

The Feasts of Jehovah 01 the Sabbath

by John W. Bramhall

The feasts of Jehovah are divinely appointed seasons to bring God's people together for his own pleasure, and they picture the redemptive history of Israel and God's redemptive purposes for the whole world.

Duration: 42:49

Scripture: Leviticus 23:5-6, Leviticus 23:10, Leviticus 23:15-16, Leviticus 23:24, Leviticus 23:27, Leviticus 23:34

Topics: "Sabbath Rest", "Leviticus Studies"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker provides an outline of the book of Leviticus and its spiritual application to our lives today. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the feasts of Jehovah, which were divine appointments for God's people to come together for His pleasure. These feasts symbolize the ultimate purpose of God to bring His children into eternal rest. However, the speaker highlights that before enjoying the Feast of Jehovah, rest is required. The sermon encourages listeners to study and understand the profound and comprehensive message of these feasts in the Word of God.

Transcript

I'm sure it's a real pleasure to be here in the name of the Lord Jesus and for the privilege of bringing out his precious word for the blessing, the edification and even the salvation of our souls. Now will you turn in your bible with me to the book of Leviticus please. I'd like to read a section in chapter 23.

For it is our purpose in the will of God to touch each day morning and evening as we speak on the seven feasts of Jehovah that are recorded in the 23rd chapter of the book of Leviticus. We do trust perhaps by tonight we may be able to have before you an illustrated chart which will be greatly helpful to understand many things relating to these seven feasts. We would like to read from verse 1 through verse 5 this morning.

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 the holy convocation even these are mine set or appointed feasts. Six days shall work be done but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest and holy convocation. Ye shall do no work therein it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwelling.

These are the feasts of the Lord or the feasts of Jehovah even holy convocations which ye shall proclaim in their season. In the 14th day of the first month and even is the Lord's Passover. May God bless the reading and hearing of his word.

May I first of all give to you very briefly the outline of the great book of Leviticus as it falls into four great important sections. For it is important to find the outline of this great book with its message to the people of God long ago and its spiritual application to our heart even today. For it is a joy to know that these things that were written long ago were written for our admonition and for our learning upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

For all scripture has been given by inspiration of God and it's profitable. For doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be complete truly furnished unto all good works. We thank God for the Old Testament scriptures.

The book of Leviticus falls into four main sections. The first seven chapters you have the great way of approach to God as pictured and illustrated by the offerings. The five offerings that are mentioned in chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 together with the law of the offerings recorded in chapters 6 and 7. Following that great presentation of the only way to approach God through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus as typically set forth.

We have the priesthood brought into demonstration as well as brought in institution in the days of Moses. And the priesthood was one of the most remarkable as well as the most important functions amongst the people of God long ago. And beginning at chapter 8 and continuing you have the priesthood.

That great priesthood represented the priesthood of Christ. For when you look at that great book you find in the opening of it the sinner needs a sacrifice. And what a joy to know that in the five offerings of Leviticus we see the perfection of the sacrifice of Christ meeting the need for every sinner.

And may I add for the sake of any who may not know the Lord Jesus, the sacrificial death of Christ has met your need for your soul's salvation upon the cross. But then after the sinner finds the sacrifice the saint finds he needs and she needs a priest. And we have the great priesthood beginning in chapter 8 and continuing.

Many things are mentioned in relation to the institution of that priesthood. Our Lord Jesus, thank God, is the priest for his people. As the sacrifice he brings us in right relationship to God.

As the priest he maintains us in that relationship. Blessed be his name. And then may I add as you study the great priesthood, thank God you have also exemplified that every believer is a priest.

To share in a priestly ministry with the great high priest above in heaven, their own functions as such. Aaron was the high priest of God's earthly people in the book of Leviticus, but his son shared that priesthood with him. And what a joy, and may I say to my fellow believers, don't forget that every one of us are priests.

To enter into the presence of God, to worship, to intercede, and to thus pray in his presence and to enjoy in his presence the ministry of a priesthood that is entrusted to us. Then you come to the chapter before us in chapter 23 where we have the seven great feasts of Jehovah. They were seven annual feasts that were to be kept by the people of Israel, annually.

Each of them to be kept every year. And then following the presentation of these seven great feasts, the last section of the book, beginning in chapter 24 to the end, set before us the responsibility of God's people to obey him. Setting before their hearts and minds that if they obey him they will be richly and greatly blessed.

If they disobey him they will be judged and visited by his own chastening hand. And oh beloved how true it is that when we find the blessings that God has brought to us in Christ, through Christ, and see the position and relationship that is ours as believers to the Lord Jesus, we must not forget our responsibility. To be obedient will bring great blessing.

To be disobedient will bring chastening. And it is quite interesting, and I point it out in passing only, if you'll read the last chapter in the book of Leviticus, you will find that every Israelite, man and woman, boy and girl, had the privilege of being valued for the divine testimony of God in that day. And it was their privilege to vow themselves in devotion to the Lord, and that they belong to him and their possessions they could lay at his feet.

And I think you and I can certainly add that in the redemption that is ours in Christ Jesus as believers today, we have the responsibility and privilege, as recorded in the words of Paul, and let me quote them, Romans 12, 1 and 2, I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercy of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and holy, perfect will of God. What a joy, and may I say, whether old or young, whether a month old, or whether over 60 years old, as recorded in the last chapter, every Israelite had the privilege to voluntarily give himself or herself as a vow of devotion to the God of Israel, in appreciation for what he had done.

My beloved Christian, may I ask, are you and I devoting our lives to the glory of our Lord Jesus who has done so much for us? And now to look at Leviticus chapter 23 in detail, and follow these seven annual feasts that we study. It's C. H. Macintosh that has certainly written well, saying this chapter is one of the most profound and comprehensive chapters in the word of God, in the inspired volume, and it claims our prayerful study. Now what were the feasts of Jehovah? For if you notice verse 2, and you have it at the opening of verse 4, concerning the feasts of the Lord, or the feasts of Jehovah, as well as in verse 4, these are the feasts of the Lord.

Now what were the feasts of Jehovah? Well first of all, they were divinely appointed seasons, or occasions, to bring God's people together, for his own pleasure. And will you not note, as you have it in verse 2, and you have it in verse 3, and you have it again in verse 4, they were to be holy convocations, and holy convocations, even holy convocations. And then if you note particularly at the end of verse 2, and I quote from the original or any corrected translation, at the end of verse 2 God says, these are my set or appointed feasts.

They were set or appointed feasts, provided by God and ordained of God, to unify his people, to unify them not only outwardly, but morally together. And they were fixed occasions, when they were to come near to God, where they could rejoice before him. And may I again emphasize, they were not voluntary gatherings.

They were divinely appointed feasts. Appointed by God, as he says, my set feasts. Every one of them a divine appointment.

Now may I translate that truth into a present day practical fact? You and I who are the people of God, we are the people of God, should ever remember, every opportunity when saints can gather together in this present age, such an opportunity is to be recognized as a divine appointment. Not merely a voluntary gathering. Can I quote the words of dear apostle Paul, as I believe he wrote the epistle to the Hebrews?

Chapter 10 verse 25, Forsaking not the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but the more so as ye see the day approaching.

My beloved Christian, may I suggest to your heart and conscience as well as mine, the meetings of God's people are divine appointments. Knowing they are divine appointments, lifts the character of the gathering to a divine character, to know that we are meeting with him and around the blessed Lord Jesus who is the center of our gathering. They were not only divine appointments according to his will, but there was a purpose for those gatherings.

And the purpose was for the worship of Jehovah. For the worship of Jehovah. Now may I suggest as the title suggests, they were not to be unpleasant experiences, they were feasts.

And they were called feasts of Jehovah. And they were to be occasions which far from being melancholy, were for God's redeemed people to have times of rejoicing before him. You know there's no better time of joy, no greater time of experience of gladness when you enjoy God.

You remember the dear apostle in Romans 5 speaks about, we glory in tribulation and so on. And as he goes down the chapter, he climaxes it with this statement, but we joy in God through whom we have received the reconciliation. I tell you you can't find any greater source of joy than in God.

And these occasions were to be experiences of joy, not in melancholy, but joyous holy occasions when they enjoyed their Jehovah and their Jehovah could enjoy them. For me I think, as we perhaps, many of us if not all of us may know, to the sad fact that those feasts degenerated. They degenerated from their true character as God requires it to be.

And in their degeneration they became instead of feasts of Jehovah, as you read your New Testament in the Gospel of John, you'll find John never calls them the feasts of Jehovah. Whenever he refers to them he calls them the feast of the Jews. And there's an obvious lesson in that.

Oh my beloved Christian I plead with you as well as with mine own heart, that we who are his people may recognize that every privilege that he has given to us to meet together is an occasion of holy joy and an experience where God himself desires to enjoy his own and Christ the beloved Savior in our midst would indeed make himself manifested in a blessed way and we rejoice before him and with him in his presence. May we not confess sadly that even the gatherings of Christians have degenerated. I think of a hymn that we once sang years ago and how true it has to be confessed as being oftentimes our experience.

Where is the joy that once I had when first I knew the Lord. Beloved Christian may I say as you and I who know the Lord go on with him, surely that joy should increase. But the feasts of Jehovah degenerated in the days of Israel and they became the feasts of the Jews.

And may I suggest don't call the gathering your own gathering. Try to keep it in character and conduct, his meeting, the testimony of the Lord. Now may I give you these thoughts concerning the seven feasts.

We're going to use three applications concerning the feasts. First the primary application. For the primary application as already suggested was in relation to Israel.

They were in the wilderness when God gave them these feasts to be kept. Those feasts were to be kept also when in the land of Canaan and all through their history. And in their primary application these seven feasts as you find them in number.

The feast of Passover first, the feast of unleavened bread second, the feast of first fruit third, the feast of weeks or the feast of Pentecost came fourth and then the feast of trumpet fifth. Then the great national day of atonement was sixth. And last of all the greatest consummation of all those seven feasts, the annual feast of tabernacle.

Which was celebrated by Israel long ago as the greatest occasion of joy that has ever been known of any people upon the earth amongst the nations according to many Jewish writers. And these seven feasts were to be annually kept by Israel. There's another application and we shall see it more clearly when we have the chart before us.

These seven feasts also cover the redemptive history of Israel from the beginning to the end. The first feast as we have it in our chapter was the feast of Passover which we shall consider in detail God willing later. The feast of the Passover was the first feast.

It was first kept in Egypt as you well know from the book of Exodus chapter 12. And it was commemorated continually as the remembrance of their deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt from the tyranny of Pharaoh and to be brought out of that bondage to Jehovah himself and planted as a nation. That was the foundation of Israel and redeemed by the blood of the passion lamb.

They came out of Egypt and God brought them into the land of Israel. And yet feast after feast as it progresses shows the history of Israel until at last they will reach their ultimate glory which is illustrated by the feast of Tabernacle. For the feast of Tabernacle the great millennial reign of the Messiah when he shall come and God grant and upon the earth.

And Israel will have the fulfillment of all this typology the feast suggests when under the reign of the Messiah the joy of the earth will be manifested under the reign of the great. And these feasts beautifully suggest the redemptive history of Israel from the beginning to the end when they shall reach their crowning glory as God promises. But then there's a third application which means much for you and for me.

These feasts also suggest God's redemptive purposes for the whole world. Beautifully typifying the redemptive purposes of God for the whole world founded upon the redemptive work of his dear son the Lord Jesus. And consummating ultimately in the eternal glory when God will have his redeemed of all ages with himself.

And we shall see every feast typifying the very present age in which you and I live to show that God's redemptive purposes from beginning to the end are marching forward to eternal fruition as we see them beautifully set forth in these seven feasts of Jehovah. Now I would like you to notice first of all an important fact. Let me read the first three verses again of our chapter because it is important to realize that every feast began with a day of rest.

A Sabbath. I read these verses one two and three. The Lord speak unto Moses saying speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them concerning the feasts of the Lord which he shall proclaim to the holy convocation even these are my feasts.

Now note the three. Six days shall work be done but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest and holy convocation. Ye shall do no work therein.

It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwelling. Now this was the preparation day for the feast. This was not the feast but it was the preparation day before the feast.

I wonder if you've ever noticed in the gospel of John that John makes mention that when the Lord Jesus was on trial it was the preparation day for the feast of the Passover. And every feast had a preparation day which was called a Sabbath or a day of rest. Most unusual when you come to the end of the feast.

The last feast of tabernacles. The only feast that is added to it another day of rest. And at the end of the feast of tabernacles there was to be a day of rest also as well as preceding the feast.

The eighth day. That great day of the feast. And how significant it is as we realize it pictures the final end of the purposes of God is to bring his dear children into an age an eternal day of rest.

And I want to give you three thoughts this morning that are important. Before the feast of Jehovah could be enjoyed rest was required. And what a lesson.

Before there can be any holy convocation and the enjoyment of God with his people and his people with God every the Sabbath must precede the feast which was a day of rest. We know that when God created the heavens of the earth he set a memorial day of rest which was his rest from creation. But I want to give you this thought.

When it comes to all that these feasts teach us based upon the redemption that is in Christ Jesus none of us can enjoy God unless we know something about rest. Rest. Rest.

Now may I quote the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew chapter 11 verse 28 I'm sure that we know them. But it's precious to realize that the Lord Jesus said come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Every one of us need redemption rest.

First every man and woman boy and girl we need redemption rest. And how significant This redemption rest can only be given to us by the Lord. Let me quote his words again.

Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden I will give you rest. We remember the words of the old hymn I heard the voice of Jesus say come unto me and rest. Lay down thou weary one lay down thy head upon my breast.

I came to Jesus as I was weary worn and sad. I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad. Dear good beloved before we can indeed enjoy what God has for his redeemed people we must have rest of conscience.

Rest of conscience. Do you have a troubled conscience? A troubled conscience can never rest in the presence of God. A conscience that is troubled by sin.

A conscience that is burdened by sin. I'm sure many of us if not most of us could testify to the remembrance of those days before we found the Lord Jesus as our savior. We were troubled we were burdened the conscience had no rest.

The condemnation of the spirit of God's work. The conviction of his power bringing to our souls that we needed salvation and we're in danger of convicted us we had no rest we had no rest no rest and we found it not until we came just as we were with all the burden and guilt of our sin and we came to him who said I will give you rest. Now beloved may I point out to you that rest is a gift you cannot buy it.

All the rest of conscience can never be purchased by any human means or effort. That rest of conscience is God's divine gift to a sinner who will but come with his and her burdened soul casting himself and herself at the blessed feet of the Lord Jesus. And in the language of the poet singing in those memorable words just as I am without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me and that thy and that thou bid me come to thee O Lamb of God I come.

Now listen carefully I quote the words of Hebrews 9 14 as the apostle Paul writes of the fact how that blessed savior by the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God how much more shall the blood of Christ purge cleanse your conscience from dead work to serve the living God. Beloved is your conscience burdened because of your sin here is one who says I will give you rest. The blood of Christ is the only power that can cleanse the guilty conscience.

Let me repeat that we sing it what can take a what can wash away my stain nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh precious is the flow that makes me white as snow no other found I know nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Oh my beloved what God has for you and me in the redemptive purposes of his heart we can never enjoy until the conscience is rest. Could I ask again make sure first of all your sins are forgiven you. The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanses us from all sin and what joy to enter into such rest.

I came to Jesus as I was weary worn inside I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad. But didn't I point out for you and me believers you and I need to realize that believers there's another rest too. For you and I to enjoy the things which be of God there's not only the need for rest of conscience but ah there's the need for the rest of the mind and the heart.

Let me quote the words of the Lord Jesus again as you have them in Matthew 11 29 and 30 going on when he said come unto me and I will give you rest he added take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest for your soul. Did you notice the difference in Matthew 11 28 he gives that rest in Matthew 11 29 and 30 you find that rest. Was it one of the Wesley's that called it the second rest and who how necessary it is as the Hebrew writer says in chapter four that we should enter into that rest which he has provided for us tell a believer may I point out to you very frankly there's not only rest of conscience in Christ but for the believer there's rest of heart and mind praise his name thou keepest him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusted in thee.

Let me quote the words of the Lord Jesus John 14 27 peace I leave with you my peace give I unto you let not your heart be not as the world giveth give I unto you let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid. Now will you do that verse very much like Matthew 11 there's two mentions of peace and they're different peace I leave with you and he's left that peace for the whole world if they will take it but then he added my peace give I unto you not your peace he said my peace give I unto you now what was his peace what was his peace may I suggest on that occasion when the Lord was surrounded by his enemies and all Jerusalem was buzzing with the plotting and scheming of his death and the ruse and the elders were gathered together and judas had gone out to betray his blessed Lord the Lord Jesus in the midst of all those circumstances as he faced the trial the judgment hall Gethsemane and the cross he had peace peace within my peace give I unto you not as the world giveth give I unto you let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid. Another believer look we not only need rest of conscience but we do need rest of heart and mind and we live in a day when we need the enjoyment of his peace within let me quote the words of Paul in Philippians 4 6 and 7 be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication

with thanksgiving let to request be made known unto God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus.

Oh beloved that peace which the world can never give but which you and I find where in Christ what rest no matter the circumstances name every circumstance that may be around me name every difficulty that may face me there in the center of his peace I can be resting peace perfect peace in this dark world of sin and what a joy to realize there is such a rest for the people of God but then thank God there's something better still than even all that as Hebrews 4 9 declares there remaineth a rest for the people of God and someday there is an eternal rest now I want you to know from on in our faith and we'll see it clearer on the chart God willing the feast began with a day of rest and at the end of the tabernacle feast they consummated with a day of rest and there you have pictures the whole

program of divine redemption from the beginning to the end God coming out of a past eternity out of the status of an eternal rest in eternity past and moving upon the scene of time when sin ruined this earth and by his redemptive purposes in Christ through Christ he marches on and on and on and on until those purposes are consummated as they will be typified by the feast of tabernacles when the last manifestation of his glory and power in relation to the earth and the last great death great judgment will take place to usher in what an eternal day of rest an eternal Sabbath the day of God hope you love it you know what I'm glad I found rest in my Lord Jesus Christ I'm glad I can find rest even in the midst of a world of trouble for my soul and I'm happy as still to know I'm going to be an

eternal day that will be forever a Sabbath of eternal rest in that blessed glory had a dear friend many years ago I never could understand why this dear brother very talented and a very efficient instructor in mathematics like one of the greatest universities of the country to come south after the world war two and when I saw him in a home assembly where I live I said Fred I said what are you doing down here oh he said teaching I said where we didn't even have but one college in that city of any consequence at that time oh he said at Burton Institute a small institute of learning on the third floor of a very dilapidated building downtown I said Fred why did you ever come down here well he said the war was ended and he said I saw all the GIs coming back from the war and he said I felt like

the old colored preacher said I was looking for work and I was afraid I might find it and he said I got out of there and one day at the close of a bible reading when we were studying he said to me he said brother Bramhall when I get to heaven if I can't rest for the first 5,000 years I'm going to be disappointed I looked at him and said Fred before that comes the Lord's going to have you pushing stars around and doing something for him but his whole thought was this rest rest you hardly believe it he did die with a heart attack believe him not but look look at the truth God has his purposes he had them for Israel to reveal himself in these feasts for their enjoyment and for his enjoyment with his people and every feast was preceded by a day of rest the beginning was preceded by a day of

rest and then the confirmation followed with a day of rest but I would like to ask this question my fellow listener do you have that rest that God wants you to have do you know that rest that comes only through the precious blood of Jesus cleansing your conscience and speaking the forgiveness of sins to give you rest of soul God grants you do my fellow believer you and I we're in a world of trouble please there is rest sweet rest under the shadow of his wings in our Lord Jesus Christ for you and for me to enjoy you know as I know we do not enjoy the things of God as we ought unless we have rest of heart and mind God help us to happen and then best and last of all my fellow friend will you be in that eternal day of rest one of the greatest privileges I have in looking at the book of

revelation to see my place is in chapter four when I look at those glory crowned elders the first thing that is stated of those elders that represent the glorified saints they are sitting clothed in white raiment with crowns of gold upon their head but they are at rest and as we often sing when all my labors and trials are o'er and I'm safe on that beautiful shore just to be near the dear Lord I adore will through the ages be glory for me bless your heart I just can't wait to get seated down in heaven around my Lord I hope that will be your portion too shall we pray and blessed God and father oh the greatness of thy loving heart all the wisdom of thine eternal mind that even long ago in relation to thine earthly people and their responsibilities and privileges with thee they could not

enjoy them without rest and a day of rest preceded these annual feasts now father we are looking forward to have a real feast of spiritual good things this week but we do pray we shall enter into the enjoyment of them with rest of conscience with rest of heart and mind and with keen anticipation that someday we shall be resting in the eternal ages of God forever and now if anyone knows not the Lord Jesus we pray now may the spirit of God convict them may he convert them and bring them to him who said I will give you rest may they receive it from him today for we ask him

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