

## Introduction to the Lord's Feasts (Leviticus 23)

Some things that we must observe before studying the feasts are:

- **There are 7 feasts.** Seven is the number for perfection or completeness. There are many things in the Bible that associated with seven: 7 days in week, 7 branches of candlestick, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 priests, 7 churches, 7 spirits, 7 stars, 7 years of tribulation.
- Feasts are centered around the agricultural cycle. This is a lesson that shows each feast is in a specific divine order just like the seasons and just like the seasons cycle around, so we should cycle through these feasts. God often uses natural events to explain the spiritual.

### Scripture

**Lev 23:1**        *The LORD said to Moses,*

**Lev 23:2**        *"Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.*

- **Notice that the Feasts belong to God.**

- Hebrew word for feast is "mo'ed". The definition of this word in Hebrew is appointment or set time.
- Some translations use "convocations" in place of "sacred assemblies". Convocation is another word for rehearsal.
- Read the scripture again using "set time" and "rehearsal" in place of "feast" and "convocation". God is announcing and setting up 7 appointments with man!
- If you are ready for your appointments you have set with other people (work, doctor, etc), why not be ready for the appointment God has set with you?

**Lev 23:4-5**        *" 'These are the LORD's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.*

- The first feast or appointment, Passover!
- Occurs on Nisan 14
- Note that this is a day when God is specifically going to do something
- God places each of the feasts in a specific order with a specific purpose
- This is the path that Israel took (and we must also take) in order to be in a right relationship with God.

**Lev 23:6**        *On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast.*

- The second feast or appointment, Unleavened Bread
- Occurs on Nisan 15, the day after Passover

**Lev 23:7-8**        *On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. For seven days present an offering made to the LORD by fire. And on the seventh day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.' "*

- This makes the feast of Unleavened Bread a special Sabbath

**Lev 23:9-11**        *The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. He is to wave the sheaf before the LORD so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.*

- The third feast or appointment, First Fruits

- Always happens on a Sunday

**Lev 23:15-17**        *" 'From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD. From wherever you live, bring two loaves made of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as a wave offering of firstfruits to the LORD.*

- The fourth feast or appointment, Pentecost or Weeks
- Occurs 50 days after First Fruits
- Note that two loaves of leaven are used

**Lev 23:22**        *" 'When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God.' "*

- This verse is not about a feast or appointment
- Sits conveniently between the first four feasts and the last three
- First four feasts represent the first coming of Christ; Last three feasts represent the second coming of Christ

- This verse is an instruction as to what the church should be doing between the first and second comings of Christ; Represents where we are today in relation to God's appointments

### **Historical Aspect**

- Each feast has an historical event that happens in the Bible
- This means specific things happened to Israel on these days
- When you link these historical events to the feasts you will learn the "hidden meaning" behind the event.
- **1 Cor 10:1-11 (The Message)** *Remember our history, friends, and be warned. All our ancestors were led by the providential Cloud and taken miraculously through the Sea. They went through the waters, in a baptism like ours, as Moses led them from enslaving death to salvation life. They all ate and drank identical food and drink, meals provided daily by God. They drank from the Rock, God's fountain for them that stayed with them wherever they were. And the Rock was Christ. But just experiencing God's wonder and grace didn't seem to mean much—most of them were defeated by temptation during the hard times in the desert, and God was not pleased.*

*The same thing could happen to us. We must be on guard so that we never get caught up in wanting our own way as they did. And we must not turn our religion into a circus as they did—"First the people partied, then they threw a dance." We must not be sexually promiscuous—they paid for that, remember, with 23,000 deaths in one day! We must never try to get Christ to serve us instead of us serving him; they tried it, and God launched an epidemic of poisonous snakes. We must be careful not to stir up discontent; discontent destroyed them.*

*These are all warning markers—danger!—in our history books, written down so that we don't repeat their mistakes.*

### **Messianic Aspect**

- Demonstrate how Christ fulfilled each of the first four feasts on the exact day and hour as outlined

### **Spiritual Aspect**

- Spiritual meaning and application for each feast
- What we have to do (rehearse) in order to draw closer to God
- Example: You can't even have a starting relationship with God unless you have personally celebrated (rehearsed) Passover in your heart

## Passover (Exodus 12)

Passover is the first of the seven Feasts of the Lord and is celebrated on Nisan 14. It is the first feast because it represents the first step that is needed in order to have a relationship with God and it tells us how God will redeem mankind.

When going through Exodus 12 remember:

- Egypt represents a place of sin and bondage
- Pharaoh represents a type of Satan
- Moses represents a type of Christ
- Leaven represents sin
- Hyssop represents faith

## Scripture

**Ex 12:1-2** *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year."*

- God changes the calendar
- First month was Tishrei (Tishrei 1 is the birthday of Adam)
- First month is now Nisan
- Israel gets a new birthday and is essentially born again

**Ex 12:3-6** *Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.*

- The lamb represents Christ
- The lamb is to be taken in on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month
- Christ entered Jerusalem 4 days before Passover (Matt 21:1-18; 26:1-5)
- The lamb is taken in on the 10<sup>th</sup> for observation to make sure it is without blemish

- Observed by Pilate (Matt 27:11-26)
- Judas (Matt 27:3-10)
- Herod (Luke 23:6-12)

Twilight or “In the evening” would be the 9<sup>th</sup> hour or around 3 pm on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Matt 27:45-50

**Ex 12:7** *Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.*

- Blood on the door would create an upside down “U” shape
- This is the Hebrew letter “chet” and is the symbol for life

**Ex 12:8** *'They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.*

- By following the Word of God and obeying the commandments of God with sincerity of heart, we eat (spiritually) of His body.
  - (a) Body must be eaten the same night the lamb was sacrificed
  - (b) It must be eaten with unleavened bread
  - (c) It must be eaten with bitter herbs
    - Bitter herbs represent 2 things
      - (1) Bondage and burdens we experience while living in this world
      - (2) Bitter thing that come into our lives as we attempt to follow Jesus on a daily basis

**Ex 12:11** *'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste--it is the LORD'S Passover.*

- The lamb must be eaten in haste
- We must be quick to leave Egypt (this world) and run toward Christ
  - Eaten with our loins girded (Luke 12:35-40; Eph 6:14)

- A staff must be in our hand (believers authority based on the Word Matt 28:18-20)

**Ex 12:12-14** *'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.*

- Why strike only the firstborn?
- Demonstrates the difference between knowledge of the lamb and application
- Do not get "passed over" in judgment until the blood is applied

	Exodus	Jesus
Nisan 10	Lamb brought into the house (Exodus 12:3)	Jesus enters Jerusalem, Palm Sunday (John 12:1-12) - 6 days before Passover Friday Nisan 8 – verse 1 - Supper – Sat Nisan 9 -verse 2 - Entry – Sun Nisan 10 – verse 12
Nisan 10-13	Inspected for blemish	Inspected four days - Matt 22 Sadducees, Pharisees, lawyer - John 18 – Chief Priest, Pilate
Nisan 14	Lamb slain at 3pm (Exodus 12:6) No bone broken – Exodus 12:46-48	Hung on cross at 9 am – Mark 15:25 - dies at 3pm – Matt 27:46-51 - No bone broken – John 19:31-37 - 1 Cor 5:7 – Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; John 1:29 - Compare Psalm 22 with Matthew 27:35-49
Nisan 15	Israel starts to leave Egypt (Exodus 12:29-39)	Buried on this day – John 19:31, 42
	Joseph's bones removed from tomb – Exodus 13:19	John 20, Jesus removed from Joseph's tomb. - Arimathea also known as Ramah; Joseph connected to Ramah through Rachel, Jer 31:15
Nisan 16	Israel flees Pharaoh	Led captivity captive – Ephesians 4:7-10

Nisan 17	Cross Red Sea	Christ resurrected John 20:1
Sivan	50 days later – Pentecost, Exodus 19:1, 10-11	Acts 2:1 Pentecost

## Unleavened Bread

### Review

- The Lord's Feasts come from Leviticus 23
- The Lord's Feasts are also known as the Lord's Appointed Times
- God is essentially saying that on each one of these specific days and times, He is going to meet with us,
- First example is the first Feast – Passover
- In Exodus 12:6. The lamb is sacrificed at twilight. Twilight is considered the 9<sup>th</sup> hour or around 3 pm
- Matthew 27:45-50 Jesus dies at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour on Passover
- By this example we know that God intends to keep His promise of meeting with us with each additional Feast.
- On this day (The Feast of Unleavened Bread, 15 Nisan on the Jewish calendar), two specific things have happened
  - 1) All of Israel left Egypt Ex 12:17
  - 2) The burial of Jesus (1<sup>st</sup> day in the ground) [*Read Deut 21:22-23 and John 19:31*]
- Believers are the "house" [*read Hebrews 3:6; 1Peter 2:5*]
- By the Holy Spirit (Feather) and the Word of God (Candle) our sin (Leaven) is revealed to us and placed upon the cross (Wooden Spoon). The contents are wrapped in linen and then cast out as Jesus was.

### Feast of Early First Fruits

Tell the story of Joseph of Rama

- "The Story of Joseph of Rama" When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, Moses took the remains of Joseph with them (Ex 13:19). Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, and he



lived in Egypt for the rest of his life. The area he lived in was called Rama, so he was known as Joseph of Rama. When the word "Rama" is transliterated from Hebrew into Aramaic (the language Jesus spoke), it becomes "Arimathea."

So...the only thing the Israelites left behind in Egypt when God set them free from slavery was the empty tomb of Joseph of Rama -- or Joseph of Arimathea. And...the only thing Jesus left behind on earth when he freed the world from bondage to sin & the Law was the tomb He borrowed from Joseph of Arimathea.

### **How the feast is celebrated**

- Read **Lev 23:9-14**
- A sheaf is also called an omer which can be translated as "a tenth of something" or Tithe

### **Symbolism**

- In the Bible a sheaf usually represents a person
- First Fruit implies that more fruit is to come. If there is a 1<sup>st</sup>, then there is a promise that a 2<sup>nd</sup>, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> should follow.

### **Understanding and Application**

- Read **Psalms 126:5-6**
- Bring the best of what you have to the Lord. The First Fruits are always the choicest, the foremost, the first, the best, and the preeminent of all that was to follow. Think of Christ and how He is God's First Fruit to rise from the dead.
- The First Fruit also redeems the firstborn (**Exodus 13:15 and Exodus 34:19-20**)
- We have been redeemed through Christ (**James 1:17-18**)