him whom they have pierced** leads me to believe they'll particularly think about how they crucified Him.

And when is it the Jews will **look on** Christ? At His Second Coming!

Here's one more prophecy of the Jews embracing Christ at His Second Coming...

Matt 23:39 [Jesus said to the Jews], "You will not see me again, until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.'"

So Jesus says they won't see Him again until the Second Coming, and when they do, they'll say He's blessed.

When that takes place, look at the next part of **verse 26**...

Rom 11:26c he will banish ungodliness from Jacob (which is another name for Israel)";
Rom 11:27 "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

The focus is clearly on God taking away Israel's sins:

1. **26 he will banish ungodliness from Jacob**
2. **27 when I take away their sins**

Now here's the question...

What covenant have the Jews been under for the last 3,500 years? The Old Covenant...and the Old Covenant can't take away sins. **Heb 10:4** says **it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats** (referring to the sacrifices under the Old Covenant) **to take away sins.**

Only the New Covenant can take away sins, and if you look at **verse 27** God says **this will be my covenant with them:**

- He's referring to the New Covenant.
- And they can only be under the New Covenant when they embrace Jesus as their Messiah, b/c He's the Mediator of that Covenant...

Heb 9:15 [Jesus] is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

It's almost like Paul says, "The Jews are under the Old Covenant. They're bound to the Law...which doesn't take away their sins. But they will embrace Christ and find themselves under the New Covenant, and then:

- **ungodliness will be banished from Jacob...or Israel.**
- **their sins will be taken away.**

Now here's the important part that we've been building up to...

For the Jews to get to the point that they receive Christ at His Second Coming and mourn over Him, they have to go through something first:

- What takes place immediately before Christ's Second Coming?
- What do the Jews have to go through to be refined and brought to repentance regarding rejecting Christ?

The Tribulation...and the sixth feast looked forward to this...go back to Lesson 1...

LESSON 1: THE SEVEN OLD TESTAMENT FEASTS (PART VII) THE DAY OF ATONEMENT LOOKS FORWARD TO THE TRIBULATION.

Please turn to **Lev 23:23**. We won't turn back to Rom. Gen, Exo, Lev, Num...

This is the chapter that contains all seven feasts...we've covered up to **verse 25**. Look at **verse 26** to see the sixth feast: the Day of Atonement...

Lev 23:26 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **27** "Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and (notice this...) **YOU SHALL AFFLICT YOURSELVES** and present a food offering to the LORD. **28** And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. **29** For (notice this...) **WHOEVER IS NOT AFFLICTED** on that very day shall be cut off from his people. **30** And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. **31** You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. **32** It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and **YOU SHALL AFFLICT YOURSELVES**. On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath."

On the Day of Atonement – or Yom Kippur – the High Priest would enter the Holiest of Holies and sprinkle blood on the ark to make atonement for Israel's sins.

If you remember **Rom 11:26** and **27** it said:

1. **26 he will banish ungodliness from Jacob**
2. **27 when I take away their sins.**

The Day of Atonement only looked forward to this.

But let me ask you...

Did the Day of Atonement ever truly atone for Israel's sins?

No!

If the Day of Atonement ever really atoned for sins, God wouldn't have sent His Son!

- Just like the Feast of Trumpets didn't truly gather God's people - it only looked forward to the Rapture when God will truly gather His people - the Day of Atonement didn't truly atone for Israel's sins...it takes Christ to do that.
- The high priest entered the earthly Holiest of Holies, but Jesus is our Great High Priest who enters the true and greater Holy of Holies, which is heaven itself: **Heb 9:24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.**

The Day of Atonement only looked forward to the perfect atonement Jesus, as our Great High Priest, would provide.

Now if you look back at the verses, there's an important word that's repeated, and it's the word **afflict**:

- **27 "Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and YOU SHALL AFFLICT YOURSELVES and present a food offering to the LORD.**
- **29 For WHOEVER IS NOT AFFLICTED on that very day...**
- **32 It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and YOU SHALL AFFLICT YOURSELVES.**

Three times it discusses Israel afflicting themselves.

Now let's be honest that it's pretty odd to see this discussion of affliction on a day that's supposed to be a celebration!

- But it's perfectly fitting, b/c the Day of Atonement looks forward to the Tribulation when the Jews will be afflicted.
- Even though the Tribulation will be global, there's a specific focus on the Jews...and this brings us to Lesson 3...

LESSON 3: THE TRIBULATION FOCUSES ON THE JEWS.

Let me give you three places in Scripture that make this clear...

First, listen to this prophecy from Jeremiah...

Jer 30:7 Alas! That day is so great (referring to the Tribulation)
there is none like it;
it is a time of DISTRESS FOR JACOB (or Israel);
yet he (Jacob or Israel) **shall be saved out of it.**

So it's going to be terribly difficult for Israel – or the Jews – but God will use it to bring about their salvation...like we read about in **Rom 11**.

Second, the Tribulation is also the 70th week of Daniel's Seventy Weeks. When the angel told Daniel about the seventy weeks listen to what he said...

Dan 9:24a “Seventy weeks are decreed about YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR HOLY CITY,

Who’s Daniel’s people? The Jews. And what’s Daniel’s holy city? Jerusalem. The 70 weeks are for Israel and the Tribulation is the 70th week, so we can expect the focus to be on Israel, or the Jews.

Also, remember Paul said it was a time to get rid of Israel’s sin, and listen to what else the angel told Daniel...

Dan 9:24b to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to ATONE for iniquity...

It says **the transgression** singularly, b/c it’s referring to the main transgression of Israel, which is rejection of Christ.

27 And he (this is the AC) shall make a strong covenant with many (the Jews) for one week (the 7-year tribulation), and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

This is referring to what we know as the Abomination of Desolation, which Jesus discussed in the Olivet Discourse. It’s when the AC – who the Jews embraced as their Messiah – enters the Holy of Holies and desecrates it in some way. Following this terrible act, the Jews recognize the AC is not their Messiah, and he turns on them and begins trying to destroy them. That’s why it’s called the Abomination of Desolation, b/c it’s the abomination which brings desolation to the Jews.

I explain this, b/c this is when the Jews start recognizing the AC - the man they embraced as their Messiah - wasn’t their Messiah, and the Man they crucified was their Messiah.

The third place making clear the Tribulation focuses on the Jews is Jesus’ Olivet Discourse. Please turn to **Matt 24:15**.

Your Bible probably has a title for this section saying something like, “The Great Tribulation” or “The Abomination of Desolation.”

There’s a real focus on Israel in these verses...

Matt 24:15 So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

This is in the temple, which is in Jerusalem...this is one reason we know there has to be a rebuilt temple.

16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Even though the Tribulation is global, Jesus specifically tells those in Judea – or the Jews – to flee, b/c it will be particularly bad for them b/c of the wrath of the AC.

17 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house,

The Middle East is where it's common for people to be **on housetops**.

Skip to **verse 20**...

20 Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.

If you had to choose one place that observes the Sabbath, it's Israel.

Skip to **verse 29** to see the discussion of Christ's Second Coming...

29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

People **mourn** b/c they recognize the AC wasn't the Messiah and the Man they crucified was their Messiah. This reminds us of **Zech 12:10** and the Jews in particular mourning over Christ!

The main point I want you to see is the Jews do come to repentance and faith in Christ, but it takes the Tribulation for that to happen.

Now follow me while I explain something that's going to seem unrelated, but I'll connect the dots in a moment...

We – believers – experience trials and tribulation:

- **John 16:33b In the world YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION...**
- **Rom 5:3 We GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS, KNOWING THAT TRIBULATION PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE..**
- **1 Thes 3:3 No one should be shaken BY THESE AFFLICTIONS; for you yourselves know that we ARE APPOINTED TO THIS.**
- **Jam 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy WHEN YOU FALL INTO VARIOUS TRIALS, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But LET PATIENCE HAVE ITS PERFECT WORK, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**

The verses in James are worded oddly. If we weren't familiar w/ them, we'd expect them to say...

Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing the test of your faith produces patience, WHICH makes you perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

But that's not what it says: instead there are some important words at the beginning of **verse 4**. It says **let patience have its perfect work**. These words are telling us to do something, and this brings us to **Lesson 4**...

LESSON 4: WE MUST "LET" SUFFERING MAKE US BETTER INSTEAD OF BITTER.

Before we discuss this lesson, let me make an important point...

Trials and temptations are NOT the same:

- Trials are from God. He has a special purpose in them. He uses them to make us better.
- Temptations on the other hand do not come from God. They come from the enemies we face: the devil, the world or our flesh. **James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.**

Think of it like this:

- God uses trials to bring out the best in us.
- Satan, the world and our flesh use temptations to bring out the worst in us.

But even though trials and temptations aren't the same, there is a common temptation we face in EVERY trial and it's the temptation to turn against God, and become angry or bitter toward Him.

There's no guarantee trials are going to make us better. They can also make us bitter.

- Perhaps you can think of people who have been through trials and this is what it did to them. They said things like:
 - *How could God let this happen?*
 - *Why would God do this to me?*
 - *I don't deserve this!*
 - *When I see God I'm going to give Him a piece of my mind!*
- Perhaps if we're honest, we can think of times in our lives when trials didn't make us better. Instead, they made us bitter.

We have to be aware of this danger, and **James 1:4** gives us the solution. **Verse 4** tells us how to become better instead of bitter. It says **LET patience have it's perfect work**.

Let is a verb, b/c it's commanding us to do something:

- We have to **let** God work through our suffering.
- We have to **let** it make us better instead of bitter.

The Greek word for **let** is *echo* (pr: eh-ho). It means, "*to have, hold, own, possess, adhere or cling to.*" Of the 712 times it occurs in the NT, 613 times it's translated as *have*.

The idea is we have to accept – or take ownership of – the trials in our lives.

- We can't reject them or resist them...allowing them to make us bitter.

- We have to embrace them...allowing them to make us better.

This is how we **let patience have its perfect work**.

Now one reason I'm mentioning this is the Tribulation – as you can imagine – is a time of great suffering, and everyone falls into one of two categories:

- Some people are made better by the suffering.
- And some people are made bitter by the suffering.

Turn to **Rev 11:13**, so I can show you these two categories during the Tribulation....we won't turn to another book:

- **Rev 11:13 In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and GAVE GLORY TO THE GOD OF HEAVEN.** These people are drawn to God. Their suffering made them better.
- Now look at **Rev 16:8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun...9 men were scorched with great heat, and THEY BLASPHEMED THE NAME OF GOD...THEY DID NOT REPENT AND GIVE HIM GLORY. 10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl [and there was] darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. 11 THEY BLASPHEMED THE GOD OF HEAVEN BECAUSE OF THEIR PAINS AND THEIR SORES, AND DID NOT REPENT.** Skip to verse 21 **Great hail from heaven fell upon men. MEN BLASPHEMED GOD because of the...hail.** These people became angry w/ God. Their suffering made them bitter!

Now let me share one more thing about the tribulation, which remember, the Day of Atonement looks forward to...

Listen to these verses, and tell me what people are really experiencing during the seven years. I'll read the verses quickly, but since we're in Revelation if you want to try to keep up with them you can...

- **Rev 6:15-17 kings of the earth, great men, rich men, commanders, mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves...16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from THE WRATH OF THE LAMB! 17 For THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH HAS COME, and who is able to stand?"**
- **Rev 11:18 The nations were angry, and YOUR WRATH HAS COME...**
- **Rev 14:19 the angel...gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of THE WRATH OF GOD.**
- **Rev 15:1bthe seven last plagues [contain] THE WRATH OF GOD.**
- **Rev 15:7b the seven golden bowls FULL OF THE WRATH OF GOD.**
- **Rev 16:1 A loud voice saying..."Go and pour out the bowls OF THE WRATH OF GOD on the earth."**

The Tribulation is a time God pours out His wrath on a Christ-rejecting world.

And this explains why the church is absent...and Israel isn't...and this brings us to Lesson 5...

LESSON 5: BELIEVERS EXPERIENCE TRIALS, BUT NOT WRATH.

You might have seen the announcement in the bulletin for a couple weeks that I'm trying to work with different men that we see having the gift of teaching. Eldon Offutt is teaching tonight. I looked over his message this past week, and he's going to be discussing God's wrath in more detail. So be sure to come out to support him!

During the seven years God pours out His wrath on a Christ-rejecting world:

- This is why the Church isn't present: the church embraced Christ.
- This is why the nation of Israel is present: they rejected Christ.

Listen to these two verses:

- **Rom 1:18 the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ALL UNGODLINESS AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS OF MEN...**
- **Rom 2:5 Because of your hard and impenitent heart YOU ARE STORING UP WRATH FOR YOURSELF ON THE DAY OF WRATH when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.**

Here's the question...

We've been ungodly and unrighteous too:

- God has plenty of wrath stored up against us b/c of our ungodliness and unrighteousness.
- Why don't we experience God's wrath?

We don't experience it b/c Christ took the wrath we deserve. Listen to these verses:

- **1 Thes 1:10 Jesus who DELIVERS US FROM THE WRATH TO COME.**
- **1 Thes 5:9 God did not appoint us to wrath.**

I noticed something interesting in my studying this week...

The word **wrath** occurs 36 times in the NT:

- 11 times it occurs in Revelation, which is the highest frequency. This makes sense, b/c it's the book about God's wrath being poured out.
- 10 times it occurs in Romans, which is the second highest frequency. This makes sense too, b/c Romans is the book explaining the Gospel, and the Gospel is about you being spared from God's wrath.

You're spared b/c Christ drank the wrath you deserved:

- In the Garden: **Luke 22:42 [Jesus said], "Father, if it is Your will, TAKE THIS CUP AWAY FROM ME; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."**

- When they came to arrest Jesus, Peter took out his sword to defend Him: **John 18:11 Jesus said, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”**

Let me be clear about what Jesus did do and didn't do:

- He drank the cup of God's wrath against believers when He hung on that cross...therefore, God no longer has any wrath against us.
- But He didn't take the wrath of God against the whole world:
 - He didn't take the wrath God feels against those who rejected Him.
 - It wouldn't be too much to say part of the wrath God has against unbelievers is **BECAUSE** they rejected His Son.

People on the earth during the Tribulation begin to experience God's wrath temporarily, and if they don't repent they end up experiencing it eternally.

Let me conclude with this...

We live during the Church Age. This is the special time God has set aside for us to be saved:

- But this time will come to an end when the rapture takes place.
- At that point there will be no alternative to entering the Tribulation, and enduring the wrath of God against a Christ-rejecting world.

Now is the time to embrace the grace and mercy of God. Jesus was willing to take the wrath we deserved so we wouldn't have to endure it.

If you have any questions about anything I've shared this morning, or you'd like prayer for anything, Pastor Doug and I will be up front after service and we'd consider it a privilege to have the opportunity to speak with you.

Let's pray.