

The Feasts of the Lord--Part I

FEASTS OF THE LORD (most of the following study is taken from The Seven Feasts of the Messiah by Eddie Chumney)

HEBREW NAME ENGLISH NAME TIME OF OBSERVANCE

1. Pesach Passover Nisan 14
2. Hag HaMatzah Feast of Nisan 15-21 Unleavened Bread
3. Bikkurim First Fruits (of The morrow after the Barley Harvest) sabbath during Hag HaMatzah
4. Shavout Feast of Weeks/ Fifty days from the Pentecost Feast of First Fruits
5. Yom Teruah Feast of Trumpets Tishrei 1 (Rosh HaShanah)
6. Yom Kippur Day of Atonement Tishrei 10
7. Sukkot Feast of Tabernacles/ Tishrei 15-21 Booths

THE APPOINTED FEASTS

The Festivals of the Lord found in Leviticus, chapter 23, were given to us by God so His people could understand the coining of the Messiah and the role that the Messiah would play in redeeming and restoring both man and the earth back to God following the fall of Man in the Garden of Eden.

The Festivals are divided into two major portions, depending upon whether they occur in the spring or the fall. The Spring Festivals teach about the First Coming of the Messiah, and the Fall Festivals teach about the Second Coming of the Messiah. During the course of the year, the rains come in Israel at two primary times - the spring and the fall. In Hosea 6:3 we read- "...His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth." The "latter and former rain" in this passage is commonly interpreted and understood to be the coming of the Holy Spirit. The "former and latter" rain also refers to the First and Second Coming of the Messiah. The Hebrew word for the former rain, found also in Joel 2:23, is 'moreh', which means "teacher". Jesus, the teacher, was sent by God to the earth to faithfully teach us righteousness, just as God faithfully sends us the rain. (Isaiah 55:10-11) The harvest (believers in Christ) is the product that the rain (Jesus) produces. The Apostle Paul, in Colossians 2:16-17 refers to the Feasts as a "shadow of things to come." The first four Feasts or Festivals, which are Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost, primarily teach about the significant events in the First Coming of the Messiah and why these events were an important part of God's redemption of man. The last three Feasts, which are the Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) also known as Rosh HaShanah, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths (Sukkot), give us a fascinating insight concerning important events that surround the Second Coming of the Messiah. God gave the Festivals to teach about the death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah, the empowering of the believers by the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of the dead, the coronation of the Messiah, the wedding of the Messiah (which we have already

outlined in a previous study, but will include portions here as well), the Millennium, and much more.

The Bible also provides some powerful reasons for studying and understanding the Seven Festivals of the Messiah:

- The Feasts are in the Bible, and all the Bible is inspired by God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- The Feasts are a shadow of things to come that teach us about the Messiah. (Colossians 2:16-17, Hebrews 10:1)
- God gave the Feasts so we could learn and understand God's plan of redemption for the world and our personal relationship to Him. (Romans 15:4)

THE BIBLICAL CALENDAR AND THEIR MONTH OF THE YEAR

NAMES OF MONTH	OUR MONTH	MONTH OF CIVIL YEAR	MONTH OF SACRED YEAR
Tishrei	Sep	1st	7th
Cheshvan	Oct	2nd	8th
Kislev	Nov	3rd	9th
Tevet	Dec	4th	10th
Shevat	Jan	5th	11th
Adar	Feb	6th	12th
Nisan (Aviv)	Mar	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr	8th	2nd
Sivan	May	9th	3rd
Tammuz	June	10th	4th
Av	July	11th	5th
Elul	Aug	12th	6th

To fully understand the Feasts being appointed times given by God, it is important to understand the Biblical Calendar that God gave to us. There are two primary calendars in the Bible. The first one is called the Civil Calendar and is used from Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 12. The first month in the Civil Calendar is Tishrei. Rosh HaShanah, or the Jewish New Year, the first day in the Civil Calendar, is the beginning of the New Year. The second calendar in the Bible is the Religious Calendar. The Religious Calendar is used from Exodus 12 to Revelation 22. God established the Religious Calendar in Exodus 12:2- "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." The month that God was referring to was the month which is called Nisan. Prior to God establishing the month of Nisan as the first month in the Religious Calendar, Nisan was the seventh month in the Civil Calendar. God gave the Religious Calendar so that we could understand that these Feasts, which He gave and which are His appointed times and foreshadow important events in redemption, would happen on the days He ordained on the

Religious Calendar. These important days on the Religious Calendar are the same days that He gave as Festivals in Leviticus, chapter 23.

HISTORICAL APPLICATION OF THE FEASTS

FEAST HISTORICAL APSECT

1. Passover Israel's deliverance out of Egyptian bondage
2. Unleavened Bread The going out of Egypt
3. First Fruits Crossing the Red Sea
4. Pentecost Giving the Commandments at Mount Sinai
5. Rosh HaShanah Blowing the 'Shofar' (trumpet) (Feast of Trumpets) Jewish New Year
6. Day of Atonement Priest entered the Holy of Holies Cleansing of the people's sins
7. Tabernacles Entering the Promised Land/Great Rejoicing

MESSIANIC APPLICATION OF THE FEASTS

FEAST MESSIANIC FULFILLMENT

1. Passover Death of Christ on the Cross (tree)
2. Unleavened Bread The burial of Jesus
3. First Fruits The resurrection of Jesus
4. Pentecost Pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2)
5. Rosh HaShanah The resurrection of the dead/(Feast of Trumpets) Rapture of the believers
6. Day of Atonement The day of Christ's Second Coming
7. Tabernacles The Messianic Era/Millennium

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION OF THE FEASTS

FEAST SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

1. Passover Repent and trust by faith in the shed blood of Jesus
2. Unleavened Bread Sanctification and separation from evil represented by water immersion (baptism)
3. First Fruits Walking in newness of life
4. Pentecost Immersion (baptism) in the Holy Spirit and faith in God
5. Rosh HaShanah Hear the calling (shofar (trumpet)) of (Feast of Trumpets) God for our lives
6. Day of Atonement Yielding ourselves to God so that we may live (face to face) in His Presence
7. Tabernacles A daily rest in the Messiah and having the rest of His Kingdom in our hearts

SIGNIFICANCE IN BRIEF

1. Passover Reminds us that God is the forgiver of sin who grants us eternal life in His Kingdom through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Passover
2. Unleavened Bread Depicts putting sin out of our lives

3. First Fruits Christ, the firstfruits risen from the dead, afterward, those who are Christ's at His Coming
4. Pentecost Serves to remind us that our Creator still works miracles, empowering us to carry out His work in this world
5. Rosh HaShanah Looks forward to the return of Jesus Christ (Feast of Trumpets) (rapture of the Church), and to the resurrection of the "dead in Christ" -the hope of Christians
6. Day of Atonement Pictures the loving reconciliation we have with God, made possible through Christ's sacrifice It also shows the remarkable truth that Satan will eventually be removed so that humanity can at last attain reconciliation with God on a universal basis
7. Tabernacles Represents the Millennium, the reign of Christ on Earth for 1,000 years of true happiness and utopia

OVERVIEW OF THE SPRING FESTIVALS

The four Spring Festivals are Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost. These four Spring Festivals are joined together as an interrelated unit. The Feast of Weeks is considered the conclusion to Passover. The season of Passover is not considered totally over until Pentecost is completed.

Passover begins in Egypt (a type of the world), where the children of Israel had become slaves. In the days of Joseph, there was a famine in Israel and the children of Israel went down to Egypt and gave themselves to rulership under Pharaoh. Because of this, Pharaoh had legal ownership over the people. This ownership could be broken only by the death of Pharaoh, thus freeing the children of Israel to go to the Promised Land. When Pharaoh died, his rulership over the children of Israel was legally broken and the people were free to go to the Promised Land.

Spiritually speaking, Pharaoh is a type of Satan. Until you accept Jesus into your life, Satan has legal ownership over you. By the death of Jesus, the legal ownership that Satan has over our lives is broken and we are free to enter into the spiritual promised land of God and receive all the promises that He has promised to us.

From the crossing of the Red Sea (Nisan 17) to the day Moses met God on Mount Sinai were 47 days. For 47 days the children of Israel traveled through the wilderness before they came to Mount Sinai on the third day of the third month. (Exodus 19:1) God instructed the people through Moses to sanctify themselves before He visited them three days later on Mount Sinai, which would be the sixth day of the third month. (Exodus 19:10-11) This day would be the fiftieth day following the crossing of the Red Sea. It came to be known as the revelation of God at Mount Sinai. This day, being the fiftieth day from the crossing of the Red Sea on Nisan 17 would be the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost.

From the Exodus story, we can see that the Lamb was slain on the fourteenth of Nisan, the day of Passover. On the fifteenth of Nisan, the day of Unleavened Bread, the people left

Egypt. On the seventeenth of Nisan the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, and 50 days later on the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost, God gave Moses the Commandments.

In the studies of the Feasts that will follow, we will see how Jesus died on Passover (Nisan 14), was in the sepulcher on the day of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15), and was resurrected on the day of First Fruits (Nisan 17), and the Holy Spirit empowered the believers 50 days following Jesus resurrection on the day of Pentecost. We will also learn what these Feasts mean to the believer and how they relate to our personal relationship with God.

OVERVIEW OF THE FALL FESTIVALS

The Fall Festival season begins with a 40 day period called, in Hebrew, 'Teshuvah', which means "to repent or return". This 40 day period begins in the sixth month of the Religious Calendar, and concludes on the tenth day of the seventh month, which is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Each morning in the synagogue following the morning prayers, a trumpet (shofar) is blown (except on sabbaths and the day preceding Rosh HaShanah, the Feast of Trumpets). The Biblical name for Rosh HaShanah is Yom Terah, which means "the day of the awakening blast". We call it the Feast of Trumpets. God gave us this day to teach us about the resurrection of the dead, the coronation of the Messiah, the wedding of the Messiah, and more. This day is both the Jewish New Year and the beginning of a period of soul searching known as the High Holy Days, culminating on Yom Kippur. Therefore, the last 10 days of the 40 day period of Teshuvah or repentance, is also called the high Holy Days. The first and second days of the 10 High Holy Days (Tishrei 1-10) are collectively known as one day. (Nehemiah 8:1-2, 13) The seven day period from Tishrei 3 through Tishrei 9 is called the Days of Awe or the Awesome Days. God gave these special days on His calendar to teach us about the future tribulation period on earth. These seven days will correspond to the seven years of the tribulation, known in Hebrew as the "birthpangs of the Messiah".

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement is observed on the tenth day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:26-32) Since Rosh HaShanah teaches us about the resurrection of the dead, the coronation of the Messiah and the wedding of the Messiah, and the Days of Awe teach us about the tribulation, Yom Kippur teaches us about the literal Second Coming of the Messiah when He will set His foot down of the Mount of Olives. (Zechariah 14:4)

The Feast of Tabernacles is observed the fifteenth day of the seventh month of Tishrei to the twenty first day. This Festival teaches us the joy of the Messianic Kingdom or the Millennium. There are four important aspects to remember when dealing with each of the seven Great Festivals of the Lord:

1. All of the Festivals are, at the same time, both historical and prophetic.
2. All of the Festivals teach about the Messiah, or Jesus.
3. All of the Festivals are agricultural in context.

4. All of the Festivals teach about your personal relationship with God and how you are to walk with Him as you grow in the knowledge of Him, from being a baby believer to a mature believer.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "FEAST" IN THE BIBLE

There are two important Hebrew words that appear in Leviticus, chapter 23, and each word is translated as 'feast' in English. In verse 2, the word for feast is the Hebrew word 'mo'ed'- "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, concerning the feasts (mo'ed) of the Lord..." The word 'mo'ed' means an appointment, a fixed time or season, a cycle or year, an assembly, an appointed time, a set time or exact time. By understanding the Hebrew meaning of the English word "feast", we can see that God is telling us that He is ordaining a "set time or exact time or an appointed time" when He has an appointment with humanity to fulfill certain events in the redemption. Jesus came to earth at the exact time ordained by God as Paul wrote in Galatians 4:4, and God has an exact time or set appointment when, in the future, He will judge the world as written in Acts 17:31.

In verse 6 is another Hebrew word translated as "feast"- "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast (chag) of unleavened bread..." The Hebrew word 'chag', which means a "festival", is derived from the Hebrew root word 'chagag', which means to move in a circle, to march in a sacred procession, to celebrate, dance, to hold a solemn feast or holiday. God gave the Festivals as cycles to be observed yearly so that, by doing them, we can understand God's redemptive plan for the world, the role that the Messiah would play in that redemption, and our personal relationship to God concerning how we grow from a baby Bible believer to a mature Bible believer.

THREE TIMES A YEAR THEY WERE TO ASSEMBLE

There are a total of seven Feasts (the divine number for perfection or completeness in the Bible). God divided the seven Festivals into three major Festival seasons. The Feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits are in the Hebrew month of Nisan, which is the first month of God's Religious Calendar in the spring of the year. The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, is observed in the third month which is the Hebrew month of Sivan. The Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles are observed in the seventh month of Tishrei, which is in the fall of the year. Three is the number of complete and perfect testimony and witness. (2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 John 5:8) So the Feasts are a witness to God's divine plan and the role of Messiah fulfilling that plan.

UNDERSTANDING THE FEASTS

In Leviticus 23:2 it is written, "...the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations..." The Hebrew term translated as convocation in Leviticus 23:2, 4 is 'miqra', which means "a rehearsal". God gave the Festivals to be yearly "rehearsals" of the future events in the redemption. Because God gave the "rehearsals" to teach us about the major events in the redemption, if we want to understand those events, then we need to

understand what God was teaching us by these rehearsals. We will do this in the study as we get into the Feasts themselves.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part II

THE PASSOVER

The Feast of Passover was given by God to be a rehearsal of the First Coming of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' sacrifice is the pivotal event in God's plan to save humanity. Speaking of His certain death, Christ said that He, as the Son of Man, must be "lifted up" (crucified) even as "Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," so that "whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

We see here that Jesus' sacrifice, the central message of the Passover, was a supreme act of love for humanity. This important event laid the foundation for the remaining annual Holy Days and Festivals. It is the most momentous step in God's plan.

The Passover in the Old Testament foreshadowed Christ's crucifixion.

God declared Passover to be a permanent celebration for all eternity. (Exodus 12:13-14) Historically, Passover celebrates God's deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, where they were slaves to the Egyptians (Exodus 6:5-8, 13:3, 14).

The spiritual application that God wants us to understand can be seen as this: Egypt is a type of the world and the world's system. Its ruler, Pharaoh, was a type of satan. The bondage people are in when they live according to the ways of the world's system is sin (John 8:34). Historically, the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage in Egypt by putting the blood of a lamb upon the doorposts of their houses (Exodus 12:13). Spiritually, this is a picture of Jesus and how those who believe in Him are delivered from the bondages of sin and the rule of satan in their lives. Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29). Jesus is also our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). Those who follow Christ are the house of God (Hebrews 3:6). The doorposts are our hearts. It is only through trusting by faith in the shed blood of Christ, our Passover, that we are free from the bondage of sin (Galatians 5:1). This is because the blood of Christ redeems us from sin (Leviticus 17:11, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, 1 Peter 1:18-19, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 1:5)

During Passover, the head of each household was to take a lamb of the first year on the tenth day of the first month known as Nisan and set it aside until the fourteenth day (Exodus 12:3-6). In the evening of the fourteenth day, at exactly 3:00 p.m., the lamb was to be killed (Exodus 12:6) The blood of the lamb was to be sprinkled on the lintel and two side posts of the household door. The lamb was to be roasted with fire, with bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread, and the entire household was to feast upon the body of the lamb (Exodus 12:7-8). The people were instructed by God to eat the lamb with haste and

to be dressed and ready to leave Egypt at the midnight hour. This would be the fifteenth day of Nisan (Exodus 12:10-11).

At midnight on that fateful evening in Egypt, the death angel passed through the land. Every house that did not have the token of the blood on the doorposts and lintel suffered the judgment of God (Exodus 12:12-15). The Hebrew word for Passover is 'Pesach', which means "to pass or hover over." This word speaks to us about two things. First, it shows the passing over in judgment from death and sin to life in Jesus. Second, it tells us about allowing, by faith, the blood of Jesus to hover over our lives and give us divine protection from the evil one.

GOD'S COMMANDMENTS FOR PASSOVER

Exodus 12: vs.2--This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you

vs.3--Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house

vs.4.--And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb

vs.5.--Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats

vs.6--And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening

vs.7--And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it

vs.8--And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it

vs.9--Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the pertinence thereof

vs.10--And ye shall let nothing remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire

vs.11--And 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

vs.12--For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.

PASSOVER WAS THE BEGINNING OF MONTHS (vs.2)

Nisan is the first month of the Religious Calendar. When we receive Jesus into our lives it is the beginning of a New Covenant relationship with God (Jeremiah 31:31-33, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Passover is the first of the Feasts. Likewise, repenting of our sins and believing in the shed blood of Jesus is the first step in our walk with God.

THE LAMB WAS HIDDEN FOR FOUR DAYS (vs.3,6)

God commanded Israel to take a lamb on the tenth day of Nisan and set it aside until the fourteenth day. These four days were fulfilled by Jesus during the Passover week. Remember, Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29). He entered Jerusalem and went to the temple, which was the house of God, and went on public display there for four days from Nisan 10 to Nisan 14 (Matthew chapters 21-26).

In eschatology, the study of last days, these four days that the lamb was hidden is prophetic of the people's expectations that the Messiah would come 4,000 years from the creation of Adam as part of the 7,000 year plan of God to redeem both man and the earth back to how things were in the Garden of Eden. These four days are prophetic of the Messiah being hid from the world and not coming to earth for four days or 4,000 years from the creation of Adam. A day is understood to be prophetic of a thousand years, based upon Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8. Linking Psalm 90:4 to each day in creation, God ordained each day in creation to be prophetic of a thousand years of time and the entire redemption to take 7,000 years to complete from the fall of man in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1:1,5,8,13,19,23,31, 2:1-3).

THE LAMB WAS TO BE WITHOUT BLEMISH (vs.5)

Jesus was the Lamb of God (John 1:29) without spot or blemish (1 Peter 1:18-20).

THE LAMB WAS OF THE FIRST YEAR (vs.5)

Jesus was the firstborn of Mary naturally (Matthew 1:21-25), and the firstborn of God spiritually (Colossians 1:15).

IT IS A MALE (vs.5)

It was through one man's sin that sin came into the world (Romans 5:12). Because Adam, the first male, sinned, so a male, Jesus, must die to atone for that sin (Romans 5:17-19)

IT IS A LAMB FOR A HOUSE (vs.3-4)

God's intention was that all (households) experience salvation. The lamb was a lamb for the house. By believing in the Lord Jesus, we become members of the household of faith (Ephesians 2:19). Salvation for a household is available to all who believe in the Messiah, the Lamb of God (Genesis 7:1, Joshua 24:15, John 4:46-53, Luke 19:5-10, Acts 16:31, 18:8).

There is a progressive revelation of the Lamb in the Bible. First, there is a lamb for a house (Exodus 12:3-4) second, a lamb for a nation (John 11:49-52) and finally, a lamb for the world (John 1:29).

A PASSEOVER LAMB WAS TO BE KILLED IN THE EVENING (vs.6) ('evening' translated as twilight or between the evenings)

The Biblical day goes from evening to evening, from sundown to sundown, which is roughly 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Genesis 1:5) The day (6:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) is divided into two 12-hour periods. -The evening runs from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. -The morning runs from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. -Each 12-hour period is divided into two smaller portions.

-From 6:00 a.m. to noon is the morning part of the day.

-From noon to 6:00 p.m. is the evening part of the day.

The phrase, "between the evening" (vs.6) refers to the period of the day that goes from noon to 6:00 p.m., which is exactly 3:00 p.m. This would be the ninth hour of the day, counting from 6:00 a.m.

Jesus died at the ninth hour of the day (Matthew 27:45-50). This would be 3:00 p.m., the ninth hour, counting from 6:00 a.m.

THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY SHALL KILL IT (vs.6)

Every person who has ever lived on planet Earth and sinned is guilty of killing Jesus because He died for all sinners (Romans 3:10, 23).

A whole congregation of people was involved in the death of Jesus. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John show how the Sanhedrin, the priests, the Romans, and the people of Israel all clamored for the crucifixion of Jesus and for His blood to be shed (Acts 4:26-28).

THE BLOOD MUST BE APPLIED TO THE DOOR (vs.7)

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus are the house of God (Hebrews 3:6). The only way into the house of God is through the shed blood of Christ, who is the Door (John 10:7-9).

THE BODY OF THE LAMB MUST BE EATEN (vs. 8-10)

Both the body and blood of the lamb speak of the body and blood of Christ (Matthew 26:26-28). We spiritually eat of the body of the Lamb when we eat of His body (today represented by the bread).

IT MUST BE EATEN THE SAME NIGHT (vs.8)

Jesus was crucified, suffered, and died the same night.

IT MUST BE EATEN WITH UNLEAVENED BREAD (vs. 8)

Leaven speaks of sin (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Unleavened bread is without sin. As believers, we are instructed to live holy (unleavened) lives before God (Leviticus 19:2, 1 Peter 1:15-16).

IT MUST BE EATEN WITH BITTER HERBS (vs. 8)

To those who have accepted Jesus into their lives, bitter herbs speak of the bondage and burdens we experience while living in this world (a type of Egypt) before we accepted Jesus into our lives. This burden of sin is placed on us by satan when we yield to his lies and deception, and then sin because of our own evil desires.

For Christ, dying on the cross was a bitter experience because He had to pay for man's sin with His sinless life.

THE LAMB MUST BE ROASTED IN FIRE (vs.8)

Fire speaks of judgment, refining, and purification. Our faith is judged and tested by fire so it can be refined and purified and come forth as pure gold (Zechariah 13:9, James 1:12, 1 Peter 1:7).

IT MUST NOT BE SODDEN WITH WATER (vs.9)

The Gospel of Jesus must not be watered down (Mark 7:9, 13).

THE HEAD, LEGS, AND OTHER PARTS OF THE LAMB MUST BE EATEN (vs.9)

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus must feed on the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:21-23, Hebrews 8:10). The legs speak of our walk (Colossians 2:6). How are we, the believers in Christ to walk? See, Romans 6:4, 8:1,4, 2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:2,8, Colossians 1:10, 4:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:1, 1 John 1:7, and 2 John vs.6.

THE LAMB MUST BE EATEN IN HASTE (vs.11)

Bible believers must be quick to leave Egypt (the influences of the world) and run toward the life that is in the Savior, Jesus Christ (Luke 19:5-6).

IT MUST BE EATEN WITH OUR LOINS GIRDED (vs.11)

Our loins being girded speaks about our hearts desire to eagerly serve and obey God. Our spiritual loins are the truth of the Word of God (Ephesians 6:14). There are other Scriptures that speak about our loins being girded. They are- 1 Kings 18:46, Luke 12:35 and 1 Peter 1:13.

SHOES MUST BE ON OUR FEET (vs.11)

Shoes on our feet speaks about our walk with God. Scriptures that speak about this are- Nahum 1:15, Romans 10:15 and Ephesians 6:15. A STAFF MUST BE IN OUR HAND (vs.11)

A staff in our hand speaks about the believer's authority in the Kingdom of God by the name of Jesus The following Scriptures speak about a staff being in our hand- Genesis 38:17-18, Psalm 23:4 and Mark 6:7-8.

IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER (vs.11)

If we follow Christ with all of our hearts, we will pass from death to life, and from judgment to divine protection (John 5:24, 1 John 3:14, 2 Corinthians 5:17).

IT IS A MEMORIAL (vs.14)

Passover is a memorial or a remembrance (Luke 22:13-15, 19). There are two elements of remembrance:

-God remembers us (Genesis 8:1, 9:5-16, Exodus 2:24-25, 6:2,5 Leviticus 26:38-45, Numbers 10:9, Psalm 105:7-8, 42-43, 112:6). In fact, God has a book of remembrance (Malachi 3:16-18).

-We must remember God (Exodus 13:3, Deuteronomy 7:17-19, 8:18, 16:3, Numbers 15:37-41).

IT IS TO BE OBSERVED AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN (Deuteronomy 16:2, 6). This was fulfilled by the Lord at His crucifixion (Matthew 27:45-46).

IT IS THE PLACE WHERE GOD WOULD PUT HIS NAME (Deuteronomy 16:2, 6)

The place where God has put His name is Jerusalem (2 Kings 21:4). Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem.

NOT A BONE OF THE LAMB WAS TO BE BROKEN (Exodus 12:43-46)

Not a bone of our Lord was broken while He hung on the cross (John 19:33).

THERE WAS TO BE AN EXPLANATION OF THE SERVICE (Exodus 12:25-28)

Jesus explained each part of the Passover as He did the service (Luke 22:14-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

THE EGYPTIANS WERE SPOILED AT THE EXODUS (Exodus 12:31-36)

Satan was spoiled when Jesus entered hell and rose again (Colossians 2:15)

YOU MUST BE CIRCUMCISED TO EAT THE PASSOVER (Exodus 12:48, Joshua 5:2-10)

The physical act of circumcision was only a picture of the inward or spiritual circumcision that God wanted us to have (Romans 2:28-29). God has always desired for His people to be circumcised in the heart (Deuteronomy 10:12-16, 1 Corinthians 7:18-19, Galatians 6:12-15).

THE PASSOVER FEAST WAS TO BE A HOLY CONVOCATION, AND NO WORK WAS TO BE DONE (Exodus 12:16)

A believer finds true rest in ceasing from his own works and resting in the finished work of Christ, God's Passover Lamb (Genesis 2:1-2, Matthew 11:28-30, Hebrews 4:1-10).

THE PASSOVER MUST BE KILLED OUTSIDE THE GATES OF THE CITY (Deuteronomy 16:5)

Our Lord was crucified outside of the city walls of Jerusalem at a place called Golgotha (John 19:16-19, Hebrews 13:10-13).

THERE IS HEALING POWER IN THE LAMB (Exodus 15:26)

Christ, is the Healer sent from God (Isaiah 53:1-5, 1 Peter 2:24, 1 Corinthians 11:26-30).

THE EXODUS WAS ON EAGLE'S WINGS (Exodus 19:4)

Scriptures associated with this are Deuteronomy 32:9-13, Isaiah 40:31, Luke 17:33-37 and Revelation 12:6, 14.

THEY SANG A SONG OF REJOICING TO THE LORD (Exodus 15:1, 19-21)

Whenever a believer experiences and understands the meaning of Passover, there is a spirit of rejoicing to the Lord for his or her deliverance from sin, and for experiencing the newness of life in the Savior. NOTE: The Passover Seder, which is the service and meal that celebrates the Passover, always ends with songs of rejoicing. This can be seen in Mark 14:26.

ISRAEL IS THE FIRSTBORN OF GOD (Exodus 4:22-23)

All those who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior are called the firstborn of God even as Jesus is called the firstborn of God (Romans 8:29, Colossians 1:15,18, Hebrews 12:22-23).

On the fourteenth of Nisan, at the third hour of the day (9 a.m.), the high priest took the lamb and ascended the altar so he could tie the lamb in place on the alter. At the same time on that day, Jesus was nailed to the cross on Mount Moriah (Mark 15:25). At the time of the evening sacrifice (3 p.m.) for Passover (Exodus 12:6), the high priest ascended the

altar, cut the throat of the lamb with a knife, and said the words, "It is finished." These are the exact words said after giving a peace offering to God. At this same time, Jesus died (the ninth hour, 3:00 p.m., Matthew 27:46), saying these exact words in John 19:30- "IT IS FINISHED."

The Feasts of the Lord--Part III

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Immediately after the Passover comes a Festival that depicts the next step in the fulfillment of God's master plan. After God, through Christ's sacrifice, has forgiven us of our sins, we must continue to avoid sin, and go on living in the newness of life. How do we live as God's redeemed people? The Feast of Unleavened Bread shows us remarkably how this was accomplished in Christ.

Each year as the Israelites observed this Feast, it reminded them of God's deliverance of their forefathers from Egypt. Just as God delivered ancient Israel, He delivers us from our sins and difficulties.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is the fifteenth day of the month of Nisan, which is the day following Passover. It is a seven-day Festival to the Lord (Leviticus 23:6-7, Exodus 12:7-8, 14-17). On the fifteenth of Nisan and for the next seven days, God forbid the people to have any leavened bread in their houses.

GOD'S COMMANDMENTS FOR THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Exodus 12:

vs.14--And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

vs.15--Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

vs.16--And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

vs.17--And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generation by an ordinance for ever.

GOD GAVE A CEREMONY OF SEARCHING AND REMOVING LEAVEN FROM THE HOUSE PRIOR TO THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD IN PREPARATION FOR THE FESTIVAL (vs.15)

Purging Leaven From The House

Spiritually, believers in the Lord Jesus are the house of God (Hebrews 3:6, 1 Peter 2:5). Leaven (sin) is to be cleaned out of our house, which is our body (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20).

We cleanse the leaven (sin) from our houses (lives) by allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal to us, through the knowledge of Christ and the Scriptures, the sin that is in our lives. It is only through God's Word that we are able to identify sin in our lives.

Jesus, who became our leaven (sin), died upon the cross so that whosoever would believe in Him would be cleaned of all leaven (sin).

--For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. -2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed for the forgiveness of our sins, thus unleavening, or cleansing, our lives.

Purging Out Of Sin

The fifteenth of Nisan marks the beginning of a seven-day feast period when Israel was to eat bread without leaven (sin) in remembrance of their baking unleavened bread in their haste to escape Egypt. The primary theme of this Feast is the purging out of leaven (sin). Historically, there are two notable events that happened on this day-

1. The Exodus journey beginning from Egypt (Exodus 12:41) In Deuteronomy 16:3, the bread is referred to as "the bread of affliction."

2. The burial of Jesus after His crucifixion, who is the Bread of Life (John 6:35).

The Festivals are fixed appointments of God specifying what He will perform and the exact time He will perform it. The Jews had to hurry to put the Lord's body in the ground because the sabbath was drawing near. This would mean that Jesus died on the fourteenth of Nisan, the day of Passover. Jesus was in the sepulcher (grave) the day following His crucifixion, which was the fifteenth of Nisan, the first day of Unleavened Bread.

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD IN THE BIBLE

-The Feast of Unleavened Bread was so much a part of Passover that the names of Passover and Unleavened Bread were used interchangeably, almost synonymously with each other (Luke 22:1).

-The Feast was to be kept seven days (Exodus 12:15-19). The number seven is the biblical number for completion or fullness. The believer who keeps this feast is to keep it fully unto the Lord and set himself aside completely to Him. The Feast of Unleavened Bread speaks of complete separation from all things that are leavened (sinful) and feeding upon Jesus, who is the believer's bread (John 6:32-36).

-The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a high sabbath day. During Passover, there is an extra sabbath besides the weekly sabbath. These sabbaths are called high sabbaths. The high sabbath of Unleavened Bread can be seen in John 19:31.

-Unleavened bread is used for consecration and separation. It is also anointed with oil. The believers in Christ are to be consecrated and separated to do the work that God has called us to do and to live a life that is holy to Him. If we do this, the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God will rest upon our lives.

--The bread represents consecration (Exodus 29:2-23).

--It was included in the sacred vow of separation of the Nazarites (Numbers 6:1-21).

--It was the food for the priests in the meal and peace offering (Leviticus 2:4, 6:14-18).

--It marked Israel's divine separation from Egypt's (the world's) life of slavery and bondage (Exodus 12:17, 30-34).

--All leaven was to be put away (Exodus 12:15, 19-20). When leaven or yeast is placed in an unleavened batch of dough, the leaven puffs up the dough. So also, when we allow sin into our lives, it will puff us up in pride and arrogance (1 Corinthians 4:18).

In the Bible, God referred to the leaven of different groups of people.

1. The leaven of Herod (Mark 8:14-15)

2. the leaven of the Pharisees (Mark 8:15, Matthew 23:1-3, Luke 11:37-44)

3. The leaven of the Sadducees (Matthew 16:6-12) The Sadducees did not believe in the supernatural. They denied the existence of the Spirit of God, angels and the resurrection (Mark 12:18, Acts 23:6-8)

4. The leaven at Corinth. The leaven at Corinth was division, jealousy, and tolerance of sexual misconduct (1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 6:9-11, 16-18, 2 Corinthians 12:20-21).

Spiritually, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is kept in sincerity and truth. Sincerity involves purity and serving God with a pure heart. It involves putting away the sin that is in our lives, and separating ourselves from all evil that has a corrupting influence in our life. Historically, Israel learned that keeping the Feast meant a complete separation from Egypt's religion, bondage, food, and slavery, as well as its worldly glory, wisdom, and splendor.

The children of Israel took the dough before it was leavened because they could not tarry in Egypt (Exodus 12:34, 39). As believers in the Lord Jesus, we are to flee the world's ways and philosophies that are contrary to the Word of God.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part IV

THE FESTIVAL OF FIRST FRUITS

In the process of revealing His plan of salvation for mankind, God established His annual Holy Days around the harvest seasons in the Middle East (Leviticus 23:9-16, Exodus 23:14-16). Just as His people harvested their crops around these three Festival seasons, God's Holy Days show us how He is harvesting people for eternal life in His Kingdom.

The Holy Days have meanings that build upon each other. Together they progressively reveal how God works with humanity.

The fifteenth of Nisan begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is a high sabbath. It is a seven day feast to the Lord. The day following the sabbath during Passover is called the Feast of First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10-14).

The Feast of First Fruits can be found in Leviticus 23:9-14.

vs.9--And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

vs.10--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:

vs.11--And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

vs.12--And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf and he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord.

vs.13--And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, and offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

vs.14--And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

UNDERSTANDING THE FESTIVAL CEREMONY

The observance was carried out in this manner, when the standing ripe harvest of barley and wheat was ready to be reaped. The celebrant would take one sheaf from the standing harvest and bring it to the priest. The lone sheaf was called "the sheaf of the first fruits." The priest was then to take this one sheaf and wave it before the Lord in His house. This was to be done "the day after the sabbath." Prescribed offerings were also to be presented along with the sheaf.

THE SHEAF OF FIRST FRUITS IN THE BIBLE

God commanded the people to bring a sheaf of the harvest (Leviticus 23:10). Remember, three times a year God commanded the people to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the

Festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. All three of these festivals are agricultural harvest Festivals. Passover is the barley harvest. Pentecost is the wheat harvest. Both of these Festivals are first fruits harvests before the final harvest that was to come at the end of the year during the Festival of Tabernacles, which is the fruit harvest.

The harvest represents all who would put their faith, trust, and confidence in the Messiah (Matthew 13:39). So, the sheaf is the first of the first fruits. Since a sheaf in the Bible is used to typify a person or persons (Genesis 37:5-11), a sheaf spiritually represents people who accept the Messiah into their hearts.

The nation of Israel was familiar with the concept of first fruits or the firstborn. The first fruits were always the choicest, the foremost, the first, the best, the preeminent of all that was to follow. They were holy to the Lord. The concept of first fruits or firstborn is a major theme in the Bible. This can be seen by the following Scriptures: Exodus 34:26, Leviticus 23:20, Numbers 18:12-15, Deuteronomy 18:1-5, 26:2-4, and Proverbs 3:9.

EVERYTHING ON THE EARTH, BOTH MAN AND BEAST, WAS TO BE PRESENTED BEFORE THE LORD AS FIRST FRUITS TO HIM

--The firstborn of both man and beast were sanctified (made holy) and presented to the Lord (Exodus 13:2, 22:29).

--The first fruits of all the earth were presented to the Lord at His altar in praise and thanksgiving (Deuteronomy 26:1-11).

THE THEME OF THE FESTIVAL OF FIRST FRUITS IS RESURRECTION AND SALVATION

There are several important events that happened on this day in the Bible.

1. Noah's ark rests on Mount Ararat (Genesis 8:4).
2. Israel crosses the Red Sea (Exodus chapter 14).
3. Israel eats the first fruits of the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12). The manna that God gave from Heaven during the days in the wilderness ceased the sixteenth day of Nisan after the people ate of the old corn of the land. The day following was the seventeenth of Nisan, the day when the children of Israel ate the first fruits of the Promised Land.
4. Haman is defeated (Esther 3:1-6).

In the Book of Esther, Haman plotted to kill all the Jews in Persia and Media. Haman had ten sons. By this, we can see that Haman is a type of the false Messiah (antichrist). A decree was sent out on the thirteenth of Nisan that all the Jews would be killed. Upon hearing this news, Esther proclaims a three-day fast, which would be Nisan 14-16. On the sixteenth of Nisan, Esther risked her life when she came to King Ahasuerus. The king asked her, in effect, "Tell me, what do you want?" Esther replied, "If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him." This was the sixteenth day of Nisan. At the banquet, the king again asked Esther what she wanted, and she asked the king to come to another banquet to be held the next

day, the seventeenth of Nisan. On this day, Haman (a type of the false Messiah or antichrist, as well as of satan) is hanged.

5. The resurrection of Jesus (John 12:24, 1 Corinthians 15:16-20). The Lord Jesus celebrated the Festival of First Fruits by offering Himself as the first fruits to all future generations (Matthew 27:52-53).

JESUS IS THE FIRST FRUITS OF THE BARLEY HARVEST

1. Jesus is the firstborn of Mary (Matthew 1:23-25)
2. Jesus is the first-begotten of God the Father (Hebrews 1:6)
3. Jesus is the firstborn of every creature (Colossians 1:15)
4. Jesus is the first-begotten from the dead (Revelation 1:5)
5. Jesus is the firstborn of many brethren (Romans 8:29)
6. Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrected ones (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23)
7. Jesus is the beginning of the creation of God (Revelation 3:14)
8. Jesus is the preeminent One (Colossians 1:18)

Jesus is indeed the Most Holy One of God and is sanctified by the Father. Jesus is the first, the choicest, the preeminent One. He is both the firstborn of God and the first fruits unto God. Jesus is the sheaf of the first fruits.

FIRST FRUITS IS PROPHETIC OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The Festival of the sheaf of the first fruits is prophetic of the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus prophesied that He would rise three days and nights after He was crucified upon the cross (Matthew 12:40, Luke 24:46). This was foreshadowed to happen in the Old Testament by type and shadow (Genesis 22:1-6, Exodus 3:18, 8:27).

Since Jesus was crucified on the day of Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan, and He arose from the grave three days and nights after He was crucified, Jesus arose from the grave on the seventeenth of Nisan, the day of the festival of First Fruits. This day would be the day after the weekly sabbath during the week of Passover (Mark 16:1-6). In fact, Jesus is called the first fruits of those who rise from the dead.

-But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. --1 Corinthians 15:20-23

THE SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING OF FIRST FRUITS

A sheaf in the Bible is used to typify a person or persons (Genesis 37:5-11). Christ will return to earth (Zechariah 14:4) during His second coming as King over all the earth. He also will bring the sheaves (the believers in Jesus as the Messiah) with Him (Psalm 126, Mark 4:26-29, Jude 14).

The 144,000 Jewish witnesses who witness of Christ during the tribulation are first fruits to God during the tribulation (Revelation 14:1-4).

The following are Scriptures in the Bible concerning first fruits.

1. Israel was God's firstborn (Exodus 4:22). But, the first will be last and the last will be first (Mark 10:31). Therefore, the Gentiles became the first to receive the Messiah (Isaiah 60:1-3, 62:1-3, Acts 15:14-16). At the end of this present age, the Jews as a corporate people will accept Jesus as Messiah as well.
2. The Gospel was preached to the Jew first and then to the non-Jews (Romans 1:16).
3. We are called to seek first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33).
4. Jesus was alive the first day of the week (Mark 16:1-6).
5. Jesus was the first to rise from the dead (Acts 26:23).
6. The early believers were a kind of first fruits (James 1:17-18).
7. Those who arose from the dead with Christ during His resurrection became the first fruits of all those who would rise from the dead (Matthew 27:52-53, Ephesians 4:8, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
8. Jesus first loved us, and He is to be our first love (1 John 4:9, Revelation 2:4).
9. Jesus is the first (Alpha) and the last (Omega) (Revelation 1:8, 17, 22:13, Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, 48:12).

Few people understand that God follows a systematic plan, symbolized by His Holy Days, to save all humanity by offering all people eternal life in His Kingdom.

In this world we are simply at the beginning of the harvest from the Kingdom of God.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part V

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

The Historical Understanding of Pentecost

In the third month after the Jews left Egypt, they arrived in the Sinai desert and camped opposite Mount Sinai. Moses was then told by God to gather the Israelites together to receive the Commandments (Exodus 19:1-8). The Israelites answered, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do."

Then Moses gave the Jews two days to cleanse themselves, wash their clothes, and prepare to receive these commandments on the third day. At the same time, Moses told them not to come too near Mount Sinai. From early morning, dense clouds covered the peak of the mountain. Thunder and lightning were frequently seen and heard. The sound of the ram's horn came very strong, and the top of the mountain was enveloped in fire and smoke. The Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai stood in great awe (Exodus 19:9-19). Moses then went

up alone on the mountain, and as he neared the top, a mighty voice announced the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:20-25, 20:1-21).

The Feast of Pentecost can be found in Leviticus 23:15-21.

vs.15--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:

vs.16--Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meal offering unto the Lord.

vs.17--Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.

vs.21--And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be a holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

The period called "the omer" begins the day following the weekly sabbath during Passover and continues until Pentecost. The Lord commanded that seven weeks be counted from the time of the offering of the omer.

Because of this ritual of counting, the period between Passover and Pentecost came to be known as the omer. In fact, Pentecost does not have a fixed calendar date in the Bible, but rather falls on the day after the completion of the omer count--that is, the fiftieth day after the omer offering is brought. Therefore, Pentecost is seen as the conclusion to the Passover season.

Because Pentecost culminates with the counting of the omer for 50 days (which should be done the day following the weekly sabbath during Passover), Pentecost is called the conclusion to Passover. Spiritually speaking, the believers in the Lord Jesus are on a journey out of Egypt (a type of the world's system and its evil ways) in the wilderness (of life), awaiting our time to meet God face to face on Mount Sinai (Exodus 3:12). There at Mount Sinai (spiritually), God will forever reveal Himself to us in a new and greater way. For all believers in Christ, the Commands that were given at Mount Sinai represents the Word of God, the entire Bible. The believer in Christ spiritually experiences Pentecost when the Holy Spirit of God reveals the Word of God to him in a deeper and more powerful way, and his understanding and desire for the Bible increases accordingly.

THE THEMES OF PENTECOST

A New Revelation

One theme of Pentecost is a new revelation of God's will (Leviticus 23:15-16, 21). Two notable historical events happened on this day.

1. The giving of the Ten Commandments

Israel came to Mount Sinai on the third day of the third month (Exodus 19:1). The Lord visited the people three days later (Exodus 19:10-17). Therefore, the commandments were

given by God in the third month of the biblical religious calendar, which is the month of Sivan, on the sixth day of this month. This is exactly 50 days from the crossing of the Red Sea.

2. The giving of the Holy Spirit by God

Jesus was resurrected on the Feast of First Fruits, as was seen in the previous study. Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in the hearts and lives of all the believers in Him. God chose the first Pentecost after Jesus Christ's resurrection to pour out the Holy Spirit on 120 believers (Acts 1:15, 2:1-4). These astounding events demonstrated the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Observe the following comparisons to Pentecost, the fiftieth day and the events we just read-

Commandments of God written on tablets of stone (Exodus 24:12) our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, Psalm 40:8, Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:22-27 and Hebrews 8:10)

Written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18) Written by the Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 3:3, Hebrews 8:10)

3,000 slain (Exodus 32:1-8, 26-28) 3,000 live (Acts 2:38, 41)

The letter of the Law (Exodus 24:12) The Spirit of the Law (Romans 7:6, 2 Corinthians 3:6)

Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:11) Mount Zion (1 Peter 2:6)

PENTECOST AS A MARRIAGE: A BETROTHAL CONTRACT

One of the most beautiful images of Pentecost is that of the marriage between God (the groom) and Israel (the bride).

The biblical wedding service that God gave marriage consisted of two stages. The first stage is betrothal. You enter this first stage of marriage as soon as a betrothal contract is made between the two parties. During betrothal, you are legally married, but do not physically dwell with your mate. Betrothal is so legally binding that you cannot get out of it without a divorce. The word for betrothal in Hebrew, 'erusin', comes from the Hebrew verb 'aras'. Aras is related to the Hebrew word 'asar', which means "to bind". By this, we can see that betrothal is legally binding.

In the New Testament, we can see that Joseph was betrothed to Mary when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would have a son named Jesus, by the Holy Spirit of God, who would be the Messiah (Luke 1:26-35). When Joseph discovered that his

betrothed wife Mary was pregnant, he decided to get a divorce until the angel of the Lord changed his mind by appearing to him in a dream (Matthew 1:18-20).

Betrothal is also mentioned in Exodus 21:8 and Deuteronomy 20:7 and 22:23, 24. The second stage of marriage is the fullness or consummation of the marriage.

In Exodus 19, when God by the leading of Moses brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, God betrothed Himself to Israel. On Mount Sinai, God gave the Commandments to Israel. At this time, God was making a betrothal contract with Israel. The written betrothal contract represents "The book of the covenant" (marriage is a covenant) that Moses wrote prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:4, 7). The Book of the Covenant spelled out mutual obligations of God and Israel just as the betrothal contract spelled out the obligations between husband and wife. So, God made a marriage contract with Israel in Exodus 19:3-7.

In Exodus 19:8, Israel accepts God's marriage proposal. Israel answered "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

THE SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

What does the wedding mean in terms of the Messiah, and what is the personal application to us? Jesus is the groom and the believers in Him are the bride. When Jesus came to the earth almost 2,000 years ago, He came so that whosoever would put their trust and confidence in Him would be wedded to Him forever. This would include both Jews and non-Jews (John 3:16). Because Jesus came as the suffering Messiah during His first coming, He ascended to Heaven to be with God the Father until He returns during His second coming to be the King Messiah. Today, Christ does not physically dwell with those who trust in Him. Therefore, the believers in Jesus are currently spiritually betrothed to Him. We will enter the full marriage and physically dwell with Him during the Messianic age known as the Millennium. However, before we can physically dwell with the Lord during this time on earth, the wedding ceremony when the believers in Christ will be wedded to Him must take place. This will take place at the beginning of the tribulation period.

In the biblical wedding service that God gave, after you are married, you have a honeymoon. The honeymoon lasts a week. Seven days equals a week. In Hebrew, a week means a seven. It can mean seven days or seven years (Daniel 9:24-27, Genesis 29:27). In Joel 2:16, we see the marriage of the bride (the believers in Christ) and the bridegroom (Jesus) where the bridegroom is going forth from the chamber and the bride out of her closet. The word closet is the Hebrew word 'chupah', and the chupah here refers to Heaven where the previously raptured believers in the Messiah have been enjoying a seven-year honeymoon with Him while the earth was experiencing the tribulation. After the seven-year honeymoon, Jesus will be returning with His bride to attend the marriage supper

(Revelation 19:7-14). Then we will rule and reign with Him physically during the Messianic age known as the Millennium (Revelation 20:4).

THE POURING OUT OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

In Exodus 19:19, a trumpet was sounded. The trumpet that was sounded grew louder and louder. "And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice." "And all the people saw the thundering's..." (Exodus 20:18)

In a commentary by R. Johanan, he says, When God gave the Commandments on Sinai He displayed untold marvels to Israel with His voice. What happened? God spoke and the voice reverberated throughout the whole world..."And all the people saw the thundering's." God's voice, as it was uttered split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand.

In Deuteronomy 32:8 we read, "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. In Exodus 1:1-5, we can see that the number of the children of Israel who came to Egypt was 70. Therefore, the 70 voices as interpreted by R. Johanan represented all the nations of the world, based upon Deuteronomy 32:8 and Exodus 1:1-5. So, it was seen that God's voice split up into the languages of all the people on the earth to be a witness to them.

This same experience that happened at Mount Sinai also occurred 50 days after the resurrection of Christ on the day of Pentecost almost 2,000 years ago. This experience is also described in Acts 2:1-11 and Hebrews 12:18-19. In describing what happened in Exodus 20:18, Hebrews 12:18-19 says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." The word 'words' in Hebrews 12:19 is the Greek word 'rhema', which means "an individual word." In this passage in Hebrews, we can see the same thing that happened at Mount Sinai in the first Pentecost is exactly what did happen as seen in Hebrews 12:19. It is also what happened during the first Pentecost following the resurrection of the Lord. At this Pentecost, the people also were as one. When God poured out His Holy Spirit at this time, once again people began to speak in the different languages of the world (Acts 2:1-11). Therefore, we can see that the Pentecost at Mount Sinai was a rehearsal of the Pentecost that would occur immediately after the resurrection of Jesus.

THE FIRST TRUMP OF GOD

Once again in Exodus 19:19, a trumpet was sounded. This trumpet grew louder and louder. The Jewish understand this to be the first trump of God. The trumpet blown by God at

Mount Sinai was understood to be the first of the two ram's horns that were present on Mount Moriah during Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22.

The Jewish people understood that there are three primary trumpets that mark major events in the redemptive plan of God. These three trumpets are known as the first trump, the last trump, and the great trumpet.

Jesus referred to this event which happened to Abraham in John 8:56 where He says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." What did Abraham see? What took place on Mount Moriah? Abraham was instructed by God to take Isaac to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him there (Genesis 22:2). The first and second temples were built in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1). It was in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah where our Lord was crucified on the cross. Calvary (Golgotha) was located on Mount Moriah. Abraham in Genesis 22:4 was looking into the future and seeing that God was going to offer up the Messiah to be slain on Mount Moriah at a future time.

God called Abraham to sacrifice Isaac and offer him as a burnt offering (Genesis 22:2-3, 6, 8, 13). A burnt offering is an offering that is totally consumed. It is freely given and done freely, willingly, and joyfully by both parties involved. The Bible tells us that God freely offered up Jesus joyfully and that Jesus was willing and obedient to His death on the cross (Philippians 2:8). In Isaiah 53:10, it says that it pleased God to offer up Jesus.

When Abraham offered up Isaac, Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). Abraham went willingly, joyfully, and obediently because he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead. This can be seen in Genesis 22:5. In this, we can see that Abraham was a type and picture of God the Father, and Isaac was a type and picture of Jesus, the Messiah. In Genesis 22:8, Abraham said to Isaac that God would provide a lamb; Jesus was the lamb that God offered to us (John 1:29).

This story is an example of the Hebrew expression, "Here now, but not yet." Abraham offered up his only son (Genesis 22:16, Hebrews 11:17, and God offered up His only Son, Jesus (John 3:16). Instead of Isaac, Abraham offered up a ram as the ram was found caught in the thicket (Genesis 22:13). In the Hebrew writings, the ram represents the Messiah and the thicket stands for the sins of the people. In Genesis 22:13 where it says "behind him", the Hebrew word is 'achar', which means afterward or in the future. Therefore, the imagery presented here is that Abraham saw this ram being sacrificed in the future. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 8:56.

Once again, relating to the story in Genesis 22, the left horn of the ram that was caught in the thicket (Genesis 22:13) is called the first trump and the right horn of the ram is called the last trump.

THE THREE TRUMPETS OF GOD

The three great trumpets that mark major events in the redemptive plan of God are associated with days in the biblical calendar. The first trumpet is associated with and was blown by God on the Feast of Pentecost when God gave the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:19).

The last trumpet is associated with and is blown on Rosh HaShanah. This will be discussed in the next study. The biblical name for Rosh HaShanah is Yom Teruah, which in Hebrew means "the day of the awakening blast." This trumpet is mentioned by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. Because the last trumpet is only blown on Rosh HaShanah and because the apostle Paul specifically mentions that the rapture of the believers in Christ will take place at the last trumpet, Paul was giving a clear understanding that the rapture of the believers in Christ will happen on a Rosh HaShanah.

The great trumpet is associated with and is blown on Yom Kippur. Jesus said that He would return at His second coming at the sound of the great trumpet (Matthew 24:30-31). Because the great trumpet is only blown on Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement) and because Jesus said that He would return with the sound of a great trumpet, Jesus was stating very clearly that He would return on a Yom Kippur. This too will be discussed in more detail in a further study. Thus, the first and last trumpet will relate to the ram's horn in Genesis 22. Again, the first trumpet will be the left horn of the ram and the last trumpet will be the right horn of the ram. In Exodus 19:19, the trumpet that was blown by God will be the first trumpet.

THE SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING OF PENTECOST

As we have seen, the Feasts were given by God as a shadow of things to come (Hebrews 10:1) to teach us (Galatians 3:24) about Jesus Christ and the redemptive work of God (Colossians 2:16-17). Pentecost was the birth of the congregation in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). The things given at Mount Sinai were divine and from God, but shown in a physical way (Hebrews 9:1) to enable us to understand the spiritual truth that God wanted to communicate to us (1 Peter 2:5-9). So God gave Israel the covenant, the law, the services, the oracles of God, and the promises, which were divine (Hebrews 9:1), at Mount Sinai to teach us about the Messiah (Psalm 40:7). With this in mind, let's look at the spiritual understandings that God was communicating to us at Pentecost.

-Two Leavened Wave Loaves -Leviticus 23:15-17

This was to be a new meal offering to the Lord (vs. 16). There were to be two wave loaves baked with leaven (vs.17). At Passover, leaven was absolutely forbidden (Exodus 12:15, 19-20) and in the regular meal offering, no leaven was permitted (Leviticus 2:1, 4-5, 11). We saw earlier that leaven represents sin (1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Galatians 5:9). The Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread spoke of the death and burial of Jesus who was without sin. Yet on Pentecost, God commanded just the opposite. Why?

Pentecost speaks of the birth of Israel as a nation, as well as the birth of the congregation of believers in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The two loaves speak of Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ. Even though both Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ are chosen by God and are holy to Him, sin is still found in Israel and sin still exists in the congregation of believers. The Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread speak primarily of Jesus who is without sin, but Pentecost speaks of Israel and the congregation of believers where sin still exists.

The two loaves speak of Israel and the believers in Christ. The number two in the Bible is the number of witness and testimony. For example, two witnesses in the Bible establish a truth (Matthew 18:19-20, Deuteronomy 19:15). The Ten Commandments were written on two stones (Exodus 31:18). Also, the Ten Commandments are fulfilled by obeying two commandments (Matthew 22:34-40). Christ and His congregation of believers testify of the love, grace, and plan of God for the whole world.

The meal offering was to be an offering burned by fire upon the altar. A work of the Holy Spirit is an immersion (baptism) of fire (Luke 3:15). Fire is what God uses to burn sin out of the lives of a believer in Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:13-15, 1 Peter 1:7). The followers of Christ are supposed to live a righteous life before God (Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-13, Colossians 3:1-13, Romans 8:1-4).

-Two-Tenths Ephod of Fine Flour -Leviticus 23:17

The grinding and crushing of wheat produces fine flour. The fine flour speaks of the refining process that our faith goes through as we are conformed to the image of Christ and enter into His trial, testing, temptations, and sufferings (Romans 5:3-5, 8:29, 1 Peter 4:12-19). Jesus was the wheat that was planted into the ground (John 12:24, 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-44). As wheat is beaten and refined to become fine flour, so our Lord Jesus was beaten and bruised as He became that fine flour (Isaiah 53:1-6).

-Holy To The Lord For The Priest -Leviticus 23:20

Even though the two wave loaves were leavened, the Lord counted them holy unto Himself for the priest. As mentioned earlier, the two wave loaves that the priest waved represented both Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ. Both the Jewish believers in Christ, represented by Israel, and the non-Jewish believers, represented by the congregation, consist of individuals who are leaven. We still sin before God despite being believers in the Lord. In spite of this sin, because we are believers in Jesus and seek to serve and love Him with all our hearts, we are considered holy before God (Deuteronomy 14:2, Luke 1:68, 72-75, Colossians 1:22-24, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, Titus 2:12, and 1 Peter 1:15-16).

-A Statute Forever -Leviticus 23:21

The Holy Spirit came to dwell with the believer in Jesus (John 14:16-17).

-The Feast Of Harvest Of First Fruits - Exodus 23:16, 34:22, Numbers 28:26
Israel was called a land of barley and wheat (Deuteronomy 8:7-8). The spring wheat and barley harvest preceded the major harvest in the fall, the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16, 34:22). Both the spring and the fall harvest were dependent upon the rains coming at the right time. The fall rains are called the early rain. The spring rains are called the latter rain. The early rain is spoken of in Deuteronomy 11:10-15, and Joel 2:23. The rain is prophetic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon people's lives individually as they accept Jesus into their lives and allow the Holy Spirit to teach and instruct them concerning the ways of God. The early rain and the latter rain also teach us about the pouring out of God's Holy Spirit in a corporate way upon all flesh. The early rain refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Christ's first coming and the latter rain refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Christ's second coming.

As we are seeing, the harvest speaks of the salvation of people. The spring harvest was the beginning of the harvest of people who would come to receive Jesus as Lord with the greatest harvest being at the end of this age (Matthew 13:39, 9:37-38). The fall harvest or the harvest at the end of this present age is in the seventh month on the biblical religious calendar. Pentecost is in the third month. From Pentecost there are four months until the final harvest in the fall (John 4:34-35). The fall harvest is the fruit harvest.

God said that the coming of Christ would be like the former and latter rain on the earth (Hosea 6:1-3, Joel 2:23). James ties the coming of the Lord to the early and latter rain (James 5:7). Christ's death, burial, and resurrection was in the spring of the year; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of Jesus was in the spring of the year; and all those who believed were first fruits of the entire harvest and were a part of the spring harvest. Jesus second coming will be in the fall of the year and the greatest number of believers will believe at this time. Jesus spoke about this great harvest at the end of this present age in Matthew 24:13-14.

-A Harvest Of Freewill Offerings And Rejoicing -Deuteronomy 16:9-11, 16-17

As believers, when we come before God we are to give of ourselves, including our time, talents, and money, and present them before Him with a joyful heart (Acts 4:32-37).

We have seen how the spring festivals are applicable in three dimensions. They are historic to the nation of Israel, they are fulfilled in the Messiah, and they describe how the individual believer is to walk and live his life before God. In other words, we can see that God has a plan for every individual to willingly come to Him. So the spring festivals were not only historic, but they were also our type and example (1 Corinthians 10:1-2, 6, and 11).

To natural Israel, Passover was their freedom from the bondage of Egypt. Unleavened Bread was the separation from the land of Egypt into the immersion (baptism) into the Red Sea and the Cloud in the wilderness. Finally, God led the people to Mount Sinai where they experienced Pentecost and God revealed Himself to the people in a deeper and greater way than He ever did previously.

The spring festivals were fulfilled by Jesus, who was our Passover Lamb, and died on the day of Passover. He was without sin and is the Bread of Life. Jesus was in the sepulcher on the day of Unleavened Bread and He was the kernel of wheat that was buried in the earth. Jesus arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest, He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and received a resurrected body. Finally, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh during the Feast of Pentecost to gather all believers in the Lord to be God's spring harvest in the earth.

Pentecost serves as an annual reminder that our Creator still works miracles, granting His Spirit to the firstfruits of His spiritual harvest, empowering them to carry out His work in this world.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part VI (6)

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

The Feast of Trumpets introduces the autumn festivals-representing the culmination of the present age of man and the beginning of an incredible time during which God will play a much more direct part in world events. The previous festivals constitute personal responses to the workings of God in the people He calls and chooses. The Feast of Trumpets herald the intervention of God in the affairs of humanity on a global basis. This Holy Day represents a dramatic turning point in world history.

This particular festival also marks the beginning of the third and final feast season (Exodus 23:14, Deuteronomy 16:16), which includes the final four Holy Days of the year, Rosh HaShanah.

ROSH HASHANAH

A special season known as 'Teshuvah' which in Hebrew means "to return or repent", begins on the first day of the month of Elul and continues 40 days, ending with Yom Kippur. Thirty days into Teshuvah, on Tishrei 1, comes Rosh HaShanah. This begins a final ten-day period beginning on Rosh HaShanah and ending on Yom Kippur. These are known as the High Holy Days and as the Awesome Days. The sabbath that falls within this ten-day period is called 'Shabbat Shuvah', the Sabbath of Return. Five days after Yom Kippur is 'Sukkot', the Feast of Tabernacles. Teshuvah begins on Elul 1 and concludes on

Tishrei 10, Yom Kippur. Each morning during the 30 days of the month of Elul, the trumpet (shofar) or ram's horn is blown to warn the people to repent and return to God.

God has always had a heart to warn people before He proclaims judgment. God warned the people before the flood, and He warned Nineveh before it was ruined. He does not want anyone to receive the wrath of His judgment (Ezekiel 18:21-23,30-32, Zephaniah 2:1-3).

The message from Elul 1 to Rosh HaShanah is clear: Repent before Rosh HaShanah. Don't wait until after Rosh HaShanah, or you will find yourself in the Days of Awe.

Rosh HaShanah is also referred to as 'Yom Teruah', the Day of the Sounding of the Shofar, or the Day of the Awakening Blast. On Yom Teruah, the Day of the Sounding of the Shofar, it is imperative for every person to hear the shofar.

Yom Teruah is the only festival that no man knows the day or the hour in which it begins. This is due to the fact that it begins on the new moon. The new moon was sanctified when two witnesses see the new moon and attest to it before the Sanhedrin in the Temple. This sanctification could happen during either of two days, depending on when the witnesses come. Since no one knew when the witnesses would come, no one knew when the Feast of Trumpets would start. On the 30th of each month, the members of the High Court assembled in a courtyard in Jerusalem, where they waited to receive the testimony of two reliable witnesses. They then sanctified the new moon. The new moon is very difficult to see on the first day because it can be seen only about sunset, close to the sun, when the sun is traveling north. So, looking for a very slim faint crescent moon, which is very close to the sun, is a very difficult thing to do. If the moon's crescent was not seen on the 30th day, the new moon was automatically celebrated on the 31st day. For this reason, Yom Teruah is always celebrated for two days. These two days are celebrated as though it is just one long day of forty-eight hours. The reason that it is celebrated for two days is because if they waited to start the celebration until after the new moon had been sanctified, they would have missed half the celebration because the new moon can only be sanctified during daylight hours. The command seems to be that we know the season, but not the day or the hour (Matthew 24:32-36).

Yom Teruah, or the Feast of Trumpets, is the only feast that we do not know the day or the hour in which to keep it. Therefore, we have to be on the alert and watch for it.

Teruah means "an awakening blast". A theme associated with Rosh HaShanah is the theme "to awake". Teruah is also translated as "shout". The book of Isaiah, chapter 12, puts the shouting in the context of the thousand-year reign of Jesus. The Messianic era and shout is mentioned in Isaiah 44:23 and Zephaniah 3:14. The first coming of Christ is associated with a shout in Zechariah 9:9. The ultimate shout is the rapture in First Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Whether it is by the blast of a shofar or the force of a supernatural shout, God's goal is to awaken us. "...Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." -Ephesians 5:14.

The book of Ephesians has many references to Rosh HaShanah and the high Holy Days. For example, in Ephesians 4:30, being sealed unto the day of redemption refers to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. God gave this festival to teach us that we will be judged on Rosh HaShanah and will be sealed unto the closing of the gates on Yom Kippur. This will be covered in that study later.

The theme of awakening from sleep is used throughout the Bible. It is found in John 11:11, Romans 13:11, Daniel 12:1-2 and Psalm 78:65.

The shofar was also blown at the temple to begin the sabbath each week. There are two types of trumpets used in the Bible:

1. The silver trumpet
2. The shofar or ram's horn

Each sabbath, two men with silver trumpets and a man with a shofar made three trumpet blasts twice during the day. On Rosh HaShanah, it is different. The shofar is the primary trumpet. On Rosh HaShanah, a shofar delivers the first blast, a silver trumpet the second, and then a shofar the third.

According to Leviticus 23:24 and Numbers 29:1, Rosh HaShanah is the day of the blowing of the trumpets.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, in the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation." -Leviticus 23:24

"And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you." -Numbers 29:1

The trumpet used for this purpose is the ram's horn, not trumpets made of metal as in Numbers Chapter 10.

Another name for Rosh HaShanah is 'Yom HaDin', the Day of Judgment. The righteous are separated and will be with God. This is known to Bible believers as the rapture. The wicked will face the wrath of God during the tribulation period.

The shofar blown on Rosh HaShanah is known as the last trump, which the apostle Paul mentioned in First Thessalonians 4:16-17. At this time, the believers in Christ will escape

the tribulation on earth and will be taken to Heaven in the rapture along with the righteous who had died before this time.

The gates of Heaven are opened on Rosh HaShanah so the righteous nation may enter (Isaiah 26:2, Psalm 118:19-20). Because the gates of Heaven are understood to be open on Rosh HaShanah, this is further evidence that the rapture of the believers in Christ will take place on Rosh HaShanah.

One of the reasons for blowing the shofar is to proclaim the resurrection of the dead. The resurrection of the dead will take place on Rosh HaShanah. In First Corinthians 15:52, the apostle Paul tells us that the resurrection of the dead will be "at the last trump." Earlier in First Corinthians 15:14, he wrote that without the Lord Jesus rising from the dead, our faith is in vain.

We cannot go to the Book of Revelation and say that the voice of the seventh angel (Revelation 11:15) is the last trump. In the first century, the last trump (shofar) meant a specific day in the year. In Judaism, there are three trumpets that have a name. They are the first trump, the last trump, and the great trump. Each one of these trumpets indicates a specific day in the Jewish year. The first trump is blown on the Feast of Pentecost (Exodus 19:19). It proclaimed that God had betrothed Himself to Israel. The last trump is synonymous with Rosh HaShanah, according to Theodore Gaster in his book, *Festivals of the Jewish Year*, in his chapter on Rosh HaShanah. Herman Kieval also states the same thing in his book, *The High Holy Days* in the chapter on the shofar. The great trumpet is blown on Yom Kippur, which will herald the return of Jesus back to the earth (Matthew 24:31).

The first and last trump relate to the two horns of the ram, which according to Jewish tradition, was caught in the thicket on Mount Moriah when Abraham was ready to slay Isaac and offer him up as a burnt offering. This ram became the substitute for Isaac even as Jesus became the substitute for us and provided life for us through His death.

Rabbi Eliezer tells us in *Pirkei Avot*, that the left horn (first trump) was blown on Mount Sinai, and its right horn (the last trump) will be blown to herald the coming of the Lord for His Church. Isaiah 18:3 and First Thessalonians 4:13-18 speak of the resurrection of the dead. First Thessalonians chapter 5 continues with the day of the Lord and the birth pangs of the Messiah. The festivals will, beyond a shadow of a doubt, tell you that the resurrection of the dead precedes the time of Jacob's trouble (the tribulation). First Thessalonians 4:16-17 says that the dead in Christ will rise first, and that the catching away of the believers will immediately follow.

The term 'rapture' comes from the Greek word 'harpazo', which means "to seize, catch away, catch up, pluck, pull, take by force" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Isaiah 57:1-2 speaks

clearly of the resurrection of the dead, the taking of the believers, and the hiding of the believers from the indignation (the tribulation). Zephaniah 1:14-18 and 2:2-3 tells about the terrible times during the day of the Lord, the birth pangs of the Messiah, and issues a decree to repent and turn to God before that day to be hid from that time. Psalm 27:5 says the righteous will be hid in the time of trouble. Paul in Second Thessalonians 2:1 tells us, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him." The phrase "gathering together" comes from the Greek word 'episunagoge', which means "an assembly".

The Feast of Trumpets, through careful study depicts nothing less than the return of Jesus Christ for His Church at the last trump, just before God pours His wrath and judgment on a sinful and Christ rejecting world.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part VII (7)

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT: YOM KIPPUR

"For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever." -Leviticus 16:30-31

"Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath." -Leviticus 23:27-28, 31-32

"And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein." -Numbers 29:7

The Day of Atonement symbolizes the reconciliation of God and all humanity. Both the Passover and the Day of Atonement teach us about the forgiveness of sin and our reconciliation with God through Christ's sacrifice. However, although the passover is personally and (for the time being) individually applied to Christians whom God has called in this age, Atonement carries immediate universal implications.

Moreover, the Day of Atonement pictures an essential additional step in God's salvation plan not to be found in the symbolism of the Passover. This step must take place before

humanity can experience true peace on earth. All people suffer the tragic consequences of sin. But sin doesn't happen without a cause, and God makes this cause clear in the symbolism associated with the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement involves not only the forgiveness of sin; it pictures the removal of the primary cause of sin-Satan and his demons. Until God removes the original instigator of sin, mankind will simply continue to fall back into disobedience and suffering. The Day of Atonement looks forward to the time during which Satan's deception will be removed and he will no longer be free to influence and deceive mankind (Revelation 20:1-3).

UNDERSTANDING THE PRIESTLY SERVICE FOR THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus chapter 16, specifies the tenth of Tishrei as the date on which the high priest shall conduct a special ceremony to purge defilement from the temple and from the people. The heart of the ritual is that the high priest shall bring a bull and two goats as a special offering. First, the bull is sacrificed to purge the temple from any defilements caused by misdeeds of the priest himself and of his household (Leviticus 16:6). Secondly, one of the goats is chosen by lot to be sacrificed to purge the temple of any similar defilement stimulated by misdeeds of the whole Israelite people (Leviticus 16:7-8). Finally, the second goat is sent away, not sacrificed, to cleanse the people themselves. The goat is marked for 'Azazel' and is sent away to wander in the wilderness (Leviticus 16:10). Before the goat is sent out, the high priest lays both his hands upon its head and confesses over it all the iniquities and transgressions of the Israelites, whatever their misdeeds, and so putting them on the head of the goat. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited..." -Leviticus 16:20-22

The Hebrew word for scapegoat is azazel. Azazel was seen as a type of satan. The sins of the people and thus the punishment of the people were laid upon azazel the scapegoat. He would bear the sins of the people and the punishment of the people would be upon him. Azazel being sent into the wilderness is understood to be a picture of satan being cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20).

This ceremony can be found in Leviticus 16:7-10. Notice in verse 8, one lot is for the Lord, and the other lot is for the scapegoat. The high priest took the two lots, one marked for the Lord and the other marked for the scapegoat, and placed one upon the head of each animal, sealing their fate.

God gave this ceremony of the casting of lots during the Day of Atonement to teach us how He will judge the nations of the world prior to the Messianic age known as the Millennium. Jesus taught us about this in Matthew 25:31-46.

FACE TO FACE

The high priest could only go into the Holy of Holies once a year (Leviticus 16:2, Hebrews 9:6-7). God issued a warning that no man could see His face and live (Exodus 33:20). But because on the Day of Atonement the priest could be in God's presence (Leviticus 16:20), another term for the Day of Atonement is "face to face".

Therefore, when the high priest stood before God on this day, he was said to be "face to face" with God. Face to face terminology was used in First Corinthians 13:9-12.

Face to face is an idiom for the Day of Atonement. It was on the Day of Atonement that the high priest had to go behind the veil of the temple. At that moment, the nation had to hold its breath because the nation's fate depended upon God's accepting the sacrifice. At that point, the high priest was "face to face with the mercy seat of God".

When the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, he saw the Lord's presence as a brilliant cloud hovering above the mercy seat (Leviticus 16:2). The word for mercy seat in Hebrew is 'kapporet'. It comes from the root word 'kaphar', which is the same word used for "atonement". The mercy seat can also be translated as the seat of atonement. The mercy seat is described in detail in Exodus 25:17-22 and 37:6-9. This is the place where Moses met and spoke with God face to face (Exodus 25:22, 30:6, Numbers 7:89).

THE GREAT SHOFAR

As mentioned in the last study on the Feast of Trumpets, when the shofar was discussed, there are three primary trumpets to the Jewish people and these three trumpets are associated with specific days in the year. These three trumpets are:

1. "The First Trump" blown and associated with Pentecost
2. "The Last Trump" blown and associated with Rosh HaShanah, the Feast of Trumpets
3. "The Great Trump" blown and associated with Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement

It is on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, when the Great Trumpet is blown. This is referred to in Isaiah 27:13 and Matthew 24:31.

The Day of Atonement was the most solemn of all the feast days. It was the day of cleansing for the nation and for the sanctuary. On this day alone, once a year, the high priest entered into the holiest of all, the Holy of Holies in the temple, within the veil of the temple, with the blood of the Lord's goat, the sin offering. Here he sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. The blood of the sin offering on the great Day of Atonement brought about the cleansing of all sin for the priesthood, the sanctuary, and Israel as a nation (Leviticus 16:29-34).

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT CEREMONIES

As we look at the ceremony itself, we will be able to see how it points to the Messiah Himself. In addition, we will be able to see how it relates to the believers in the Lord Jesus.

1. The priest used a golden censer (Leviticus 16:1-2,12-14, Hebrews 9:4) The censer is mentioned in Leviticus 16:12, Numbers 16:46, First Kings 7:50-51, Second Chronicles 4:19,22 and Hebrews 9:4.

The incense of the golden censer represents the prayers of Bible believers (Psalm 141:2, Luke 1:5-11, and Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4).

Aaron the high priest typifies the ministry of mediator and intercessor. Jesus is our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1) and Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 12:24). He lives to make intercession for us (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:22-27).

2. He went within the veil once a year (Leviticus 16:2, Hebrews 9:2, 7).

By the death of Jesus, we are free to enter into the veil every day (Matthew 27:50-51, 2 Corinthians 3:14, Hebrews 4:16, 6:13-19, 10:19-22).

3. He washed himself in water (Leviticus 16:4, 24).

For Aaron, this meant he must be absolutely clean in order to make atonement on behalf of the people of Israel. For believers in Christ, it means we are to be washed by the water of the Word of God as we approach God as well for the removal of sin from our lives (John 3:1-5,15, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Ephesians 5:26-27, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 10:22). For Jesus, it meant that He was absolutely clean and without sin when He made the atonement of sacrificing His body on the cross.

4. He put on holy linen garments (Leviticus 16:4, 23).

The priestly clothing is also mentioned in Exodus 28:1-4. In verse 3 they are for glory and beauty. The linen garments speak of the sinless humanity of the Lord and His righteousness. These linen garments were stained with blood while the priest offered the sacrifices. After the sacrifices were complete, the garments were taken off and new garments were put on again (Leviticus 16:23-24). Isaiah 1:18 speaks of the blood-stained garments and the new garments that were put on afterwards. The white linen garments are clothes of righteousness (Job 29:14, Psalm 132:9, Isaiah 61:10 and Revelation 3:5,19:7-8).

5. At the moment the atonement was made on the Day of Atonement, those being atoned for were sinless and blameless before God. The congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus is being presented before God without spot or blemish (Ephesians 5:27) because of the blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:19).

6. The bodies of the animals were outside the camp (Leviticus 16:27).

The bodies of the sin offering, both the bullock and the goat, were taken outside the camp where they were burned. Jesus was crucified outside the camp or gates of Jerusalem (John 19:17-20 and Hebrews 13:10-13).

7. Many sacrifices were offered (Leviticus 16:1-6, 25-27).

Our bodies are to be a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:5). We are to offer up a sacrifice of praise to God (Leviticus 7:12, Psalm 34:1, 50:14,23, 69:30-31, 107:22, 116:17 and Hebrews 13:15-16). Jesus is the sacrifice of God for us who believe on Him (Hebrews 9:26-28, 10:1-10).

8. The year of Jubilee was the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 25:9-11).

This was a year and day of liberty. Jesus came to preach this liberty at His first coming (Isaiah 61:1-3, Luke 4:17-21). From Adam, it has been almost 6,000 years and 120 Jubilees. The number 120 points to the end of the age of the flesh and the reign of the life of the spirit (Genesis 6:3). The ultimate fulfillment of the year of Jubilee will take place at the second coming of the Lord. The earth will be redeemed and come into full and complete rest from the curse brought upon it by Adam's sin. Complete restoration of man's lost inheritance will take place. God's people will be totally set free -- set at liberty, from all sin, sickness and disease, death, and the curse. Satan, the source of all these things, will be bound and true rest will be realized. The tabernacle of God will be with men and He will dwell with them (Revelation 21:1-4). So, the year of Jubilee and the day of Atonement speak of the fullness of the redemptive plan of God for man.

God divinely placed the Day of Atonement before the Feast of Tabernacles, which is called "The Season of Our Joy." The children of Israel and all believers in the Lord Jesus could only rejoice once they were redeemed and their sins forgiven.

In Joel 2:15-16 we read..."Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet."

Jesus spoke of this same event in Matthew 24:27-31. In Matthew 24:31, the trumpet that is being blown is called by Jesus the great trumpet. This is the trumpet that is blown on the Day of Atonement. This trumpet will usher the return of Christ to rule as Messiah ben David, the King, during the Messianic age. The Day of Atonement serves as a vital preparatory step in anticipation of the next milestone in God's glorious Holy Day plan, beautifully depicted by the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feasts of the Lord--Part VIII (8)

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The seven-day Feast of Tabernacles pictures the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ over the earth after His second coming (Revelation 20:4).

This Feast also reflects the "rest" symbolized by the weekly Sabbath (Hebrews 4:1-11) that celebrates the great harvest of humanity when all living people will learn God's ways. Humanity will at last be restored to a right relationship with God (Isaiah 11:9-10).

The name of the Feast of Tabernacles derives from God's command to ancient Israel to build temporary "tabernacles," sometimes called "booths," to live in during the festival.

The Bible emphasizes that, as with booths or temporary dwellings, our physical life is transitory.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." -2 Corinthians 5:1-2

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, the fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord." -Leviticus 23:34

"Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." -Deuteronomy 16:13

The Feast of Tabernacles or the festival of "Booths," occurs for seven days, from Tishrei 15 to 21. There is therefore a quick transition from the high holidays, with their somber mood of repentance and judgment, to a holiday of rejoicing and celebration, for which the people are commanded to build a hut and make it their home. The Bible identifies the booth with the temporary dwellings in which the Israelites lived in the wilderness after they left Egypt on their way to the Promised Land (Leviticus 23:42).

God desired that the tabernacle in the wilderness be built because He wanted to dwell with his people (Exodus 29:44-45). Spiritually speaking, this physical tabernacle was given by God to teach and instruct us that He desires to live and dwell with His people by means of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:1).

UNDERSTANDING THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The Feast of Tabernacles completes the sacred festivals of the seventh month. In contrast to the somber tone of Rosh HaShanah and the Day of Atonement, the third feast of Tishrei was a time of joy. Israel had passed through the season of repentance and redemption.

The Feast of Tabernacles is called the "Season of Our Joy." One reason the Feast of Tabernacles was a time of joy was that after the season of repentance and the redemption of Yom Kippur came the joy of knowing your sins were forgiven and the joy of walking with God, knowing God, and being obedient to God. Historically, the Feast of Tabernacles commemorates the days in the wilderness of Sinai after coming out of Egypt. According to all natural laws, the Israelites should have perished, but were instead divinely protected by God. Prophetically, the Feast of Tabernacles is the festival that teaches on the Messianic Kingdom and the joy of that Kingdom.

The word tabernacle refers to a temporary dwelling place, which is the purpose of the booth. The booth symbolizes man's need to depend upon God for his provision of food, water, and shelter. This is true in the spiritual realm as well. The booth is the physical body, which is a temporary dwelling place for our souls and spirits (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We need the food that the Word of God provides (Matthew 6:11, 4:4, John 6:33-35), the cleansing, rinsing, and washing that the Word of God brings to our lives (Ephesians 5:26), and the shelter of God's protection over our lives from the evil one (Matthew 6:13, Psalm 91). Our physical needs will be provided for by God if we seek Him spiritually (Matthew 6:31-33).

The observance of the Feast of Tabernacles described in Leviticus 23:40-41 can be seen in Nehemiah chapter 8. The temporary dwellings or booths are described as a part of the festival. This is in remembrance of when the children of Israel dwelled in booths during their time in the wilderness (Leviticus 23:43).

Isaiah talked about the tabernacle in Isaiah 4:4-6. The divine order declares that after judgment, the Day of Atonement (Isaiah 4:4), comes a tabernacle for a place of refuge (Isaiah 4:5-6). The command to rejoice at this time is given in Deuteronomy 16:13-15.

A tabernacle is a temporary dwelling place. In First Kings 8:27, at the dedication of Solomon's temple during the festival of Tabernacles, Solomon asks, "Will God indeed dwell on the earth?"

The Scriptures say that Jesus became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us (John 1:14). He came to earth at His first coming and temporarily dwelt among men.

UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF BOOTHS OR TABERNACLES

The Hebrew word for tabernacle is 'sukkah'. It means "a booth, a hut, a covering, a pavilion or tent." The Greek word for tabernacle is 'sk'en'e', which also means "a tent, hut, or habitation." With this in mind, let's look at the context by which the word tabernacle is used in the New Testament.

1. Jesus tabernacled among us (John 1:14)
2. Peter spoke about his body being a tabernacle (2 Peter 1:13-14)
3. The apostle Paul told us that our earthly bodies were earthly houses or tabernacles (2 Corinthians 5:1-5)
4. The tabernacle of Moses was a tent of habitation (Acts 7:44, Hebrews 9:2-8)
5. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in tabernacles (tents) (Hebrews 11:8-9)
6. The tabernacle of David was a tent or dwelling place (Acts 15:16, Amos 9:11). This tabernacle was the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 5:2-5, 8:1-21)
7. Jesus entered the temple on the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2, 27-29)
8. The Bible speaks of a heavenly tabernacle (Hebrews 8:1-2, Revelation 13:6, 15:5). This heavenly tabernacle will come to earth (Revelation 21:1-3)
9. Jesus was the true tabernacle of God (Hebrews 9:11)

So, the booth or tabernacle was a temporary dwelling place. Historically, it was to remind the people of their exodus from Egypt as described in Leviticus 23:42-43. Prophetically, the tabernacle points toward the future to the Messianic age, the Millennium. Spiritually, a tabernacle is supposed to remind us that we are but strangers and pilgrims on the earth, this being a temporary dwelling place. So the believer in Christ is but a stranger and pilgrim on this earth (Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16, Genesis 23:3-4, 47:9, 1 Peter 1:17, 2:11).

The Feast of Tabernacles is the fall harvest festival. It begins on the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei. Like the other pilgrimage festivals, the Feast of Tabernacles has an agricultural element. It marks the time of the harvest, the final ingathering of produce before the oncoming winter. Hence, it is also called the festival of Ingathering. "And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." -Exodus 23:16

As just stated, the Feast of Tabernacles is called the Feast of Ingathering. Jesus told us that the harvest represents the end of the age. This is found in Matthew 13:39, Revelation 14:15 and Joel 3:13. The harvest refers more specifically to people who choose to accept Christ into their hearts and lives (Matthew 9:35-38, Luke 10:1-2, John 4:35-38 and Revelation 14:14-18).

SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

One of the most outstanding truths of the Feast of Tabernacles involves the seasonal rains in Israel. The prophet Joel tells us that the former and latter rain would come in the first

month (Joel 2:23). This is because Passover is the first month in the religious or sacred calendar, and the Feast of Tabernacles is the first month in the civil calendar. So Israel has two first months in the same year because of the special calendar that God set up in Exodus 12:2.

Hosea 6:3 tells us that the coming of the Messiah will be as the former and latter rain on the earth. His second coming will also be in the first month of the civil calendar, Tishrei. Jesus will return to earth during the fall of the year.

The fullness of this feast in the seventh month will be experienced at the coming of the Messiah when He will rule and reign on the earth during the Messianic age, the Millennium. This will be a time of joy for all believers in Christ and will be the age of Israel's glory.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FESTIVALS TO THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER IN THE LORD JESUS AND HOW THEY RELATE TO HIS LIFE

God designed the agricultural and weather seasons in Israel to parallel the life of every believer in Christ who seeks to love Him and serve Him with all his heart. With this in mind, let us examine how this is true.

Every time a person receives the Lord Jesus as his own Savior, he spiritually experiences Passover. He is to flee Egypt, the world's evil system and ways, trust in the Lord, the Lamb of God, and allow Christ to be the doorpost of his heart. As believers, we are then to seek to live holy lives before God and experience Unleavened Bread. Just as Jesus rose from the dead, we are to consider our former ways dead to us and experience the newness of life in the Lord. Once we do this, we can be immersed (baptized) in the Holy Spirit and have the power of God (the anointing) in our lives. Spiritually, we have experienced the spring harvest of Israel in our lives. When we accept Jesus into our hearts and lives, He begins to teach us the Bible and show us how much He loves us, and we begin to grow in the knowledge of Him.

At that time, God will begin to take us on a spiritual journey through the wilderness of life. Spiritually, we will begin to experience the dry summer season of Israel. Many things in our lives will not go the way we expect them to or how we trust God for them to go. In the process of experiencing life's bitter disappointments and struggles, if we keep our eyes upon God, He will take us from Passover to Pentecost. There He will reveal His ways and His Word, the Bible, in a deeper and more progressive way. By keeping our eyes on the Messiah through life's struggles, God will not only reveal His Word, the Bible, to us in a greater way, but He also will refine our faith like fine flour, just as was done to the wheat during the days of counting the omer between Passover and Pentecost. Meanwhile, if we put our entire trust in Jesus while on our spiritual journey in the wilderness of life as God refines our faith and reveals Himself to us in a greater way, then our spiritual journey will

not end in the wilderness of life. Instead God will take us forward to spiritually experience the fall festivals and our spiritual promised land.

It is when we spiritually experience the fall festivals -- especially the Feast of Tabernacles, and enter into our spiritual promised land that God will anoint our lives for Him in an awesome way, as we live and serve Him, and we will then experience the greatest joy in our entire lives. Joy unspeakable! But we will experience not only joy, but also dancing, praise, victory, peace, and the power of God in our lives. Spiritually, we will be experiencing the fall harvest of Israel. The rain in the bible speaks of two things: the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and an in-depth understanding of Jesus and his Word, the Bible, in our lives. Both the anointing of the Holy Spirit and great knowledge of spiritual truths will be present in our lives in order that we may accomplish the purpose God has for every one of our lives. Therefore, we have the anointing of God upon our lives so we may help to do our part to build up the Body of Christ to full maturity and to establish the Kingdom of God on earth until we come to that day when we will rule and reign with the Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords on earth during the Messianic age, the Millennium, and for all eternity.

---Study taken from "The Seven Festivals Of The Messiah" by Eddie Chumney