

Hope for Judgment Day

II Cor. 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith

On Friday evening, Sept. 22, Rosh HaShanah ushers in a somber time of reflection and self-examination for every observant Jew. Also known as Yom Teruah, or the Day of Blowing of Trumpets, this day initiates a ten day period known as The Days of Awe.

Tradition dictates that each person should examine himself and see if the pattern of his days has been righteousness or sin. Unlike a secular New Year's Day when the focus is upon our future, Rosh HaShanah helps us focus on the past year. We can lay our actions in the balance and see the overall impact we have had. Where do we stand in the eyes of God? Are we righteous and blessed, or evil and rejected?

Tradition also holds that the final determination for the year is made in the courts of heaven on that tenth day, Yom Kippur. These ten days offer a window of hope to those of us who fear sin has prevailed over righteousness.

More charitable donations are made by Jewish believers at this time of year than at any other. It is so easy to see the many, many times we have failed. How can we make it right? How can our names be written in the Book of Life? Let me do good works, and surely the Almighty will bless me!

However, Jewish believers in Jesus as Messiah have a different perspective. We know that no matter how many righteous works we perform, only His sacrifice can cover our sins. We know that once we accept Him, we are free from worry about the end of our days. We dwell in righteousness because His righteousness covers all of our unrighteousness.

We have peace of mind.

But that doesn't change the fact that every believer, Jew or gentile, is admonished to examine his life. Do I really live what I believe, or only pay lip service? Am I walking the walk, or only talking the talk?

In Matt 7:21 says "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Human beings have a phenomenal capacity for denying our true nature. Jer. 17:9 tells us our hearts are deceitful. Only God can reveal our hearts to us. But those who have accepted His rulership through Jesus can trust Him to conform our hearts to His word.

How can we have boldness on Judgment Day? By loving Him and abiding in His love. We have His promise: "perfect love casts out fear." (I John 4:17)