

## Lesson 4 – 22 May, 2011.

### The Holy Feasts—Consecration

**Lesson Scope:** [Leviticus Chapters 23 through 27](#)

#### Lesson Focus

The Old Testament feasts were called the "feasts of the LORD." They served much the same purpose as the ordinances of the church. They kept Israel conscious of God's redemptive work and reminded them of their spiritual relationship with Him. Some of the feasts invited reflection on historical events, others were seasonal. Perhaps of greatest importance was the Sabbath, which served as a weekly reminder of the people's relationship with and obligation to God.

These gatherings were special times of worship and fellowship. They were not optional; three times in a year the men were to appear before the Lord. Sacrifice was involved. Attendance required travel, and the people were not to come empty handed (Deuteronomy 16:16). But the blessing was theirs! Worship and service are integral parts of a right relationship with God. The Levitical feasts, which inspired the Old Testament saints, abound in the beautiful types for the New Testament believer.

It is of interest to note the similarity in thought between the Old Testament feasts and the ordinance of Communion. Keep this in the back of your mind as you study this lesson. It will add an interesting side note to any discussion.

This lesson also emphasizes on the valuable place that the ordinances of the church fill in keeping the faith. Those who apostatize invariably drop many of the ordinances and no longer observe close Communion.

Keep in mind that more than one meaning can apply to a given feast. For example, the Feast of Tabernacles may remind us that we are strangers and pilgrims with no certain dwelling place, or it can point to the final rest. Also, the sounding of a trumpet can symbolize the call of the Gospel as well as the catching up of the saints.

**Lesson Aim:** To see the spiritual significance of the Levitical feasts.

**Theme Verse:** [Nahum 1:15](#). Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

**Lesson Text:**

**The Feast of the Passover.**

[Leviticus 23:4-5](#)

These *are* the feasts of the LORD, *even* holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. <sup>5</sup>In the fourteenth *day* of the first month at even *is* the LORD'S Passover.

**The Feast of Unleavened Bread.**

[Leviticus 23:6](#)

And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

**The Feast of Firstfruits.**

[Leviticus 23:10-11](#)

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: <sup>11</sup>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.

**The Feast of Weeks.**

[Leviticus 23:15-22](#)

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: <sup>16</sup>Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be *for* a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, *even* an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD. <sup>19</sup>Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. <sup>20</sup>And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first fruits *for* a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. <sup>21</sup>And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, *that* it may be

an 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.

<sup>22</sup>And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

### **The Feast of Trumpets.**

[Leviticus 23:24-25](#)

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. <sup>25</sup>Ye shall do no servile work *therein:* but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

### **The Day of Atonement.**

[Leviticus 23:27-28](#)

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. <sup>28</sup>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.

### **Questions for Study**

1. Why were the feasts called "the feasts of the LORD"?
2. Compare the Feast of Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread with the observance of Communion.
3. What is the significance of the wave loaves as compared to the sheaf of first fruits?
4. How was the typology of the Feast of Weeks fulfilled?
5. What is symbolized by the sounding of trumpets?
6. What is significant about the fact that Israel was to afflict their souls on the Day of Atonement?
7. What is the historical present, and future significance of the Feast of Tabernacles?

### **Analyzing the Passage**

These feasts were not mere social gatherings but holy convocations (Leviticus 23:4). They were public gatherings for religious observances. They were held in their seasons (on specific, designated days). Servile or customary work (Leviticus 23:21) was prohibited on most of the feast days, but on the Day of Atonement absolutely no work was to be done. It was a

time for Israel to afflict their souls.

The three spring feasts covered an eight-day period. The Passover, on the fourteenth day of the first month, commemorated the deliverance of the first-born in Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread began the following day and lasted seven days. The Feast of First Fruits observed on the sixteenth day, marked the beginning of barley harvest.

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) came fifty days later at the end of wheat harvest. It reminded Israel that all their blessings came from God.

The remaining three feasts were observed in the fall. They were held in the seventh month, which was the first month of the civil year. The Feast of Trumpets was held on the first day. The Feast of Atonement followed on the tenth day, and the Feast of Tabernacles was observed from the fifteenth through the twenty-second.

The seventh month was the most sacred month of the year, because in it two great ordinances were observed--the Day of Atonement, when the high priest made his annual entrance into the most holy Place, and the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people dwelt in booths as a reminder of the pilgrim character of life under the government of God.

### **Principles and Applications.**

1. The Passover pointed forward to deliverance from sin through the sinless blood of the perfect Lamb of God (Leviticus 23:5). The Passover was superseded by the observance of the ordinance of Communion. In it we remember our deliverance from death and the bondage of sin. We look back to the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread typified Christ's sinless body sacrificed to provide the world with the bread of life (Leviticus 23:6). -"This is my body, which is broken for you" (1 Corinthians 11:24). The Feast of Unleavened Bread was a continuation of the same subject as the Passover. The Passover was the cause: the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the effect. For us, the first one symbolizes the way of pardon: the second illustrates the holiness that follows.

3. The Feast of First Fruits foreshadowed Christ's resurrection (Leviticus 23:10-11). "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20). The first sheaf is the pledge of a harvest to follow. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). The saints are the harvest that the Father is anticipating. The three feasts portray a sequence. What is begun in the first (the new birth) is continued in the second (sanctification) and completed in the third (resurrec-

tion). Our redemption will be complete when we receive our new bodies.

4. The Feast of Weeks pointed forward to the uniting of Jew and Gentile in one body, the church, by the power of the Holy Spirit (Leviticus 23:16-20). "He is our peace offering, who hath made both one.... For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father- (Ephesians 2:14, 18). At this feast the Jews were to bring two wave loaves made with leaven and offer them before the Lord. Just as the individual kernels of wheat give up their identity to blend with others in one loaf, even so the Holy Spirit blends the believers into one body.

5. The Feast of Trumpets prefigured the joyous return of Christ for His redeemed people (Leviticus 23:24-25). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel. and with the trump of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The sounding of trumpets signified the call of God. They were used to call Israel to worship or to battle. Revelation 4:1 refers to a "voice ... as it were of a trumpet calling John to "come up hither. - The Sounding of the trumpet could also be thought of as the call of the Gospel.

6. The Day of Atonement signified the reconciliation that follows godly sorrow and cleansing from sin (Leviticus 23:27-28). "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall he in bitterness" (Zechariah 12:10). All of the other feasts were seasons of joy. This was to be a day of affliction. In the truest sense, however, it was a time of joy. Sorrow for sin turns into joy when the blood has been applied. It is noteworthy that the Year of Jubilee began on the evening of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 25:9).

7. The Feast of Tabernacles illustrated the final rest of the redeemed (Leviticus 23:36, 42). "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9). The historical precedent for this feast was Israel's journey through the wilderness to Canaan, when they experienced God's presence, provision, and promises. The believer is content as a stranger and pilgrim here, because he is looking for a city whose builder and maker is God.

### **Important Teachings**

1. Passover pointed forward to deliverance from sin through the sinless blood of the perfect Lamb of God (Leviticus 23:5).

2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread typified Christ's sinless body sacrificed to provide the world with the bread of life (Leviticus 23:6).

3. The Feast of First Fruits foreshadowed Christ's resurrection (Leviticus 23:10-11).

4. The Feast of Weeks pointed forward to the uniting of Jew and Gentile in one body, the church, by the power of the Holy Spirit (Leviticus 23:16-20).
5. The Feast of Trumpets prefigured the joyous return of Christ for His redeemed people (Leviticus 23:24-25).
6. The Day of Atonement signified the reconciliation that follows godly sorrow and cleansing from sin (Leviticus 23:27-28).
7. The Feast of Tabernacles illustrated the final rest of the redeemed (Leviticus 23:36, 42).

### **Answers to Questions**

1. Why were the feasts called "the feasts of the Lord"?

The Old Testament feasts were called feasts of the Lord because He designed and instituted them. It was God's way of placing in Israel's national life a reminder of the special relationship that they had with Him. Israel's faithfulness in the keeping of these feasts had a direct bearing upon their faithfulness to God.

2. Compare the Feast of Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread with the observance of Communion.

Passover and Communion both point to the shedding of blood for deliverance from death and cleansing from sin. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and Communion both employ the symbolism of bread.

3. What is the significance of the wave loaves as compared to the sheaf of first fruits?

The sheaf of first fruits pointed to Christ, the source of life and sustenance. He was the first to rise from the grave, triumphant over death. The wave loaves were made from grains that the sheaf produced. Believers are the product or effect of Christ's work. The Holy Spirit is working to perfect and unite both Jews and Gentiles into one body.

4. How was the typology of the Feast of Weeks fulfilled?

The events recorded in Acts 2 fulfilled the typology of the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). The Feast of Weeks coincided with the giving of the Law at Sinai; Pentecost (Acts 2) marked the completion of the New Covenant provision. Occurring fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, Pentecost placed on display (waving of the loaves) God's marvelous work of salvation for all men, both Jew and Gentile (two loaves).

5. What is symbolized by the sounding of trumpets?

Trumpets symbolize the voice of God. They were used to proclaim a solemn assembly or to call Israel to battle. The trumpet sound is symbolic language for the word behold. This word prefaced many of Jesus' teachings.

It is in type the call of the Gospel. We are admonished in Hebrews 12:25, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." In Revelation 4:1 John received the call to "come up hither." We are waiting for the "last trump," the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall be raised, and the living are caught up and changed (1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

6. What is significant about the fact that Israel was to afflict their souls on, the Day of Atonement?

Sin is never to be taken lightly; it is a legitimate cause for sorrow and mourning. To think that Jesus was willing to suffer and die to save us from sin is reason enough to afflict one's soul. Self-denial is to deny the flesh, take up our cross, and follow Jesus.

7. What is the historical, present, and future significance of the Feast Tabernacles?

In the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, Israel looked back to the time when they lived in tents and were on the move. They were journeying to the land of promise, and God's presence went with them. Presently, the people of God are to live as pilgrims and strangers, but God is with us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We likewise are journeying to the Promised Land. In the future we anticipate the time when we will dwell with God and God with us. It will be a time of rest and peace! There will be great joy!

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

God appointed feasts and ordinances to remind His people of whose they are and whom they serve. Having reached the land of promise, Israel faced the temptation to forget the bondage of Egypt and the disciplines of the wilderness journey. We likewise are inclined to take salvation for granted. Consequently, the faith can be lost with the passing generations. The faithful practice of the New Testament ordinances is vital to the preserving of the faith.

### **Research Guide**

1. First Thessalonians 4:15-18; 1 Corinthians 15; and Revelation 4:1 mention the sounding of the trumpet.
2. Deuteronomy 16 is a review of these feasts.
3. Leviticus 16 describes the Day of Atonement in detail.
4. Read what is given under "Festivals" in Unger's Bible Dictionary.