

THE FEASTS
OF
THE LORD
LEVITICUS 23
A
BIBLE STUDY
TAUGHT
BY

By Pastor w. Jack casey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Inside Cover-----	1
Table of Contents-----	2
How to Study the Bible-----	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
CHAPTER ONE.....	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	16
CHAPTER THREE.....	21
CHAPTER FOUR.....	26
CHAPTER FIVE.....	30
CHAPTER SIX.....	36
CHAPTER SEVEN.....	41

How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

INTRODUCTION

We will in this study take up the seven feasts that God set for the nation of Israel. There are three important reasons for these feasts.

1. Practical – they brought the nation together for fellowship and worship three times each year.
2. Prophetic—to point out a future time of fulfillment
3. Application—to show Jew and gentile alike deep aspects of the life, death and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Here are the seven feasts that we will be studying in order of their occurrence each year.

1. Passover – found in Lev. 23:5-14 compare with 1 Cor. 5:7
2. Unleavened Bread—found in Lev. 23: 6-8 compare with 1 Cor. 5:8; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; John 6:51
3. First Fruits—Lev. 23:9-14 compare with 1Cor. 15:20-23
4. Pentecost—Lev. 23: 15-22 compare with Acts 2:1; 1 Cor. 12:13,20; 1 Cor. 10: 16-17
5. Trumpets – Lev. 23:23-25 compare with Isaiah 18:3-7, 27:12-13, 58:1-14
6. Day of Atonement -- Lev. 23:26-32 compare with Heb. 9:11-14
7. Tabernacles—Lev. 23: 33-44 compare with Zech. 14:16-20

The Jews were required by the law to travel to Jerusalem for each of these feasts. For many to make seven trips a year would be so time consuming that they would not be able to provide for their families. God in His providence grouped them together in such a way that they could be accomplished in just three trips.

Right about now you may still be wondering we should be studying these Old Testament feasts. The first and best is that the Lord Jesus performed each feast faithfully. Jesus walked up to 75 miles each way from Galilee to Jerusalem for each of the three occasions. With Him would be His disciples and the others that traveled with Him.

The first trip took in the feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits these three occurred within and 8 day time period in early spring beginning on the 14th of Nisan. Pentecost was observed 50 days later requiring the second trip sometime around the first part of June. The last trip took in the feasts of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles. These occurred in early fall and took 22 day period.

Those living in and around Jerusalem had a natural advantage, however faithful Jews from all over the Roman Empire would travel to Jerusalem

to attend as seen in Acts 2:5-10. Now the law was clear and strict on attendance as we read in Lev. 23:29-30.

Jesus even attended Hanukkah or the Feast of Dedication as recorded in John 10:22. It must also be noted that for Jesus to travel to these feasts presented a special hardship as He was a man with a price on His head. Even Jesus own brothers taunted Him in John 7:3-5 about attending the Feast of Tabernacles, so Jesus traveled there “**not openly, but, as it were in secret**” according to verse 10 of John 7.

We sing “I have decided to follow Jesus” not always realizing that in so doing it might involve long trips through hostile country.

There is another reason to delve into these feasts and that is to be able to gain an insight into the very essence of Christianity that is Christ’s life.

CHAPTER ONE

FEAST OF PASSOVER

The first feast we must study is the feast of Passover. The essence of Passover is the sacrifice of the Lamb. We can see the crucifixion as a last time this feast was necessary. In Exodus 12:5 we have this phrase “without blemish,” a male of the first year. A sacrificial lamb was sufficient for the redemption of an entire nation of Israel as they prepared to leave Egypt. Now both Jew and Christian can say “I was delivered from slavery by the blood of the lamb.

John the Baptist stressed this for the Jews present at Jordan when Jesus came down to be baptized. John could have announced Him as King of king’s, Lord of Lord’s, Prince of Peace, or Messiah of Israel. Instead he chose these words “behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world”. Here Jesus begins 3.5 years of observation equal to the time set to observe the Passover Lamb.

They knew that Jesus as the Lamb appealed to God as a sacrifice. To understand Jesus as a sacrificial lamb is to understand the heart of Christianity. All of His sermons, miracles, and the sum of all His teachings put together would not save the best of His disciples. Peter denied Him when the chips were down after being present for all of those. But His blood saves all His sacrifice pays off our debts to God in full.

A third reason to study these feasts and Passover in particular is so that we can better witness to our Jewish neighbors. Look at what Paul says in Romans 1:16; 10:1; 11:1 all of Christianity our churches, seminaries, missions societies can be traced back to the Jewish church at Jerusalem. Witnessing to Jews is an area of missions greatly lacking in effort. So maybe if we gain a better understanding of the feasts we will be better prepared to lead a Jewish person to faith in the real Messiah Jesus.

The Passover Seder is recorded in Lev. 23:5-14 and it starts with the first of four cups of wine the Kiddush the cup of blessing.

Leader 1:"at various times and in diverse ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1)

All: God gave promises to our people

Leader 1: With cups of wine we recall the promises

All: The first promise we recall...I AM THE LORD AND I WILL FREE YOU FROM THE BURDENS OF THE EGYPTIANS. (Ex 6:6)

Leader 1: Let us take up the cup and proclaim the holiness of this day of deliverance, which we celebrate.

All: (The first toast of three from this cup) Blessed is our Lord, God, King of the Universe who has created the fruit of the vine.

Leader 2: Blessed is God, who chose us among all people to seek holiness through the commandments. With Love, you have given us, O Lord, Sabbaths for rest, festivals for joy and this Passover feast of freedom, a Holy gathering to remember the exodus from Egypt.

In Egypt the Jews were forced to build the store cities of Pithom and Ramses. Because these Cities rested on swampland every level they built sank as they built the next. Slavery is a life with no accomplishment, no achievement, no meaning. So too is the slavery of Satan over mans life in this world it produces dead works. Many today are serving Satan in ignorance of their own slavery to sin. When God's fire comes only the works of God will not be consumed, read Heb. 9:22 "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission"

Next comes the candle lighting, with toasts or blessings being made. Also the middle Matzoth bread is broken and wrapped in white linen and hidden away.

All: (The second toast with the first cup) Blessed is our Lord, God, King of the Universe who created the lights of fire.

Reader 1: Who teaches us to know light from Darkness, sacred from profane, Just as you have set the Sabbath apart from the other six days, so may we your people, be set aside to you in Holiness.

All: (The final toast from this cup) Blessed is our Lord, God King of the Universe
who has kept us in Life, sustained us, and brought us to this moment.

It is at this point that the father will take out the center Matzoth and break it into two pieces wrapping one half in a napkin and hiding it out of site and replacing the other half back in the bag.

Next will come the ceremonial hand washing the (urchats). The Talmud asks "why do we wash our hands at this point?" the answer comes back "because it is an unusual activity" that prompts questions mostly from the children. We all need to retain that child like curiosity (Mark 10:15). The leader then recites

Leader 1:"I wash my hands in innocence, and I go around your altar, O Lord, giving voice to my thanks and recounting all your wondrous deeds.

All: "O Lord, I love the house in which you dwell, the tenting place of your glory. Gather not my soul with those of sinners, or with men of blood, my life.

Leader 1:"But may I walk in integrity, redeem me and have pity on me.

All: "With my feet set on a right path I will bless you in the assemblies. Amen.

Next the leader will take up the karpas, which means green vegetable. A stalk of celery or sometimes parsley is used. A green vegetable is taken and god is blessed for creating fruits from the ground. The Talmud asks, "Who is the rich person? The answer is "the one who's satisfied with what he's got. The celery or parsley is dipped in the bowl of salt water to let us know that even things that appear bitter (lost job or broken relationship) are ultimately for the best. The celery in salt water is like a life immersed in tears mark 9: 49-50.

The first Matzoth is then given out, it is the bread of affliction. Another toast and blessings are given before the bread is eaten.

Leader 1: Let us share the first matzoth the bread of affliction

(The bread will be passed but not yet consumed)

Leader 2: Among people everywhere, sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship.

Let us recall all people who are in need, those who are imprisoned, the poor, and the oppressed -- especially of our own community.

Reader 1: This is the bread of affliction, the poor bread that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and earth Let all who are in want share the hope of the Passover. As we celebrate here, we join with people everywhere.

This year we celebrate here. Maybe next year in the Promised Land. This year we are still bound; next year may we all be free.

All: (The second toast with this cup) Blessed are you, O Lord, God, King of the universe for you "Bring good news to the poor, you proclaim liberty to captives, you restore sight to the Blind and you set the captives free." (Luke 4:18)

Following the bread of affliction then the father is asked the four questions asked at every Passover.

These four questions give the leader an opportunity to go over the particulars of the first Passover.

1st Why is this night distinguished from all other nights? The answer: the unleavened bread symbolizes purity as leaven is always a picture of sin (1 Cor. 5:8).

2nd On all other nights we may eat any kind of herb, but on this night only bitter herbs. Why? The answer: The bitter herbs remind us of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt.

3rd On all other nights we do not dip, but tonight we dip twice. Why? The answer: the parsley is dipped twice in the salt water. The first dip is Israel going into the sea and coming out the other side unharmed. The second dip is for the Egyptian army (parsley dipped and eaten) went in but didn't come out. This is the dipping by which Jesus identified His betrayer.

4th On this night we all recline in our chairs at the table. Why? The answer: this has to do with freedom. They are no longer slaves and

can now relax. For us the pillow is a picture of salvation, think of the fluffiest pillow, and sit on it now that's salvation.

The retelling of the Exodus

It begins in Chapter 12 of Exodus. The delivering of a nation to freedom has ever inspired the world for instance on our Liberty bell is inscribed Lev. 25:10. The real meaning of the story of the Exodus is in how God chose to deliver His people. He had them select that young male lamb, and for four days before Passover it is examined. (Jesus completed this symbol when He came into Jerusalem 4 days before Passover).

God had them sprinkle the Blood of that lamb on each house. We are still doing this today, except the blood is placed on the heart. God said the death angel would Passover Egypt killing the entire first born not covered by the blood. Now a question why did God do it that way? Would the angel make a mistake if someone failed to apply the blood? God taught them something never to be forgotten it is the Blood that saves. Everyone must have the Blood.

The story goes through the miracle of the Red Sea, the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai, the wilderness journey and going into the Promised Land at Jericho. While the story is being told the ceremonial food is eaten by the family. While talking of the harshness of slavery each person is given red horseradish to eat. Anyone tasting real Jewish horseradish will not forget bitterness. When the father comes to the lamb he shows them the unbroken shank bone. The meat is gone being eaten as prescribed by God but it is not broken as it pictures the fact that Jesus had none of His bones broken.

The roasted Egg

Resting on the Seder plate is a roasted egg. The egg was not in God's plan it was included in the meal during the Babylonian captivity.

The Babylonians were great egg worshipers. Their goddess, Ishtar was coaxed every spring to bring forth a new issue of children to continue the tribe. The prayers did not work very well as they are gone. Ishtar didn't merely leave her egg, but her name also what is referred too as Easter is in reality First

Fruits (Lev. 23:10; 1Cor. 15:23). Easter is Ishtar of the Babylonians.

Some of the wonderful symbols of Passover are overlooked- the sweetness reflects the sin you once enjoyed. The salt water- is a picture of your tears of repentance. The Red Sea – is a picture of your Baptism by immersion, you went in but came out safely. The wilderness, this is a picture of our traveling this world while we are waiting to cross into the Promised Land. Jericho – is an oasis for us a time of refreshment on the long journey. Joshua- is Jesus the one to take us into the Promised Land (Josh. 6:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

Passover then tells our whole story from slavery to sin to meeting Christ and then His leading us into the Promised Land.

Now to the Second Cup

The wine in this cup is put onto each plate one drop at a time; each drop represents each of the smiting of the ten plagues of Egypt.

1. Blood 2 Frogs 3 Lice 4 Flies 5 Cattle afflicted 6 Boils
7 Hail
8 Locusts 9 Darkness 10 Death of the first born.

It is well to remember what we are saved from. While remembering these, there is no gloating, but a deep sorrow for those stricken. The wrath of God on those who curse the Jews is tremendous.

There is a large meal comparable to our thanksgiving dinner. It is leisurely and joyful. This whole feast may well last from sundown to midnight.

The Third Cup

This is the most symbolic of all the cups. This cup is the cup of redemption. It is also time to bring forth the buried loaf, this will serve as dessert. The Matzoth is called the “Afikomen” which means festival procession or arrival. It represents Jesus and His triumphal entry. Once recovered it is then shared with the third cup by all. This then is where we celebrate Communion. We will now go into this bread and cup in more detail.

The three loaves represents the trinity, the middle one represents the son (his body broken for you) broken and wrapped in white linen and buried as Jesus was and now brought forth to eat with the cup of redemption (Jewish name). Everyone takes part in this bread and it is the last thing eaten, as though eating of this bread will sustain everyone from here on. This pictures Jesus the bread of life sustaining us through our Christian life!

The Father breaks off pieces and passes them out. Each person eats his piece and drinks of the cup.

There are blessings pronounced over each item. Now Jesus as the Father offered these blessings they have been said for millennia (Matt. 26:26 “and blessed it”). What was the blessing? It is this “blessed are thou, o lord our God, King of the universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth” Jesus then said this bread is my body take eat of it. What He was saying to His disciples was this; God has been bringing forth bread out of the earth from the beginning. This bread represents my body and God will bring my body forth from the earth! Now before leaving the bread I want to point out how like Jesus body it is. It has stripes, it is pierced, “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced” and it is pure, containing no leaven (no sin).

Jesus life was made of bread; He was born in Bethlehem which is interpreted as the “house of bread”. He used this imagery of bread all during his ministry. Now He provides the “bread of life”, to all who partake of Him. He is finally the “dessert” of life, the final homecoming for those who forage for nourishment in this wilderness.

Now let’s look a little more at the wine, go to Matt 26:27-28 as Jesus raises this third cup the cup of redemption. Again what did He say when He “gave thanks”. Well before I can give it to you, we need to delve into the marriage custom of Jesus day. In the first century and before the young groom had to approach his future bride with a contract, a covenant which both were to sign. The groom would pay a price to her father. When the price was paid and the contract signed the new covenant was sealed with a cup of wine.

Then the groom would depart with these words “I go to prepare a place for you” with that it was back to his father’s house to begin the building process of a bridal chamber- a little mansion for the upcoming honeymoon. The father had to approve all aspects of building and the time to go for the bride. In the mean time the bride remained bought with a price. She would wear her veil when she went into the public so no other young men would want to make a contract with her. At home she would work on the wedding clothes and at night she would keep her lamp and oil close as the groom often came at night to steal her away. All Jewish brides were “stolen” snatched away (raptured) by the groom.

Now the groom and his party couldn’t just show up so one of his party had to go a little ahead and prepare the way with a shout “behold the bridegroom comes”. At this the bride and her maids (ten virgins) would trim their lamps and off they would go. Jesus used this in His parable of the wise and foolish virgins as his listeners would understand exactly what He was talking about.

Once back at the father’s house the Bride and groom go into the wedding chamber (New Jerusalem) and shut the door. Guests, friends of the groom (John the Baptist said he was one) and the grooms father would be assembled and once the marriage was consummated, it was announced by the best man standing at the door listening. Then the celebration started with a seven day party (7 year marriage supper of the lamb before returning to Mt. Olives). Sometimes the wine ran out and someone had to make some from water. No one wanted to leave because at the end of the seven days (tribulation) the bride and groom would come out for the marriage supper.

Now Jesus approached us with a contract the New Covenant (Heb. 8:8-12) God signed this covenant in blood sacrifice and Jesus came with His own blood to ratify the New Covenant this is the words “This is my blood of the new testament shed for many for the remission of sins”. He found the price high as seen in Luke 22:42, ultimately though He paid it “thy will not mine be done”. He told us He was leaving in John 14 and only the Father knew when He would return for us. For

now we wait with our oil (Holy Spirit) ready to go, see Matt. 25: 1-13. Those who have only made a profession and not really possessed salvation are represented by the 5 foolish virgins.

We have our veil's on (sealed with the Holy Spirit) the unbelievers are always trying to make a contract with us (temptation). When Jesus comes we will go into the judgment seat (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15). Jesus will examine our works and reward us accordingly. After that we will attend the marriage supper dressed in our white linen (Rev. 19:7-8) with the Old Testament saints as the friends of the bridegroom. Then it is off to set up house keeping that is back to earth to live with Jesus in His kingdom.

Now Jesus really did toast His bride "blessed art thou, o Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine (believers). Now Jesus said He was the vine and we are the branches. Now after the blessing Jesus then presented it as His blood of the New Covenant and all who partake will have their sins remitted (forgiven) Jeremiah 31:34; Heb. 8:12.

The main difference in our communion and the Passover is joy. The Passover is a celebration, and Communion is a solemn event.

Then there is the fourth and final Cup! (Cup of praise)

Jesus did not drink this cup as it is Elijah's; they set a special place for him. And the Jew is still looking for him to come (Mal. 4:5) and announce that Messiah had arrived. Now the disciples did not drink it because Jesus declared that John the Baptist had come in the spirit and power of Elijah. So Elijah doesn't come and the Father ends the Passover with these words "L'shamah hab'ah b'yrushalyim" or next year in Jerusalem.

They are still waiting for Him to come as the suffering and reigning King, we as the church know that He has come and we are now awaiting His soon return, we should be saying "next year in new Jerusalem" Rev. 21:2. They then left the table singing a song, Jesus and the disciples left the upper room for Gethsemane with a song as we see in Matt. 26:30. We do not keep the Passover and its symbolism; however I hope

we have seen the picture of Christ. Now we have Christ and we need only look to Him.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Exodus 13:3, 7-8; And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 16: 3-4; Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction: for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

Matthew 16:11-12 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees

Overview

To begin this study of unleavened bread we first need to understand Jewish time keeping so that we can better understand how this feast relates to the Crucifixion of Jesus. The Jewish day starts at 6 P.M. and goes to 6 P.M. the next

day. Go back to Genesis chapters 1 and 2 and read how God determined the day “the evening and the morning was.”

You see God started time in the evening. We know that the Jews were to take a male lamb of the first year on the 10th of the month that is “Nisan” and keep it until the 14th day when they were to kill it for Passover. Now the next day the 15th was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread and according to our text was a high day or a holy Sabbath in which no work can be done.

Now this relates to Christ in this way. Jesus went into Jerusalem on a donkey on the 10th of Nisan and went in and out being observed. At 6 pm Tuesday which is the beginning of the 14th Jesus and the disciples partook of Passover. Now the Gospel of John chapters 13-16 is a record of the events in the upper room that evening.

Jesus arrest and trials all took place between Tuesday night and Wednesday morning when He was crucified. All of the trials and abuse was illegal and immoral the high priest allowed it out of hatred of Jesus. At three P.M. Jesus gives up the ghost and dies. Now they wanted His body off the cross because the next day was a Sabbath and it started at 6 pm Wednesday so Joseph and Nicodemus takes His body down and wrap it and place it in the tomb before 6 pm thereby not breaking the law.

You see Jesus was that perfect bread wrapped as the first batch of unleavened bread was and carried away from Egypt to see this turn to Exodus 12: 31, 34 “And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders”. Now the Israelites that first night kneaded their dough and before they could add yeast Pharaoh ordered them out so the women wrapped the dough and placed it over their shoulders and off they went and could not eat it until the 15th of Nisan Exodus 12:39 “And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt,

and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.”

Unleavened Bread in Bible Times

During this week long feast absolutely no leaven is to be in the house. They were so meticulous about this the father would take a candle, a feather and a wooden spoon and use the feather to sweep under all the furniture collecting it in the spoon and depositing it in a bag to be burned the next day. For seven days they practice this separation from leaven (leaven always refers to sin in the Bible) symbolizing God’s people separating themselves from sin and becoming a holy people.

Requirements for directing the Feast Lev. 23:6; Ex. 12:15-17.

1. The first day all leaven was to be removed Ex. 12:15 “even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses:” For seven days they would eat only unleavened bread Lev. 23:6 “And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.”
2. This feast starts with a high Sabbath and ends with a high Sabbath Ex. 12:16 “And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.”
3. It was declared a memorial to be kept forever Ex. 12:17 “therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.”

Today the Jews include in their rules the following items not to be eaten as leavened: wheat, barley, rye, and oats, spelt also rice, corn, peanuts, and legumes. Passover bread is made of wheat but great care is taken to ensure it has no time to begin the leavening process it is cooked within 18 minutes of kneading.

The Messianic Significance

Our first two references is Isaiah 53:1 "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" and 1 Peter 2:24 "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were". The unleavened bread speaks of Sanctification. Jesus was set apart, as He spoke of leaven as sin in Matthew 16:6, 11-12 "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? 12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Yeast is used as a picture of sin just as a little leaven leavens the whole lump even so a little sin can spread and grow in our minds and attitudes causing us to "puff up" with pride and arrogance (1 Cor. 4:18-19; 5:2 and Col. 2:18)

As the leaven represents sin the unleavened bread is a symbol of the body of Christ without sin. Our Lord referred to Himself as the bread of God in John 6:33, 35 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world; And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and He chose the Passover bread as the memorial of His body in Luke 22:19. It is to be noted once again that Jesus was born in Bethlehem which is being interpreted as the "house of bread." Paul used this to illustrate Christ sacrifice and our salvation in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

The unleavened bread is a visual lesson on how God desires us to change through Christ. When one accepts Christ as Saviour then our position is changed before God from one of sin to one of sinless (with our yeast) as Jesus took our sin, we

are made righteous through Christ as seen in Ephesians 4:22-24 and Galatians 5:16-24

Each time we eat leavened bread we have an opportunity to be reminded that

1. The unleavened bread is a symbol of the speed and haste with which the Israelites left Egypt.
2. Jesus is the bread of life as seen in John 6:26-58
3. The days of unleavened bread were not joyless as it begins and ends with a party (feast). A walk of purity in the Lord is not a joyless life!
4. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word from God as Jesus teaches us in Luke 4.

CHAPTER THREE

FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS

LEV. 23:9-14

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

In Systematic Theology there is the study of Eschatology or the study of last things. Not examined as much is the study of first things a subject the Bible has a lot to say about. First Fruits is the feast devoted to first things. The message is powerful for without the resurrection the rest of the gospel will have no effect. The word First Fruits means “a promise to come”, it is also known as the feast of weeks as it lasts for 49 days. It is also the second most mentioned feast in the Bible.

First Fruits marked the beginning of the cereal grain harvests in Israel. Barley was the first planted in winter and the first to ripen in spring. The first portion was cut and brought to the Temple as a Thank Offering to the Lord for the harvest. The first sheaves are recorded as having been cut from the Garden of Gethsemane where Christ prayed.

There are 8 commands in this passage of Leviticus 23.

1. Tell Israel to bring a sheaf of the First Fruits to the priest when the first crop planted in the Promised Land came into harvest.
2. The priest shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah to be accepted for each family Lev. 23:11 "And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it."
3. He shall wave it after the Sabbath that ends at 6 pm on Saturday
4. On that day they were to offer a lamb as seen in verse 12
5. With the lamb two tenth deals about 1 gallon of fine flour mingled with oil as an offering by fire to Jehovah verse 13.
6. The drink offering would be one fourth of a hin about 1.5 quarts of wine.
7. They could not eat their crops until this offering was done verse 14.
8. This shall be a statute forever in all generations.

First fruit was a national feast but each family brought its respective offering to the Temple. Outside the gates as many arrive there is recited Psalm 150:1. Inside a Levite choir would be singing Psalm 30 this would go on all day as a large number of Priests were busy with fires, killing the sacrifices (Lev. 1:14-17), they would also be pouring drink offerings and waving first fruits before the Lord.

Jesus is the first fruit of the harvest

1. Firstborn of Mary Matthew 1:23-25
2. First begotten of God the Father Hebrew 1:6
3. Firstborn of every creature Colossians 1: 5
4. First begotten of the dead Revelation 1:5
5. First fruit of the resurrected ones 1 Corinthians 15:20,23
6. The beginning of the Creation of God Revelation 3:14
7. Jesus is the preeminent one Colossians 1:8

Jesus celebrated the festival of First fruits by offering Himself as the first fruits of all generations of believers Matthew 27:52, 53

Other events occurring on the day of First Fruits, the 17th of the month Nisan on the Jewish calendar

1. Noah's ark comes to rest on Mt. Ararat Genesis 8:4
2. Joseph's dream of the sheaf's Genesis 37:5-11
3. Hebrews entered Egypt 430 years before deliverance Exodus 12:40-41
4. Moses led the Israelites through the Red Sea Exodus chapter 3.
5. Israel entered and ate of the fruits of the promised land Joshua 5:10-12
6. The walls of Jericho fell Joshua 5:13
7. The cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah 2 Chronicles 29:1-28
8. Queen Ester saves her people Esther 3:12, 5:1
9. It is the day Jesus arose

The odds of 2 of these occurring on the same day of the Hebrew year are 129,000 to 1. The odds of all 8 of these occurring on the same day of the Hebrew year are 783,864,276,960,000,000

Bible instances of First things in regard to First Fruits. Things belonging to the Lord

1. Exodus 22:29 "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me."
2. Exodus 23:19 "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God"
3. Deuteronomy 18:4: The firstfruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him." & 26:2

This includes all seven major crops- Barley, Wheat, Grapes, Figs, Pomegranates, Olives and Dates. The first of the bread dough as seen in Numbers 15:20-21.

The first born males of the animals and children Exodus 13:2, 12-15 "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."

First Fruits in the New Testament

This feast is mentioned seven times.

1. Paul spoke of Epaenetus as the first fruits of Achaia in Romans 16:5 "Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ."
2. Paul used the concept of the First Fruits pinched from the dough in Romans 11:16 "For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy:" What he meant was this if God accepted the Patriarchs then the whole lump (Israel belonged to Him) Romans 11:2 "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew" .
3. James taught that we as believers who are set apart to the Lord are His first fruits James 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
4. Paul used this imagery when he spoke of salvation as the "first fruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8:23). The indwelling of the Spirit of God is the guarantee that there will be a harvest of redemption.
5. In Revelation John describes the 144,000 Jewish witnesses' as being first fruits to God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:4).
6. Paul himself said he was one born out of due time or a first fruit of the final harvest of Israel.
7. And lastly of course the fulfillment of the feast in Jesus 1 Corinthians 15:20 "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." Also in Revelation 1:5. Jesus is our first fruit having arisen on the feast of First Fruits. However His resurrection had greater implications as seen in 1 Corinthians 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Jesus is the guarantee of the Final Harvest of Saints.

There is life after death the grave is not the end. All will be resurrected (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29) either to stand at the Judgment seat (saved) or to face the second death at the White Throne judgment in Revelation chapters 19-20.

Just as there are two parts of the harvest of the wheat and chaff there are two resurrections life and death Matthew 3:12 and 13: 37-43; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13-15; 1 Corinthians 15:12-25, 50-58.

CHRIST IS THE FIRST FRUITS FROM THE DEAD AND BECAUSE HE LIVES WE SHALL LIVE ALSO! ARE YOU READY FOR ETERNITY?

COUNTING THE OMER

For the next 45 days the Jews would count the Omer. This is the 1st day of Omer, 2nd day of Omer and so forth to 49. On the 50th day is Pentecost. The Israelites when they left Egypt had 47 days of traveling and then 3 days of preparation before the giving of the law at Sinai.

Orthodox Jews even today do not shave, cut their hair, or celebrate weddings as it is a time of mourning. At Sinai Moses went up to receive the law the people went into a fit of orgy and made an idol of gold. When Moses came down from the mountain with the law, 3,000 souls died who were involved in the orgy on the first day of the first feast of weeks. On the day of Pentecost after Jesus arose there were 3,000 souls were redeemed.

FIRST FRUITS FOR THE CHURCH

John Bunyan made this statement about Christian and their first fruits "There was a man , some called him mad; the more he gave, the more he had" Bunyan used prose to state this principal found in both testaments – Hosea 10:12; Proverbs 11:24; Luke 6:38; and Galatians 6:6-7

Each of these statements comes from a different time period, in Bible history. 1st the one in Hosea and Proverbs is under the law; the 2nd one in Luke is by Christ Himself and the 3rd one in Galatians is by the Apostle Paul. We can see from these 3 examples that we are to have an attitude of gratefulness in bringing our first fruits of our lives and labor to Christ no matter the time or place or circumstances. One needs to read also these two passages 1 Corinthians 9:1-18 & 2 Timothy 2:6.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST LEVITICUS 23:15-21

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD. And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

This feast followed the feast of First Fruits by 7 weeks and 1 day. The day fell on the “morrow” after the Sabbath of the 49th day. The celebration for the completed grain harvest takes place. Pentecost- is the Greek term for the Hebrew Shavuot which means weeks. This is how it gained its common title feast of weeks and occurs near the end of the harvest.

Therefore the people of Israel were to offer baked loaves of bread two of them (2). It is important to note now that at the

feast of first fruit it was unleavened grain but now it is leavened loaves.

There are several passages of scripture which mention Pentecost they are as follows Exodus chapters 19-20, 24, 23:16-17, 34:22-23; Deuteronomy 16:9-12; Leviticus 23:15-21; Numbers 28:26-31; Acts 2; 2 Corinthians 3; Hebrews 8.

In the New Testament it is known by Pentecost and Feast of weeks it is the feast that God refers to here in Exodus 5:1 "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness" and 10:9 "for we must hold a feast unto the LORD". The most interesting part of this feast is that the two leaven loaves are waved before the Lord. This would appear to contradict the instructions for Passover.

Now Jesus is perfect, sinless and our unleavened bread or meal offering. Now this feast of Pentecost uses leaven to speak of our not yet coming to perfection. Only two offerings have leaven in them, the peace offering, and the Pentecost wave loaves. Remember the number 2 speaks of witness and testimony.

There are 2 leavened loaves offered at Pentecost Lev. 23:17-21
There were 2 Birds used in the sacrifice and cleansing of lepers Lev. 4:17 & Gen. 15:9

There are 2 Trumpets of Silver used in calling Israel together as a nation. Num. 10:1-10 & 29:1

There were 2 Tablets of stone with the 10 commandments on them Exodus 20:1-7 & 31:18

Jesus sent out the 12 Apostles in 6 sets of 2 and the 70 disciples in 35 sets of 2 see Luke 9:1-6 & 10:1-2

The day of Pentecost is the making of 2 into one new man 1 Cor. 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Jesus and the church, two testifying of one to the world" read also Hebrews 2:11 & Eph 5:31

These two wave loaves are God and believers recognizing that the rest of sin had not yet been eradicated, even though we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Jeremiah 31:31-33. When we have the written word and then have it written on our

hearts we have double portion of blessings 2 Corinthians 3:6. Also involved in this feast were 2 tenths deal of fine flour about 10 pounds as seen in Lev. 23:17. The Manna was 2 tenths deal on the 6th day it was a double portion as we see in Exodus 16:22, 36. The meal offering at first fruits was of 2 tenths deal or a double portion (23:13).

The 12 loaves of showbread on the gold table was of two tenths deal a double portion of life and health in the bread of His presence (23:17).

The two tables of stone with the Ten Commandments or 2 tenths again a double portion as they are fulfilled in 2 commands. Love God and Love your neighbor as yourself.

Now the fine flour that is used comes from whole wheat. It must be put through a grinder until it becomes fine flour for the bread (1 Cor. 10:16-17). The fine flour in scripture speaks to us of trials, testing, temptation, and suffering of the believers. It is through the crushing and breaking process that we become suitable to become bread for spiritually hungry world as seen in Philippians 3:10. The 2 waves loaves of fine flour speak of witness and 2 becoming one 1 Cor. 10:17.

The Israelites left Egypt during Passover in the month Nisan. They crossed the Red Sea and came to the foot of the Mountain Sinai (Mt. Agar in Saudi Arabia) here they experienced the feast of Pentecost in the 3rd month called Sivan. During this time they were given 10 Commandments, the Tabernacle, the Aaronic priesthood, and The Sacrificial system. It is here where Israel became “the church in the wilderness” as stated in Acts 7:38.

Here at Mt. Sinai the nation arrived on the 1st day of the 3rd month (Exodus 16:1 & 19:1). Moses had the people sanctify themselves for 3 days, and then Moses went up on the Mountain to receive the Tablets.

The time frame for all this is as follows.

1st month Nisan they traveled 15 days

2nd month Zif they traveled 30 days

3rd month Sivan 4 days

For a total of 49 days or 7 weeks

And on the morrow after the Sabbath 49 plus 1 = 50 days

In Acts we see the fulfillment for the 2nd time as 50 days. Remember Moses told Pharaoh that they needed to go 3 days into the wilderness and make a sacrifice. This was to be their freedom from slavery. Compare it to Jesus spending 3 days and nights in the tomb and arising on the morrow after the Sabbath.

After Jesus arose he was seen for 40 days then told the disciples to tarry 10 days waiting for the Comforter.

40 days of ministry

10 days of tarrying

50 days that happens on Pentecost

Here are some things that happen around the number 50 as it represents liberty, freedom, deliverance, Jubilee.

1st the Slaves were freed—debts cancelled – families reunited—liberty proclaimed by the Jubilee trumpets. Priests served until they were 50 years old.

Pentecost means we are at liberty to serve the Lord, not just the letter but the Spirit of the Law.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

Lev. 23: 23-26

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying

The Feast of Trumpets in Biblical times was celebrated in far more festive fashion than today Amos 8:5 “Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? This feast is celebrated for two days; however the preparation for these two days began a full month in advance. On the Jewish calendar it is a forty day period called “return to repentance.”

It starts on Elul 1 and ends on the Day of Atonement which is Tishri 10. It is a time to examine ones life and restore relationships between God and man. The first thirty days are from the month Elul and the last ten which include Trumpets and Day of Atonement are in the month of Tishri, these ten days are also called the Ten days of Awe.

This feast is one of mixed emotions, at once it is a happy, joyous occasion and at the same time somber. Joyous because it is the start of the New Year, somber because it is a day of judgment that is looking back and assessing your life over the past year, no work is done during this time.

This Feast has three expressions

1. A day of “solemn rest” on the 1st day of the seventh month (like the weekly Sabbath).
2. A memorial proclaimed with the blast of the shofar horn.
3. A day of blowing of the horns Numbers 29:1 “And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye

shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you."

One day or two

This feast occurred at the time of the new moon. In fact the entire Jewish calendar revolves around the moons cycles. Then as now the feast lasts 2 days though tradition says the second day was added during the time of the Prophets. Ezra observed this feast as seen in Nehemiah 8:2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. 13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.

A Psalm is devoted to this feast day it is Psalm 81. The ceremony of the blowing the shofar was a magnificent sight. The Priest chosen to do this was trained from childhood. On this first day they stood outside the Temple with 2 trumpets. This blowing represents a call to awaken the conscience.

Practical Facts

Judaism has several new years, On Tishri 1 began the Jewish civil year it is the first day of the 7th month. Nisan 1 is the New Year for counting the reign of kings and counting months. On Elul 1 is the New Year for the tithe to the Levites. The 15th of the month Shevat in February is the New Year for trees this determines when one could eat of the first fruits.

Even we here in America have three new years. January 1 starts the new calendar year, July 1 starts the fiscal year and September 1 starts the school year.

The Lord named all of the feasts but this one; He said it was a memorial but not what for. Some say it is for when Abraham was given a ram in place of Isaac in Genesis chapter 22. Others believe it is for the creation of the world

when the angels shouted as recorded in Job 38:7 “and all the sons of God shouted for joy”? The feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement are the holiest days of the year for Jews.

The Trumpets

The trumpet has always held a special place for the Jews. The two most important ones were made of silver (Numbers 10:2) these were used only by the Priest for approaching festivals and calling to war. Some were of rams horns (Joshua 6:8) these were for special festivals and seasons (Leviticus 23:24; 25:9; 1 Chronicles 15:24; 2 Chronicles 29:27; Psalm 81:3, 98:6) and in the book of Revelation chapters 1 verse 10 and chapter 8 verse 2.

Jewish Customs

The Feast of Trumpets requires a preparing of the spirit. The shofar is blown each morning and Psalm 27 is recited morning and evening. New Year cards are sent, cantors recite and choirs practice and an offering is made for the poor. The feast lasts two days to make sure they do not miss the new moon. The reformed Jews still only celebrate one day. The night before a special midnight (watch night) service is held called the time of “repentant prayers.”

The holiday begins in the evening; much of the service takes place in the synagogue except for a feast at home. As with all Sabbaths it starts with the women lighting the festival candles. The sound from the shofar is a series of broken staccato blasts to remind the people they need to break their evil inclinations. The shofar is not a straight horn but is bent as reminder to bend in respect to God.

There are 4 different sounds for the Feast.

1. A pure unbroken sound that calls each to search the heart for sin not confessed.
2. A broken staccato, trembling sound for the sorrow that comes when one realizes his wrong and desires to change.
3. A wave like sound of alarm calling for men to stand by the banner of God.

4. A prolonged unbroken sound for a final invitation to repent.

Jesus in the Feast of Trumpets

The blowing of the trumpets is a sign of the return of Christ and memorial of God's grace to Abraham when he substituted a ram to be sacrificed instead of Isaac. Isaac is a type or for shadowing of Christ. Just as Abraham offered his son on the altar, God offered his son on Calvary Hebrews 11:17, 19.

Trumpets were used in giving signals of war. Jesus is the commander of God's army. The Jewish people were looking for a deliverer to free them from Rome. Jesus however came the first time to defeat Satan and the sin in men's hearts Colossians 2:15 "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

This feast speaks to us about spiritual warfare as evidenced in Ephesians 6:11-13. The feast can be a very special time for believers. Too often we get into easy believeism which gives a head belief James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." There must be a repentant heart. The symbolism of what the Jews did at this time will help us remember our need to have repentant hearts.

Jesus Baptism

There is evidence from Christian Jews that Jesus was born in the fall at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, we will cover this at that time. It is also believed his baptism was in the fall and the forty days of temptation or the time of repentance. It is believed that this is the time He began His public ministry as seen in Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Prophetic Significance

The 3 major feasts are Passover, Pentecost, and Trumpets. We know Passover is Christ crucified, Pentecost is the coming of the Holy Spirit. So the feast of Trumpets must represent a very special time also and that is the Lord's return.

The trumpets were the signal for the field workers to come into the Temple. The High Priest stood on the South West parapet and blew so that in the surrounding fields he could be heard. At that moment the faithful would leave their harvesting even if there was more to be done and come in to worship. This is of course what will happen at the Rapture on Rosh Hashanah, a series of 100 trumpet blasts is sounded to announce the setting up of the eternal court, and the trumpets herald God as the all seeing all knowing Judge of the universe.

Jewish tradition says this court was to determine who are righteous and have their names in the book of life through the messiah. All others are a mix of good and bad. God delays their court so they may prepare a defense. This second date is Yom Kippur.

The Wedding 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

Trumpets will be fulfilled when Jesus comes to claim His own and we shall receive our new bodies. All those who are in the Lambs book of life are righteous, not by self deeds but by the blood of the Lamb.

Teshuvah and Days of Awe

The forty day season called Teshuvah (return or repentance) starts 30 days before Trumpets and is a shadow of God's prophetic plan. The last ten days are the Days of Awe. The days between Trumpets (2) and the Day of Atonement reflects the 7 years of tribulation as seen In Jeremiah 30:7.

Here is a breakdown of these days.

30 days of the month Elul – the church age

2 days for Trumpets – the Rapture

7 days of awe- the tribulation

1 day of Atonement- the 2nd coming

For 30 days the Trumpets or Shofar sounds every morning to remind all that the Holy days are coming, so preparation can be made. Preparation consists of confessing sins and seeking forgiveness along with a change in ones life.

Coronation of Jesus our King

Jewish eschatology teaches that on the Day of Atonement after 6,000 years the Day of the Lord will come. On that day the trumpet will sound and the dead will rise and attend the crowning of the King. Jewish end times say that the gates of heaven open on Rosh Hashanah and close on Yom Kippur. This brings us to Revelation 3:7- 11 now note the words open door and crown (as in coronation) also Daniel 7:9-14 speaks of the Messiah (Jesus) returning as King. In Revelation chapters 8-10 the 7 trumpets and “Mystery of God” are revealed at the final blasts see Rev. 10: 5-7.

We should because of the Feasts of Trumpets have a joyful expectation the can be seen in Titus 2:11 “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” and be patient in waiting in an attitude of obedience (1 Corinthians 1:7; 1Timothy 6:14). We should take the Feast of Trumpets and teach young and old about repentance and looking forward to the coming of Jesus.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT Lev. 23: 26-32

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

Overview

The Day of Atonement has 3 names, Day of Judgment, Sabbath of Sabbath, Day of Redemption, and this one that it is more commonly known as. It occurs on the 10th day of Tishri which is the seventh month. It is a holy day that is a permanent statute.

This is the day Israel's people are to be judged, it pictures the transference of sin. It is a reminder that the daily, weekly, and monthly sacrifices were not sufficient for their sins. It is customary to wear white on this day to symbolize purity and the promise of our sins being made white as seen in Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool". There is an inherent weakness in the law as seen in Hebrews 10:1, 4.

The Day of Atonement in the Old Testament

This day is the responsibility of the High Priest. He begins a week before as he stays in the priests chamber studying all the scripture pertaining to this day so there could be no mistakes at all, as an error could cost him his life. On this day he would speak a word 10 times that was never spoken at any other time and that is the word “Jehovah” (yhwh). When the people hear it they would fall on the ground in reverence.

The inside of the temple was 35’ wide by 140’ long; the priest came in by the priest porch which was 17 feet deep. He would then go through gilded Cyprus doors with flowers, palms and cherubim’s engraved on them. This brought him into the holy place. Beyond this was the olive wood doors leading to the Holy of Holies which was 35’ by 35’ here was the Ark, The Mercy Seat and the Cherubim. This room was entered only once a year on this day.

The High Priest would take off his official robes and put on a white garment consisting of 8 items as recorded in Leviticus 8:7 and Exodus 28:33-35

1. Gold crown
2. Breastplate over the heart
3. Outer robe with bells and pomegranate
4. Apron or vest
5. Four white pieces from flax
6. Belt
7. Turban
8. Linen britches

He then offered a bullock for himself and the priest hood. Next he filled the censor with coals from that offering and went into the Holy of Holies once inside he would put incense on the coals and the room would fill with smoke as a covering. He then took the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it on the mercy seat and the ground as a cleansing.

Then there follows the sacrifice of 7 male lambs 1 year old, a young bullock, and 1 ram. The sin offering was 1 male goat. Every step he took was scripted; the Talmud said he would make 43 trips from the outer court into the sanctuary. There are 40 steps the priest took to fulfill the entire task that day.

Ten times he called on Jehovah, 6 times in connection to the bullock, 3 times with the he goat, 1 with the casting of lots. Those closest enough would bow down and those farther away made this recitation “Blessed be His name whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever”. Neither group would move until the scapegoat was gone.

The Fast

The fast, penitential prayers, Bible readings, and confessions pointed to one thing and that was to atone for sin as seen in Leviticus 16: 31 “It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever”, and chapter 23:27-32 and Numbers 29:7. “Afflicting” is interpreted to mean a fast that included these 5 areas of life

1. Abstain from food
2. Marital relations
3. Wearing leather shoes
4. Using cosmetics and lotion
5. Bathing except fingers and eyes.

The pleasure of these is seen as being opposed to afflicting the soul. One needs to read the following passages to gain a fuller understanding of the fast. Jonah 3:6; Ezekiel 9:5; Joshua 7:5- 13; Jeremiah 6:26; Lamentations 2:10.

Jewish Custom

The sacrifices ceased with the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D.

They still practice the fast by ceasing work of all types, attending the synagogue. Every male 13 and over and female 12 and over are mandated to practice these rules. They are to wear white clothes and attend synagogue.

Jesus in the Day of Atonement

Go to Romans 2: 23-24 “Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written”. We know Jesus is

our atonement. Jesus death surpasses and replaces the atonement and ritual of the temple, as in Hebrews 9: 11-12. The Old Testament Tabernacle was designed in part to teach Israel that sin hindered access to God. Only the High Priest could enter and only once a year as in Hebrews 9:7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: and on in verses 11-14. To the people this served as a reminder that the perfect atonement had not yet been offered (12). The Old Testament offerings were a prophecy of Jesus (13-14). God at the right time provided the last offering see John 1:19 and 3:16. When Jesus died the veil was rent top to bottom and the earth quaked as a mark of Jesus being the eternal High Priest. Jesus took His blood to the heavenly Holy of Holies. Because of this we need not to stand afar off as the Israelites did.

The Two Goats

After purifying the holy place and the altar of burnt offering with the Blood of the bullock the High Priest went to the eastern side of the court in front of the Temple. There he would find 2 goats nearby was a box inside was two tablets on one was written "For God" and the other "For Azazel which means "scapegoat. He shook the box and then drew out one and put it in front of the one goat and then the second. The one "For God" was sacrificed the other the High Priest laid hands on and confessed the sins of Israel, this goat was then driven into the wilderness.

In this same way Jesus was brought before Pilate about to be led out bearing the impurities of all. It took two goats to do what Jesus did (Lev. 16:17, 21-22; 16:7-10, 18, 22). Tradition says that a red wool cord was tied to the goat horn when the red turned white it was a sign that God had forgiven them as seen in Isaiah 1:18.

Prophetic Significance

1. The second coming or judgment seen in the ten days of awe these are a picture of the rapture as follows 2

days (trumpets) tribulation (7 days between) and 2nd coming (Day of Atonement). As for the 2nd coming Jesus made two promises before He ascended. One the Comforter would come to us and second He would return as stated in John 14:3. This Day of Atonement may well be the day Jesus comes physically to establish His Kingdom here Matthew 13: 24-26

2. Day of Judgment- Peter wrote of this in 2nd Peter 3:10-13; also Matthew 25: 31-34 and 2nd Corinthians 5:10. In the coming judgment; we find at the judgment seat there is forgiveness, mercy and grace to those under the blood (Romans 5:1-2).

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Feast of Tabernacles Lev. 23:34-43

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Overview

This is the last of the major feasts ordered by God. It is known by three names, 1 Tabernacles; 2 Booths; 3 Feast of Ingathering. This feast lasts for one week beginning 5 days after the Day of Atonement. In that week the Israelites went from the most solemn event to the most joyous event. This

feast derives its name from the temporary dwellings they are to live in for the week. The feast lasts for 7 days ending on the 21st day of Tishri.

This holiday has a dual significance; first historically it was kept in remembrance of the dwelling in tents in the wilderness (Lev. 23:43). Second agriculturally it is a time of celebration and thanksgiving for the concluded harvest.

Bible Times

As the first day approached the booths were made to eat and sleep in. Four huge Menorahs were built and lit so that the entire city was illuminated around these there was much dancing, singing of hymns and praise to God. This often lasted through the night. The holiday follows the outline in Leviticus chapter 23.

1. they lived in Booths vs. 42
2. They rested from all regular work on the 1st and 8th days.
3. The Priest made offering each of the 7 days beginning with 13 bulls and using one less each day until the 7th when 7 were sacrificed.
4. On the 8th day it was 1 bull, 1 ram, 7 lambs (Num. 29:36) for a total of 189 animals
5. Men carried clusters of branches to the synagogue to wave as they rejoiced Lev. 23:40 “And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days:

The last day of the ceremony was called Hasha’na Rabba or Day of the Great Hosanna and Psalms 113 through 118 were sung.

Jesus in the Feast

Jesus celebrated Tabernacles every year. He taught in the temple during this feast. His disciples did not expect Him to attend. The pilgrims hoped he would and Jesus did not disappoint them. He taught daily in Solomon’s porch. This boldness so amazed His enemies as they were not prepared for this challenge. On the last day the day the priest poured out

water on the altar in thanksgiving for the rain. Jesus taught the crowd that gathered for this that He was the very fountain of living water as recorded in John 7:37-38 "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Spiritual lessons from this feast

The first thing we can see is that God is our shelter (Isaiah 25:4) as the booths covered the Israelites; Jesus covers us in His blood. Second is that we should not hold on too tightly to material things. These things can manipulate us. We need to seek God's Kingdom not earthly comfort as Jesus stated in Luke 12:31 "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you". Third our spiritual thirst cannot be quenched with anything less than Christ our living water as seen in John 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life". Jesus washes away our sins as he is that true and living water that cleanses us from sin, see Hebrews 9:13-14. Fourth Jesus is the light of the world. The light from the 4 Menorahs lit up the entire city. Jesus likely referred to this when He said He was the light, see John 1:1-9; 8:12, 9:5.

Jesus is preparing our permanent home. These physical bodies are only temporary places (tabernacles) our hope is not in these tents but rather the permanent home now being prepared for us, read John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also". As the Israelites left their bondage from Egypt, we in turn leave the bondage of sin in our lives.

The birth of Jesus in Tabernacles

Now we come to a great question; was the birth of Jesus during this feast. Many Bible teachers believe this is so. We know He left His heavenly home to tabernacle with us as stated in John 1: 14.

We know He was not born in the winter months as the sheep were in the field (Luke 2:8). We also know Zachariah ministered during the week of the month Sivan 12 to 18 now adding 40 weeks we have John the Baptist being born on or about Passover. Six months after John was conceived Jesus was conceived see Luke 1: 26-33. Now six months after John was born would be the month Kislev on the 25th of this month is Hanukkah or the festival of lights. So was the light of the world conceived on the festival of lights? Now counting 9 months from the 25th one arrives at the Feast of Tabernacles around September 15th to 20th.

During this feast all males had to go to Jerusalem with such a crowd they would spill out into the surrounding towns such as Bethlehem. Due to the travel difficulties in that day and region; taxes were collected during these three feasts, see Luke 2:1.

Now Jesus came to dwell with us in a body (tabernacle) like ours. He would very well have been born in a tabernacle as they dotted the landscape to shelter the travelers and their animals. The word “stable” is called a “Sukkoth” in Genesis 33:17 and Luke 2:7.

Now they went to Egypt and stayed some 40 days. We know it was around 40 days as Mary had to complete her purification on the 40th day and also have the dedication of Jesus. The angel had told Joseph to go there to wait until Herod the King died and according to Josephus, Herod’s death was in the autumn of 4 B.C.

Prophetic Significance

These 3 fall festivals speak of a future time when we will again tabernacle with God see Revelation 21:3 “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God”. It is a day when all nations will gather in Jerusalem read Zechariah 8:22 “Yea, many people and

strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD” and 14:16 “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” Even now the Jews are traveling back to Israel from a hundred countries, and by the thousands every year..