

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON 7 –THE JEWISH FESTIVALS

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality...found in Christ. Colossians 2:16-17

Most of us are familiar with this passage that allows Christians to celebrate religious holidays such as Christmas. Have you ever noticed the reason why? Paul is saying that all the Old Testament Feasts and religious zeal surrounding those feasts are a shadow of things that “were” to come. What does he mean? The religious festivals of the Jews were and are, “previews of coming attractions”, of Christ, the “He” of Genesis 3:15.

GOD ESTABLISHES SPECIAL FESTIVALS AND CHANGES THE TIME-CLOCK OF CREATION

At Sinai GOD gave the Jews a task to become the evangelists to the world. Just like the Levites became the priests to the Jews, GOD ordained the Jews to become priests to the world. Evangelism begins at Sinai.

Exodus 19:6 ... you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation..."

At Sinai GOD also establishes religious festivals. And, at Sinai GOD changes the Jewish calendar, literally setting a new time clock for the coming of the “He” of Genesis 3:15. The original calendar began at Creation. The new calendar began at Sinai.

It is all connected! GOD tells the Jews they are to be His evangelists to the world; establishes monthly festivals that tell them about Christ and remind them of their duty; and, resets the time-clock to the time of His Coming. (Hint: This suggests that the time-clock may tell us something about the time of His coming?)

The Festivals were given by God not only for the purpose of remembering Him on a seasonal basis. They were also established specifically to tell the Jews about the “He” of Genesis 3:15 as well as when to expect “Him” to appear.

THE NEW SACRED CALENDAR

Prior to Sinai GOD had set the Jewish calendar going back to creation.

The months were:

1. **Tishri**
2. Cheshvan
3. Chisleu
4. Tevet
5. Sh'vat
6. Adar
7. **Nisan (Aviv)**
8. Ilyar
9. Sivan
10. Tammuz
11. Av
12. Elul

Then, GOD does a mysterious thing. Look at the numbers. GOD changes the months as follows:

“This month (Nisan) shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.” Exodus 12:2

7. Tishri (Ethaniam)

8. Cheshvan

9. Chisleu

10. Tevet

11. Sh'vat

12. Adar

1. Nisan (Abib)

2. Ilyar

3. Sivan

4. Tammuz

5. Av

6. Elul

In the new **Sacred Calendar** a year begins **in spring** with the Passover month of **Abib** (Exodus 12:2, 13:4). **Abib** is also known as Nisan.

Ethaniam the seventh month is also known as **Tishri**.

Months in the Sacred Calendar now begin with a **first- sighting** of the new moon **from the stand-point of Jerusalem**.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years. (Gen 1:14)

PREVIEWS OF COMING ATTRACTIONS (LITERALLY)

Now the stage is set. Notice the symbols of SPRING. Nisan 14 is the day Christ is crucified. (Remember the ark comes to rest on Ararat on Nisan 17, 3-days after Nisan 14), and. As we will see, Nisan is the month with 3 special feasts.

THE NEW SACRED FEASTS AND CALENDAR

The new sacred calendar revolved around **7 major feasts**. (By now, you should not be surprised the number is 7) To understand how the Festivals are outlined during the year, you need to remember that God explained how the coming Messiah would be both King and Servant.

The Jews understood that God was telling them about both a Kingly Messiah and a Suffering Messiah but could not understand how the Messiah could be both. Therefore, they referred to the Kingly Messiah as **Messiah ben David** (after the conquering King David) and the Suffering Servant Messiah as **Messiah ben Joseph** (after Joseph whom you will recall is the 7th Patriarch and the one who most perfectly symbolizes Christ).

AN OUTLINE OF THE FEASTS

The Feasts are laid out by God **in a specific chronology**. **The chronology is in the order in which the Messiah will appear in His two different functions.** We should also expect such precise chronology to tell us something about what festival is associated with not only His first coming, but also His second coming and, it does.

SPRING – Begins with Nisan (the new 1st Month and the month in which Christ is crucified)

Spring feasts are looking for *the coming* of **Messiah ben Joseph**.

The spring feasts are:

1. **Sabbath**
2. **Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread**
3. **Feast of First Fruits**
4. **Pentecost (Feast of the 50th day)**

AUTUMN/FALL – Begins with Tishri (the new 7th Month and the month in which we should look for the 2nd Coming)

Autumn feasts are looking for *the coming* of **Messiah ben David**.

The autumn feasts are:

5. **Feast of Trumpets**
6. **Day of Atonement**
7. **Feast of Tabernacles**

If you are a Christian you will immediately see a connection with the autumn feasts and the books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation.

Note that the names of these feasts are New Testament 2nd Coming concepts.

GOD is truly wonderful to lay out these feasts for us to ponder and study.

GOD'S CHRONOLOGY FOR THE "HE" OF GENESIS 3:15

SPRING FEASTS – First, the coming of Messiah ben Joseph. (Fulfilled in Christ)

1. Feast of Sabbath
2. Passover and Unleavened Bread
3. Feast of First Fruits
4. Pentecost (Feast of the 50th day)

AUTUMN FEASTS – Second, the coming of Messiah ben David. (Yet to be fulfilled)

8. Feast of Trumpets
9. Day of Atonement
10. Feast of Tabernacles

THE SPRING FEASTS

FEAST #1 - THE FEAST OF SABBATH (FEAST OF 7'S)

***" There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the LORD.
Leviticus 23:3***

Outside the Bible, there are:

- 7 colors in the spectrum (the primary colors are, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet)
- 7 notes of the musical scale
- 7 basic plots in story-telling (scholars have determined them to only be, rags to riches, the quest, voyage and return, comedy, tragedy, rebirth and, overcoming the monster)
- 7 wonders of the world
- 7 seas
- 7 objects in the span of attention
- 7 digits in the span of immediate memory
- 7 daughters of Atlas in the Pleiades
- 7 deadly sins
- 7 categories for absolute judgment
- 7 ages of man
- 7 levels of hell
- 7 sacraments
- 7 dwarfs (Disney)
- 7 samurai (the movie)
- 7 reincarnations in Buddhism
- 7th day of celebration after a Japanese baby is born.
- 7th day of mourning after a Japanese dies.
- 7th week of mourning after a Japanese death.

In antiquity:

- 7 planets (the only visible planets plus the moon and sun)
- 7 original and higher gods (Egyptian and Phoenician)
- 7 sacred horses of Mithra; 7 angels that opposed 7 demons; and, 7 celestial bodies that parallel 7 lower regions (Persian)
- 7 headed gods (many Mid-Eastern and Asian gods are 7-headed)
- 7 heavens (almost all cultures on the planet)

In the Bible:

- 7 of the 10 commandments begin with the word "not."
- There are 7 seals, 7 trumpets,
- 7 parables in Matthew, and 7 promises to the churches.
- There are 7 "eternals" in Hebrews which are: A priest for ever (1:6); Eternal salvation (1:9); Eternal judgment (6:2); eternal redemption (9:12); eternal spirit (9:14); eternal inheritance (9:15); and everlasting covenant (13:20).
- Jesus said 7 things on the cross: 1) Luke 23:34 "Jesus said, *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* And they divided up his clothes by casting lots; 2) Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, *"I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise"*; 3) Matthew 27:46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, *"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" -- which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*; 4) John 19:26 *"When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son";* 5) John 19:28 *"Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."* 6) John 19:30 *"When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit";* and 7) Luke 23:46 *"Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."* When he had said this, he breathed his last."
- "After the order of Melchizedek" occurs 7 times.
- **7 Chronicles of Narnia** (rigged by C.S. Lewis for reasons we all can figure out)

In fact, the number 7 is universally symbolized as *lucky*. (Interesting coincidence)

NOTE...This is a ramification of the fact that God created the stars, planets, sun & moon as a time-clock, counting down to an event in history that affects all cultures and nations on the earth.

The number 7 is more than simply an *archetype* discovered by Carl Jung.

IN GOD'S CREATION

God has decreed that 7 is a spiritual number. But why? All numbers in some manner point to the coming of Christ Messiah. But, 7 is a *special* place marker and it represents a special point in our understanding of that coming. Therefore, we are to be conscious of God's Creation and Time-Clock looking for special 7's.

PREVIEWS OF COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Jewish calendar has a "week of weeks". (time divided into 7x7 weeks), a "week of months" (time divided into 7x7 months) and, a "week of years" (time divided into 7x7 years)

For now, understand that God's Sabbath is very special indeed, and all the cultures of the world "sense" this as they watch time pass.

FEAST #2 - FEAST OF PASSOVER (Exodus 12:1-51)

Passover" (pasach) means "to pass over; to spread the wings over, to spare; preserve; protecting,

- It came about with the death of all the firstborn in Egypt;
- God's judgment passed over and the Lord stood guard protecting those who trusted in Him;
- A type of the salvation God has provided;
- **Two days were required to celebrate the Passover. Jesus, with His disciples, observed the Passover the first night, and BECAME HIMSELF (remember Isaac's question?) the Passover Lamb the second night;**
- In each Jewish house in Egypt the paschal lamb was to die in the place of the firstborn; In the same way, Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us;
- The blood of the Paschal lamb was and is a type of the Lamb of God—The "He" our Passover;
- **The Passover Lamb must be a choice male lamb in the prime of his life;**
- **The Passover Lamb had to be without blemish;**
- **The Passover Lamb must be kept under scrutiny (Scribes & Pharisees);**
- **The passover lamb had to be slain;**
- **The bones could not be broken;**
- **The meal was a memorial service;**
- **The angel of death could not trample or break through the door of blood.**
- **The blood provided perfect protection from Satan;**

FEAST #2 – THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (Exodus 12:8–11)

Immediately after the Passover comes a festival that depicts the next step in the fulfillment of God's master plan.

- After God has forgiven our sins, how do we continue to avoid sin
- We find the answer in the symbolism of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

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 generations by an

ordinance for ever. In the first month on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses:" (Exodus 12:17-20 KJV)

- **Leaven = symbolic of impurity/sin.**

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:" (1 Corinthians 5:7-8 KJV)

I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." ... "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." John 6:51-58

Every time a person receives the "He" Messiah as his personal Savior, he/she experiences a spiritual Passover.

- He is to flee Egypt (the world's evil system and ways) and trust in the Messiah, the Lamb of God.
- He is to allow Christ to be the doorpost of his heart barring evil/sin from entering.
- We are then to seek to live holy lives before God and experience Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*).
- Just as *Christ* arose from the dead, we are to consider our former ways dead to us and experience the newness of life in the Messiah.
- Once we do this, we are immersed (buried/baptized) in water as a symbol of the death, burial and resurrection.
- We are then baptized in the Holy Spirit and have the power of God (the anointing) in our lives.
- At that time, God will begin to take us on a **spiritual journey through the wilderness of life.**

SYMBOLS OF THE SPRING FEASTS IN THE EXODUS

In the process of experiencing life's bitter disappointments and struggles, **if we keep our eyes upon God, He will take us from Passover (*Pesach*) to *Shavuot (Pentecost)* where He will reveal His ways and His Word, the Bible, in a deeper and 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. (The Barley festival)

Meanwhile, **if we put our entire trust in the He of Genesis 3:15, through our spiritual journey in the wilderness of life as God refines our faith and reveals Himself to us in a greater way, 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.** (Previews of coming attractions)

FEAST #3 - THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS OF THE BARLEY HARVEST

If we look back at the FEAST OF PASSOVER and the FEAST OF UNLEAVNED BREAD (Exodus) we should expect the **FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS** to have something to do with **events following our Exodus from sin.** (symbols)

Since we know from GOD our next feast is the FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS, as Christians, we should also expect it to have something to do with Christ's appearance and His Passion.

(See the time clock moving forward?)

Each of the spring holidays is a picture of Christ's first coming.

- The SABBATHS take us back to Eden as it was intended to be.
- Jesus was sacrificed for our sins on PASSOVER and buried on UNLEAVENED BREAD.
- Christ arose on FIRSTFRUITS.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:22-23)

1ST SUNDAY AFTER PASSOVER

Noah's Ark opened its door on the 14th day of Nisan. Christ is risen 3 days later (17th Nisan)

GOD instructed that the FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS begin on THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PASSOVER during the SEVEN DAYS of Unleavening.

It begins with GOD's people making an offering to YAHWEH of the very best of their first early spring harvest.

(GOD offers the very best to us through His Son)

“FIRST” MEANS AN ORDER OF THINGS TO COME

First means there will be a second and third and fourth, etc.. My family are all farm people and first harvest means there will be a second, third, etc... After all, this is the essence of harvest.

FIRSTFRUITS is the day when CHRIST WAS RAISED and PRESENTED as THE FIRST HARVEST OF REDEEMED SPIRITS TO GOD. (See Matthew 27:52-53)

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

We know this day as RESURRECTION SUNDAY.

- The feast of first fruits was the third day after Passover.
- Christ rose from the dead as the first fruits of the resurrection on the third day from His death.

FEAST #4 – FEAST OF PENTECOST

We now come to the last of the Spring Feasts.

4. Pentecost (Feast of the 50th day)

THE HOLY SPIRIT Poured OUT ON PENTECOST/50TH DAY

The LORD has risen. They are all together in Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost or the Feast of the 50th Day, when the HOLY SPIRIT is poured out on the Church.

Why did GOD select Pentecost?

Pentecost comes 50 days after Passover and **comes between the two seasons**. It is just before the **beginning of the Autumn season** in which we are to look in chronology for the Coming of Messiah ben David (the conquering Messiah).

FEAST OF PENTECOST (Shavuot) is also when God led the people to Mount Sinai (Exodus [Shemot] 19:1) where as we discussed, God revealed Himself to the people in a deeper and greater way than He ever did previously.

This is the time in which GOD becomes YHWH. (YHWH = He causes to be or, to exist/I Exist/Am)

Just as GOD at Sinai revealed Himself in His Glory and revealed Himself in a personal way never before seen (since Eden),

- **Jesus arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest**, (Remember the Feast of First Fruits. He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and receive a resurrected body.
- **Now, the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) is poured out upon all flesh during the feast of Shavuot (Pentecost)** to gather all believers in the Messiah to be God's spring harvest in the earth. (Where we are today)

PENTECOST is our great joy because the promised HOLY SPIRIT is now ours for the taking through faith in JESUS CHRIST.

All this, is PENTECOST.

NOTE:

THE UNLEAVENED AND LEAVENED BREAD

Unleavened bread was THE BREAD OF PASSOVER. It was the bread of past brokenness and affliction. It was to be eaten with bitter herbs to further remind Israel of its past bondage in Egypt. It was the bread of sorrow, and yet it also was the bread of anticipation; anticipation of salvation, the great upcoming victory with God.

Leavened bread was the bread of actual victory; THE BREAD OF PENTECOST. It was FULL OF THE SPIRIT (leaven), and it was to be EATEN WITH HONEY to remind Israel of the sweetness of its spiritual relationship with God. (Our relationship through the Holy Spirit)! It was the bread of great joy.

Will we eat leavened bread with Christ in heaven?

Nest week, Autumn Festivals that point to the 2nd Coming of Christ.