

2 Israel's Yearly Sabbaths

Having begun to establish the purpose of signs and wonders, I wish to further reveal their function by displaying their relationship to people and time, and by explaining when and why I believe they faded away. Since the majority of this issue (the confusion regarding signs, especially tongues - Acts 2:6,12) centers around Pentecost, I will begin by reviewing it, along with the other yearly Sabbaths (described in Leviticus 23 and elsewhere) which God commanded Israel to keep as ritualistic shadows (prophetic symbolic representations) of Jesus' redemptive work for mankind. For a more in-depth study on this subject, I suggest reading John Ritchie's book *Feasts of Jehovah*, as I've gleaned a good portion of my information and understanding from it. Briefly, here are the yearly feasts, and, in general, what I believe them to represent.

The *Passover*, a yearly celebration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, was a shadow of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. In Egypt, an unblemished lamb was sacrificed and its blood put on the doorposts and lintel of believers' homes, so that when the angel of death traveled through the midst killing the firstborn, He would pass over them.

1 Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

The Passover ceremony had many prophetic symbolisms hidden within which are very heartwarming. Jesus, our unblemished Lamb, who saves us from eternal death, was sacrificed at the Passover feast as had been the lamb in Egypt. The lamb was to be selected four days before its death (Exod 12:3-6), just as Jesus entered Jerusalem four days before the Passover (Mark 11:1,12,19-20, 14:1). The lamb had to be unblemished, as Jesus was sinless. The lamb was to be sacrificed at twilight (from the ninth to the eleventh hour - marginal note, Exod 12:6 KJV), Jesus the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). The lamb had to be roasted in fire, just as Jesus underwent the

essence of hell - the lake of fire - when forsaken by God from the sixth hour until the ninth. No bone of the lamb was to be broken; Jesus was to give up His life rather than have it taken from Him, making it unnecessary for the Roman soldiers to speed up His death by breaking His legs as they did with the other two men on crosses. And finally, the lamb was to be eaten that night only, with all leftovers to be destroyed by fire, just as the body of Jesus was not to see corruption in the grave, but rather to be resurrected before this would happen. Overall, the Passover was a very intriguing prophetic celebration of the atoning death of Jesus.

The *Feast of Unleavened Bread* kind of blends in with the Passover in that the Passover is an individual celebration, while the Feast of Unleavened Bread is amongst brethren; it was a shadow of the communion of saints.

1 Cor 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The command to eat unleavened bread is the command to the newborn Christian (one which has just selected and feasted upon his Passover Lamb) to immediately begin removing the sin from his life.

The *Feast of Firstfruits* was a dedication of the beginning of the barley harvest to God. The first and best of the harvest was collected, dedicated, and given to God, indicating the belief that there would be a further harvest, and that the entire crop actually belonged to God. This feast was a shadow of the resurrection of Christ as the first of all to be resurrected unto life.

1 Cor 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

The *Feast of Weeks* (Pentecost), according to my understanding (although Scripture does not directly say so), was an anniversary celebration of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. The first time the law was given, Israel could not accept it

due to their idolatry, but the second time, they accepted it completely. This was (and will be) true for Pentecost too. Both of these events (Mount Sinai and Pentecost) were introduced with loud prolonged noises accompanied by supernatural signs of fire.

Exod 19:16 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.

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

Pentecost was also a yearly celebration of the beginning of the wheat harvest.

Along with these two applications, this feast seems to have two fulfillments. It was a twofold shadow of a type of the firstfruits of the harvest of God's people. The first was a shadow of the former rain, the inauguration of God's heavenly people (the Church). This is when God first wrote His laws on our hearts, replacing those written on stone. In this instance, as before, Israel again could not accept these laws due to their sin (idolatry).

1 Cor 15:23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Rom 16:5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

James 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

2 Cor 3:2 You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

Heb 10:15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "This is the covenant that I will make **with them** after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. 19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

The second Pentecostal shadow was of the latter rain, the inauguration of God's earthly people (the Jewish remnant of Israel) in their restoration during the tribulation period. Here God will write His laws on their hearts, again replacing those written on stone. This time, ultimately, the entire nation of Israel will fully accept these laws just as they did with the second pair of stone tablets at Sinai.

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the

sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being **firstfruits** to God and to the Lamb.

As "firstfruits" is a term (uniquely Pentecostal with respect to people) referring to the first clusters of fruit gathered of a larger harvest, and as it would be incorrect to consider fruit gathered two thousand years after harvesting has begun to be firstfruits, the above-mentioned firstfruits must be those of a new harvest - the first converts of the second Pentecostal fulfillment. (See also the following two passages.)

Heb 8:8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 9 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. 10 "For this is the covenant that I will make **with the house of Israel** after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Ezek 36:24 "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. 28 "Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

An interesting feature of Pentecost (as stated before) which we must not miss is that even though it was one of the yearly feasts, and therefore part of God's plan of redemption, it contained elements of judgment (if not fully heeded) closely mingled together with promises of blessing (if heeded). Obedience to God's holy and perfect laws (written on stone at Sinai, and on our hearts through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost) will always be associated with (usually spiritual) blessings, while disobedience will always be associated with (often delayed) judgment.

Deut 11:26 "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 "the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; 28 "and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known.

The *Feast of Trumpets* was a twofold shadow too. The first was a shadow of the finished ingathering of God's heavenly people (the Church) commonly known as The Rapture.

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

1 Cor 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

The second shadow was of the finished ingathering of God's earthly people (believing Israel) back into the Promised Land.

Matt 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Isaiah 27:13 So it shall be in that day: the great trumpet will be blown; they will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

The *Day of Atonement*, instituted immediately after God had killed Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron who had offered profane fire, seems to have two applications too. The first is for the sin these men committed as individuals, and the second is for that committed as religious leaders representing Israel. Their sin was that of "will worship"; they worshiped God their own way, rather than how He had told them to. The first application of this feast is for individual members within the Church, where their service will be judged as to its value to God; whether they did it their way (using the world's methods), or God's way (using His methods). This event is commonly referred to as The Judgment Seat of Christ.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Rev 22:12 "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

2 Tim 2:5 And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

2 Sam 6:6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. 7 Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God.

1 Sam 15:22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he also has rejected you from being king."

The second application (for the sin Aaron's sons committed as religious leaders representing Israel) of this feast is for the nation of Israel. It's for their judgment and acquittal of having rejected and crucified Jesus (a sin committed mainly by the religious leaders).

John 7:47 Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived? 48 "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?

Matt 27:25 And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children." 26 Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Zech 12:9 "It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they have pierced; they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

Joel 3:20 But Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 "For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; for the LORD dwells in Zion."

And finally, let's look at the *Feast of Tabernacles* with its two shadows. The first shadow is the perpetual indwelling of the fullness (rather than just the firstfruits) of the Spirit after the redemption of our bodies - when God will dwell in us and us in Him.

Rom 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we

ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

Rev 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev 21:22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

And the second shadow is that of the reign of Christ with Israel during the millennial kingdom.

Zech 14:16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whicheckver of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.

Arthur W. Pink also offers some very interesting insight into this Feast and its meanings.

The Old Testament records but two occasions when this Feast was ever observed by Israel in the past, and they are most significant. The first of these is found in I Kings 8, see vv. 2, 11, 13, 62-66, and note particularly the "seventh month" in v. 2 and the "eighth day" in v. 66. This was in the days of Solomon at the completion and dedication of the Temple. In like manner, the antitypical Feast of tabernacles, will not be ushered in till the completion of the spiritual "temple," which God is now building (Eph. 2:22; I Pet. 2:5). The second account of Israel's past celebration of this Feast is recorded in Neh. 8:13-18. The occasion was the settlement of the Jewish remnant in Palestine, after they had come up

out of captivity.¹

The above piece of information is interesting in that Israel's restoration into Palestine was a type of their restoration beginning the millennial kingdom, whereas Solomon's Temple (the literal temple "made with hands" by the literal seed of David - Solomon) was a type of the Church (the spiritual temple "built without hands" by the spiritual seed of David - Christ).

2 Sam 7:12 "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your **seed** after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 **He** shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 **"I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.** If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. 15 "But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."" 17 According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

1 Chr 22:7 And David said to Solomon: "My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house to the name of the LORD my God; 8 "but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. 9 'Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon, for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. 10 **'He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father;** and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.' 11 "Now, my son, may the LORD be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you.

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Acts 7:44 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, 45 "which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, 46 "who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. 47 "But Solomon built Him a house. 48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: 49 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the Lord, or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?'

Eph 2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

1 Peter 2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

I draw this parallel in the same way that Paul does when he refers to the promises given to Abraham and his Seed as referring to Christ.

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

Heb 1:5 For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to

Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son"?

Matt 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build** My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Overall, the Sabbaths represented God's plan of redemption (death, resurrection, ingathering, forgiveness, and perpetual cohabitation) for mankind. They were a remarkable prophetic shadow of the things to come in and through Jesus Christ. Superb evidence of divine inspiration!