

The Connection

In This Issue

To call all people to a vibrant life of faith in Christ

For Jesus, his disciples, and their communities the turning of a new year was rooted deep in ritual. Jesus would begin his new year's celebration with 10 Days of Awe. This was the period of time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This was a time of celebration but also a time of serious introspection. The type of introspection prompted by Isaiah 63:7–9. Let's read the text together.



⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD, the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, because of all that the LORD has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. ⁸ For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their savior ⁹ in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

During these Days of Awe Jesus and his disciples would take time to reflect on what God was doing. They would eat fruits and honey cake to remind them of the richness of God. They would send portions to those who have nothing to prepare to remind them of God's generosity. And throughout these Days of Awe they were reminded of the importance of this ritual by the shofar. A trumpet sound from a ram's horn that would ring out through the community, calling on all to come to attention. Go to this link for an example. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXw3LgmGUI8>

Pretty powerful, isn't it? 100 notes played each day for the 10 Days of Awe would remind them to fully live into the significance of this ritual.



*In his love
and
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Isaiah 63:9

As disciples of Jesus, the Days of Awe were also significant for another reason. One of the focuses of this time is not only to give thanks for what God was doing but also to make sure we leave behind those things that we should not take with us into the new year. There is a major focus on seeking out those whom we have wronged and asking for forgiveness, and this includes ourselves. I don't know about you, but that's more easily said than done. Yet that's the hard work God calls us too. There's no getting around it. But what we do know is that during these Days of Awe we are reminded that it's about God doing and not our doing. For so many of

us, and at the heart of so many of the world's religions, is this concept of Karma – an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth or the concept of reaping what you sow. Along comes Jesus and God's reality of grace. God's love breaks through our guilt and consequence. This allows us to see ourselves not as the total sum of our actions, but as the total sum of God's love for us outside of our actions. This gives us the freedom to leave behind in the old year all those things that shouldn't come with us. We do not have to be defined by our past, but led into a new future of God's doing.



Upcoming Events: (for more, visit Resurrection's [website](#))

Recharge Ministry Conference, January 6
Food First Sunday, January 7
[Serve](#) at East Immanuel, January 8