

Leviticus Chapter 23

- In Matthew 16 the religious leaders came to Jesus, tempting Him, they wanted Jesus to show them a sign from Heaven.
 - Jesus responded that when the sky is red in the evening, it will be fair weather but if it's a red sky in the morning it will be foul weather today.
 - Jesus scolded them, calling them hypocrites because they could discern the weather, but they didn't know the signs of the times – which all pointed to Him.
 - Living in these last days we too need to discern the signs of the times which are interwoven with the feasts of Israel, which is the subject of this chapter.
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V: 1-2 Back to addressing the nation as opposed to just talking to the priests.

- The Lord speaks to Moses concerning the feasts of Israel; which is how we refer to them, God says that they are His feasts. "... My feasts..."
- These are holy days, from which we get our term holidays – which started out as holy days, but really aren't any longer. Holy days referred to as holy convocations.
- "Holy convocations": This phrase is used 19 times in the Bible, 11 of which are in this chapter.

Holy: (H6944) qodesh, ko'-desh; a sacred ; consecrated, dedicated, separated; hallowed, holiness. The word indicates something consecrated and set aside for sacred use only; it was not to be put into common use, for if it was, it became profaned and common, not holy.

Convocation: (H4744) miqra', mik-raw'; something called out, i.e. a public meeting or assembly, calling, convocation, reading, a calling together.

- The Sabbaths and the feasts are more than a day of rest to the people; these things turn the national consciousness towards the things of the Lord, centered upon God.
- We would be a different nation if that were so for us.
- At each of these feasts every adult male was required to stand before the Lord.
- Each of the feasts was intended to be a commemoration, but they each also created or illustrated an expectation; a prophetic illustration.
- 7 feasts are listed, 4 take place in the spring and summer. The last 3 take place in the fall. Prophetically 4 have been fulfilled and we're waiting on the last 3.

Luke 21:28 “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

V: 3 The Sabbath day is a holy convocation; 6 days to work, the 7th belongs to the Lord.

- We know that the Law has its fulfillment in Jesus.

Jesus Himself said:

Matthew 5:17 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

- Jesus is the fulfillment of our Sabbath day if we have entered into that rest as it says:

Hebrews 4:9-11 ⁹“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. ¹⁰For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. ¹¹Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

- All the work and effort that we do to try to be accepted by our own righteousness before God is ended when we rest in His finished work, when we accept His righteousness; that is when we rest in Him, He is our Sabbath.

V: 4-5 Feasts, holy convocations, dedicated gatherings:

- 1st is the Passover:
- This commemorates the “Passover” when the Lord went throughout the land of Egypt and slew all the firstborn of men and cattle except for those whose household was covered in the blood of the Passover Lamb.
- This is what led to their deliverance from Egypt.
- This points to our deliverer; our Passover Lamb.

Jesus is the Passover Lamb:

John 1:29 “... behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

1 Corinthians 5:7 “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:”

V: 6-8 Feast of unleavened bread.

- No servile work, no ordinary work is to be done, but an offering is to be made unto the Lord for seven days.
- They were to partake of un-leavened bread, no leaven was to be found in their homes.
- Leaven is always analogous to sin, and the Apostle Paul understood this:

1 Corinthians 5:8 “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

- The fulfillment of this feast is found in Jesus.

Jesus said:

John 8:35 “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

- As God, Jesus was holy; as a man He was holy because He had no sin, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and thus had no sin nature as we do.
- Jesus had no leaven, no sin in His life.

2 Corinthians 5:21 “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.”

1. Jesus would later take bread and breaking it said to His disciples:
2. “Take, eat. This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”
3. They used to do it in remembrance of the lamb that was slain in Egypt.
4. Now, we’re to remember the lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world.
5. Jesus took the cup and said, “this cup is a new covenant”, the old covenant was with the blood of the lamb on the door posts, that saved the sons from death.
6. Jesus says this new covenant is in My blood, and it is shed for the remission of sins.
7. The Passover was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

V: 9-11 First fruits as a wave offering.

- They were to bring a sheaf or handful of the very first fruits; the first fruits always belong to God.

Proverbs 3:9 “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.”

- It is a way of expressing our understanding of where all these things have come from:

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

- 1st harvest then the 2nd harvest:

Jesus is the first fruits of all things:

1 Corinthians 15:20 “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.”

Colossians 1:18 “And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.”

V: 12 At the same time as the wave offering of the first fruits, a burnt offering (consecration) of a lamb without blemish of the first year.

V: 13 Along with that, a meat offering (meal offering of grain or bread).

- And a drink offering, 3 pints of wine; poured out upon the altar to the Lord.
- Coming after the burnt offering, spoke of the nation’s dedication to God. Now the meat / meal offering and drink offerings were reminders of God provision, based on two staples in their diet, bread and wine.

Psalms 104:14-15 “¹⁴He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that He may bring forth food out of the earth; ¹⁵and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man’s heart.”

- This also points to the One who is broken bread and poured out wine: Jesus.

V: 14 During this time, no bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears; until the offering. In other words God gets His portion first, then the people may partake, but not until God has.

V: 15-16 The feast of “Pentecost”. 7 sabbaths, 49 days, then the next morning, 1 more day = 50 days.

- The church was born on Pentecost. The disciples were gathered in one place and the Holy Spirit descended upon them as tongues of fire, they each began to speak in different languages, and Peter gave a sermon – and about 3,000 got saved that day.
- God began to reap a harvest from that time forward.

V: 17 Two loaves of bread baked with leaven.

- At Pentecost both Jews & Gentiles came together in the Spirit, and the church was born. Jews & Gentiles, both sinners saved by grace, comprising the church.

C.H. Mackintosh: *“blessed be God, the evil which was divinely recognized was divinely provided for.”*

Ephesians 5:27 “That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

- The church won’t be without sin, spot, or wrinkle until Jesus comes to get us.

V: 18-19 Somehow connected to Pentecost and the birth of the church:

1. Burnt offerings – consecration, sanctification.
2. Meat offerings – thanks giving.
3. Drink offerings – life poured out in service to God.
4. Sin Offerings – forgiveness.
5. Peace Offerings – fellowship.

- Just as the nation of Israel was accepted by God through these sacrifices, so too would the church be accepted.

V: 22 Workfare for the poor. They weren’t to get all the corners of their fields nor glean after the first attempt at harvesting the crops – the remainder was left intentionally for the poor who could come and pick it for themselves thus putting food on their tables. (A picture of God’s grace.)

2 Thessalonians 3:10 “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”

V: 23-25 On the first day of the 7th month, Tishri (September-October) the Feast of trumpets:

- The first 4 feasts: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost all followed one after another in the spring season.
- Then approximately 4 months later the final 3 feasts took place in the fall beginning with the feast of Trumpets.
- The first 4 feasts were related to the first advent of Christ, the last three are related to the 2nd coming of Jesus.

Numbers 10:2 “Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

- Moses is instructed to make two trumpets for two purposes: each related to calling the assembly.

Exodus 19:16 “And it came to pass on the 3rd day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.”

- The trumpet of God sounded loud when the Law was given.
- The trumpet of God will soon sound again:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 “¹⁶For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

- This particular feast takes place in the 7th month, the number of completeness.

Romans 11:25 “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”

V: 26-32 10th day of the 7th month, the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

- On this day the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies to atone for the sins of the nation.
- Following the feast of trumpets, Yom Kippur is a time of reflection and confession. At time to atone for sin.

- Symbolically, after the rapture of the church, God once again turns His attention to the nation of Israel.
- The event that follows the rapture is the great tribulation, or the time of Jacob's trouble.

This is when the children of Israel recognize their Messiah as Jesus:

Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

- During this time period 144,000 Jewish evangelists will be busy ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God will send two witnesses that will testify in Jerusalem, possibly Elijah and Moses, after they are killed and resurrected the anti-Christ will seek to be worshipped in the 3rd Temple and 2/3 of the Jews will be killed when they refuse.

V: 33-44 On the 15th day of Tishri, the feast of Tabernacles, booths, or Succoth.

- During this feast they were required to move out of their homes and to build little shanties to live in – it was a reminder of their being sojourners, pilgrims.
- They went from a temporary habitation to their permanent homes.

John 14:2-3 “²In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

1. During the feast of Tabernacles which lasted 7 days; there were 4 giant Menorah's in the Temple courtyard which when lit could be seen from a great distance. They were lit once a year specifically for this feast.
2. Each day a procession of priests would go down to the brook Kidron and using a silver or gold pitcher take up some water. Then they would proceed back up into the Temple where the people were gathered. They would pour out the water which symbolized God's provision for them when they were wandering in the wilderness.
3. On the 7th day, the great day the priests would go through the whole ritual, except that they would bring the pitcher back empty so that when they turned it over in front of the people, pouring it out, nothing came out.
4. This symbolized the fact that God stopped providing for His people this way once they came into the promise land.

5. That was exactly when Jesus stepped out in front of the crowd and stole the show. The priests are holding an empty pitcher – symbolically having nothing to offer when Jesus cries out in a loud voice:

John 7:37 “³⁷... if any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. ³⁸He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

- This is still true today, the world’s religions are still holding an empty pitcher, nothing to offer.
- Finally as the feast came to a close, the Menorah’s were extinguished until they would be re-lit the following year.
- As they were extinguishing the Menorah’s – Jesus once again stepped out and proclaimed:

John 8:12 “... I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”