

Hoshana Rabbah, America, and the End of the Age

T.W. Tramm – (10/15/22)

THE LAST DAY of the Feast of Tabernacles, called *Hoshana Rabbah*, will be observed October 18 this year.

Hoshana means “please save us” in Hebrew. *Rabbah* means “great.” Thus, *Hoshana Rabbah* means “great salvation.”

In the days of the Temple, *Hoshana Rabbah* marked the climax of the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles. On the other days of the festival, the priests made but one circuit around the altar with palm branches. On this day, the priests made seven circuits while the people recited the messianic psalm, “Save us now, oh Lord!” (118:25).

The seven circuits around the altar recall the seven circuits the Israelites made around the City of Jericho, the gateway to the Promised Land, when a trumpet blast and a shout announced the tumbling of the walls, and the people went straight up into the city (Josh. 6).

Besides being a day of increased prayers for salvation, *Hoshana Rabbah* is a day of heightened prayers for the autumn rains to come, following the long dry summer. The two themes, Messiah’s deliverance and the autumn rains, are poetically combined in Hosea:

“Come, let us return to the Lord. Though he has wounded us, he will bind our wounds. After two days, he will raise us up, and we will live in his presence His coming is as certain as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the autumn and spring rains come on the earth” (Hos. 6:1–3 paraphr).

Seeing how the Feast of Tabernacles and *Hoshana Rabbah* embody the themes of a temporary dwelling place (tabernacle) and God’s provision, it is fascinating to consider a connection to the discovery of the land that would become a second Jewish homeland.

HOSHANA RABBAH, AMERICA, AND THE END OF THE AGE

It is well known that America has been a safe haven for Jews, and the chief ally and supporter of the modern Nation of Israel. A lesser-known fact, however, is that the man credited with discovering the Americas, Christopher Columbus—believed to be of Jewish descent—made landfall in the New World on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles. It was October 12, 1492, corresponding to the biblical date Tishrei 21, or *Hoshana Rabbah*, that Columbus and crew sighted land and went ashore on the continent known today as America.

It gets more interesting. Columbus began his journey to the New World on Av 10, the date on which both biblical Temples were historically burned, sending the Jews into exile. Thus, Columbus's voyage to the continent that would become a second Jewish homeland lasted exactly 70 days, the biblical number of homecoming and redemption (Jer. 29:10; Dan. 9:24–27). Moreover, the voyage began on the saddest day on the biblical calendar (Av 10), a day associated with Jewish exile, and ended on the most joyous day on the calendar (*Hoshana Rabbah*), a day associated with a temporary dwelling place or, tabernacle

Viewing Columbus's land discovery as part of God's plan of redemption for Israel, it is fascinating to consider the year that its helper-nation, the US, was founded. The United States declared independence in 1776, which happened to be a Sabbatical year. Thus, the US's first year as a nation was 1777, a post-Sabbatical year. The number "1777" is striking by itself. But even more amazing is the fact that 1777 is believed to be a Jubilee year (calculation based on a 2022 Jubilee).

That the US's first year was a Jubilee, the biblical year of "liberty," is fitting as the nation was uniquely founded on the principle of liberty:

Patrick Henry's famous quote during the run-up to the Revolutionary War was, "Give me Liberty, or give me death!"

The US Pledge of Allegiance contains the phrase, "with liberty and justice for all."

Immigrants arriving in New York harbor are greeted by the Statue of Liberty.

Next to "In God We Trust," the motto stamped on the face of US coins is "Liberty."

The Liberty Bell, the iconic symbol of American independence, was cast with the jubilee declaration on its side: "Proclaim Liberty Throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants Thereof" (Lev. 25:10).

Finally, it is striking that the US is today comprised of 50 states—the biblical number of Jubilee.

If it is true that 1777 and 2022 are Jubilees, the US has existed for exactly five jubilee periods. In the Bible, the number five signifies God's grace, goodness, and favor toward man.

Could America's period of grace be ending in 2022?

Could the unprecedented convergence of threats facing the nation be evidence of God's protective hand being lifted from a people who increasingly reject His ways?

Seeing that this is how the Lord has previously dealt with rebellion, it seems likely (Lev. 26:14–26).

For this reason, circling back to the *Hoshana Rabbah* tradition of calling out to the Lord, let us pray for repentance, and that Jesus returns speedily to rescue His people.

“Save us now, oh Lord!”

Just how soon He will appear, no man can say. But rest assured, His coming is as certain as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the autumn and spring rains that water the earth.

. . .

NOTES:

1. The modern (precalculated) Jewish calendar has *Hoshana Rabbah* beginning at sunset October 15. However, those who reckon the months by the sighting of the New-Moon crescent will observe the day beginning at sunset October 17:

<https://torahcalendar.com/Calendar.asp?YM=Y2022M7>

2. *Hoshana Rabbah* is also traditionally considered the final day of divine judgment, the day on which the heavenly verdicts issued on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are delivered, or fulfilled.

3. Jews in America:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Jews#:~:text=Depending%20on%20religious%20definitions%20and,in%20the%20world%2C%20after%20Israel.

4. More on Columbus's arrival in the Americas:

<https://www.threemacs.org/docs/Americas%20Hebraic%20Roots%20-%20Columbus%20and%20the%20Discovery.pdf>

5. According to tradition, Av 9/10 became a cursed date when the spies sent to survey the Promised Land returned on this day with a bad report, causing the children of Israel to become fearful of entering the Land.

6. Throughout Scripture, the number 70 is associated with Israel and signifies fullness or redemption:

- The post-flood world was repopulated by 70 descendants of Noah, resulting in 70 nations (Gen. 10).
- Terah, the father of Abraham, was 70 years old when Abraham was born (Gen. 11:26).
- The Nation of Israel began with 70 Hebrews who migrated to Egypt (Ex. 1:1-5).
- Moses appointed 70 elders to be the governing body of Israel (Num. 11:16).

- Following the liberation from bondage in Egypt, the children of Israel camped at an oasis of 70 palm trees (Ex. 15:27).
- A typical human lifespan is 70 years (Ps. 90:10).
- Israel's greatest ruler, King David, died at the age of 70 (2 Sam. 5:4).
- The Jews were liberated from captivity in Babylon after 70 years (Jer. 29:10).
- God's plan of redemption for Israel and Jerusalem is comprised of 70 weeks (Dan. 9:24-27).

7. In 2022, *Hoshana Rabbah* marks the seventh day, of the seventh festival, of the seventh month, following seven Sabbatical weeks since Jerusalem was restored to the Jews in 1967.

8. 2022 Jubilee calculation: <https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-35306783/documents/a0ea26efd60c45ec83fce69a4d6e75cc/Jubilee%20Q%20and%20A%20-%20Is%20the%20Year%20of%20Redemption%20Upon%20Us%20-%20rev%20a.pdf>

9. After *Hoshana Rabbah*, comes a separate eighth-day closing assembly called "the eighth day of assembly (Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35). The Jewish sages call this day *Shemini Atzeret*, from the Hebrew root word meaning "to hold back." The idea is that God asks all those who celebrated the seven days of Tabernacles to tarry, or linger, with Him one additional day. Since the number eight signifies a new beginning in Scripture, it is believed that the assembly of the eighth day symbolizes the eternal state, the new heavens and new earth after the Millennial reign (Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:1).