

In less than 40 years from this cry, in 70 A. D., Rome did come down and destroy the city of Jerusalem, scattering the Jews all over the place! As you move down into verse 35, I believe we see the petition of the nation as they call upon the Lord prior to His return at His second coming at the end of the Tribulation Period.

Paul speaks of the repentance of the Jews in Romans 11:25-27. One day they will receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. The nation of Israel will be saved! Also, listen to what we are told in Isaiah 25:9, "**And it will be said in that day: 'Behold, this is our God: We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'**"

Who is their God? Jesus is their God. As you read on you will see that come shinning through. Who have they been waiting for? They have been waiting for the Messiah to come, Jesus! They missed Him the first time but they will receive Him when He comes again. What are they rejoicing in? They are rejoicing in the salvation that the Messiah, that Jesus, brings them, the freedom from sin! The focus here in this verse is the Kingdom Age!

In Zechariah 13:1-6 we are told that the Lord will remove the sins of the Jews. How is that accomplished? Only by receiving Jesus as their Lord and Savior! He concluded in verse 6 by once again speaking of the wounds of the crucifixion that were placed there by the Jews for their rejection of Him!

You can read Daniel 9:24, only one verse, but it is packed with things all related to the nation of Israel in the last days, the Jewish people. This is for the Jews, and the culmination of all things for them will be to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, to anoint the most holy.

So the Day of Atonement is fulfilled at the end of the Tribulation Period at the second coming of Jesus Christ as He will not only judge the Gentile nations but the nation of Israel as well. All those that receive Him will enter into the Kingdom Age with Him, which is pictured in the last of these Feasts, the Feasts of Tabernacles. Thus, the Day of Atonement is fulfilled as the Jews receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior and their sins are forgiven, cast as far as the east is from the west, to be remembered no more! Thus, I believe this will take place on the very **DAY OF ATONEMENT!**

#### 7. **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES – LEVITICUS 23:33-44**

This last Feast is called the Feast of Succoth or Tabernacles, also the Feast of Booths, SUCCOTH in Hebrew. It began on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month or Tishri and it lasted for seven days. During this Feast the Jews would live in temporary booths, as they did in the wilderness. It reminded them of how God brought them through those times and into the Promise Land.

I believe the picture here is the future Kingdom Age that God has prepared for Israel and all those who believe. But again, I believe the focus is Israel in the second coming of Jesus! Instead of dwelling in booths, they will dwell with the Lord and in Isaiah 11:6-9 we see a picture of what that period of time will be like.

What a glorious period of time, 1,000 years as righteousness fills this land as our King of kings and Lord of lord's rules and reigns! It is also worth noting that the Jews added two extra rituals to their celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles to remind them of God's wilderness blessings. The first was the pouring out of the water from the pool of Siloam, recalling God's provision of water in the desert; the second was the placing of four large lighted candlesticks to recall the pillar of fire that led the people by night.

Jesus related both of these traditions to Himself. It was during the Feast of Tabernacles, when the water was being poured out, that He cried out, "**If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.**" (John 7:37). He also said to the temple crowd, "**I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.**" (John 8:12). What a tragedy that the Jews were so careful to maintain their traditions and yet they completely missed the Messiah who was in their midst! I wonder how many people today miss the Messiah because of the traditions they hold on to! The Millennial reign of Christ – **THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES!**

So we have seen in the Feast of Passover that Jesus is the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world as He was crucified on the Feast of Passover for our sins. He is our Unleavened Bread as the sinless One was placed in the tomb on the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And He is our Firstfruits as He was raised from the dead on that Sunday morning, assuring us that one day we too will be raised from the dead, the Feast of Firstfruits! These are the Spring Feasts.

Then, on the Feast of Pentecost we see the Church burst on the scene in power as Jesus unites both Jew and Gentile into one body, the body of Christ, empowering them for the work of the ministry; to bring the Gospel message to a lost world, The Feast of Pentecost. This is the Summer Feast.

In the Feast of Trumpets, Jesus will gather Jews from all over the world at the end of the Tribulation Period, the Feast of Trumpets. Then, on the Day of Atonement, the Jews as a nation will receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior at the end of the Tribulation Period; they will receive His atonement, the Day of Atonement. Finally, the Feast of Tabernacles, as the Jews will dwell with the Lord in the Millennial Kingdom, the Kingdom Age for 1,000 years, the Feast of Tabernacles. These are the Fall Feasts.

In all of this we have seen the complete work of God bringing both Jews and Gentiles into the Kingdom Age and to be with the Lord Jesus Christ for eternity. What an awesome God we have. You see, these Feasts did not just mean something historically, they were not just a ritual that the Jews observed. But it pointed to the future plan of God in which three of those Feasts have been fulfilled in Jesus, the fourth or Pentecost is still being played out as we are in the Church Age and there are three more to come, to be fulfilled in His second coming! **THE FEASTS OF ISRAEL!**

# What the Bible says about . . . The Feasts of Israel

In this study we are going to look at the Feasts of Israel that are spoken of in Leviticus chapter 23. You may be wondering why this is even important to us, but as you will see, it is very important that we not only see what these Feasts were about historically, but also their prophetic significance!

God instructed the children of Israel to observe seven Feasts, of which three occurred in the springtime: The Feast of Passover, The Feast of Unleavened Bread, and The Feast of Firstfruits. There was one Feast that occurred in the summer: The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. Then there were three fall Feasts: The Feast of Trumpets, The Day of Atonement, and The Feast of Tabernacles.

I believe the Scriptures indicate that the first three Feasts of Israel point to the first coming of Jesus Christ. The fourth Feast points to the Church and what Christ has done to birth and empower the Church. Then the last three Feasts relate to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

So far not too controversial, but let me change that. I believe that the only Feast that relates directly to the Church is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. The other six Feasts relate to the nation of Israel and what God is doing with His people, the Jews. I realize that some have very strong feelings about the Feast of Trumpets being related to the Rapture of the Church, but as you will see, I don't believe it fits.

#### 1. **THE FEAST OF PASSOVER – LEVITICUS 23:4-5**

The Feast of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are sometimes used interchangeably for both Feasts, but they are two separate Feasts. The Feast of Passover took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and it was celebrated to commemorate Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

God instructed Moses and the children of Israel that each family was to slay a lamb and place the blood of that sacrifice upon the doors of their homes. The pattern He instructed them to follow caused the blood to form a cross, interestingly enough. As they did this, the Lord told them that the Angel of Death would pass over their homes. If they didn't obey the Lord, then judgment would come in the form of death to the firstborn of that family.



Thus, this Feast looked back historically to how God delivered His people from their bondage in Egypt by the sacrifice of the lamb. But, this feast also looked ahead prophetically to the coming of the Messiah to shed His blood to free the people from their bondage to sin they are in. Thus, as the blood of Jesus is applied to our lives the judgment of God passes over us!

Remember what John the Baptist said as he saw Jesus coming, “... **Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**” John 1:29. Don’t miss the point here. John is saying that Jesus, God incarnate, is ***THE*** sacrificial Lamb who did not come to cover our sins but to take them away completely!

Paul picks up on this idea of Jesus being the Passover Lamb when he wrote in I Corinthians 5:7, “... **For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**” He is our Passover Lamb and by receiving Him into our lives by faith, our sins have been forgiven. You see, the work is done; the gift is there for all to receive it, but not all appropriate that gift into their life by faith!

As we look at the Feast of Passover we see the finished work of Jesus on the cross of Calvary as ***THE*** Lamb of God who sacrificed Himself for our sins. In other words, God took our sins and poured them upon Jesus and He took the righteousness of Jesus and poured that upon us! ***JESUS IS OUR PASSOVER LAMB!***

## **2. THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD – LEVITICUS 23:6-8**

Beginning on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and running for seven days, or the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 21<sup>st</sup> of Nisan, was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On the first and last day of this Feast there was a holy convocation. Keep in mind that leaven speaks of sin in the Scriptures and in this Feast and the Feast of Passover there is no leaven to be found. In fact, before this Feast, they will go through their homes and sweep away any leaven that is found!

Prophetically speaking, many believe this is a picture of the Church, of believers and how they are to walk in holiness, in purity. That is very true and there are many Scriptures that tell us we need to walk in holiness, to be set apart for the Lord. But I don’t believe that is what this Feast is prophetically indicating.

First of all the Church was not born until the Feast of Pentecost. So it would seem strange to call us to holiness when we are not even around yet! Secondly, as good as we think we are, we still sin! When we look at the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, it is a Feast that includes leaven. Why? There is leaven in this Feast because the Church is filled with sinners in a practical sense.

Yes, all our sins are forgiven in a positional sense, but we do still sin in a practical sense, or in our day-to-day lives. John picks up on this when he tells us in I John 1:8, “**If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**” And, if you remember, the Feast of Unleavened Bread has no leaven it!

Then what does this mean? Who is it speaking of? Keep in mind that the first three Feasts speak of the first coming of Jesus Christ. Thus, who is the sinless one? It is the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world. It is ***JESUS CHRIST!***

The sinless One who gave His life at 3 pm was placed in the tomb on the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus, ***JESUS IS THE SINLESS ONE. HE IS OUR UNLEAVENED BREAD!***

## **3. THE FEASTS OF FIRSTFRUITS – LEVITICUS 23:9-14**

The Feast of Firstfruits occurred on the day after the Sabbath or the first Sunday after Passover’s Sabbath. This Feast was the celebration of the barley harvest, not the wheat harvest that took place in May or June. The idea here is that the firstfruits belonged to the Lord and as you gave to Him your best, it would ensure a bountiful harvest. Put God first. You won’t lose when you do that. He deserves our best.

During this Feast the priest would take the first sheaf of barley from the field and waved it as an offering before the Lord. Like I said, it was a token that the first and best belonged to the Lord. It was done before Israel reaped the harvest for themselves.

Now, how does this relate prophetically speaking? If Jesus was crucified on Thursday, the Feast of Passover, if He was placed in the tomb at the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then the Feast of Firstfruits speaks of His resurrection from the grave, which coincidentally occurred on Sunday morning!

Again, this points to the first coming of Jesus Christ, the Feast of Firstfruits. Paul, in I Corinthians 15:20-23 makes this point about Jesus being the firstfruits as He tells us, “**But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.**”

Christ is the beginning. He was the firstfruits and there is coming a bountiful resurrection from the dead. The word “**coming**” is PAROUSIA in the Greek and in general terms it speaks of a person’s appearance. But when it is spoken of Christ, it relates to His second coming. Matthew 24:27 tells us, “**For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**” So we will receive our resurrection bodies at the second coming of Christ!

What a glorious truth and what great hope and comfort it gives to us, knowing that since Jesus has been raised from the dead, so too will we one day! ***JESUS CHRIST IS OUR FIRSTFRUITS OF WHAT IS TO COME – A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST OF SOULS!***

## **4. THE FEAST OF PENTECOST – LEVITICUS 23:15-22**

We are told that fifty days after the Feast of Firstfruits came the Feast of Pentecost, also called the Feast of Weeks or SHAVOUT. This Feast took place in the month of Sivan on the Jewish calendar, and it corresponds to our May/June, during the wheat harvest. In this Feast they would bring a new grain offering to the Lord and wave two loaves of leaven bread before the Lord. Interestingly enough, in these Feasts, this is the first time leaven is used, and there is an important reason for that, and the first time for two loaves of bread, as we will see.

On this Feast we can read of what took place in Acts 2:4-41. What we see here is the empowering of the Holy Spirit for service upon believers. We see the birth of the Church! The problem here is that, if this is dealing with the Holy Spirit, how can the Feast of Pentecost relate to Jesus? In John 16:7 we are told, “**Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.**” Did you see that? Because of the work Jesus has done and His return to glory, He now sends His Spirit to work in the lives of His people, to empower them for service!

Now, what about those two loaves of leaven bread? What is that all about? Well, we know these two loaves are speaking of the Jews and the Gentiles coming together into one body, the body of Christ. The leaven in the Scriptures speaks of sin in both the Old and New Testament.

The Holy Spirit is showing us that Jewish sinners and Gentile sinners will come together in Christ; this is what makes up the Church – ***SAVED SINNERS!*** Think about it. How many of you were sinners? All of you! Great, now how many of you still sin? All of us do and if you refuse to admit it, then you are a liar! We all fall far short of what God desires, but we are forgiven in Christ and called to strive for holiness!

So we see here, as Jesus sends out the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost, the Church was born - ***THE FEAST OF PENTECOST!***

## **5. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS – LEVITICUS 23:23-25**

The Feast of Trumpets, or Rosh Hashanah, took place on the first day of the month of Tishri on the Jewish ceremonial or religious calendar and thus, it corresponds to our September/October. When the trumpets sounded, it called God’s people together for this celebration. It is also known as the “Day of Judgment” or the “Day of Sounding the Shofar” and the “Day of Remembrance.” As Passover is the start of the religious New Year, Rosh Hashanah is the start of the civil New Year.

Now, why is there such a long period of time between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets? I believe this period of time is known as the Church Age where God is gathering together a bride for Jesus out of both Jews and Gentiles.

I also believe the Feast of Trumpets does not give to us a picture of the Rapture of the Church, but it does give to us a picture of the second coming of Jesus Christ as He gathers the children of Israel together in Jerusalem. Jesus does this by blowing the trumpet to alert them that the Messiah has come! Thus, I believe that this will take place on the very day the Feast of Trumpets is celebrated as the New Year begins for Israel, a new beginning you might say for them as they come to Jesus! The Feast of Trumpets is the re-gathering of the nation of Israel together before the Lord - ***THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS!***

## **6. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT – LEVITICUS 23:26-32**

This is the second of these fall Feasts that began on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month or Tishri, the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. This Feast was more of a day of affliction; affliction over their sin and the need for atonement that could only be made by the shedding of the blood of the sacrifice and the confessing of the sin upon the scapegoat and sending him away into the wilderness, showing that their sins were forgiven.

The picture of Christ is beautiful. He shed His blood for our sins on the cross of Calvary and because of that our sins have been cast as far as the east is from the west to be remembered no more! In other words, our sins were paid in full!

I believe the picture of the Day of Atonement is a picture of Israel’s national repentance., that they receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior, the atonement that is only found in Him! The picture does fit perfectly. You can read of this in Luke 13:34-35. Here we see Jesus lamenting over Jerusalem for He sees the power of Rome coming down and destroying her and her only hope is Jesus, whom they have rejected.