

Feasts of the Lord

From a New Testament Perspective

"Now all these things happened to them (Israel) as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come" 1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV). (See also 2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 15:4; John 5:39; Matthew 5:17).

Just as Jesus taught by parables (a natural story with a spiritual meaning), so God has made all that happened to Israel in the Old Testament like a large parable to teach us spiritual truths. The New Testament interprets and fulfills all that is spoken of in the Old Testament.

Symbol of the Feasts

"Blessed – happy, fortunate (to be envied) – are the people who know the joyful sound (who understand and appreciate the spiritual blessings symbolised by the feasts); they shall walk, O Lord, in the light and favour of your countenance" Psalm 89:15 (Amp) Read Leviticus 23:4-44; Numbers 28:16-31; chapter 29; Deuteronomy 16:1-17 Two Hebrew words are translated "Feast"

- "Mo-ed" - "a set time or assembly"
- "Hag" - "to dance"

All Israel's worship revolved around three feasts, or festivals. So too, there are three distinct spiritual experiences for the Church. The Feasts find their fullest expression and completion in Christ and His Church. They prefigure and typify the whole Church age beginning with the Cross and consummating in the Last Day display of God's power and glory through His Body.

Israel was told to "proclaim (the feasts) at their appointed times" (Leviticus 23:4).

Three Fold Aspect

Historical Each Feast spoke of what God HAS DONE. In the celebration of the Feasts each year, Israel was remembering actual events of God's intervention in their history.

Prophetical Each Feast spoke of what God WAS GOING TO DO. Each pre-pictured what God was going to do through Christ.

Experiential Each Feast pictures what God was going to do IN US – the individual believer in Christ.

4-Fold Application

The Feasts have a four-fold application. They apply to ...

- Israel
- The life of Jesus
- The Church
- Each Believer

Two of the three annual Feasts of Israel have already been fulfilled in Christ and His Church. We are living in the exciting day of the fulfillment of the third.

Historical	Egypt	Sinai	Wilderness	Cannan
(Events in Israel's history remembered and celebrated annually)	1st Month Passover Passover.....14th Unleavened Bread...15th Sheaf of First Fruits..17/18th	3rd Month Pentecost Dated 50 days from Sheaf of 1st Fruits in Passover	4th - 5th - 6th Months	7th Month Tabernacles Trumpets.....1st Day of Atonement...10th Tabernacles.....15th
Prophetical (New Testament fulfillment)	Crucifixion and Resurrection (Matt 26-28; Mark 15-16; Luke 23-24; John 19-20)	Outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:8; 2:2-4)	Dark Ages	The Prophetic Voice (Isaiah 58:1) The Church clothed in the glory of God (John 17; Ephesians 4:13) The great ingathering of souls (Joel2; James 5:7)
	No leaven in Christ	Leaven in the Church		No leaven in the Church
	Spring Rains Barley Harvest	Wheat Harvest	Dry Months	Autumn Rains Fruit Harvest
Experiential (Fulfilled in each believer in Christ)	Salvation and Water Baptism	Baptism in Holy Spirit		Full maturity in Christ

Feasts of the Lord

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The Feast of Passover Every year Israel celebrated their deliverance, through Moses, out of slavery in Egypt (read Lev. 23:5-14; Deut. 16:1-8; Num. 9:1-14). It is a beautiful picture of our deliverance, through Christ, out of slavery to sin and Satan. Jesus is described as the Passover Lamb: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29.

Passover is a prophetic picture of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the Cross. Jesus was crucified on the *Day of Passover*. At the exact time that families all over Israel were slaying their Passover lamb, Jesus died on the Cross (Luke 22:1, 15-20).

"Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" 1 Corinthians 5:7.

The Historic Picture

Read Exodus 12:1-14; 21-51.

The First Month (v.2) Passover meant a new calendar for Israel. It spoke of a new beginning for them as they left the life of bondage they had known in Egypt. The Cross means a new beginning for the believer - a new covenant (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8:6-13) and a new birth (John 3:7).

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Lamb taken, kept 4 days (vs.3,6) Christ was foreordained to die.

"He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake" 1 Peter 1:20.

The lamb was kept 4 days. 2 Pet. 3:8 declares:

"With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day".

From Adam's sin to the Cross is 4000 years - 4 "days" of the Lord.

A Lamb for a House (v.3) "...Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved - you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.... then immediately he and all his family were baptised. The jailer was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God - he and his whole family" Acts 16:31-34.

A Lamb Without Blemish (v.5) "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" 1 Peter 1:18-19.

A Year-Old Male (v.5) "For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive" 1 Cor.15:21-22 (Rom.5:15).

All the People Kill Lamb (v.6) While the Jews were celebrating the natural feast - God was fulfilling it in reality. See John 19:14-15.

In the Evening (v.6) "At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?' - which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' ... With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last" Mark 15:33-37.

Blood Atonement (v.7) "In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" Hebrews 9:22.

Blood Sprinkled Door (v.7, 22) "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" John 10:9.

Blood Applied Personally (v.22) "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe ... God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood..." Rom.3:22-25 (Eph.2:8; Heb.11:28)

Inside the Door (v.22-23) Safety and protection from the "destroyer" was inside the door.

"... the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one does not touch him... And we are in him who is true - even in his Son Jesus Christ..." 1 John 5:18-20 (Col. 3:3).

Eat the Lamb's Flesh (v.8-10)

The flesh - the Body of the Lamb "Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me..." John 6:53-57.

Roast with Fire "... for our God is a consuming fire" Hebrews 12:29.

The Unleavened Bread "I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" John 6:48-51.

Eaten with Bitter Herbs Read Jeremiah's description of his experiences in Lamentations 3 and note verse 15. The bitter herbs eaten at Passover speak of the sufferings of the Cross.

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame..." Hebrews 12:2.

Not a Bone Broken (v.46)

"... The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.... These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken' ..." John 19:31-36.

Eaten in Haste, Ready to Depart (v.11) Here is true repentance in the believer pictured - leaving behind the old life, and entering into the new. " ... I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds" Acts 26:20 (Acts 3:19).

The Firstborn Judged (v.12) "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation ... For God was pleased...through him to reconcile to himself all things...by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross Col. 1:15-20 (Romans 8:29; Revelation 1:5).

The Enemy Plundered (v.35-36) "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" Colossians 2:15.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

Read Exodus 12:15-20; 31-39; 13:3-10.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread speaks of Christ, the sinless Son of God - the sustenance of spiritual and eternal Life for the believer. "I am the bread of life.... Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world ... he who feeds on this bread will live forever" John 6:48-58

Leaven's Significance

Leaven (yeast) works silently and steadily, gradually spreading its influence and power through the whole lump of dough until all is affected and permeated.

Symbolic in Scripture

With one exception (Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:20-21), every reference to leaven in Scripture speaks of that which is evil and corrupt in its influence. It is the symbol of sin, false doctrine and corrupt practices.

"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ... Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast - as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth" 1 Corinthians 5:1-8.

Scripture Examples

The Leaven of Herod "Be careful,' Jesus warned them. 'Watch out for the yeast of ... Herod" Mark 8:15. Read Mark 6:14-29. The leaven of Herod was *the love of the world* (1John 2:15).

The Leaven of the Sadducees "Be careful,' Jesus said to them. 'Be on your guard against the yeast of the ... Sadducees" Matthew 16:6. Read Matthew 16:1-4 and Acts 23:6-8. The leaven of the Sadducees was *unbelief in the supernatural*.

The Leaven of the Pharisees "... Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is *hypocrisy*" Luke 12:1 (Matt. 16:6; Mark 8:15).

The Leaven of Galatia "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace...that kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you.' A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough" Galatians 5:4-9. The leaven of Galatia was *legalism*.

The Leaven of Corinth "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you... Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?" 1 Corinthians 5:1-7. The leaven of Corinth was *immorality*.

Symbolic Feast

All Leaven to be Put Away See Exodus 12:15. The putting away of the leaven pictures the believer acting by faith in the work of Christ on the Cross and so experiencing the removal of sin and the works of the flesh and living accordingly.

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your mind; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness: Eph. 4:22-24 (read verses 17 to 32; Gal. 5:16-24; Col. 3:1-17).

No Leaven to be Eaten They were forbidden to eat leaven. Jesus warned His disciples, "Beware of the leaven..." In other words, be careful not to "feed" upon corrupting influences. Then they cannot be "digested" and become part of you.

7 Days to Eat Unleavened Bread The Feast lasted for seven days - from the 15th to the 21st. In the Word of God seven is the number of completion and perfection. It speaks of the Christian's complete and continual "feeding" upon Christ, the sinless One.

Keeping Free from Leaven

When the Children of Israel departed from Egypt they gathered up their dough before it was leavened. They did not have opportunity to leaven it. "With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves" Exodus 12:39.

So it is with the child of God. The Cross cleanses us and sets us free from "leaven" (sin). As we walk daily focused on the Lord sin has no time or opportunity to take hold in our lives.

"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil ... But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness" 1 Timothy 6:9-11.

The Bread of Healing Israel was healed as they fed upon the *flesh* of the slain lamb, and ate the *unleavened bread* inside the blood-sprinkled door. "He brought [Israel] forth also with silver and gold, and there was not one feeble person among their tribes" Psalm 105:37. Healing is the "children's bread" See Mark 7:24-30.

The Lord's Supper Jesus used the natural Feasts to explain and reveal their spiritual significance. On the eve of the Passover, when He Himself, was about to be slain as the true Passover lamb, the Lord gathered His disciples together and established "The Lord's Supper". He fulfilled the old and established the new. (1 Cor. 11:20-34).

"And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you: do this in remembrance of me'" Luke 22:19-20.

Sheaf of Firstfruits Read Leviticus 23:9-14. It was the beginning of the barley harvest. Before there was any general harvest, however, *one sheaf* was garnered and waved before the Lord on the day after the Sabbath, reminding Israel of the fact that soon a great harvest was to be gathered in. No bread or roasted grain was allowed to be eaten until this sheaf was presented to the Lord. It was also presented with specified offerings.

Christ, the Firstfruits The Sheaf of Firstfruits is typical and prophetic of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his Ascension to the Father, as the "firstfruits" of the coming resurrection of all the saints.

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep ... Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him" 1 Corinthians 15:20-23.

The Ceremony

Bring a Sheaf (v.10) This one sheaf represents the Lord Jesus Christ (note: Joseph, the type of the rejected beloved Son, dreams of the eleven sheaves bowing to his one sheaf - Genesis 37:5-11).

Of the Firstfruits (v.10) The firstfruits were always the choicest and the best. They were most holy to the Lord, sanctified, and presented always to God *first*. "And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy" Colossians 1:18.

Of Your Harvest (v.10) The one sheaf was *representative* of the whole harvest. "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers" Romans 8:29.

Just as the one ripe sheaf testified to Israel that a great harvest was soon to be reaped, so did the resurrection of Christ testify to the fact that soon after there would be a great spiritual harvest of souls.

Wave Sheaf before Lord (v.11) This was picturing Christ's resurrection, ascension and presentation in the Father's House (Exodus 23:19; John 20:11-17). When the priest, on the day of Christ's resurrection, waved the sheaf of firstfruits in the temple it was before a rent veil and was but an antiquated form. The empty tomb proclaimed that the great Firstfruit Sheaf had been reaped and waved in the Heavenly Temple.

To be Accepted for You (V.11) As the sheaf was accepted before Jehovah for Israel, and Israel was accepted of Jehovah in that sheaf; so Christ is accepted before God for us, and we are accepted of God in Christ.

"...to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved" Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV).

Day after the Sabbath (v.11) This was prophetic of Christ's resurrection on the first day of the week ... the day after the Sabbath. "On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!'" Luke 24:1-5 (Mark 16:1-6; Matthew 28:1-6; John 20: 1-9).

Offerings Presented with the Sheaf

A Lamb Without Blemish (v.12) Christ, the burnt offering His death.

Grain and Drink Offering (v.13) His Body and His Blood ... Luke 22:14-20. No bread, or roasted or new grain was to be eaten until after the sheaf was presented to the Lord (v.14). We enjoy the full benefits of His finished work and sacrifice *after* His resurrection and ascension to be seated at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:17-2:10; Mark 16:19-20).

The Week of the Crucifixion

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" Matthew 12:40

Evening to Evening

Sunday	10th	Lamb taken.....	Jesus enters Jerusalem
Monday	11th	and	

Tuesday	12th	kept	
Wednesday	13th	four days	
Thursday	14th	Lamb slain..... Jesus dies 3:00 p.m. (Mark 15:33-37) "Day of Preparation" (Luke 23:52-54; John 19:31)	Crucifixion 1st day 1st night
Friday	15th	Feast of Unleavened Bread Holy Convocation, Sabbath, "High Day" (Luke 23:52-54; John 19:31)	2nd day 2nd night
Saturday	16th	Weekly Sabbath	3rd day 3rd night
Sunday	17th	1st day of the week..... Sheaf waved on the day after the Sabbath (Mark 8:31)	Resurrection Around the time of dawn on Sunday ... the first day of the week. (John 20:1)

Feast of Pentecost The Feast of Pentecost pre-pictures the glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the formation of the Church, the Body of Christ.

Different Names

"Feast of Weeks" Exodus 34:22; Deut. 16:10,16; 2 Chron. 8:13. It was called this because it was celebrated seven complete weeks or 50 days, counted from the waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits at the end of Passover. Thus Passover and Pentecosts are linked together.

"Pentecost" Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8. It was called this only in the New Testament. Pentecost is the Greek word meaning "50" (Acts 1:3-5; 2:1). From the Resurrection (the waving of the Sheaf of Firstfruits) Jesus appeared for 40 days + 10 days waiting = 50 days to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Day of Pentecost). Just as with Passover, so now with Pentecost, at the exact time the Jews were celebrating the natural Feast, God was fulfilling it in reality.

"Feast of Harvest" Exodus 23:16. The Spring rains had fallen during Passover, ripening the harvest. This was now the conclusion of the barley harvest begun after Passover, and the beginning of the wheat harvest. There was a great "harvest" of Jew and Gentile under the Early Church (Acts 4:4; 5:14).

"Day of First-Fruits" Numbers 28:26; Exodus 34:22 The first loaves from the new grain were offered (Leviticus 23:17). The Early Church were the first-fruits of the great harvest which was to follow; and the Holy Spirit, indwelling the believer, is the "firstfruits" of that which is to come (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:13-14; James 1:18).

Mt Sinai In the life of Israel, the historical event celebrated in the Feast of Pentecost took place at Mt Sinai, in the 3rd month after they had left Egypt (Ex. 19:1).

God's Purpose

For Israel.....Exodus 19:5-6

For the Church.....1 Peter 2:1-9

Three Important Happenings

- **Power of God Revealed** *Sinai* - fire, darkness, trumpet voice, quaking, thunders, lightnings (Exodus 19:16-19; Hebrews 12:18-21; Deut. 4:33,36). *Pentecost* - wind, fire, tongues and later, shaking (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 4:31).

- **Law of God Given** *Sinai* - written by the Finger of God on tablets of stone. The ministration of death - 3000 slain (Exodus 32:28). *Pentecost* - written by the Spirit of God on fleshly tablets of the heart (Luke 11:20). The ministration of life - 3000 live (Acts 2:41; 2 Corinthians 3:3-18).

- **Pattern of the Tabernacle Given** Exodus 25-31; 35-40. The Tabernacle is a picture of the Heavenly on earth - prophetic of the Church (Hebrews 8:1-5; Exodus 24:8; Hebrews 9:11-28).

The Annual Ceremony

Read Leviticus 23:15-22. Each part of the Feast pictures the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer (John 16:7-15).

New Meal Offering (v.16) A *new* experience, different from Passover, although linked (Acts 19:2; 8:5-17).

Two Loaves (v.17) The two loaves speak of the Jew and Gentile now one in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22)

Baked with Leaven (v.17) There was no leaven in Passover - no sin or works of the flesh in Christ. But sin can still be a reality in the Church (1 Cor. 5:7-8). The one time in Scripture where leaven is used to picture a positive force is when the Lord Jesus used it in relation to the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 13:33) which He had come to proclaim (Matthew 4:17). The leaven in the loaves in Pentecost picture the outworking in the life of the believer of the finished work of Christ. Paul describes this effect of Christ's work of the Cross clearly in Romans 7:22-8:4 - the old leaven (the "law of sin and death") is replaced with a new leaven ("the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus").

"...For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin. Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Paul goes on to exhort us as believers to take hold of what Christ has done so that it be a living reality in our lives (Rom. 8:5-14; 1 Cor.5:7-8). Prior to the work of the Cross we were enslaved to the old sinful self. After the Cross we are free to choose to be slaves to righteousness because of the Spirit of life now indwelling us (Romans 6).

The loaves were "baked" and offered together with burnt offerings - "an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord" (v.18). The Holy Spirit is sent like "fire" (Luke 3:16). He is given to give us *wisdom* and *revelation* in what Christ has done (Eph. 1:17); to *intercede* for us to bring us to the fullness of all Christ has accomplished (Rom. 8:26); to *search* the deep things of God for us (1 Cor. 2:7-10); and to *change* us from glory to glory into His image (2 Cor. 3:18). He has been sent to make real to us all that Jesus has done (John 16:13-14).

Fine Flour (v.17) The grain had to be ground down to a fine flour, speaking of the refining work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life through the trials of faith (1 Pet. 1:6-7; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:35-39).

Waved Before the Lord (v.18-20) The two loaves were waved before the Lord with burnt and sin sacrifices and peace offerings. The Church, composed of Jew and Gentile, is accepted of God and has peace with God through the merits of Christ's *perfect sacrifice* (Romans 5:1).

Day of Rest (v.21) The Holy Spirit is a free gift - not earned by our works (Acts 2:38).

Day of Rejoicing (Deut. 16:9-12) They brought freewill offerings to the Lord in proportion to His blessings upon them and rejoiced before the Lord together (Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-35).

Poor and Alien Blessed (v.22) The world reaps some benefits from the presence of the Holy Spirit in His Church.

The Dry Season

Literally in the Annual Feasts The spring rains fell during the Feast of Passover to ripen the grain. The barley harvest was reaped at Passover and the wheat harvest at Pentecost. Then followed the dry season before the fall of the Autumn rains at the Feast of Tabernacles, which ripened the fruit harvest (Deut. 11:10-17; Jer.5:24; Job 6:15-17).

Historically in Israel The children of Israel experienced Passover in Egypt, Pentecost at Sinai, and God desired them to experience Tabernacles in Canaan, the Promised land. But at Kadesh-Barnea, when the 10 spies brought an evil report of the land, they fell into sin and unbelief and desired to return to Egypt. It had taken them two years to get there and God caused them to wander in the wilderness for another 38 years, making 40 in all. "Kadesh" means "holiness" or "dedication" and "Barnea" means "inconstant". Holiness should have been a gateway to the Promised land but instead was a barrier. Its name was then changed to "En-Mishpat", which means "Fountain of Judgment" (Numbers 13:21-14:34).

Prophetically in the Church "Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth" Hosea 6:3 (Joel 2:23; Ps 72:6). The "spring rains" of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit fell at the time of the Early Church (Acts 2:13-21; Joel 2:28-32). The "dry season" and the "wilderness" followed as the Church gradually lost its glory and entered into the Dark Ages. Since the time of the Reformation, the "Spring Rains" have been falling restoring the truths, pictured in the Feasts of Passover and Pentecost, that had been lost to the Church. As we enter into the time of the prophetic fulfilment of the Feast of Tabernacles in these last days, the Church will experience the outpouring of the "Autumn Rains" (Joel 2:23; James 5:7; John 4:35).

God's Glorious Plan

From before the creation, God has had a wonderful plan for His Church to be:

- Radiant (Ephesians 5:26)
- Holy (Ephesians 5:25,27)
- Blameless (Ephesians 5:27)
- Sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:2)
- Victorious (Matthew 16:18)
- Diverse (1 Corinthians 12:28)
- Mutually edifying (1 Corinthians 14:26)
- Growing up into Christ (Ephesians 2:21-22; 4:13)
- An extension of Christ's authority (Ephesians 1:21-22; 5:23-24)
- The pillar and foundation of truth (1 Timothy 3:15)
- The fullness of God expressed (Ephesians 1:23)

God's plan is still being outworked in the Church. Satan, in opposing the plan of God, seeks to undermine each of these aspects, crippling the Church and stripping her of her call and inheritance.

Overview of History

The history of the Church, in overview, can be divided into four stages:

A glorious birth Read Acts 4:31-35 (see also 2:1-4, 41-47).

The Church of God was birthed in the power of the Holy Spirit and had a dynamic impact on the community of that day.

A period of decline Satan began an immediate program of attack against God's Church, outworked on two levels - persecution and deception (2 Thessalonians 2:3). God pictures apostasy as like the work of a locust swam (Joel 1:4).

Even in the time of the first Century Church, errors began infiltrating the Body of Christ. Most of the epistles of the New Testament are letters of correction, readjusting doctrine and purging heretical concepts (read Revelation 2 and 3).

A period of restoration The decline of the Church as a whole reached rock bottom during the Dark Ages, where the Church was hardly recognisable as the same holy, dynamic company birthed by God on the Day of Pentecost. Even then, however, there were always true believers, lights shining in the darkness of apostasy. But then, God began to raise up people of God - the "Lights of the Reformation" - who rebuilt, layer by layer, the foundations of the Church. We are now at the finishing stages of this work of restoration. (Joel 2:25).

A glorious finale Read Romans 8:18-23. At the time of Christ's return, "the mystery of God will be accomplished" (Revelation 10:7), and God will bring His plan for the Church to its climax.

Restoration of Truth "Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of *repentance* from acts that lead to death, and of *faith in God*, instruction about *baptisms*, the *laying on of hands*, the *resurrection of the dead*, and *eternal judgement*" Hebrews 6:1-2.

These six elements are the foundation of Christian doctrine - but they are more than just things that we learn about. Everything the Bible teaches is not just facts but also *experience*. The early Christians experienced each of these truths in their daily lives - repentance (Acts 2:38); faith (Acts 3:16; 26:18); baptisms (Acts 2:41; 1:5); laying on of hands (Acts 8:18-19; 13:2-3); resurrection of the dead (Acts 9:36-40; 14:19-20); and eternal judgement (Acts 5:1-16; 10:42; 17:31).

God began to restore the essential truths of the Gospel, and their accompanying outworking in the daily life of the Church, in the order they were lost:

AD 1517 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH...Martin Luther

AD 1524 WATER BAPTISM...Mennonites

AD 1738 SANCTIFICATION... John Wesley

AD 1860 MISSIONARY VISION... CT Studd & others.

AD 1902 BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT...Azusa Street

AD 1948 THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

AD 1960-THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL.

AD 1980-PURGING AND PURIFICATION of the Church

AD 1990-NEW WINESKINS for new wine (Matt 9:17)

AD ? ---- RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL JUDGEMENT

"Therefore, tell the people: This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declares the Lord Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the Lord Almighty" Zechariah 1:3. There are two parts to the restoration process: repentance on our part and the actual act of restoration on the part of the Holy Spirit.

Double Portion

"Instead of their shame my people will receive a *double portion*, and instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance; and so they will inherit a *double portion* in their land, and everlasting joy will be theirs." Isaiah 61:7.

God does not simply restore what was lost - He always restores with a double portion! The early church is not our standard; Christ is! (Ephesians 4:13). God never finishes on a lesser note than on what He began (Haggai 2:9). He always leaves the best until last (John 2:9-10). Like Elisha, the last day Church will have a double anointing of the Holy Spirit (2 Kings 2:9), so that God's glory will fill this earth (Numbers 14:21). See Proverbs 4:18.

Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets marked the New Year in Israel's Civil (agricultural) calendar (the 7th month of the year begun by the Lord at Passover - Exodus 12:2). Read Leviticus 23:23-25; Numbers 29:1-6.

A Prophetic Voice

The trumpets are a prophetic voice! They are God speaking to His people through His messengers.

"Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people..." Isaiah 58:1 (Isaiah 18:3).

On the 1st day of the 7th month trumpet blasts sounded from the Temple calling all Israel to gather. It was a call to...

Repent The distinctive message of the Feast of Trumpets was the call to get hearts and lives right with God - God is calling His people today in the same way. "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord" Acts 3:19.

Awake The Feast of Trumpets was known as "The Day of the Awakening Blast". So the call has come to the Church in these last days to "*awake*"!

"And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed" Romans 13:11 (1 Corinthians 15:34; Ephesians 5:14).

Three specific calls to Israel to "awake" in Isaiah 51:9-52:12 have strong significance for the Church today.

- "Awake, as in days gone by...." (51:9) God desires to restore to the Church the strength and joy of the New Testament Church.

- "Awake, awake! Rise up..." (51:17) The Lord wants to restore to the Church her power and victory over the Enemy.
- "Awake, awake ... put on your garments of splendour..." (52:1) God desires to restore the Church's beautiful "clothing" - her salvation, righteousness, joy, praise and zeal (Isaiah 61:3, 10; 59:17)

Prepare In 10 days would be the Day of Atonement - the day of national cleansing, the highlight of Israel's year. The trumpets' call was to prepare. We will see in the next lesson the awesome significance of this to the Church today.

Two Kinds of Trumpets

Two kinds of trumpets were used on the day of the Feast of Trumpets.

The Shofar - The Ram's Horn This was the primary trumpet used. For Israel this was a reminder of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac and God's provision of a ram as a substitute (Genesis 22:13). In the fulfilment of the Feast of Trumpets in the Church, with the call to repentance, comes the reminder of the central factor of the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross as a substitute for us.

The Silver Trumpets Read Numbers 10:1-10. Two silver trumpets were made from one piece of silver. Two speaks of *witness* (2 Cor. 13:1; Rev. 11:3); silver speaks of *atonement* (1 Peter 1:18) - the fullness of redemption proclaimed.

Task of the 5-Fold Ministry The trumpets were to be blown by Aaron and his four sons (v.8; Exodus 28:1) picturing the task of the five-fold ministry in Ephesians 4:11-13:

"It was he (Jesus) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ".

Distinctive messages to be sounded

- **Calling of the Assembly** (v.2) The gathering together of all the tribes as one at the door of the Tabernacle / Temple (Psalm 50:5; John 17).

- **Calling of Leaders** (v.4) The heads of the thousands gathered to Moses (Christ). One trumpet to sound for the leaders (Revelation 1:9-20). Two trumpets to sound for the people (Revelation 2-3). God's method is to go to the leaders first (Amos 3:6-7; Ezekiel 34).

- **Journeying of the Camps** (v.2,5,6) Read Numbers 9:15-23. When the cloud moved, the Trumpets must blow an alarm, and the people must move (Joel 2:1).

- **Warning of Enemy Attack** (v.9) "Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8 (Ezekiel 33:1-7; Ephesians 6:10-18).

- **Celebration of the Feasts** (v.9) The trumpets blew to announce the beginning of all the festivals (Leviticus 23:4); at the time of the restoration of His Presence with His people (1 Chronicles 15:24-29); and as an expression of worship and praise (Psalm 150:3). "God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets" Psalm 47:5.

We Must Take Heed "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches..." Revelation 2:7 (2:11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).

- Take heed *what* you hear - the material. "Consider carefully what you hear..." Mark 4:23-24.

- Take heed *how* you hear - the attitude of listening. "Therefore consider carefully how you listen..." Luke 8:18.

Many Christians are waiting for the last trumpet to sound, but we must hear the others first.

Other Prophetic Pictures

- The 120 Trumpeters in the dedication of Solomon's Temple in the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Chronicles 5). The true dedication of the Church at the end of the age.

- The 7 Priests ... 7 trumpets ... at the fall of Jericho (Joshua 6; Revelation 11:15).

- The opening of the Book in the Feast of Trumpets (Deut. 31:9-13; Ezra 3; Neh. 8; Rev. 4,5; Isaiah 29:11-12).

- The Day of the Lord... the Second Coming (Zephaniah 1:14-18; Matthew 24:31; 1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16).

- The Anointing of the King of Kings (1 Kings 1:32-40; 2 Kings 9:11-13).

Day of Atonement

Read Leviticus 23:26-32. This was the most solemn, and yet the greatest day in the life of the nation of Israel. It was the day of the cleansing of all sin for the priesthood, the sanctuary, and the whole nation. On this day alone, once a year, the high priest entered, through the veil, into the Holy of Holies in the temple where God presenced Himself in all His glory.

It is prophetic of the cleansing of the Church, the Body of Christ, and its coming to the fullness of the glorious expression God has planned for it on earth prior to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

The Perfect Day

"But the path of the uncompromisingly just *and* righteousness is like the light of dawn, that shines more and more - brighter and clearer - until [it reaches its full strength and glory in] the perfect (to-be-prepared) day" Proverbs 4:18 (Amp.V.).

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" 2 Corinthians 3:18 (1 Peter 2:2; Heb. 5:13 - 6:2).

On the Day of Atonement the full manifestation of the finished work of the Cross and the Resurrection will be seen on earth in the Church, His Body.

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" Ephesians 4:11-13 (read through to verse 16; Romans 8:18-30; John 17; Ephesians 5:25-32).

The Ceremony Read Leviticus 16.

Deny Yourself (v. 29-31) The Day of Atonement took place on the 10th day of the 7th month. The distinctive message of the Feast of Trumpets, blown on the 1st day of the month, was the call to all Israel to prepare for the day of national cleansing... 10 days of preparation. The number ten in Scripture signifies trial and testing (Daniel 1:11-15; Rev 2:10; the 10 commandments; 10 trials in the wilderness the disciples wait 10 days for the Holy Spirit).

The 10 days of preparation (repentance) climaxed in the Day itself, a day set aside as a day of national fasting (Numbers 29:7) and so became known as "the Fast" (Acts 27:9). The interval of time between Trumpets and the Day of Atonement speaks of great trial and sifting for God's people (Isaiah 58; Joel 2; 1 Peter 1:3-7; 4:12-19).

Day of Rest (v.31) No manner of work was to be done. The High Priest did all the work. Our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus, has done all the work. We rest in faith in His finished work (Hebrews 4:14-5:10; 6:19-10:25). "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Phil. 1:6.

The Two Goats (v.5-10, 15)

- The Lord's Goat Dies to reconcile. Its blood is shed for the people, then taken within the veil and sprinkled before the Mercy Seat (Ephesians 1:7).

- The Scapegoat The Hebrew word "azazel", translated "scapegoat", literally means "an entire removal". At the laying on of hands *all* Israel's sin was confessed upon the scapegoat. It was then taken into a land not inhabited (literally - a land of separation) and left in the wilderness.

Blood Sprinkled 7 Times (v.14) Throughout scripture the number 7 speaks of perfection. Here it speaks of the perfect atonement through the Blood of Christ. All the Feasts of the Lord are founded on blood sacrifices. Christ's once-for-all sacrifice is the foundation for all the Feasts in the Church. The Day of Atonement is the fullest power of that blood manifest in the Church to cleanse *all* sin, *all* iniquity and *all* sins of ignorance (v.30).

Cleansing of the Sanctuary The Tabernacle and the Temple were once God's Sanctuary and the great Day of Atonement was its cleansing. The Church is now God's Temple and Sanctuary (Acts 7:48; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16) and the great Day of its cleansing is coming.

The Golden Censer (v.12-13) Although considered part of the Holiest of all, the altar of incense was situated just before the veil (Hebrews 9:2-4). On the Day of Atonement the High Priest would take the Golden Censer off the altar of incense and take it through with him into the presence of God. As the prophetic fulfilment of the Day of Atonement approaches God is going to pour upon the Church prayer and intercession.

"... another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth..." Revelation 8:1-6.

It will be the answer to the prayer of Jesus....

" ... I pray ... that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" John 17:20-23 (Hebrews 7:25; Rom 8:26-27).

Face to Face (v.2) The Day of Atonement was the only day in the year that the Holiest of All, containing the shekinah glory of God, was entered (Heb. 9:7-9; 6:19-20). The High Priest, representing the whole nation, came "face to face" with God.

The veil (curtain) that hung before the Holiest of All represented everything that separated sinful mankind from a holy, righteous God. On the Cross, Jesus hung between Heaven and earth as the veil (Hebrews 10:19-20). At the exact moment of His death, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom (Matt. 27:50-51). The way was open! Through the Cross we now have free access into the Presence of God in the fullness of His glory. The Day of Atonement pre-pictures the Church entering into the full outworking of all that Christ has accomplished.

"For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears... Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see *face to face*. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" 1 Corinthians 13:9-12.

Feast of Tabernacles

Year of Jubilee Read Leviticus 25:8-17. Every 50th year was a Jubilee year (literally "shouting"). The trumpet, blown on the Day of Atonement, sounded throughout the land proclaiming the year of Jubilee. It was a year of liberty, freedom from debt, release of prisoners, reuniting of families, lifting of oppressions, setting free of slaves, restoring of lands and properties.

The 120th Jubilee is at hand (120 x 50 = 6000 years since Adam). The number 120 in the Scripture speaks of "the end of all flesh" (Genesis 6:3; 2 Chron.5:12-14; Acts 1:15; 2:4).

The Day of Atonement in the Church is also the fulfillment of the Year of Jubilee and begins the greatest ministry prior to the 2nd Coming of Christ (Hab.2:14; Isaiah 35; 40:5).

Feast of Tabernacles

Lev.23:33-44; Deut.16:13-17; Num.29:12-35. The Feast of Tabernacles began on the 15th day of the 7th month, and lasted until the 21st, with the 22nd an additional Sabbath. It is the consummation of all the Feasts of the Lord. It pictures the final ingathering of souls in the end of the age.

The Ceremony

- 15th (1st day of the Feast)...close of the fruit harvest (Lev.23:39).
- 15th...gathering of palm fronds, willows and leafy branches to build booths (v.39).
- 15th and 22nd...days of rest (v.39).
- Burnt offerings, sacrifices for 7 days (v.36-37).
- Rejoicing for 7 days (v.40).
- Dwelling in booths for 7 days (v.42).

Following the Day of Atonement the harvest of the grape and olive took place and with it a transition from the somber mood of "The Fast" to a holiday of great rejoicing and celebration. For this the people were told to build booths out of branches and palm leaves and live in them during the festival. Historically this was commemorating them living in "tabernacles", and God "tabernacling" with them (Ex.25:8), during the journey to the Promised Land. It was also celebrating the ingathering of the fruit.

Significance of the Number 7 The Feast of Tabernacles is the 7th feast. For 7 days 70 bullocks, 14 rams, 98 lambs and 7 goats were offered...numbers, both in groups and collectively, all divisible by 7. The number 7 (perfect completion, rest - Genesis 1:31-2:3) is impressed upon this final feast.

Character of the Feast

Festival of Rest The Feast lasted for 7 days in the 7th month...the number of rest and perfection (Hebrews 4:9).

Festival of Unity See Ezra 3:1-4. Everything in this final Feast is a corporate experience and is pre-picturing the effect of the Body of Christ in unity!

Festival of Dedication It is also known as the Feast of Dedication because Solomon dedicated the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles (2 Chron.6:2-7:10). It speaks of the dedication of the Church in the last days and the glory of the Lord filling it (Ephesians 2:21-22)

Festival of Joy There was great rejoicing in this Feast (Deut.16:13-14; Neh.8:9-17; Psalm 126). To express the joy the Lord had commanded, Israel added something to the celebration - the water pouring ceremony. This outpouring of water developed into an outpouring of intense, and sometimes riotous, joy. It was during this time that Jesus made a prophetic declaration: "Now on the final and most important day of the feast (note verse 2), Jesus stood forth and He cried in a loud voice, If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink! He who believes in Me...Out from his innermost being springs and rivers of living water shall flow (continuously). But He was speaking here of the Spirit, Whom those who believed - trusted, had faith - in Him were afterward to receive. For the (Holy) Spirit had not yet been given; because Jesus was not yet glorified (raised to honour)" John 7:37-39 (Amp.). The Lord used the water-pouring to picture the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon, and the outflowing from, the believer. It was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost but also speaks of the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in the last day Church (Isaiah 12).

Festival of Light Again, Israel had added to the celebrations of this Feast. By Jesus' day they would flood the Temple with light at the Feast of Tabernacles and the spiritual leaders of the people would hold bright torches and dance and sing praises to God well into the night and the city would be filled with light. So it became known as the festival of light. Jesus said "I am the light of the world" during the Feast of Tabernacles! (John 8:12; 7:2). The Church is now the Temple of God - the light of the world (Matt. 5:14).

Festival of Harvest Read Exodus 23:16;34:22. Following the fall of the Autumn rains, which bring the fruit (the grape and the olive) to full ripeness, comes the great and final harvest of the year - the harvest of their wine and oil.

• **The Autumn Rains** Rain speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival, restoration and refreshing (Hosea 6:1-3). Joel 2:23-32 foretells the outpouring of the Holy Spirit using, as a picture, the rainfalls that fell during the feasts. The Early Church experienced the "Spring Rains" of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-21). The last day Church will know not only the "Spring Rains" of Passover and Pentecost but will experience the outpouring of the "Autumn Rains" of the Holy Spirit, experiencing all that the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement and Feast of Tabernacles pre-pictures.

- **The Wine** The joy of the Lord, fullness of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:13-18; Ephesians 5:18).
- **The Oil** The anointing, empowering of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 89:20-29; 104:15).
- **The Great Ingathering** The Last Day Harvest...multitudes gathered into the Kingdom of God because of the revelation of His glory in and through the Church (Joel 3:14; Matt.13:30,39).

Festival of the Nations See Zechariah 14:16-18. The harvest in the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Church is a harvest of people - from every nation, tribe and language (Rev. 7:9-10).

The 8th Day

At the close of the 7 days another Sabbath was added...the 8th day (Numbers 29:35-40). 8 is the number of new beginnings (Gen.7:13; 1 Sam.16:10-13). The Feast of Tabernacles brings us right to the 2nd Coming of the Lord Jesus, and the resurrection

of the saints of all ages (1 Cor. 15:20-26; 1 Thess. 4:13-17). The Sabbath of the 8th day speaks of the Millennial Rest (Rev.20:2-7).

"...Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them..." Revelation 21:3 (NKJV).