

# The Bible From 20,000 Feet

## Part 15: Leviticus ch. 23 - 27

Tuesday Night Bible Study, November 4, 2008

### --OUTLINE

- ISRAEL'S FEASTS THAT FORESHADOWED CHRIST'S FIRST COMING (SPRING FEASTS)
- ISRAEL'S FEASTS THAT FORESHADOWED CHRIST'S SECOND COMING (FALL FEASTS)
- THE SABBATH YEAR AND YEAR OF JUBILEE

### --ISRAEL'S FEASTS THAT FORESHADOWED CHRIST'S FIRST COMING (SPRING FEASTS)

--before listing the 7 annual feasts for Israel to celebrate God reiterated the command to rest on the Sabbath...

--Leviticus 23:3: "Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation."

--Exodus 20:8-11: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

--the idea of taking Sunday off from work is so universal that it's easy to lose sight of it's spiritual significance. In a sense, in the middle of every culture is a memorial to God's creation of the world and the fact that we are made in His image... God worked in a pattern of six days followed by a day of rest and because we are made in His image we naturally follow the same pattern. If we work 7 day weeks for too long then we lose productivity and become overworked...like a car engine that is overheated.

### --The Passover Feast

--first instituted during exodus from Egypt when blood of the Passover sacrifice sprinkled on their doorposts protected them from the plague of death that swept through Egypt.

--all symbolic sacrifices of the Old Testament pointed to the final sacrifice of Christ. When we trust in Christ, His shed blood – His death on the cross – protects us from the consequence of our sins, death in eternity.

--in 1 Corinthians 5:7 Christ is called our Passover – "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."

--it was no coincidence that Christ was crucified during the Passover weekend when families from all around Israel were bringing lambs to Jerusalem to be offered as their Passover sacrifice!

--John the Baptist introduced Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" (John 1:29)

### --The Feast of Unleavened Bread

--first instituted during exodus from Egypt, this feast memorialized Israel's quick departure from Egypt when they didn't have time to wait for leaven to make their dough rise.

--leaven was also symbolic of sin... just as Israel ate unleavened bread after being set free from bondage in Egypt, so we too, after being set free from the eternal consequence of our sins begin to purge sin from our lives.

--back to analogy in 1 Corinthians 5:7... in the context of addressing sin in the Corinthian church, Paul writes, "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump [*a little sin in our life leads to more sin...little compromises lead to larger compromises*]? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven [*remove old sinful ways from our life*], that you may be

a new lump [*that we may live new lives that are free of our old patterns of sin*], since you truly are unleavened [*so that our lives will reflect the reality in our spirit...since we are already cleansed of sin in our spirit...we are "born of the Spirit"... a "new creation" in Christ*]. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us [*we are cleansed of our sin in our spirit because Christ died for our sins*]. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth [*what matters now is not keeping the Old Testament feast of eating unleavened bread but living lives that are free of old patterns of sin*]. (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

**--so we see that the essence of Christianity wasn't formulated long after Christ lived as some critics claim... but we see the two foundational principles of Christianity (trusting in Christ's payment for our sins and turning from our sins... faith and repentance) deeply rooted in the ceremonial law that was at the center of Israel's culture for 1500 years before Christ!**

--when Paul stood on trial, accused by the Jews of starting a new cult, He said, "having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, **saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come** — 23 that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light [*forgiveness of sins and repentance from sins*] to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:22-23)

--Luke 24:46-49: "Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that **repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.'"

#### **--the Feast of Firstfruits**

--in this feast Israel dedicated the firstfruits of the wheat harvest to the Lord

--in the New Testament Christ is called the "firstfruits" (1 Cor. 15:20) of the resurrection... just as the first stalk of wheat that was gathered and offered to the Lord was the first of a multitude of stalks, so Christ was the first of a multitude that will be resurrected.

--1 Cor. 15:20: "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep [*"fallen asleep" – indicating temporary state of physical death*]."

--the first stalk of wheat for the feast was offered on Sunday (Lev. 23:11 - "the day after the Sabbath") and Christ rose from the grave on Sunday!

--the visible resurrection of Christ is a kind of pledge of the general resurrection of the entire human race...

--some resurrected to eternal life and others resurrected to judgement... Jesus said, "for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." (John 5:28-30)

#### **--the Feast of Pentecost**

--in this feast Israel dedicated the firstfruits of the barley harvest to the Lord.

--this feast was held 50 days after the feast of the firstfruits

--50 days after Christ rose from the grave, during the Feast of Pentecost, the church was born in Jerusalem as believers there were filled with the Holy Spirit...

--Acts 2:1-4: "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all

filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

--supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit helped establish the church

--during the Feast of Pentecost God commanded Israel to offer two loaves made from the firstfruits of the Barley harvest.

--this foreshadowed two groups (Jews and Gentiles) for the first time being united together in the church (before the church was born both only the Jews were active participants in God's plan of salvation)

--the birth of the church was a milestone in the promise God gave Abraham that "all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you..." (Genesis 12:3) the church is comprised of people from all nations!

--satan is right there to oppose God's work...and therefore we see countless perversions of Christianity and corrupt churches throughout the ages that have been a curse to all people!

--what is "the church" in the truest sense?

--"the church" is simply all believers united through the Holy Spirit... the one true church isn't found in a single location or a denomination but rather is the single body of all believers spread across the globe who are organically connected through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

--1 Cor 12:12-31: "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ... 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."

--recap of spring feasts fulfilled at Christ's first coming:

--Passover... Christ died for our sins to bring us into relationship with Him.

--Unleavened Bread... because we have a relationship with Christ, sin is purged from our lives and we become more like Him.

--Firstfruits... because we have a relationship with Christ, we will be resurrected to eternal life with Him

--Pentecost... it is through the Holy Spirit that we have a relationship with Christ and are empowered to break the old patterns of sin in our lives.

## **--ISRAEL'S FEASTS THAT FORESHADOWED CHRIST'S SECOND COMING (FALL FEASTS)**

### **--Feast of Trumpets**

--this day was a day of rest where trumpets were sounded to mark the beginning of a new year (on the new calendar that God instituted as Israel left Egypt.

--this feast foreshadows the return of Christ and the new era that He will usher in... a 1000 year period of peace where He reigns over the entire world.

--1 Thess 4:16-17: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

--1 Cor 15:50-53: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of

an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

--"the dead will be raised incorruptible..." that is, all those whose sins are forgiven will be resurrected to live in glorified bodies and serve under Christ during the millennial kingdom.

--the unsaved won't be resurrected until the second resurrection after the millennial kingdom.

Revelation 20:4-6: "Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

### **--Day of Atonement**

--in part 14 we explored the Day of Atonement

--this day in more detail than any other part of the ceremonial law foreshadowed Christ making atonement for our sins by dying in our place on the cross.

--fulfillment of this feast is found in both the first and second coming of Christ...

--Christ made atonement for our sins during His first coming, but Israel as a nation will not experience His atonement for their sins until His second coming when they finally turn to Him in faith as a nation.

--Zechariah chapters 12-13 describe Israel as a nation turning to Christ in faith and the events surrounding this.

### **--Feast of Tabernacles**

--once Israel was settled in the Promise Land, during this feast they lived in tents for 1 week as a reminder of the years that they lived in the wilderness before conquering the land of Canaan.

--the fulfillment of this feast is less clear than the others, but in sense this feast points to Israel's future during the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth after His second coming.

--the week of living in tents (after leaving the desert wilderness and establishing their homeland) reminded Israel that they were still living in the spiritual wilderness of this world with the kingdom of heaven before them.

--the essence of the kingdom of heaven is living in the presence of God...

--in this sense the Feast of Tabernacles is fulfilled during Christ's first coming and His second coming...

--during His first coming He opened the way (by making atonement for our sins) for us to live in the presence of God through the indwelling of His Spirit

--at the beginning of Jesus' 3 year preaching ministry Matthew records, "From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." (Matthew 4:17)

--when we repented of our sins and trusted in Christ the kingdom of heaven began in us.

--after His second coming He will reign on earth during the 1000 year millennial kingdom and the whole world will live in His presence.

--for most of Israel both of these fulfillments won't occur until His second coming (as most of Israel won't be saved until His second coming)

--the ultimate fulfillment will be living in the visible presence of God in heaven in our glorified bodies! Only then will we be truly home!

## **--THE SABBATH YEAR AND YEAR OF JUBILEE**

### **--the Sabbath Year**

-God commanded Israel to let the land rest every 7 years after they settled in Canaan  
--Leviticus 25:2-4: "When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. 3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard."

### **--the Year of Jubilee**

-every 7 sabbath years (every 49 years) is the Year of Jubilee

-all debt forgiven, property given back to original owner, indentured servants released

--simple yet ingenious regulation... debt forgiven after 50 years... therefore credit tighter....therefore less overspending and less bankruptcy... and therefore more stable economy!

--also prevented too much wealth accumulating with one person or family

--essentially the only permanent ownership is that which God gave them when they first established the land.

--as the Year of Jubilee got closer the value of property decreased because the length of time the property could be sold (or essentially leased) was shorter (Leviticus 25:50-53)

**--in our lives, the closer we get to heaven the less value the things of this world become to us!**