

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

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Talbot's examination of the seven Jewish feasts in Leviticus 23 showing their typological significance regarding Christ, explaining how the feasts celebrate redemption, worship, fellowship, and the believer's pilgrimage.

12 Chapters

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01 "The Law... A Shadow Of Good Things To Come"

CHAPTER ONE

"THE LAW... A SHADOW OF GOOD THINGS TO COME" Hebrews 10:1

While the children of Israel were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai; "the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Leviticus 1:1).

And the message which God spake unto Moses in that day; comprises the whole of the book of Leviticus. Among other commandments which He gave to His people on this solemn occasion we find His instructions regarding the observance of "the feasts of the Lord," recorded in chapter twenty-three.

This chapter opens with these words:

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts."

There were seven of them, and each was to be observed annually.

It is our purpose in this study to consider the typical teaching of these seven "feasts of the Lord," for they are rich in spiritual lessons for God's people of all ages. But before we begin this study in detail, let us consider briefly what we mean by the "types."

The Epistle to the Hebrews, more than any other New Testament book, is a kind of commentary on Old Testament ritualism and Old Testament prophecy. Frequently in this letter we read the words "shadow" and "figure"; and in Hebrews 10:1 we read the plain declaration that "the law" was "a shadow of good things to come."

Now the Holy Spirit often refers to the first five books of the Bible as "the law," "the law of Moses," and "the book of the law." In another, more limited, sense the words spoken by God to Moses from Mount Sinai are called "the law"; and in yet another sense the whole of the Old Testament is described by this term. In any case, from Genesis to Malachi we have hundreds of "shadows" or "figures" or types of "good things to come"-all fulfilled in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One in whom the "good things to come" find their full and complete and final fulfillment.

Some of these many types deal with the person of the Lord Jesus, His eternal deity and His perfect humanity. Others deal with His work on the cross, in His resurrection, in His present ministry of intercession, and in His coming glory. Yet others deal with the ages, and show us in shadow or prophecy God's eternal purpose, from the past eternity to the future eternity.

In the feasts of the Lord we see many wonderful types of the person and work of Christ; and these we shall consider as we follow this series of studies.

But first let us grasp the broad, outline purpose of these “holy convocations”; for in a remarkable way they show us God’s eternal purpose in His dealings with man throughout the ages.

In Hebrews 1:2 we read that the eternal Son of God “made the worlds”; or, as the literal meaning of the phrase is that He framed or “made the ages.”

In our study of “God’s Plan of the Ages” we have tried to comprehend something of this “eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11). And we have seen that it finds its accomplishment in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ-eternal God, perfect Man, and only Saviour of sinners.

We have seen that in Old Testament days men were saved by trusting in the Christ of prophecy, even as “Abraham rejoiced” to see His day, and “was glad” (John 8:56). And we have seen that all who live in New Testament times much approach God on the ground of the finished work of Christ on Calvary, if they are to inherit eternal life.

This truth was in the mind and heart of the hymn writer who sang:

“In the cross of Christ I glory, Tow’ring o’er the wrecks of time;

All the light of sacred story Gathers ’round its head sublime.” But you may ask: Is it really true that in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus and in all the Old Testament we find set forth in type and shadow God’s great plan of the ages, wrought out in the person and work of Christ?

Can we be sure that these types have not sprung from the imagination of men? Yes, my friend, we can be very sure, as we search the Scriptures to find out whether these things are so. For our answer let us turn, not only to the words of the Holy Spirit, to which we have already referred: “The law” was “a shadow of good things to come”; but let us look also at the plain statements of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Two of these we find in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke.

The risen Christ, withholding His identity from the two disciples, was walking with them to Emmaus.

Having listened to them as they rehearsed the story of His own death and resurrection, He said unto them: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27).

Rebuking these disciples for their unbelief, the risen Lord said that the prophets had foretold His sufferings and “the glory that should follow.”

Moreover, He began His exposition of all the Old Testament with Moses’ writings; and Moses, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote the first five books of the Bible. “Beginning at Moses”-Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy- “he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” What a wonderful exposition that must have been!

Later in this same chapter we read that the risen Lord said practically the same thing to the ten disciples:

“These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me” (Luke 24:44).

And in John 5:39; John 5:46 we read that Christ gave the Old Testament Scriptures as one of the infallible proofs of His deity-the New Testament was not then written. “Ye search the scriptures,” He said to the unbelieving Jews, “for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me . . . Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me” (John 5:39; John 5:46).

“Beginning at Moses” we read the story of God’s great plan of redemption. Hundreds of prophecies, given in plain declaration and in shadow and type, foretold the coming into the world of the eternal Son of God, the only Redeemer and Lord. And why are there so many shadows and types? you may ask. Because one-or a few-could not tell the whole story of the wonderful person and mighty work of Christ Jesus, the Lord.

When I was coming to this country from Australia, I visited the Dore Art Gallery in London. As the guide led me first to one platform, then to another, to view the same painting, I realized that he was showing me the one picture from different angles. And so it is in the Word of God. The Holy Spirit leads us to behold first one and then another of the marvelous portraits of our Lord and Saviour. So wonderful is His glorious person, and so marvelous is His work on our behalf, that our poor, little, finite minds can not grasp the picture in one glance. And throughout the endless ages we shall be finding new marvels as we gaze upon the face of the Son of God!

~ end of chapter 1 ~

02 "Moses... Who Wrote Of Me"

CHAPTER TWO

"MOSES . . . WROTE OF ME" (John 5:46)

We can better understand the typical significance of the feasts of the Lord if we first get a glimpse of the context and setting of the record, according to the Scriptures.

We have already seen that God's commandments concerning them are found in one chapter, right in the very heart of the books of Moses. But that is not enough; we want to find out something of the whole message of these five books, of which this one chapter is but a part.

In Genesis we are impressed with the repeated failure of man, as God gives him trial after trial. Beginning with the ease, comfort, and blessing of the Garden of Eden, picturing God in fellowship and communion with man, this first book of the Bible closes with words that speak of death—"in a coffin in Egypt."

Cain, who knew all the background of his parents' sin, and the consequences thereof, became a murderer!

In the days before the flood; "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5).

Noah, who saw the awful judgment of God upon a corrupt world, afterwards failed to govern himself. (See Genesis 9:20-23).

In direct defiance of God, wicked men built the tower of Babel, bringing confusion and division among men.

Abraham, though "the friend of God," yet disobeyed Him by going down to Egypt, the very place where God had told him not to go.

What a record! What a tragedy! Failure--sin-death! This is the message of Genesis, together with the promise of a Redeemer. And it may be summed up in these words: "Ye must be born again."

Then follows Exodus; the book of redemption.

It opens with Israel in bondage in Egypt, under the lash of the taskmaster. And it takes us on to see the deliverance of God's people on the night of the first passover, deliverance from the bondage of Pharaoh's tyranny and deliverance from the waters of judgment as the nation walked through the Red Sea on dry ground.

All this is but a picture of the deliverance of the sinner from the bondage of Satan by faith in the shed blood of the Paschal Lamb, even Jesus, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

But in Exodus there is yet more—there is the record of the building of the Jewish tabernacle, in order that a holy God might come down and dwell among His people during their wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan.

Exodus closes with the tabernacle erected and the cloud of glory covering this “tent of the congregation.” This was the Shekinah Glory, a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, the presence of God “in the midst” of His redeemed people. Thus we see that Exodus is the book of redemption, and shows how sinful man may have fellowship restored with a holy God.

Before the record of the wilderness journey is resumed in the book of Numbers, we find in Leviticus the words of the Lord, given to Moses as He “spoke unto him out of the tabernacle” (Leviticus 1:1).

And God called unto Moses from the tabernacle, because it was His great desire to have His people in there with Him. He gave to them words of instruction concerning the worship of a wilderness people. As we have seen, the whole of Leviticus is but the record of the word of the Lord, spoken to Moses at the foot of Mount Sinai. Herein God tells a redeemed people how they may worship Him—on the ground of sacrifice. Therefore, Leviticus opens with the five offerings, all of which set forth the person and work of Christ.

The burnt offering and the meal offering typify His personal perfections and glories; the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering set forth His redemptive work.

We cannot go fully into the typical significance of these five offerings in this study; but in order that we may better understand the feasts of the Lord, let us pause just here for a brief glance at the meaning of the offerings; for fellowship with God in partaking of His “feasts” was based upon a right relationship with Him by faith in the redemptive work of Christ, the promised Messiah.

In the burnt offering and in the meat [meal] offering there was no leaven; for leaven, in the Word of God, is always a type of sin; and these two offerings represent the perfections and excellencies of the person of Christ, in whom there is no sin. Therefore, they went up as “a sweet savour” unto God.

“The whole burnt offering” was offered on the altar; none of it was to be eaten by the priests; and never was the Son more precious to the Father than when He offered Himself “without spot or blemish” as the whole burnt offering, on behalf of the guilty sinner.

The meal offering speaks to us of the perfect humanity of Christ. The “fine flour,” with no unevenness, no coarseness, reminds us that in Him was no sin; while the “oil” in Scripture is always a type of the Holy Spirit. At the Incarnation and at the baptism of our Lord we see, as it were, the “fine flour . . . mingled with oil.” The sinless Son of Man was born of the Holy Spirit and baptized with the Holy Spirit. All through His earthly ministry He worked in the power of the Holy Spirit; and He was raised from the dead by “the spirit of holiness” (Romans 1:4).

The peace offering, the sin offering and the trespass offering, represent the work of Christ on behalf of man, and deal with every phase of sin. Therefore, they are called the “non-sweet savour” offerings. Making “peace” for us “through the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:20), becoming “sin for us, who knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21), and dealing with sin in its working against God—these are the three phases of Christ’s redemptive work for us, as typified by the three non-sweet

savour offerings.

As the book of Exodus closes, we see Moses and all Israel shut out of the tabernacle where God dwells in the midst of His people. Then as Leviticus opens, God calls “unto Moses” and shows him how worship and fellowship with Him may be restored -on the basis of the offerings, which pointed on to Christ.

With worship made possible by faith in the promised Redeemer, God goes on to invite Moses and his people to sit at His table and share with Him His “feasts.” That upon which He delights His soul is none other than the person and work of His Son, our Saviour, the Bread of Life and the Living Water to the hungry, thirsty soul.

Later on in the history of Israel, as they rejected their Messiah, the Holy Spirit ceased to call these “holy convocations” the “feasts of the Lord”; He called them, in the Gospels, the “feasts of the Jews.” They lose their real meaning unless the Lord Jesus is the object of worship and delight. But with Him as the Bread of Heaven, they are the “feasts of the Lord.” And to us today, as to Israel in the wilderness, God is saying, “Come, and enjoy this feast with Me.”

Numbers takes up the story of the journey from Egypt to Canaan, a type of the believer’s pilgrimage from the Christ-rejecting world to the Promised Land, even heaven itself.

Israel met with temptations and trials and testings on this journey; likewise, the Christian in this world is on the enemy’s territory. We need not be surprised, therefore, when the trials come. But the goal, ever before us, enables us to say with Paul: “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

Deuteronomy finds God’s people at the very entrance to the land of promise, at the end of their long, weary journey. And one day we, too, shall reach the end of our earthly pilgrimage.

As we shall then look back over all the way the Lord has led us, we shall thank Him for deliverance from bondage to Satan and sin; we shall thank Him for fellowship restored; and we shall thank Him even for the trials and testings that brought us closer to His guiding hand.

This is the message of the books of Moses; and this is the setting in which we find His own words concerning His feasts. As we examine the record, we see why the Lord Jesus, “beginning at Moses,” expounded unto the two disciples on the way to Emmaus “the things concerning himself.”

We see why He said to the Pharisees, “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me” (John 5:46).

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy--these are the books of Moses; and they tell the story of sin, redemption, worship, pilgrimage journey, and Promised Land in sight. These things were “a shadow of good things to come”; and they are fulfilled in the person and work of the eternal Son of God.

“THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME” (Psalms 23:5)

It is in this setting that we find the instructions regarding the feasts of the Lord. It is here that we find a holy God inviting His redeemed people to share with Him the things which delight His heart.

The wisest of men once wrote, saying, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love" (Song of Solomon 2:4). The Psalmist also said, "Thou preparest a table before me."

The Lord Jesus is the Bread of God. At His baptism and again at His transfiguration the Father's voice spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The feasts which delight the heart of the Father are those feasts which proclaim the glories and the excellencies of the "beloved Son."

Is He the Bread of Life to you, my friend? "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalms 34:8). The Father invites you to share with Him His delight in the One "altogether lovely." Is He the object of your affections? Is He the One whom you delight to please? Then for you the feasts of the Lord hold mines of wealth untold!

~ end of chapter 2 ~

03 "These Are The Feasts Of The Lord"

CHAPTER THREE

"THESE ARE THE FEASTS OF THE LORD" (Leviticus 23:4)

Before we begin the study of each feast in detail, let us read the whole of the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, noting certain significant facts.

First let us note that they were to be observed annually, at certain stated times. Israel was thus continually reminded, year after year, century after century, of the lessons God was teaching her concerning her coming Messiah.

Again, these "holy convocations" began with the Sabbath and closed with the Sabbath. This is an important truth for us to grasp.

- The Sabbath before the feasts of the Lord points back to God's eternal rest which He had before sin entered the world to break that rest.
- The Sabbath following the feasts points on to God's eternal rest which He will share with the redeemed throughout the endless ages.

And between these two Sabbaths there came the feasts of the Lord—a picture of God's purpose for man throughout the ages, in redeeming him and leading him on, even unto his eternal rest in heaven. By faith we "enter into" that rest even in this life; but in its full and complete enjoyment "there remaineth . . . a rest (or 'keeping of a sabbath') to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9).

As we examine the record further, we note that there were seven of these feasts; and seven is the number that speaks of completion. We find also that some of them were to be observed in one day each, whereas the others covered a period of seven days each.

- The one-day feasts represented definite acts of God, accomplished in a day;
- The seven-day feasts represented His dealings with His people over a period of time.

They pointed on to the outcome of these one-day acts.

Again we turn to the inspired record and read:

"These are the feasts of the Lord" (Leviticus 23:4).

Let us outline them before we take each one up separately to see what distinct message it holds for us:

1. The Feast of the Passover, which finds its fulfillment in the death of "Christ our passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7), was to be observed "in the fourteenth day of the first month at even" (Leviticus 23:5).

2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed the Passover, and was closely linked with it. It began “on the fifteenth day of the same month,” and was to be observed for seven days (Leviticus 23:6).

This finds its fulfillment, as we shall see, in the holy walk of the believer as he feeds upon Christ, “the bread of life.”

3. The Feast of the Firstfruits, observed “on the morrow after the sabbath” (Leviticus 23:11); that is, three days after the Passover, on the first day of the week, is a remarkable type of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, on the first day of the week, “when the sabbath was fully past,” three days after He offered Himself as the Paschal Lamb on Calvary’s cross. He is, indeed, “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20).

4. The Feast of Pentecost, so called because it came fifty days after the feast of the firstfruits (“Pentecost” is a Greek word meaning “fiftieth”), finds its fulfillment in the descent of the Holy Spirit “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1), exactly fifty days after the resurrection of Christ.

Between the feasts of Pentecost and trumpets there was a long interval of several months, during which time Israel was to glean in the harvest field (Leviticus 23:22)-a striking type of this present Church Age, from Pentecost to the translation of the Church, while the harvest of souls is being gathered into the garner of the Lord. Then in the seventh month the three remaining feasts were observed; the fulfillment of which is yet future.

5. The Feast of Trumpets, “a memorial of blowing of trumpets” (Leviticus 23:24), gathered the people together to worship the Lord God. Before Christ returns in glory to be worshipped as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Israel will have been re-gathered to her own land of Palestine; and then the feast of trumpets will find its fulfillment.

6. The Day of Atonement was a time of mourning, and points on to the time when Israel shall “look upon” Him “whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son” (Zechariah 12:10). The details of the ritualism of the Day of Atonement are highly significant; we shall go into them later.

7. The Feast of Tabernacles, observed for seven days (Leviticus 23:24), was a time of rejoicing, and points on to the millennial reign of Christ, the Son of David, over re-gathered and redeemed Israel and over the whole world.

“These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons,” God said to Moses as He “called unto” him, and “spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation” many centuries ago at the foot of Mount Sinai.

“And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the Lord” (Leviticus 23:44), even as God had commanded him to do.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

04 The Feast Of The Passover

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

(Leviticus 23:5; Exodus 12:1-13; 1 Corinthians 5:7) The feast of the Passover is the only one of the seven feasts of the Lord not described in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus; and the reason for this is that Israel had already been given full instructions regarding its observance before their deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

Let us turn back to Exodus 12:1-13, and refresh our minds in regard to the story of the first Passover and the details of its observance from year to year.

The Israelites were in Egypt, slaves of Pharaoh, under the lash of the taskmaster. This bondage had lasted for four hundred bitter years, and Pharaoh was determined not to let God's people go. Moreover, Israel did not deserve deliverance. Had she not sinned in selling Joseph into Egypt, thus bringing upon the nation the righteous judgment of God? But God in grace delivered His people.

What a picture this is of our own state and the state of every sinner saved by grace!

In Egypt, as it were; that is, in the Christ-rejecting world; in bondage to Satan and sin, we deserve the righteous judgment of God. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). The Lord Jesus Christ delivered us from the enemy of our souls when He died on Calvary!

Nine plagues, terrible in their consequences, had not been enough to make the rebellious Pharaoh relent. Then God told Moses that He would send one last, great plague upon the land- the death of the firstborn. And here is where God's grace entered in: He provided a way of escape for His people who, by faith, would kill the paschal lamb and sprinkle the blood, even as He commanded.

In every detail of the ritual, we see the type marvelously fulfilled in the Lamb of Calvary.

Let us examine the record carefully.

1. "This Shall Be the Beginning of Months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Exodus 12:2).

Thus God commanded His people to revise their calendar, and to observe the month of their deliverance from year to year as "a memorial" throughout their generations (Exodus 12:14).

The spiritual significance of this commandment of God is not hard to find. In 1 Corinthians 5:7 Paul tells us that "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"; and again, in 2 Corinthians 5:17 : "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation] : old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

God reckons a man's life and service only from the time he is born again.

Israel in Egyptian bondage was, as it were, “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). The blood of the paschal lamb saved them from the judgment of death. Their new relationship to the Lord was founded upon the sprinkled blood. Therefore, it was “the beginning of months . . . the first month of the year.”

When I first came to this country, I went to the Pacific Garden Mission in the heart of Chicago, where hundreds of derelicts and wrecks of humanity have found in Christ their Passover Lamb. When a grey-haired man stood and testified, saying, “I am twenty years old today,” I did not understand what he meant. Then when he went on to explain that the twentieth previous year had marked his second birthday, his spiritual birthday.

I remembered what God meant when He said to Israel in Egypt, “This shall be the beginning of months.”

My dear brother, have you had your spiritual birthday? You may have respectability, morality, even church membership, and yet not be “a new creation in Christ Jesus.” “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Let Him create in you a new heart. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

2. “The Lord Did Bring the Children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt” (Exodus 12:51).

It was a night of perfect freedom. From a slave-people, Israel became a nation of warriors. From the whip of the taskmaster, from bondage in Egypt; “the Lord did bring the children of Israel” into full and complete liberty.

Even so, Christ has come to preach “freedom to the captives.” “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (John 5:35). But “if the Son . . . shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 5:36).

“Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:22-23).

In Pharaoh’s household “the wages of sin” was death -the death of the firstborn and eternal separation from God; but in Israel, with her people sheltered behind the sprinkled blood, “the gift of God” was life-physical life to the firstborn and eternal life to all who put their trust in the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

My unsaved friend, Jesus is the Paschal Lamb; and He can set the captive free. He can deliver you from the power of Satan and from bondage to evil habits and secret sins. Then you will be able to sing, in the words of the hymn:

“Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,

Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;

Into Thy freedom, gladness, and light,

Jesus, I come to Thee.

“Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee.”

3. “Your Lamb Shall Be without Blemish, a male of the first year” (Exodus 12:5).

The physical perfection of the paschal lamb was but a faint picture of the moral perfection of the Lamb of God!

Peter tells us in words not to be misunderstood: “Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year,” the Lord said to Israel in Egypt. And redeemed Israel put her faith in the sinless Lamb of God who was to come and suffer and die, in the full strength and vigor of His manhood—the sinless Saviour.

Satan tempted our Lord, but our Lord Jesus Christ is holy; He could not sin!

“In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

He is “touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” because He was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (or apart from sin)” (Hebrews 4:15). He is “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens” (Hebrews 7:26).

That is why He could be our Saviour; He was and is and ever shall be “without blemish and without spot.”

4. “Ye Shall Keep It Up until the Fourteenth Day” (Exodus 12:6).

“In the tenth day of the month” (Exodus 12:3) Israel was to take the lamb, keeping it up, under observation, for four days. Why? In order to test it, to prove it, to see if it was really “without blemish.”

Here again the type is very clear. Throughout His boyhood and early manhood and for three and one-half years of public ministry our Lord was closely, keenly, cruelly observed by wicked men who sought to find fault with Him. The Pharisees sent officers to take Him, but they did not take Him; and their only excuse was this: “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:46). Even Pilate was forced to make the declaration: “I find no fault in him” (John 19:6). He was the perfect Son of Man because He was also the eternal Son of God.

5. “The Whole Assembly of the Congregation Shall Kill It,” God said to Moses regarding the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:6).

And every sinner of all the ages, from the time of Adam, had a part in crucifying the Son of God.

Your sins and mine and the sins of the whole world sent Jesus to the cross. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5-6).

That the paschal lamb was but a type of Christ in His death is seen in the fact that our Lord went to Calvary on the very day of the feast of the Passover.

Every one of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, is careful to tell us this significant fact. Had you ever thought of that last Passover supper in the light of this "memorial" of the centuries, my friend? The Lord Jesus knew when He sat around that table with His disciples for "the last supper" that He was the true Passover Lamb!

In the light of this eternal truth how precious does the Lord's Supper become to the believer, instituted by Him on that night as a new memorial, by which to remember His death "till he come"! No longer do we observe the Old Testament ritualism; no longer do we kill the lamb and feed upon it; for the types and shadows were done away when Christ offered Himself "once for all."

Have you ever thanked Him, my dear brother, for bearing your sins on Calvary's cross? He loves you, and He is waiting to save you; but He does not force Himself upon you.

Listen to His words of invitation: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

6. "When I See the Blood, I Will Pass Over You" (Exodus 12:13).

These are remarkable words! The sinless life, the perfect example of the Lord Jesus could not save a lost world, any more than the lamb without blemish, unslain, could save the firstborn in Israel from the judgment of death in that fateful night.

The lamb had to be slain, and the blood applied. So also Christ had to die, and His precious blood must be applied to the sinful heart of him who would escape eternal condemnation. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11).

"Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." It would take pages and pages to quote the many passages from God's own Word which tell us that it is the blood of the Lord Jesus that atones for sin.

This is the message of the Gospel!

Will you note also where Israel was to sprinkle the shed blood of the innocent victim? It was to be applied "on the two side posts and on the upper post of the houses" (Exodus 12:7).

You see in this-the blood on the lintel and on the two side posts-the very sign of the cross, a foreshadowing of Calvary. Between the destroying angel and the Hebrew there stood the sprinkled blood in the form of a cross. It was not to be sprinkled on the threshold; for "the blood of the covenant," the shed blood of the Son of God, of which the sprinkled blood of the passover lamb was but a type, is not to be "trodden under foot" (Hebrews 10:29).

That precious blood is sacred, and woe be to that man who scorns it or rejects it or is indifferent to it! Christ died for the sins of the whole world; but the man is eternally lost who goes out of this life refusing to let the Holy Spirit apply the shed blood of the Lamb of God to his sinful heart.

Once it is sprinkled there, God says to the redeemed soul: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Isaiah 44:22).

My unsaved friend, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

7. "Thus Shall Ye Eat It . . . It Is the Lord's Passover" (Exodus 12:11).

God gave to Israel some very definite instructions as to how they should feed upon the paschal lamb, as they stayed indoors from evening until midnight. So we, too, have been left in this dark world for a little while-for communion with Him whose blood was shed for us, even as we witness to His name. It is our privilege, as well as our responsibility, to feed upon Christ, the Bread of Life. But let us look further at the definite commands God gave as to how Israel was to feed upon the paschal lamb.

(a) "They shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire" (Exodus 12:8).

What does it mean to "eat the flesh" of the Lamb? The Lord Jesus answered this question when He was on earth, and John has recorded His answer in the sixth chapter of the Gospel which bears his name. Turn to this record, and read every word of it carefully. There you will find that the unbelieving Jews raised the very question which we have just asked, when they "strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (John 6:52).

Christ had miraculously fed the five thousand on the previous day; and when the multitudes continued to follow Him, He answered them and said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you: for him hath the Father sealed" (John 6:26-27).

With these words the Lord Jesus began His great discourse on "the bread of life." "I am the bread of life," He said repeatedly; "he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

Then it was that Christ went on to say: "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world . . . Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed . . . He that eateth of this bread shall live forever" (John 6:51; John 6:53-58).

Moreover, the Lord did not leave us in doubt as to what He meant by these words. When He "knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:61-63).

To “eat the flesh” of the Lamb, my brother, is to receive His Word into your heart by the Holy Spirit day by day. And Israel feeding upon the paschal lamb on the night of the first Passover is just a picture of what countless thousands have done throughout the ages, as they have fed their souls upon “the bread of life.”

The Word of God is constantly compared to food.

- Job, under the fires of testing, said of it: “I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food” (Job 23:12).

- The Psalmist also wrote, saying: “How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Psalms 119:103).

- The Lord Jesus rebuked Satan when He was being tempted with that familiar utterance: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

May I ask you, my friend: Have you eaten of the flesh of the Lamb today? Before you went to your breakfast, did you feed upon “the bread of life”? “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

(b) “Eat not of it raw, not sodden at all with water, but roast with fire,” God said to Moses concerning the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:9).

Our Lord Jesus suffered the fires of judgment for our sins when He died on the cross. And we cannot feed upon Him, the Bread of Life, unless we accept Him as the only Saviour from sin.

There can be no carnal communion with Him, no mere historical appreciation of His beautiful life. We must “eat the flesh . . . roast with fire.”

If we are going to feed upon the Word of God, we must let it stand as it is!

We have no right to take out of it what we may not happen to like—the doctrine of the total depravity of the human soul, of an eternal hell for the wicked, of the need of the cross for the sinner who would escape the judgment he deserves. We have no right or authority to rob the eternal Son of God of His deity by relegating the teaching regarding His virgin birth and His bodily resurrection to the stock of myths and fables. Either He is eternal God and only Saviour, or we have no “bread of life,” upon which to feed our hungry souls!

(c) “With bitter herbs they shall eat it” (Exodus 12:8).

We shall see the significance of the eating of “unleavened bread,” which followed on the day after the Passover, when we come to the study of “the feast of unleavened bread.” But here let us note that the lamb, “roast with fire,” was to be eaten “with bitter herbs.”

This reminds us not only of the bitter “cup” which our Lord drank when He became our Sin-Bearer; but it also takes our thoughts back to His own words: “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mark 8:34).

When you take Christ as your Saviour, my friend, so far as the world is concerned, it will mean eating the bitter herbs; that is, if your testimony is out-and-out for Him. You may be ridiculed or

even persecuted, as Paul was, and as were all the martyrs of Jesus. Even those you love best may make your way hard because of your testimony for Christ.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation,” the Saviour said; “but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

And there will be no bitter herbs in heaven! Again our Lord’s own words encourage our hearts: “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” (Matthew 19:29).

(d) “And they shall eat the flesh in that night . . . his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire” (Exodus 12:8-10).

Now “the head” represents the thoughts; “the legs” represent the walk; while “the purtenance thereof” speaks of the heart. We must know what our Lord taught, and act upon it in our conduct, even as we feed our souls upon that which filled His heart—the love and compassion and infinite tenderness of the Son of God.

We can know what He taught only as we study His Word. Then only can we “walk in the light, as he is in the light” (1 John 1:7). And, in this daily fellowship with Him, we shall know in ever-increasing measure of the meaning of the prayer:

“Give me a heart like Thine;

By Thy wonderful power,

By Thy grace ev’ry hour,

Give me a heart like Thine!”

If we want to tell the derelicts and the wrecks of humanity something of the love of God, my friend, we must feed upon the heart of the Lamb.

- He knew what it was to weep over His beloved city.

- He had sympathy for those who had missed the way.

- He was moved with compassion as He saw men and women rushing on to the judgment bar of God, unsaved and undone.

His love for sinners brought Him all the way from glory to die the most shameful of deaths. Do you know what it is to feed upon the heart of the Lamb, my Christian friend? If you do, then He can use you as a winner of souls.

None of the paschal lamb was to be left until the morning; all that remained was to be burned with fire. And all that our Lord is in His person, all His redemptive work for us—these things are precious and sacred. They are not to be lightly esteemed or discarded or despised.

(e) “Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s Passover” (Exodus 12:11).

Four distinct commands given in this statement tell us that God is not pleased with idle, careless Christians. Israel was to eat the lamb:

- (1) with girded loins;
- (2) with their shoes on their feet;
- (3) with staff in hand;
- (4) in haste.

God knew that He would deliver them from Egyptian bondage that night, and that a long pilgrimage was before them. He knew that Egypt was doomed, and that His people must be up and away. Therefore, He told them to be ready for the march.

What a lesson this should be to every one of us today! Paul tells us to put on the whole armour of God, having our "loins girt about with truth" (Ephesians 6:14). And Peter adds: "Gird up the loins of your mind" (1 Peter 1:13). With a belt of Scripture around the desires that emanate from the mind and heart, we shall then set our affections "on things above" (Colossians 3:1-2).

We are living in a day when looseness of character, like a flabby garment, is seen, even in many who profess the name of Christ. Let us gird up the loins of our minds with the truth of God's eternal Word.

Again, God told Israel to be ready for the march, with shoes on their feet and with staff in hand.

Their whole attitude showed that they were no longer at home in Egypt. They were to be ready for the pilgrim journey. Likewise, we are told to have our "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15), to be ready to speak for Christ, ready to go for Him, or ready to stay for Him.

Paul said, "I am ready." Are we? Are we ready to serve Him in His own appointed place, even if that means on a bed of suffering-as an intercessor for the lost and as a living witness to His sustaining grace? Are we ready for His coming? The Christ-rejecting world is doomed to swift and certain judgment. We must feed upon the Lamb "in haste," to snatch the souls of men as brands from the burning.

Our walk here-from the evening till the morning-is that of a pilgrim; for "here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

Thank God! There will be a morning! And in the meantime, we are sheltered behind the blood of the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"! We "shall not come into judgment."

No wonder Israel was told to remember the feast of the Passover every year, as "a memorial" throughout their generations. No matter how profound we may become in spiritual things, no matter how much we may fathom the depths of the love of God, we can never forget Calvary!

And throughout the endless ages we shall remember "Christ our passover, who is sacrificed for us," because we "shall know Him by the print of the nails in His hands."

~ end of chapter 4 ~

05 The Feast Of Unleavened Bread

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (Leviticus 23:6-8; Exodus 12:14-20)

Immediately following the feast of the Passover Israel was commanded to keep the feast of unleavened bread. The lamb was slain “on the fourteenth day of the first month at even.” Then God said to Moses: “On the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread” (Leviticus 23:6).

Again we turn back to Exodus 12:14-20 to find other details concerning the manner in which this “memorial” was to be observed every year—from the night of the first Passover even unto the coming of the Messiah and His death on the cross. There are some searching lessons for us in this feast. Let us examine the Scripture carefully.

1. A Holy Walk.

The feast of unleavened bread represents the walk of the believer in separation from sin, from the time he accepts Christ as his Paschal Lamb even until heaven is reached.

In this connection we note, first of all, that there was no interval of time between the feast of the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread; the one followed the other immediately; and the two were ever linked together. Herein we see foreshadowed the fundamental truth that only the redeemed child of God can walk with Him; Calvary must precede a holy walk; and a holy walk should follow Calvary. This is what Paul meant when he wrote: “They that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:8). It is not enough to be kind and philanthropic and moral, as the world judges. God says, “Ye must be born again!”

Moreover, the believer’s walk with the crucified and risen Lord, beginning at Calvary, extends throughout this earthly life. The Passover was a one-day feast, and represented a single act of God in offering Himself on the cross; but the feast of unleavened bread continued for seven days, and showed the outcome of the Passover. As seven is the number which represents a complete circle of time, so it speaks of the believer’s whole life of witness on earth to Him who gave His life “a ransom for many.”

And the whole Christian life is the outgrowth of the transaction that takes place when the sinner is saved by the regenerating, quickening power of the Holy Spirit of God.

This close relationship between the feast of the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread is seen in Paul’s words to the Corinthians, where he sets forth the typical significance as outlined above: “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 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: therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:6-8).

2. The Unleavened Bread.

These words of Paul, written by inspiration of God, bring us to another important lesson to be learned here. Already in this study we have referred to the fact that leaven, in the Bible, is always a type of sin. In the keeping of the feast of unleavened bread no leaven was to be eaten; no leaven was to be seen; no leaven was to be in the house of an Israelite. And to make sure that none was there, a most diligent search for it was to be made. Leaven is a corrupt thing, produced by fermentation; and as a symbol of sin, it was to be purged from every home in Israel. As God's redeemed people, feeding upon the lamb "without blemish," they were to feed upon the unleavened bread.

Again, in the New Testament leaven is always a symbol of sin. The Lord Jesus used it to represent the evil doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees and the wicked life of Herod, when He said to His disciples: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees . . . and of the leaven of Herod" (Matthew 16:6; Matthew 16:12; Mark 8:15).

In our study of Matthew we saw that the parable of the leaven (Matthew 13:33) teaches that professing Christendom will more and more be filled with false doctrine as the Church Age draws to a close. And yet again, Paul speaks of the "leaven of malice and wickedness" in contrast with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Corinthians 5:8).

Do you not see, my friend, that if we are to "keep the feast," we must "purge out . . . the old leaven"; we must hold communion with God, walking with Him in separation from sin? This does not mean that in this life we can ever hope to be sinless. Only the Son of God lived without sin. We still have the old nature, and shall have as long as we live in this world. But the same apostle who wrote, saying, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8), wrote also saying, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not" (1 John 2:1).

The child of God who walks with Him will not continue in sin; he will confess it and forsake it by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a tragedy to see Christians bound by the old things-old habits and associations that degrade. And it is a tragedy to see Christians bound by what we might call the new leaven of conceit in spiritual things, boasting, envy, jealousy, "malice and wickedness." These things not only break our communion with God; they also mar our usefulness.

"Therefore let us keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

3. Fellowship with Christ.

This is the price of fellowship with God-to "purge out . . . the old leaven." "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:6-7).

We might represent the "communion of saints" by the walk of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus with the risen Lord. Little wonder "they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

His death on the cross, His bodily resurrection, and His coming glory were the theme of their conversation.

When “they constrained him, saying, Abide with us,” He “went in to tarry with them.” This was fellowship, indeed, with the crucified and risen Son of God, feeding upon His Word, walking and talking with Him by the way. And we may enter into it today as fully as did those two disciples of old; for we have dwelling in us the Holy Spirit of God to “take the things of Christ,” and show them unto us!

Enoch and Noah and Abraham knew what it was to walk with God. Paul made it the burden of his prayer that he might “keep the feast . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

These were his words: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Php 3:10).

Is that your prayer, my Christian friend?

It is possible for you to know Him as your Passover Lamb, and yet not know Him as the Unleavened Bread-in that intimate, satisfying fellowship that only a close walk with Him can give. But “if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

~ end of chapter 5 ~

06 The Feast Of The Firstfruits

CHAPTER SIX

THE FEAST OF THE FIRSTFRUITS (Leviticus 23:9-14)

1. A Memorial of Victory and Rest.

“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” (Leviticus 23:9-11).

We have seen in our outline glance at the seven feasts of the Lord that the feast of the firstfruits foreshadowed the resurrection of Christ, whom the Holy Spirit calls “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). That this is not mere fancy, we shall see as we look carefully at the details of the type and its fulfillment, considering them in the order in which they are presented to us in Leviticus 23:9-14.

And first of all we read that this feast was not to be observed by Israel until they reached the land of promise. Not so the feasts of the Passover and unleavened bread; they were to be kept in the wilderness. Every year for forty years, throughout the long, weary pilgrimage, God’s people remembered their redemption from bondage on that first Passover night, and ate the unleavened bread.

But God told Moses that they were not to observe the feast of the firstfruits until they were in the land, whither they were journeying.

Now the sheaf of the firstfruits was a pledge or guarantee of a greater harvest; so “Christ” is “the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:23). And His triumph over death and the grave is a guarantee or pledge that we, too, shall enter fully into His eternal rest and victory when we “be come into the land,” even heaven itself. Then there will be no more weary journeying; the full harvest will be gathered in; and we shall be forever with Christ in our glorious, resurrection bodies.

It will be a day of victory and rest-an eternal day.

2. “Christ the Firstfruits” (1 Corinthians 15:23).

“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” (Leviticus 23:10-11).

This was a single sheaf, even as Christ was the firstborn from among the dead. Moreover, the very name given to the risen Lord identifies Him as the fulfillment of the type: “Christ the firstfruits.”

The priest waved the single sheaf before the Lord as a pledge of a greater harvest; and Christ, in His bodily resurrection, is the guarantee that all who put their faith in Him as Saviour and Lord will be gathered unto Him "at his coming." Nothing can prevent the resurrection of His saints; He is the firstfruits, the pledge! And even as the single sheaf was waved "before the Lord" and laid up, as it were, to remind Israel that the harvest was sure to follow, so the risen Christ is at the right hand of the throne of God; and because He lives, we too shall live!

3. The Very Day of Christ's Resurrection was also foreshadowed in the feast of the firstfruits.

Every one of the Gospel writers is careful to tell us plainly that He arose "upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning," "when the sabbath was fully past."

He was crucified on the Passover; and when the sabbath following the Passover was ended, "Christ the firstfruits" arose from the grave, in exact fulfillment of the type. "On the morrow after the sabbath" following the Passover, God had said to Moses, "the priest shall wave . . . a sheaf of the firstfruits." And Jesus arose from the grave "on the morrow after the sabbath."

On that Passover day nearly two thousand years ago the spiritually blind priest in Jerusalem killed the lamb and sprinkled the blood, not knowing that Calvary was God's altar, upon which the Lamb of God was offered "once for all." (See Hebrews 13:10-13.)

And on that feast of the firstfruits which followed, the spiritually blind priest stood before the rent veil of the temple at Jerusalem, and waved a sheaf of the firstfruits, not knowing that The Great Reaper was waving the One Sheaf before Joseph's empty tomb! When the women found the stone rolled away, the first sheaf had already been reaped! And that is why the angel of the Lord could say unto them: "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said" (Matthew 28:5-6). How wonderfully Christ fulfilled the type, even to the very day!

4. The Significance of the Two Offerings.

We have seen earlier in this study that the burnt offering and the meal offering speak to us of the perfections and excellencies of the person of the Lord Jesus; and these two offerings were made on the day of the feast of the firstfruits. We have seen that even as the whole burnt offering went up to God as a sweet savour, so the Father was "well pleased" in the glories and excellencies of the Son throughout His earthly ministry-"even unto death."

And we have seen that the mingling of the fine flour with the oil-without leaven-was a type of the perfect humanity of our Lord, lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, He was "God manifest in the flesh"-perfect Man and eternal God.

A careful reading of the first two chapters of Leviticus will show us yet other significant lessons to be learned from these two offerings. The frankincense used in connection with the meal offering speaks to us of the fragrance of the life of the Lord Jesus as He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

Part of the meal offering was burned upon the altar; part, "baken in the oven." Here we are reminded of the sufferings of Christ which were known to the world, and of those sufferings known only to the Father and to the Son. The world knew it when He was weary and hungry and despised

and crucified; but “in an oven,” as it were-beyond the sight of human gaze-there was that bitter “cup” which only the Father could understand. Not even the holy angels could enter into His agony when He said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death” (Matthew 26:38).

As the whole burnt offering foreshadowed the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross-in His whole personality, body, mind, and spirit-so the meal offering speaks to us of His humanity. And these two offerings were made on the feast of the firstfruits, by the express command of the Lord. Why? Because the same Lord who died as the Paschal Lamb arose in His glorified body on the very feast of the firstfruits nearly two thousand years ago.

Moreover, He is in the presence of the Father today in His resurrection body, not on the ground of His atoning work; we shall stand before Him unashamed on that basis alone; but He is there on the ground of His own person, on the ground of His moral excellencies. We have no excellencies of our own; but our crucified and risen Lord was and is and ever shall be the very embodiment of all that is “true” and “honest” and “just” and “pure” and “lovely” and “of good report” (Php 4:8).

In this connection, it is highly significant that the non-sweet savour offerings were not made on the feast of the firstfruits; for they speak to us of Christ as our Sin-Bearer, in His work for us on the cross. In the feast of the firstfruits we see, rather, His own beauty and glory as the sinless Son of Man, offering Himself without spot or blemish as the whole burnt offering, and raised again from the dead in His uncreated glory.

5. A Pledge of the Harvest.

“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept . . . Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” (1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Corinthians 15:23).

In His Incarnation Christ stood alone; but in His death and resurrection He is not alone. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).

“A corn of wheat” perfect in itself, if put in the ground, produces a whole ear- many grains, yet all united in the one ear. So also Christ, in His death and resurrection is the firstborn from among many brethren, all united into the one Body, which is His Church! He did not call His disciples His “brethren” until after He arose from the dead; but in His resurrection body He said to Mary: “Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). And these words are a pledge of the welcome which every true believer receives when he enters the presence of God.

Martin Luther once stood by the bedside of a dying reformer. “What are your plans?” Luther asked him, to which the saint replied, “I’m going on a long journey.” Again the questioner asked, “And what is your passport?” Once more the answer came, “My Forerunner has gone before me.” And then Luther said to him, “Go on your way; a warm welcome awaits you.”

My Christian friend, we have a “hope . . . both sure and steadfast,” for our “forerunner . . . even Jesus” has gone on before us. (See Hebrews 6:18-20). He is the “firstfruits.” “After-ward”- because of His own bodily resurrection-“they that are his at his coming” shall arise, forever to be with Him. The spirits of the saints who “sleep in Jesus” are even now in His presence, but their bodies are in the grave. When He comes for His Church, “the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are

alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

My unsaved friend, Christ is risen from the dead. You must stand before Him one day. Shall you meet Him as your Saviour, or shall you meet Him as your Judge? In your "flesh" you shall "see God." It will be a time of rejoicing, or it will be a time of terrible anguish and eternal woe. Will you not trust Him now as your Passover Lamb and your risen Lord? Then only can you share with the Lord now and forever the feast of the firstfruits- His feast, and yours for the taking. Then only you may say with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

Some years ago two men lived in this country. They were born in the same year; they died in the same year. One was a leader of infidels; the other was the greatest evangelist of his day. One was Robert Ingersoll; the other was D. L. Moody. And each spoke at the funeral of a brother.

Robert Ingersoll loved his brother; his voice choked, and the tears came. He gave an eloquent oration, saying in part: "Life is a narrow veil between the dark, barren peaks of two eternities. We try to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud. But the only answer to our cry is the echo of our wail."

D. L. Moody loved his brother also. He, too, shed tears. But he looked up by faith into the face of the Great Wave-Sheaf, "Christ the firstfruits" of a coming harvest, and said, in part: "'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' Goodbye, my brother. I'll meet you in the morning." When Ingersoll died, his family was distracted.

But when Moody went to be with the Lord, his Christian friends and relatives could say of him, "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17). And his last words were the expression of a "desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better" (Php 1:23) ; for this is what he said: "Heaven is opening; earth is receding; God is calling; I must be away."

"If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14).

Yes, my brother; God's eternal Word says that there will be a "resurrection of life" and a "resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:29). Take Christ as your personal Saviour, and then you will be able to say with Job: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

~ end of chapter 6 ~

07 The Feast Of Pentecost

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST (Leviticus 23:15-21)

1. The Time.

Fifty days after the feast of the firstfruits, on the first day of the week, Israel kept the feast of Pentecost, according to God's commandment:

"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" (Leviticus 23:15-16).

We have already seen that this "holy convocation" was called the feast of Pentecost because "Pentecost" means "fiftieth." It was also called the "feast of the weeks" because seven weeks elapsed between the feast of the first-fruits and Pentecost. Therefore, these two feasts were intimately linked together; this is an important fact for us to note.

Christ had honored the Passover by becoming the Paschal Lamb on the very day of the feast. God the Father had honored the feast of the firstfruits by raising His Son from the dead on the very day when the Jews were observing this "holy convocation."

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come" (Acts 2:1)-fifty days after the resurrection of Christ-the Holy Spirit honored that feast by descending in great power upon the "devout Jews" assembled in the temple in Jerusalem-to keep the feast and to obey the Lord Jesus in His express command that they "tarry in Jerusalem" to wait for "the promise of the Father."

This exact fulfillment of the types, even unto the very day, could not have been mere chance. On the contrary, it reveals how marvelously God had foretold His great purpose and plan through these "shadows of good things to come." While He was on earth, immediately following Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Lord Jesus had said to His disciples, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). Upon this rock of eternal truth He had said He would build His Church-a then future work of grace.

Before He went to the cross, He told His disciples repeatedly that it was "expedient" for Him to go away, in order that the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, might come unto them. (See John 14:16-17; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7-15). And after He rose from the dead, He told them further:

"Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

"And, being assembled together with them" after His resurrection, He "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have

heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence . . .

“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:4-5; Acts 1:8).

It was in obedience to this express command that the disciples, having seen the risen Lord ascend into heaven, “returned . . . unto Jerusalem” and “continued with one accord in prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:12; Acts 1:14). Then “when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

They were in the temple to keep the feast of Pentecost, and with them were other Jews who did not accept Jesus as their Messiah. They were there to observe the empty form and ritualism of the feast; and blinded as they were by sin, they “mocked,” and said that the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, were “full of new wine” (Acts 2:13). But their mocking and their unbelief did not alter the fact that “the promise of the Father” was given in that day, which marked the beginning of the Church. “I will build my church,” the Lord had said.

And from Pentecost till the translation of the Church, He has been fulfilling His promise, and will continue to fulfill it until His Bride is complete!

The Church of the Lord Jesus is a New Testament organism, my friend. Until you get this fact clearly in mind, you will not be able rightly to divide the Word of Truth. In Old Testament times God dealt first with the whole race, then especially with one particular nation, through whom He promised to send the Redeemer, and through whom He gave to the world the Bible. The word “church,” which means “the called-out ones,” is not an Old Testament term.

Stephen rightly refers to Israel as “the church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38), in the sense that Israel was “called out of Egypt.” And Psalms 22:22 is a definite prophecy concerning Christ and the Church, as the Holy Spirit distinctly explains in Hebrews 2:12.

But otherwise, the word “church” is strictly a New Testament term.

Paul bore testimony to the fact that the Church is a New Testament body when he wrote to the Ephesian Christians, saying:

“Ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (something not hitherto revealed, not something ‘mysterious’) . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel . . . to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:2-6; Ephesians 3:9-11).

2. One Offering-Two Wave-Loaves.

The truth declared in the words just quoted from Paul, saying that Jew and Gentile should be “fellowheirs, and of the same body” in the Church, was set forth in type by the one offering, yet with two wave-loaves, on the feast of Pentecost.

The two loaves represent Jew and Gentile; the one offering speaks of the one Body in Christ. “Ye shall offer a new meal offering unto the Lord” (one offering), God said to Moses as He called to him out of the tabernacle at the foot of Mount Sinai. And further, the Lord said, “Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenth deals” (Leviticus 23:16-17).

Many New Testament references throw a flood of light on this typical teaching. Space here permits us to look only at a few:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 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” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; compare Galatians 3:27-28).

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one (Jew and Gentile), and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us . . . to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace” (Ephesians 2:14-15; compare Ephesians 2:11-18).

The disciples gathered in the temple on the day of Pentecost, and baptized with the Holy Spirit, were Jews (Acts 2:5).

Gentiles did not keep the feasts of the Lord; these were a part of the Jewish worship.

And when the Holy Spirit came upon that assembly in Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago, it was as though the Lord presented one of the two wave-loaves, in fulfillment of the type.

It was not until sometime later that the second loaf was “waved,” when in the house of Cornelius, a Gentile and a Roman soldier, the Holy Spirit came in the same demonstration of power. (See Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-18).

Then Gentile, as well as Jew, was filled with the Holy Spirit.

God chose Peter to be His mouthpiece on both occasions; and the two sermons preached by this disciple, first in the temple on the day of Pentecost, and then in the house of Cornelius some time later, are well worth our prayerful study. They were uttered by inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God; and it is about Him that they speak—His coming into the world to lead men to a saving knowledge of Christ crucified, Christ risen, interceding, and coming again in great power and great glory.

Throughout the centuries every true believer has rejoiced that in the Body of Christ there is no color or class, no kindred or tongue, that all are “one in Christ Jesus.” It is easy for us—Gentiles—in our day to accept this beautiful truth, as a part of our heritage received from Christian forefathers; but, humanly speaking, it was not easy for Peter and his Jewish brethren to have fellowship with Gentiles. Only a miracle could break down “the middle wall of partition,” and only a miracle did bring this very thing to pass.

Two wave-loaves—one offering!

What a significant type of the unity of Jew and Gentile in the one Body, which is the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! This is a searching truth, and it carries with it the grave responsibility of manifesting Christian unity and love!

Just here let us recall what we said at the beginning of this study of Pentecost: This feast is intimately linked with the feast of firstfruits, coming fifty days after that “holy convocation.” The single sheaf was waved before the Lord first; then the wave-loaves. We have seen that Christ is “the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”

There could be no life for the sinner until Christ died and rose again. But there is yet another wonderful truth for us here.

In the economy of God we are even now, from the moment we are born again, “quicken,” “raised” to “walk” with Him “in newness of life” (Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:1-3). God sees us in this present life seated “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”—not as separate sheaves, but bound together in a union that is real and abiding. This also is a searching truth, and it carries with it the grave responsibility of walking in purity of life, keeping our garments “unspotted from the world”!

3. The Fine Flour and the Leaven

“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” (Leviticus 23:17).

Just as the fine flour without leaven in the feast of unleavened bread speaks to us of the sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus, with all the excellencies and glories of His person, so here in the two wave-loaves of Pentecost we see the believer’s two natures:

- A new nature in Christ Jesus, of which the fine flour is a shadow;
- The old nature ever present with us in the flesh, of which the leaven is a type.

Paul was constantly teaching this two-fold truth throughout his letters; hence the struggle he described between the old nature and the new in the sixth and seventh chapters of Romans.

John recognized the same truth when he wrote to Christians, saying: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). Here he was talking about the old, Adamic nature. But in the same epistle he wrote: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not” (1 John 2:1). We cannot live without sin in the flesh, but we can and we should live without sin on the conscience; for “if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). We must confess and forsake the sinful acts which give expression to the sinful nature, or our fellowship with God will be broken, and our testimony before the world will be marred.

We are not talking about our standing before God; that is perfect, because the Father sees us identified with the Son in His death and resurrection. But the Bible does not teach the eradication or the suppression of the old nature; it does teach the counteraction of it by the power of the Holy Spirit in the life.

By God's grace the old nature need not be dominant; but even Paul said: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18). And the leaven in the two loaves of Pentecost typified this very truth, for leaven in the Word of God is always a symbol of sin.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). These are the words of the Lord Jesus!

4. A Holy Sacrifice.

The two wave-loaves were accepted by God, even though they contained leaven, because they were presented with the burnt offering, the sin offering and the peace offering.

"They shall be holy to the Lord," God said to Moses (Leviticus 23:20). And we are "accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6) -accepted in the beloved Son, because "Calvary covers it all!" It covers all the old nature, and we are complete in Him. He has reckoned all that He is to us, and "the iniquity of us all" was laid upon Him when He became our Sin offering. The "seven lambs without blemish" (Leviticus 23:18) pointed on to Christ. And His shed blood covers all our sins.

Some years ago, after I had preached one evening at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, I was riding home on the elevated train when my attention was attracted to a group of people on the car who were looking intently at one of the advertisements. The placard was printed in red letters; and as these people looked at it through a red-stained glass, they were exclaiming over the strange thing they saw. All the red letters appeared to be wiped away, blotted out.

Why? Because the glass through which they looked was red also.

Something like this God has done for you and me, my friend. Our sins are crimson, but washed in the blood of His Son, they become "as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). We are "accepted in the beloved," because "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). Therefore, He says to us, through the pen of the inspired writer: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable (or 'spiritual') service" (Romans 12:1).

5. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And now we have come to that truth regarding Pentecost, about which there is so much confusion and fanaticism; that is, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is not an experience to be sought and prayed for after conversion; it is a dispensational act, and takes place at conversion. There is no such thing as being born again, and yet not having the baptism of the Holy Spirit. To be born again is to be made "a new creature in Christ Jesus" by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit of God. The Lord Jesus said plainly that it is the Holy Spirit who convicts men of sin and who regenerates the sinner. (See John 16:7-11; compare John 3:3-8).

But some will ask: Were the twelve disciples and those other "devout Jews" who received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost not born again before that memorable day? Yes; they were; but we must remember that they lived during two dispensations- before the cross and after the cross.

To the disciples the Lord said, "I will build my church." They were among the faithful remnant in Israel who, during His earthly ministry, believed Him to be their Messiah. Therefore, when the time

came for the Church to be formed, to them was granted the added experience of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, and of being among the first “living stones” to be built into the Body of Christ.

But, my friend, you and I do not belong to that small group who lived when Christ was on earth. You and I were born nearly two thousand years too late for that experience-of living in two dispensations. We live on this side of the cross; and ever since the day of Pentecost, all sinners who have accepted the finished work of Christ on Calvary have, from the very moment they believed, been baptized with the Holy Spirit. To be a Christian is to be baptized with the Spirit of God.

Moreover, the miracle that accompanied the descent of the Holy Spirit was for a testimony to the fact that this was a work of God.

The “rushing mighty wind,” the “cloven tongues like as of fire,” and the speaking in “other tongues” were enough to convince the most skeptical that this demonstration of power was from the Lord God. And some such signs and wonders were needed to mark the new thing which God was about to do in the earth- in calling out “a people for his name” (Acts 15:14).

The beginning of the Church of the crucified and risen Lord was thus made known by this mighty demonstration of “power from on high.”

But nowhere in the Word of God are we told that the gift of tongues accompanies salvation in this age. On the contrary, Paul expressly stated: “Whether there be tongues, they shall cease” (1 Corinthians 13:8).

It is very clear that, in this Church Age, the Holy Spirit is working silently in the hearts of men, convicting them of sin, and creating in them new life in Christ Jesus. And His power is just as mighty, just as efficacious, in this quiet work of grace as it was on the day of Pentecost! He is able to quicken those who are dead in trespasses and in sin; and He is able to empower the sinner saved by grace for a holy walk and a true testimony before a Christ-rejecting world.

The believer’s body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is possible for the Christian to grieve Him; and it is equally possible for the child of God to be “filled with the Spirit.” But at conversion He enters the heart to stay. (See John 14:16-17.)

Peter testified to the meaning of the miracle that took place on the day of Pentecost, when he said:

“This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams . . . And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:16-18; Acts 2:21).

Now in Old Testament times the Holy Spirit had come upon individuals for special services. He came upon Saul, upon David, and upon all the prophets. But not until Pentecost did He come into the world to dwell among men-in the Body of Christ.

Let me ask you the all-important question, my unsaved friend: Will you let the Holy Spirit of God work a miracle of grace in your heart, giving you new life in Christ Jesus? If you will, then He will

be your Comforter and Teacher and Guide. He will take the things of Christ, and show them unto you. He will never leave you or forsake you. And by His power you can walk in fellowship with the eternal Son of God. This is the gift of everlasting life. And it is yours for the taking!

~ end of chapter 7 ~

08 A Long Interval

CHAPTER EIGHT

A LONG INTERVAL (Leviticus 23:22)

Between the feast of Pentecost and the feast of trumpets there was a long interval of several months, during which time Israel observed no feast. Her people were scattered throughout the harvest field, gleaning and reaping. This was according to the Word of God:

“And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:22).

This long interval is highly suggestive of the fact that between the beginning of the Church at Pentecost and God’s dealing again with Israel as a nation, there comes this present Church Age. His chosen people are scattered throughout the earth; but from Jew and Gentile the Holy Spirit is gleaning a great harvest of souls, uniting them into the Body of Christ. “The stranger,” sharing with the Jew in the fruits of the harvest, represents the Gentile in the Bride of Christ. No longer “aliens . . . and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12), the Gentiles are heirs of God.

We have already seen that the Church period was not revealed to the Old Testament saints; it was given by special revelation to the Apostle Paul. God did not tell Israel in Old Testament times what He was going to do during this long interval between the feasts of Pentecost and trumpets. He did tell them that He would re-gather their nation before Christ returns in glory to establish His millennial kingdom.

As we shall see, the feast of the trumpets foreshadowed this reassembling of God’s people, Israel, in their own land. But between Pentecost and the feast of the trumpets, He is calling out “a people for his name”-the two wave-loaves, as it were, composed of Jew and Gentile, yet one Body in Christ Jesus.

You and I are living in this long interval, my friend. It has already lasted nearly two thousand years. And God alone knows when it will come to a close.

In the meantime, He has told us to go out into the field and gather in the harvest. It is an individual, personal responsibility that each of us has, to cooperate with the Holy Spirit of God in reaping the harvest: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature . . . Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (Mark 16:15; John 4:35).

There is no joy like that of winning a lost soul! When the harvest has been fully brought in, and we stand before “the judgment seat of Christ,” we shall want to be able to say: “There are the sheaves which I gathered in for the Lord.” How many sheaves have we gleaned today?

Passover-Unleavened Bread-Firstfruits-Pentecost! How perfect is the divine order!

As the last three feasts which we are now to consider, are closely related one to another, so also are these first four feasts bound together in a real way.

“Christ our Passover” had to be sacrificed for us first, before there could be fellowship with Him as the Bread of Life; and He had to rise from the dead before the Church could be formed, to receive new life in Him. The death and resurrection of Christ had to be accomplished before the Church could be built upon His finished work of redemption.

Again, even as the inspired record concerning the feasts of the Passover and unleavened bread was marked by the usual introductory words, “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying” (Leviticus 23:1), so also the feasts of the firstfruits and Pentecost were introduced by the same words (Leviticus 23:9), which do not occur again until verse 23, where the Holy Spirit begins to tell about the feast of the trumpets.

Thus we see that, as the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread are associated together, so are the feasts of the firstfruits and Pentecost. And even while the feast of unleavened bread was running its course, the feast of the firstfruits was observed.

Only because Christ died and rose again can there be a Church -His Church. And only on the basis of His death and resurrection can the members of His Body walk in communion and fellowship with Him. What “a shadow of good things to come” were these feasts of the Lord!

No wonder the Lord Jesus said, in substance, more than once, “Moses . . . wrote of me”!

~ end of chapter 8 ~

09 The Feast Of Trumpets

CHAPTER NINE

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS (Leviticus 23:23-25) The last three feasts of the Lord, yet to be fulfilled, have to do primarily with Israel's future.

- The feast of trumpets is prophetic of the re-gathering of Israel in the land of Palestine;
- The feast of atonement will find its fulfillment in the return of Christ in glory, to be received by Israel as her Messiah;
- The feast of tabernacles speaks to us of the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus over the house of David.

These three "holy convocations" will follow one another in rapid succession after the long interval of this Church Age comes to a close.

As has already been stated, this present dispensation of grace and the translation of the Church were not revealed in Old Testament times; but the prophets wrote often and fully concerning the re-gathering of Israel and the return of Christ in glory.

Let us see how these prophecies regarding the reassembling of God's chosen people in their own land were foreshadowed in the feast of trumpets.

Little ceremony was connected with this feast, about which we read in Leviticus 23:23-25. For several months there had been no holy convocation in Israel; then the priests blew a loud blast on the silver trumpets to call the people together for worship.

The Day of Atonement followed almost immediately; and without a doubt the assembling of the people was only preparatory to that remarkably significant day, the feast of atonement.

That was the one day in the year when the high priest went into the Holy of Holies and came out again unto the people, symbolically making an atonement for the sins of the year that had passed. It points on to the day when Christ, the Great High Priest, will come out of the Holy of Holies, even heaven itself, and appear unto Israel-having made a full atonement for their sins.

God has not told us the day or the hour of His appearing; but "the signs of the times" seem to indicate that He is getting His ancient people ready for the blowing of the trumpets. But let us keep in mind this important fact: What we see coming to pass in Israel today is only preparatory to that great event. Before the feast of the trumpets is fulfilled, the Church must be translated; this long interval must come to a close. Then God will begin to deal again with Israel as a nation.

We see the Jew turning his face toward Palestine today; but the real re-gathering that will take place at the feast of the trumpets will excel and eclipse everything which we see now coming to pass. After the Church has been translated, the Antichrist will be revealed; and the covenant which

he will make with Israel will cause the nation to seek her own land as never before. Then Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones will begin to find its real fulfillment. (See Ezekiel 37:1-14.) For centuries Israel has been buried nationally; but even in our own day God seems to be preparing His ancient people for the blowing of the silver trumpets, as it were—just prior to the appearing of her Messiah and Great High Priest, even Jesus. Let us consider, for a moment, Israel's future in the light of current events.

1. The Zionist Movement, the beginning of which our own generation has seen, is a literal fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning Israel: "They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward" (Jeremiah 50:5).

Zionist societies have been formed all over the earth. The organizations have been legally incorporated, and vast sums of money have been subscribed for the carrying out of their objectives. Children are being taught that the glory of Israel is at hand, and are taking upon their lips once again the ancient name "Zion."

This movement was begun by Dr. Theodore Herzl, an Austrian Jew. Its objects are two-fold:

- (1) To foster the national idea in Israel;
- (2) to promote the colonization of Palestine by Jews.

It was given a tremendous impetus by the Balfour Declaration made in 1917, which declared "that the British government looks with favor upon making Palestine a national home for the Jew."

A hundred years ago there were not more than six thousand Jews in Palestine; today there are over a hundred and fifty thousand. And so great has been Jewish immigration toward the land of promise that the British government has found it necessary to restrict it. The Jew is already the preeminent factor in Jerusalem. He controls its business, and his synagogues are rising within the shadows of the Mohammedan mosque. At the close of the World War the British government appointed Sir Herbert Samuels to be the first Governor-general.

It is interesting to know that he was the first Jew to have jurisdiction of life and death in Palestine since the days of Nebuchadnezzar. So eager is the Jew to reestablish himself in Palestine, and so assured is he that Zionism will become a political fact, that he has created his own national flag, which has in its center the Star of David.

Some time ago I was asked to attend a Zionist meeting, held in a large synagogue in a southern city. The building was crowded and on the platform were seated Zionist representatives, who addressed the gathered company on Zionism and the Jewish colonization of Palestine.

In the middle of one of the messages an old Jew stood to his feet and, raising his hands, he cried, "Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who has permitted me to see this day!"

While I sat there, watching "the fig tree" once again putting forth her leaves, a friend who was with me turned to me and asked, "What do you think a meeting like this means to the average Christian?"

My reply was, "You can get your answer by looking around to see how many Gentiles are in this gathering."

We looked and saw that we two were probably the only Gentiles there. When we came out of that synagogue with our hearts solemnized, we saw throngs of people coming and going, on business or in search of pleasure, seemingly unaware of and indifferent to, the fact that right in their midst the "fig tree" was beginning to bud-the sign the Lord gave of the nearness of His return to the earth.

2. The Prominent Place of Jews in the World Today.

The leading business men in our great commercial cities are Jews. The Jew is in control of New York's Broadway. Most of the signs in the business establishments on New York's White Way bear Jewish names. The greater number of bankers in the world-at-large are Jews. The Jew has also excelled in music, science, philosophy, statesmanship. In spite of every attempt made by the nations of the earth to shackle him, he comes to the forefront unshackled. He is playing today an important role in every nation of the world.

In England there are only 215,000 Jews! And yet they control the clothing business, the tobacco, fruit, oil, wine, and lumber industries; and a great number are connected with banks and the stock exchange. Not so many months ago five Jews held positions in the Cabinet; one had served as Lord Chief Justice of England and leader of jurisprudence. One was viceroy of India; five were privy counsellors; five, members of the House of Lords; sixteen, baronets; eighteen, Knights of the Garter; and thirty, members of Parliament. Sir Matthew Nathan served England during the World War as the Secretary for Ireland. And at the outbreak of the war Sir E. Goschen, G. C. B., was the British ambassador to Germany. All of these were Jews.

The Jew occupies just as important a place in France, Belgium, Russia, Austria, and America, and Germany, which is now trying to get rid of the Jew, has given to the world some of its most brilliant leaders- sons of Abraham. The total Jewish population of France is a little over one hundred thousand. During the World War in the regular army there were eight Jewish generals, fourteen colonels, twenty-one lieutenants, sixty-eight majors, and one hundred and seven captains, while over ten thousand served in the ranks.

General Heimans, a Jew, was in charge of one of the army corps; five Jews held important positions in the Cabinet; and the Rothschilds are among the prominent families of that nation. Today in every department of French life the Jew is altogether out of proportion to his number. This is especially true in politics, in the press, and in finance. Over two hundred French Jews occupy chairs in the leading universities. In Belgium there are 15,000 Jews, many of whom rendered invaluable service to the country in her crisis period. Her ambassador to the Court of St. James during that period was M. Hymans, a Jew.

In Italy it is impossible to get the present status of the Jew. The total Jewish population there, however, is 45,000; and in recent years this ancient people has provided Italy with a Prime Minister, Signor Luigi Luzzatti, who previously served as Minister of Finance on six occasions.

During the war sixteen members of Parliament and fourteen senators were Jews. It was Baron Sidney Sonnino, a Jew, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who influenced Italy at the beginning of the war to withdraw from the Teutonic powers and cast her lot with the allies.

In spite of all the nefarious propaganda to stimulate anti-Semitism in Germany, the Jew has played a great part in the affairs of that nation. Karl Marx laid the scientific foundation to Socialism, and La Salle founded the German Social Democratic Party. Both these men were Jews. Dr. Von Dernberg served as ambassador to the United States. The secret measure of success achieved by the German army lay in the wonderful organization of transportation. To pick up an army of a million men and transplant them from one scene of war to another was an undertaking of tremendous responsibility. The Kaiser entrusted this responsibility to Herr Arthur Ballin, a Jew.

And so the story continues all through the social and political life of every nation under heaven. During 1914 to 1918, the most tragic period the world has ever known, the Jews were especially prominent.

It is interesting to note that here in the United States the Jew controls 45% of the boot, shoe, and clothing business; 85% of the tobacco business; 90% of the amusements; 80% of the liquor; and that he plays a great part in the control of national railroads; namely, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Southern Pacific, the Illinois Central, and the New York Central. Some of our largest newspapers are also controlled by the Jew. In every trade, profession, and department of human genius he is at the forefront.

3. The Restoration of Palestine as a Jewish National Home.

We hear a great deal about patriotism in these days. But there is no patriotism that can excel that of an orthodox Jew.

For almost two thousand years these people of the wandering feet have been out of their land, but ever longing for home. The personal sacrifices on the part of some Jews for their nation are unparalleled.

The large hearted millionaire, Baron De Hirsch, laid on the altar his whole fortune of seventy-five million dollars to transplant Jewish people from Russia to Palestine. In 1916 Dr. W. E. Weizmann, a Russian Jew, discovered a chemical for the manufacture of the highest explosive known-T. N. T.-for which formula the British government would have been glad to give him millions of dollars. But Dr. Weizmann gave it, and then gave himself to oversee its manufacture, asking but one thing: that the British government favor the reestablishment of his people in the land of Palestine. The Jew loves his money, but there is proof that he loves his nation and the city of Jerusalem more than he does his gold!

Great schemes are under way, not only to increase the number of Jews returning to Palestine, but also to develop the land by building new cities and restoring the old ones. The city of Tel-Aviv is a thrilling illustration of the new life that everywhere is in evidence throughout the land of Palestine.

Until recently its site was desert sand. Now there is a modern city of nearly 50,000 inhabitants, all of them Jews. Should you visit Tel-Aviv, you would see concrete streets, electric light and power, beautiful boulevards, modern homes, and up-to-date hotels. Thriving cities are also springing up in other parts of the land. Millions of vine cuttings have been planted on the hills, and territories that have been for years desert waste are being turned into beautiful gardens.

The harbor at Haifa is being constructed so that large steamers may soon be able to moor alongside its docks. A syndicate of Jewish capitalists under the leadership of such men as Lord

Reading and Baron De Rothschild, have secured concessions in regard to the Dead Sea. As a result of their efforts, the extraction of its enormous wealth will soon be an established fact.

Many other things might be said concerning the marvelous transformations that are taking place in Palestine under Jewish leadership. Surely "the fig tree" is beginning to bud. God is allowing the anti-Semitic movements in all parts of the world today, in order that the Zionist Movement may be accelerated. The one thing that was clearly settled as a result of the recent World War was that Turkish and Mohammedan rule ended in Palestine, and plans were set afoot for the turning of that country to its rightful owner.

4. Israel's Changing Attitude toward Christ.

As a nation the Jews will not accept the Lord Jesus as their Messiah until He comes again-in fulfillment of the feast of atonement; but proportionately more Jews are accepting Him as Saviour and Lord today than in any other nation. Evangelism among God's ancient people has for many centuries been a slow and difficult task, but the many Hebrew Christians in the world today bear witness to a changing attitude toward their Messiah and Lord.

Again, and possibly more significant, is the fact that orthodox Jews are taking a decidedly different attitude toward Christ.

Once bitter and relentless in their hatred of Jesus, many of their leading rabbis are now admitting that He was not only one of their prophets, but the greatest of them all. Our current newspapers and magazines are announcing the assembling together of influential Jews in France to re-try the case of Jesus, reserving judgment until they consider it anew.

Think of it! In comparison with the bitterness of Israel toward her Messiah for nearly two thousand years, this is nothing short of a miracle! And while the prophetic Word of God plainly states that the nation will return to Palestine in unbelief, yet God is surely preparing their hearts, unrealized by them, for the great Day of Atonement, when they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced!

There are fifteen million Jews in the world today-scattered among the nations, yet marvelously preserved as a separate people by their God.

And what He is doing for them in our own generation is an infallible sign that "the times of the Gentiles" will soon come to a close, and the times of the Jews will begin once more.

In fulfillment of the feast of the trumpets, ancient Israel will go back to her own land; her Great High Priest, even Jesus, will appear; and then He will establish His kingdom, sitting upon the throne of His father, David, to rule over the house of Jacob forever.

If the Zionist Movement is a sign of the nearness of the Lord's return to the earth, how much more is it a sign of the nearness of the translation of the Church; for the rapture of the Church must precede the revelation of the Antichrist, the great tribulation, and the return of our Lord in glory!

Let me ask you this question, my friend: Are you ready for His coming? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

~ end of chapter 9 ~

10 The Day Of Atonement

CHAPTER TEN

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Leviticus 23:26-32; Leviticus 16:1-34) The last three feasts of the year-the feast of trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the feast of tabernacles-came in the seventh month. Seven is the number that speaks of completion; and these seven feasts of the Lord, observed in the first seven months of the year, set forth, as we have seen, God's great plan of the ages-from the past eternity to the future eternity.

The feast of the trumpets fell upon the first day of the seventh month; the day of atonement, on the tenth day; and the feast of tabernacles, on the fifteenth day, continuing for seven days. Thus we see how closely related they were, even as they pointed on to God's yet future dealings with Israel in a rapid succession of events:

- (1) The re-gathering of His people;
- (2) His appearing unto them as their Great High Priest and King of Kings;
- (3) His millennial reign over the house of Jacob.

The feast of atonement was observed in a single day, while the feast of tabernacles covered seven days, and was the outcome of the single act of the Day of Atonement. So also Israel's Great High Priest will appear in a moment, "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west" (Matthew 24:27).

And the outcome of His glorious appearing will be His millennial reign, covering a complete period of time, typified by the seven days of the feast of tabernacles.

Not only do we read about the day of atonement in Leviticus 23:26-32, where its relation to the other feasts of the Lord is set forth; but all of the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus is given over to the details of the ritual of this most memorable day in the year.

As we read these two chapters carefully, we see certain wonderful truths, unmistakable "shadows of good things to come."

1. A Day of Mourning.

The feast of atonement was possibly the most solemn of all the feasts of the Lord.

Three times in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus and twice in the sixteenth chapter we read God's commandment to Moses: "Ye shall afflict your souls . . . whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." It was a time of weeping and mourning in Israel, a time of sorrow for their sins.

Israel's bitterness and grief on the day of atonement was but a shadow of the still future affliction of their souls when "they shall look upon" Him "whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for

him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10)

"His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives" (Zechariah 14:4).

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zechariah 13:6).

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Revelation 1:7).

In that coming day, of which the feast of atonement was a type, Israel's Great High Priest, even Jesus, will come out of the Holy of Holies, which is heaven itself, to deliver His people from the terrible persecution of the Antichrist.

In great tribulation they will cry unto God, and their God will come down to deliver them. When they see the nail prints in His hands and feet and the print of the wounded side, they will remember the mocking, angry mob who cried out, saying: "Crucify him, crucify him . . . His blood be on us, and on our children."

And their penitential prayer will be the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, a marvelous prophecy of the sufferings of their Messiah and the Saviour of the world. In the affliction of their souls, His ancient people will say:

"We hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:3-6).

But Israel's mourning will be turned into joy when Jesus comes!

For He will deliver His people, and usher in His long-promised kingdom of peace and righteousness!

2. A Day of Rest.

The feast of atonement was "a sabbath of rest." "Ye shall do no work in that same day," God said to Moses, "and whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people" (Leviticus 23:28; Leviticus 23:30; Leviticus 23:32).

Wherever we find the atoning work of Christ referred to in the Word of God, it is always plainly set forth as a work of grace. Man can only remain passive, and accept the finished work of Christ.

It is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

You cannot do one thing to save yourself, my brother; you must accept what Christ has done for you in His death and resurrection. You must rest in His finished work of redemption!

3. "Once a Year."

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat . . . And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (Leviticus 16:2; Leviticus 16:34).

Let us turn now to the ninth chapter of Hebrews, and read the first fourteen verses. These words explain the "shadow" of the Old Testament ritual:

"When these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle (i.e., the Holy Place), accomplishing the service of God. But into the second (the Holy of Holies) went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors (sins of ignorance) of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present . . . But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:6-9; Hebrews 9:11-12).

In quoting the book of Hebrews in this connection, it is difficult to know where to stop; for the whole epistle is a marvelous explanation of the meaning of the ritualism of Judaism and of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming Messiah.

But the passage quoted above is one of the priceless gems from this portion of the Word of God. (Read the entire epistle carefully, if you would understand the books of Moses).

In these unmistakable words from the New Testament, the Holy Spirit throws a flood of light upon the Old Testament ritual of the Day of Atonement!

Day after day the morning and evening sacrifices were made in Israel, but only on this one day in the year could the high priest enter the Holy of Holies where God dwelt in the pillar of cloud and fire.

Now a year is a full period of time; and typically the Day of Atonement covers all human history. Christ died "once for all," in fulfillment of the types and shadows set forth in every animal sacrifice of Old Testament days.

What a mighty grandeur this gives to the cross of our Lord! There all the ages met! Every other day of the past and future was pressed into that one atoning day. The cross linked the past eternity with the future eternity. Verily, Calvary's cross does tower ". . . o'er the wrecks of time;

All the light of sacred story

Gathers 'round its head sublime!"

“Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself” (Hebrews 7:26-27).

“Now once in the end of the world (or ‘age’) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself . . . Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 9:28).

“This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God . . . Now where remission of these is, there-is no more offering for sin” (Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 10:18).

4. The Affliction and Humiliation of the High Priest.

Seven days prior to the feast of atonement the high priest in Israel had to be separated from family and home; and on the day of the feast he had to divest himself of his robes of “glory and beauty,” putting on a simple linen robe such as that worn by one of the common priests.

How marvelously this speaks to us of how our Great High Priest was for thirty-three and one-half years separated from His Father and Home—a self-denying Servant!

He laid aside His garments of glory and beauty—not His deity—and was “fashioned” like unto his brethren, “that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17).

“Being in the form of God,” He “thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Php 2:6-8).

“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

For us He wore the crown of thorns and the purple robe, put upon Him in derision and mockery by wicked men. The affliction and humiliation of the high priest in Israel on the Day of Atonement was but a faint “shadow” of the affliction and humiliation of Jesus, our Great High Priest, when He made atonement for our sins on the cross!

5. “The High Priest Alone once every year” went into the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:7).

For God had said to Moses: “There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel” (Leviticus 16:17).

When Christ drank the bitter “cup,” He drank it alone! There was none to help! His disciples “forsook him, and fled.” Even His Father in heaven had to turn His face away in that dark moment; for a holy God cannot look upon sin—and in His death the holy Son of God took upon Himself the sins of the whole world! “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He cried. And yet, knowing beforehand that this would be, still He had prayed: “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39).

He willingly went to Gethsemane and to Calvary alone!

6. The Two Goats.

We have already considered the significance of the burnt offering and the sin offering, both of which were made on the Day of Atonement. There was a God-ward and there was a man-ward aspect to Calvary.

There was the sweet savour offering when the Son presented Himself without spot or blemish to the Father as the whole burnt offering, delighting to do His will. And there was the non-sweet savour offering, when, as the sin offering, the Holy Son of God became the sinner's Substitute.

We shall not dwell further on these offerings here. But the ritual concerning the two goats was observed only on the Day of Atonement; and it is highly significant.

Turn to the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, and note the details carefully.

The two goats were to be taken from "the congregation of the children of Israel" (Leviticus 16:5); that is, they were to be purchased from the public treasury.

Aaron, the high priest, presented them "before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation," and "cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat" (Leviticus 16:7-8). The one was slain, and the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies (Leviticus 16:15). The other was led out into the wilderness, "unto a land not inhabited" (Leviticus 16:10, Leviticus 16:22). But before the one was slain and the other was led away, the priest laid his hands upon the heads of the animals and confessed the sins of the people, symbolically transferring their sins to their Substitute, even Jesus, of whom the animal sacrifices were a type.

This is made very clear in the commandment of God concerning the sin offering (Leviticus 4:4)-the slain goat was a sin offering (Leviticus 16:15)-and in the commandment He gave to Moses regarding the scapegoat:

"And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" (Leviticus 16:21-22).

How significant is all this ritual!

The two goats represent Christ dying for our sins, and bearing them away, to remember them no more forever. Even as they were purchased from the public treasury, so the thirty pieces of silver given to Judas for selling the Lord Jesus came out of the public treasury, from the officials of the Jews. For the sins of "the whole congregation" He died!

Again, the casting of the lots, to determine which goat was to die and which was to be the scapegoat, reminds us that it was God who made this decision. Likewise, Christ was not the victim of circumstance; He came into the world to die, "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23).

“I lay down my life, that I might take it again,” He said. “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself” (John 10:17-18).

The blood of the goat which was slain was brought by the high priest “within the veil,” into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled “upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat” (Leviticus 16:15).

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come . . . by his own blood . . . entered in once into the holy place (even heaven itself), having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:11-12).

This is the heart of the message of the Gospel, my friend.

It explains to us the meaning of the rent veil. Until Christ died, no man except the high priest dared enter the Holy of Holies where God dwelt in the Shekinah Glory; and even he went in only once a year, “not without blood.”

The veil shut the sinner out from the presence of God. Why? Because a full atonement had not been made for sin. The animal sacrifices were only “shadows of good things to come”; and sinful man could not stand in the presence of a holy God until the full atonement was made. But Christ came; He died; He shed His own precious blood; He rose again, and entered into heaven itself, bearing in His glorified body the marks of Calvary. He presented His own blood before the mercy seat, which is the throne of God. He changed the judgment throne into the mercy seat, on the ground of the sprinkled blood!

That is why the veil of the temple was rent in twain when He died on the cross; “the way into the holiest” was forever opened; and the weakest sinner was invited to “come boldly unto the throne of grace” (Hebrews 10:19-22; compare Hebrews 9:8; Hebrews 4:16).

That is why we no longer need an earthly priest to confess our sins for us; we have a Great High Priest, and to Him we may go in prayer!

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:19-22).

In shedding His blood for our sins, the Lord Jesus bore them away into “the wilderness,” as it were, “unto a land not inhabited.” The place of no habitation is the grave.

“The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

And in His death He has taken away our sins!

“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalms 103:12). And His promise is sure: “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Hebrews 10:17).

God not only forgives; He forgets! “What a wonderful Saviour!”

7. The Coming Forth of the High Priest from the Holy of Holies.

After Aaron came out from the presence of God, and before he appeared again unto the people, he took off the linen clothes of humiliation and put on once more his robes of “glory and beauty.”

And when our Lord returns, when He appears once more to His people, Israel, He will come in all His glory, His eternal glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5).

He laid aside that glory, in order to become a merciful and a faithful High Priest; but He took it up again, after He had made a full atonement for sin. When He rose from the grave, He put on His robes of glory. And very soon perhaps He will come out of the Holy of Holies! “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him!” (Revelation 1:7).

Then the work which He did on that Passover feast nearly two thousand years ago will find its complete fruition.

At the feast of the Passover the Israelite sprinkled the shed blood upon his own lintel and door posts, but then there was no Holy of Holies; there was no sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat.

The Passover sets forth the man-ward aspect of Calvary. Each sinner must, by his own volition, allow the Holy Spirit to apply the shed blood of the Lamb of God to his sinful heart. On the Day of Atonement, however, it was the high priest who sprinkled the shed blood in the presence of the Shekinah Glory. This is the God-ward aspect of Calvary, and shows us in a faint picture what Christ has done for the sinner.

Thus the feasts of the Passover and atonement dovetail perfectly, setting forth also Israel’s special relation to the Lord God, in that Christ will appear on the Day of Atonement, as it were, to establish His promised kingdom over the house of Jacob.

On the basis of the shed blood of the Paschal Lamb “all Israel shall be saved.” Just as God heard the cry of His people in Egyptian bondage, so also He will hear the cry of Israel during the great tribulation. As He sent Moses to deliver them long ago, so He Himself will arise from “the marriage supper of the Lamb,” and He will come out of the Holy of Holies to deliver His people in their hour of great affliction. Then Israel will receive Him as her Great High Priest and King of Kings!

Are you ready for His coming, my brother? He has died for you; He will bear all your sins away, and remember them no more forever, if you will only trust Him. He has opened the way into heaven, into His glorious presence, by His own shed blood. But you must accept His great salvation. It is a free gift; but you must take it if you want access before the throne of grace- now and throughout the endless ages.

~ end of chapter10 ~

11 The Feast Of Tabernacles

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (Leviticus 23:33-43)

Five days after the feast of atonement the children of Israel began to keep the feast of tabernacles, and observed it for seven days. We have already seen that this last feast of the year was a type of the millennial reign of Christ, immediately following His return in glory to the earth.

And we have noted that it was the outgrowth of the one-day act of the feast of atonement. As in the other feasts of the Lord, the “offering made by fire unto the Lord” (Leviticus 23:36) was a foreshadowing of Calvary’s cross; and throughout the thousand years’ reign of Christ on earth, as well as for all eternity, we shall be reminded of the price our Lord paid for our redemption.

1. At the End of the Harvest Israel observed the feast of tabernacles.

“When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days,” God said to Moses (Leviticus 23:39). In Deuteronomy 16:13 we read that the harvest was of corn and wine. It was a season of joy, a kind of harvest-home. Its answer is found in the future glory of Christ, when Israel shall be given her rightful place as the head of the nations, never again to be scattered, persecuted, and hated. Then will be fulfilled the words of the prophet:

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee” (Isaiah 60:1).

The harvest of corn suggests to us the words of our Lord already referred to in this study:

“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24).

Every believer in this Church Age and every tribulation saint will be included in this abundant harvest of redeemed souls. And what a time of rejoicing it will be! Now Israel is scattered throughout the harvest field; this is the long interval between Pentecost and the feast of the trumpets, during which Jews and Gentiles are being gathered into the garner of the Lord

But the harvest-home will come. “And thou shalt rejoice,” God said, “after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine” (Deuteronomy 16:13-14).

The vintage, however, suggests the solemn truth that the feast of tabernacles will not begin to find its fulfillment in the millennial reign of Christ until after He has purified a wicked world with His righteous judgments, at the close of the seventieth week of Daniel.

In the book of Revelation we read of this terrible time of judgment yet to come upon the earth, when the returning Lord Jesus shall tread “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15).

My unsaved brother, do not put off your acceptance of Christ until it is too late. It seems as though the feast of the tabernacles were soon to be fulfilled; and before that reign of righteousness begins, there must be the treading of the winepress-the vintage of the earth-that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords may rule over a purified world!

2. A Time of Rejoicing.

The feast of tabernacles was a season of great joy. "Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days," the Lord said to His people, Israel. "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 . . . Ye shall dwell in booths seven days" (Leviticus 23:40; Leviticus 23:42). Therefore, this holy convocation was called the feast of tabernacles; Israel dwelt in booths.

The palm branches ever speak of victory; and Israel in the millennium will be glad and rejoice that her battles are over. She will have triumphed over Satan and all his hosts "by the blood of the Lamb." So shall we all who love the Lord. His Bride will be ruling with Him in glory; and as members of His Church, we, too, shall rejoice in that day of triumph-in that clay and throughout eternity.

But Israel also made her booths for the feast of tabernacles from the willows of the brook. She will remember her tears, and thank God for wiping them all away. She will rejoice that her nation is no longer the people of the wandering feet, hunted, persecuted, hated, despised. It will be a glad day for Israel when all her tears are wiped away. And it will be a glad day for you and me, my Christian friend, when we shall look back over all the path over which God has led us, and thank Him that His own nail-pierced hands have wiped away our tears. We shall thank Him then for the testings and trials that have been a part of His schooling-to fit us for reigning and ruling with Him in glory.

I am so glad that Israel will rejoice in that day. The most wonderful nation, yet the most tragic-her history indelibly written in blood and tears-will hear the Son of David saying: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." And I am so glad that we, too, shall join Israel in an everlasting hymn of praise: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

3. A Memorial and a "Shadow of Good Things to Come."

Why did God tell Israel to keep the feast of tabernacles? This is what He said to them:

"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" (Leviticus 23:42-43).

The Lord did not want His redeemed people to forget the Passover or the wilderness journey. He wanted them to remember always that their blessings came from Him. And all who enter into the reign of Christ-His chosen people, the Gentile nations, and His Bride-all will remember Calvary and His guiding, protecting hand.

Throughout the endless ages, of which the sabbath which followed the feast of tabernacles was a type, the Lamb will be "all the glory of Immanuel's land."

The feast of tabernacles was a memorial; and it was “a shadow of good things to come,” when Jesus returns to reign.

~ end of chapter 11 ~

12 "These Are The Feasts Of The Lord"

CHAPTER TWELVE

"THESE ARE THE FEASTS OF THE LORD"

(Leviticus 23:4)

Little wonder these seven feasts of the Lord delight the heart of God! They picture the glories of the person of Christ and His mighty work of grace for a sinning world. The Father calls them His "feasts."

And He longs to share them with you and me. He "called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation" at the foot of Mount Sinai many centuries ago, in order to tell His people how they might share His feasts. He still calls to you and me today, bidding us find delight in these things that rejoice His heart.

He has prepared "a table" before us in the presence of our enemies, before Satan and all his hosts. He invites us to His banqueting house, and His banner over us is love. Will you not open the door of your heart to Him, my unsaved brother, and let Him enter there to sup with you?

"Nothing satisfies but Jesus." He is the Bread of Life. And He will fill your hungering soul with the heavenly manna and the living water.

All these "shadows of good things to come" find their beginning and their ending in Jesus of Nazareth, the eternal Son of God, Israel's Messiah, and the Saviour of the world. Moses wrote of Him. All the prophets foretold His "sufferings . . . and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:11).

In Him all the ages meet. And this Mighty One longs to be your personal Saviour and Lord. Let Him into your heart today, and you will sit with Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb-and share with Jehovah His "feasts" throughout the endless ages!

~ end of book ~

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