

Series 8 Lesson 1: Leviticus 23 - God's Festal Calendar (Spring Feasts 1 – 4):
The OC types/shadows – The NC fulfilled redemptive work of Christ

The Feasts of Yahweh (YHWH):

We find all seven of these in chronological order in Leviticus 23. Let's look at that text:

- **The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations--My appointed times are these: (Lev. 23:1-2 (NASB))**

These are the Spring Feast and picture the Lord's First Coming. They are a type of His death paying for and removing sin, His resurrection and Pentecost.

- 1) Passover**
- 2) Unleavened Bread**
- 3) First Fruits**
- 4) Pentecost (Shavuot)**

These are the Fall Feast and picture the Lord's Second Coming. They picture judgment on the unfaithful Old Covenant (OC) wife, removal of the Old Heavens and Earth, and consummation of the New Heavens and Earth eternal New Covenant Kingdom in the blood and finished redemptive work of Christ. God would gather His faithful people and forever dwell with them.

- 5) Trumpets**
- 6) Day of Atonement**
- 7) Feast of Tabernacle (Booths)**

These feasts are clustered according to the rainy season in Israel. Passover, the Feast of Unleavened bread, First fruits, and Pentecost come under a period known as the latter rain. The latter rain brings forth the beginning of the harvest, it comes in the spring. Then you have a four month or 120 day dry season, which I believe represents the building of the Church (bride) between Pentecost and AD 70. This four month period represents the forty year second exodus (we will look into deeper when we study the latter feasts later in **Lesson 2**).

Then we have the former rain that occurs during the end time Feasts of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles. We will see that these feasts represent the fall of Jerusalem, the end of Old Covenant Israel, and the establishment of the New Heavens and Earth through the blood and complete redemptive work of Christ where God's tabernacle is now among men.

Hosea explains to us that the latter rain comes first, then the former rain:

- “Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.” (Hos. 6:3. NKJV)

These seven feasts of the YHWH represent and typify the sequence, the timing, and significance of the major events of the Lord’s redemptive process. They commence at Calvary, where Jesus voluntarily gave Himself for the sins of the world (Passover), and climax at the consummation of the Messianic Kingdom at the Lord's Second Coming.

These Seven Feasts depict the entire redemptive career of the Messiah. If you want to study redemption, you have to study the feasts.

These feasts are a study of typology. Biblical typology takes the unity of both covenants, and sees in the Old Covenant (OC) “types,” or “shadows,” or “pictures,” which prefigure something in the New Covenant (NC). These types can be people, places, objects, or events. Typological language in the OC is called a “type” and the counterpart → the reality or fulfillment is called the “antitype.” **A type always prefigures something future.**

These feasts are prophetic, as they were prophesying to Israel something that was to come in the future where God would send a Messiah to fully accomplish redemption.

As they were **rehearsing** these year after year, they were **seeing a picture of Yahweh and His completed redemptive picture**. These were similar in type to our wedding rehearsal. The rehearsal does not marry anyone, **they are supposed to prepare everyone for the actual wedding day.**

The typology and prophetic scriptures of the OT were all predictive of and fulfilled in Christ. (John 5:39-40, 46-47; Luke 24:25-27, 44; Acts 17:2-3, 18:28)

Colossians 2 gives us several examples of types/shadows and their fulfillments (anti-types). Let us look at this one relative to our study in Colossians 2:16-17:

- **Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day – things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.** (NASB)(See also Heb. 8:13)

The Greek word used of "festival" here is *heorte*, which is the normal word used for referring to the "Feasts of Yahweh." Colossians 2:17 indicates that the Feasts are shadows to teach us about the Messiah.

When we study the Feasts of Yahweh we are in reality studying the Messiah. **Each Feast is a prophetic picture of the Messiah:**

- **Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';** (Isaiah 46:10 NASB)

Each Feast is an announcement to the end. As you understand the Feasts you will begin to see God's prophetic timeline unfolding, and you will grow deeper in your knowledge of the Messiah. Our endeavors at studying the Feasts should not just leave us with academic knowledge; rather, it should leave us in awe of Yahweh who is forever praised!

Also notice from Colossians that the Feasts are a shadow of things to come. "To come" is from the Greek word *mello*. The Greek verb "mello" in the infinitive means: "to be about to"(see Thayer, Arndt & Gingrich, *New Englishman's Greek Concordance*).

So, at the time of Paul's writing of Colossians (circa AD 63), the Feasts were **still existing shadows**, but the realities were "about to" come (be fully consummated in Christ).

Most believers and most Bible teachers see the first four Feasts as being fulfilled in Christ's First Coming. But they are still looking for the fulfillment of the Fall Feasts in our future. But as mentioned, in Paul's day all the Feasts were **about to** become fully consummated/fulfilled:

- **For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.** (Heb. 10:1 NASB)

The Law was a shadow. The coming of Christ cast its shadow in the Tanakh (OT scriptures). The purpose of the Law of Moses is to give us a foreshadowing, a pre-figurement, of the person and work of Christ. The old sacrifices were a shadow, never the substance. Shadows aren't enough. You can't live in the shadow of a house; you need the actual house. Notice again that the "good things," the realities to which the shadows pointed, were "about to" come when Paul was writing in the 1st century.

Thomas Hartwell Horne explains in *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, a text that was standard reading for British divinity students:

- "A type, in its primary and literal meaning, simply denotes a rough draught, or less accurate model, from which a more perfect image is made; but in the sacred or theological sense of the term, a type may be defined to be a symbol of something future and distant, or an example prepared and evidently designed by God to prefigure that future thing. What is thus prefigured is called the antitype."

I believe The Seven Annual Feasts, or holy days of God given to Old Covenant Israel, which take place in the first seven months of their agricultural year, were all fulfilled both prophetically, spiritually and in reality in the period from the death of Jesus to the fall of Jerusalem; which equates with the return of Jesus, the end of the Jewish age, and the consummation of the New Heavens and Earth world order and one eternal Kingdom of God in AD 70.

The Feasts have to be viewed in their strategic order from Passover through Tabernacles. The Feasts actually convey two forty year exodus periods. The first exodus period is one familiar to all of us. The nation of Israel was removed from bondage in Egypt at Passover, and they wandered in the wilderness on a 40 year physical journey to a physical promise land (Num. 32:13; Deut. 8:1-2). Now the more important second exodus we are not so familiar with: this exodus runs from the Cross in AD 30 to AD 70. Commencing after the time of Passover was the beginning of this second exodus. Let's look at the "Mount of Transfiguration" in Luke:

- **And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke 9:29-31. NASB)**

Moses and Elijah appear on the mountain, and they speak of Jesus's **departure**. The word for "**departure**" is the Greek word **exodos**. This same word is used in Hebrews 11:22 and translated: "**exodus**." There was an exodus that was to begin at the cross and start a second forty year journey. In this second exodus, New Covenant True Israel (all believing Jews/Gentiles), no longer under the condemnation of the Law of Sin and Death (Rom. 8:2), **left behind** the old Mosaic Covenant and its bondage under the old ceremonies and animal sacrifice system (Gal. 4:3, 9), and began a forty year spiritual journey of maturity in Christ toward their **ultimate destination** of the **heavenly city and country not made with hands**, the **heavenly realm** of the one eternal New Covenant Kingdom and the promised **eternal afterlife with God in heaven** (Heb. 11:9-10, 13-16).

Feast 1: Passover:

(Read) Lev. 23:4-5, "These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover...'" (NASB)

Passover is the foundational Feast. The other six Feasts that follow are built upon it. Passover occurs in the spring of the year, on the 14th day of the Hebrew month, *Abib/Nisan* (March/April).

You'll remember that the first Passover was observed when Israel was about to be delivered from slavery in Egypt. God had spoken through Moses, demanding that Pharaoh release His people, but in spite of a series of devastating plagues, Pharaoh refused to do so. And so now, in preparation for the final and most terrible plague, the death of every first-born, God gives Moses specific instructions for how the Israelites are to be saved. Let's look at the first Passover in Exodus 12:

- **Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you..."**
(Exodus 12:1-2. NASB)

In the first verses of this chapter we see the significance of this Feast in that Yahweh changes the calendar with its introduction. The month that God was referring to was the month of *Abib/Nisan*. Prior to God's establishing the month of *Abib/Nisan* as the first month in the religious calendar, it was the seventh month in the civil/agricultural calendar. Right in the middle of the year, God gives them a new beginning. **The relevance, of course, has to do with Redemption.**

As we look at the Passover, please keep in mind that it is a **type, or picture** of something much greater → it pictured the redemption of God through the sacrifice of the sinless Son of God, the Lord Jesus:

- **³"Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. ⁴'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ⁵'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶'And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. 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. ⁸'And they shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹'Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. ¹⁰'And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. 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. (Ex. 12:3-11. NASB)**

Verse 3 tells us, *"On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household."* Who is the antitype of the lamb? It is the Lord Jesus Christ. A lamb is very symbolic in Christological interpretation. How do we know this? We learn this in the New Testament. Writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul draws the parallel for all time when he says,

- ***"Christ, our Passover Lamb, was sacrificed for us."* (1 Cor. 5:7).**

When Jesus first appears publicly, John the Baptist introduces Him as the "**Lamb** of God":

- **“These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:28-29 NASB)**

In this, John is referring to the Passover Lamb. All Israelites understood this. Jesus’ first introduction by John highlights His destiny as the Lamb of God who is to die for our sins. The Passover Lamb foreshadowed God's final Passover Lamb and suffering Servant Jesus the Christ whom God would one day send to this world to be sacrificed so that His blood could be used to remove the sin and save all those who placed their faith in Him, not from the bondage of Egypt, but from the bondage of sin and guilt and condemnation to eternal death, and to deliver us into the Kingdom of God – a Kingdom of life, joy, peace, and love and relationship and fellowship, and the promise of eternal life in the afterlife in His very presence.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that this lamb is to be unblemished.

- **“Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.” (Exod. 12:5. NASB)**

In the New Testament we see that Christ was the unblemished Lamb:

- **“Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:18-19. NASB)**

Peter makes it very clear here that Christ is a spotless, unblemished Lamb. Paul also mentions Christ's sinlessness in 2 Corinthians 5:21 "Him who knew no sin..."

There are several points of interest in our next verse:

- **“And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.” (Exod. 12:6. NASB)**

Yahweh commanded Israel to take a lamb on the tenth day of *Abib/Nisan* and set it aside until the fourteenth day. These four days were fulfilled by Jesus during the Passover week. Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the Temple, which was the house of God, and went on public display there for four days, from *Abib/Nisan* 10 to *Abib/Nisan* 14. During this time Jesus was examined by many in fulfilling this Scripture, including: The chief priests and elders (Matthew 21:23); Pilate (Matthew 27:1-2, 11-14, 17-26); Herod (Luke 23:6-12); Annas, and then Caiaphas the high priest (John 18:13, 19, 24).

- **“And Pilate came out again, and said to them, ‘Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.’”** (John 19:4. NASB)
 - Christ was the **perfect spotless Passover lamb**.

Mark 15:25 tells us that it was at the **third hour** (Jewish time)(9 a.m. Roman and Hellenistic time) that Christ was sacrificed on the cross → the exact same time the Passover lamb was being bound in the OC temple for the OC Passover sacrifice Christ was being bound to the cross.

At the very same moment that they are binding the Passover lamb to the horns of the altar on the temple mount, they are binding Jesus to the cross (**third hour**). At this same time they are singing the *Hallel*, which are Psalms 113 - 118. Notice what it says in Psa. 118:27:

- **“The LORD is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.”** (Psa. 118:27. NASB)

On this same 14th day of *Abib/Nisan* the OC Passover lamb was killed at twilight, or the **9th hour** (Jewish time)(3 p.m. Roman and Hellenistic time) → at the same **9th hour** Christ cried out and gave up His spirit. (Mark 15:34, 37)

This **ninth hour** was also an hour of prayer, and at this time they would again sing the *Hallel*:

- **The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation.** (Psa. 118:14)

The word for Salvation is "Yeshua" (Christ's Hebrew name). He is the final Lamb slain for the sins of the world.

Thousands of lambs would be sacrificed on Passover, starting at around 9:00 am. The *shofar* would sound to announce to the surrounding areas that the last lamb of about 250,000 (over 40,000 per hour) had been slaughtered. This would be about 3:00 pm.

The high priest who had closely inspected the lamb, satisfied it was unblemished, would say: "**I find no fault in him.**" Look at what the NT scriptures say about Jesus Christ: John 18:38, 19:4, 6. The main lamb offering at the temple mount during Passover was made by the high priest after all the others had been made, about 3:00pm. After the high priest offered up the last lamb he would say "**I thirst.**" He would then wet his lips with water and proclaim that, "**It is finished,**" meaning the slaughtering of all of the lambs for Passover was now completed.

- It was exactly 3:00 pm when Yeshua (Jesus), our High Priest, gave up His Spirit and said the exact same words **at the same time**: "I thirst," and "It is finished." (John 19:28, 30)

Exodus 12:6 tells us that they were to "***kill the lamb.***" This was prophetic of the death of Christ. Israel killed the lamb at Passover, beginning the first exodus over 1,500 years earlier; and now, here in the NT, Israel killed the Lamb of God, Yeshua (Jesus), beginning the second exodus:

- "**But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' They took him, and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard.**" (Mark 12:7-8. NASB)

In John 19:19-20 it says that Pilot put up a sign over Jesus on the cross which said → Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. One of the languages it was written in was Hebrew → which was the acronym YHWY (Yahweh = God) → which now makes it all the more clear why the Jews were so furious. (God was beautifully starting the fulfillment of the OC types/shadows/pictures of His redemptive Festal calendar in Christ).

Although the Passover is filled with meaning, its primary emphasis is **Redemption**. The New Testament truth that "*Christ died for our sins*" is demonstrated well in the Passover. According to Exodus 12:7, the lamb's blood was to be put on the two side posts and above the door. Why? Why were they to kill this lamb and put its blood on the door? Yahweh answers this question in the next two verses:

- **“For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments - I am the LORD. 'And 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.”** (Exod. 12:12-13 NASB)

The first thing I'd like you to notice is that the lamb was a substitute. If you were an Israelite, and you wanted your household to escape death when the angel of Yahweh passed by, you had to kill an innocent creature. You had to show that you had done so by smearing its blood on the doorway of your house. If you did that, then the Lord would accept the life of the animal in place of the life of your first-born child. In the same way, Christ gave His life as our substitute.

This idea of substitution: of Christ being condemned and suffering and dying in our place, is fundamental to the Christian faith. Because, in contrast to every other form of religion, we hold to a Gospel of Grace; a Gospel of God's unearned, undeserved, unmerited favor. We are forgiven, but not because our so-called "good" deeds outweigh our bad ones. We have eternal life, but not because we do our best to live up to a moral code. On the contrary, we know that our good works are insufficient; that we constantly fail to meet Yahweh's perfect standard of holiness; and that we deserve, not acceptance and approval from Yahweh, but rather rejection and condemnation. No, our hope is not based on anything we have done, or could do, but entirely on the fact that Jesus the Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, gave His life in exchange for ours; that by His physical death and shed blood on the cross, He paid the penalty for sin on our behalf. As Paul puts it:

- **Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE."** (Galatians 3:13 NASB. Cf. Deut. 21:22-23; Rom. 8:1-4)

Because of our sin, we owed a debt we could not pay. But Praise Yahweh – Christ paid a debt He did not owe by going to the cross and enduring the wrath of God in our place! He was, and is, our Passover Lamb. This is what the Gospel is all about, Christ died for us:

- **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.** (Romans 5:8. NASB)

As we look at Passover and see its fulfillment in the Cross of Christ, this should increase our confidence in the Scriptures; these things are beyond coincidence. I do not believe there is any clearer example of salvation by grace in the OT scriptures than the typology and fulfillment of the Passover which we have just studied.

As Christians, we must understand that because Christ is our Passover Lamb, we are Yahweh's possession. Christians have been redeemed by the Lamb of God, they do not belong to themselves, and we are therefore to live out our lives as a living sacrifice to Yahweh. When we come to faith in Christ, we cease to own ourselves, and we become Christ's possession. We are not to live our lives independently or autonomously as Christians, but we are to live them out as those who have been bought with a price and as those who belong to Yahweh.

Feast 2: Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6-8):

"Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. 'But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.'" (Leviticus 23:6-8. NASB)

Yahweh appointed another feast that was to begin the very next day after Passover, on the fifteenth of the Hebrew month, *Abib/Nisan*. It is called the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. It was to last for seven days. Seven being the number of completion, perfection. On the first night, and again on the seventh, there was to be a **high Sabbath**.

The Bible gives only **three** instructions for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Special sacrifices were to be offered in the Temple each day of the feast, according to Leviticus 23:8; Numbers 28:19-24. The first and seventh days of the feast were Sabbaths with prohibitions on all work (Exodus 12:16; Leviticus 23:7-8; Numbers 28:25; Deut. 16:8).

And the third requirement was the **prohibition of ANY leaven**. No less than six different passages emphasize the prohibition of leaven during this feast (Exodus 12:14-20; 13:6-8, 23:15, 34:18; Leviticus 23:6; Deut. 16:3 & 8).

Not only is the eating of leavened foods (such as bread and rolls) forbidden during the feast, but **even the presence of leaven within one's house is unlawful**. Yahweh commanded Moses:

- 'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall **remove leaven from your houses**; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. (Exodus 12:15 NASB)

Disobedience to the divine command carried the death penalty. Another command stated:

- "Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders. (Exodus 13:7 NASB)

The clarity of God's command allows no room for debate. Any leaven, no matter how small the amount or how discreet its presence, is not permitted during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is not enough to simply refrain from eating leaven, or from touching leaven, or even from looking at leaven by storing it away in a hidden place. **All leaven must be purged out**. Failure to do so brought death.

An important thing to understand is that the Last Supper was **not** the actual Jewish Passover meal. **The Last Supper was eaten a day earlier than the Passover meal**, and you also cannot eat the Passover meal without the lamb and the lamb wasn't killed until the last hours of the day of Passover. **The Last Supper was in the "first hours" of the 24 hour Passover day**.

We must keep in mind that the Hebrew community, taking its cues from Genesis 1 where the Bible says, "*...the evening and the morning were the first day,*" observes their days as starting at sundown; normally at 6:00, but formally at sundown. They do not view midnight to midnight as a day, as we do; but from sundown to sundown. So the 14th of *Abib/Nisan* began at sundown. After the sun had set, the **start of the 14th** day of preparation, is when they celebrated the Lord's Supper. But the Passover meal was not eaten until after sundown the next day, **at the start of the 15th**.

- “Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” (John 13:1 NASB)

This text then goes into the details of the Lord's Supper. So we see that the Lord's Supper was *"...before the Feast of the Passover."* It's easy to establish from the fourth Gospel that the people of Israel did not eat their Passover meal until sometime after Jesus partook of the Last Supper:

- “Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.” (John 18:28 NASB)

This is clearly after the Last Supper and the Jewish leaders had not yet eaten the Passover. During the Last Supper the Lord sent Judas out and our text says:

- “For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.” (John 13:29 NASB)

Some of the disciples thought that Jesus was telling Judas to go buy things for the Passover Feast, which was yet future for them and all Israel.

**** When Judas accepted the dipped bread from Jesus at the Last Supper and left, it was symbolic of removing all the leaven from the house on preparation day during Passover week.**

- “Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour*. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!"” (John 19:14 NASB)(* Sixth hour = 6 a.m. Roman and Hellenistic time. John wrote using their time reference, while Matthew, Mark and Luke wrote using Jewish time reference (Three hours later after John 19:14 Jesus was crucified according to Mark 15:25, 3rd hour = 9 a.m.)

From these texts we just read we see that the Last Supper, Judas' betrayal, and Jesus's trial and crucifixion, all occurred before Israel ate the Passover. These all occurred on the fourteenth, the day of preparation, the day when the Israelites made all the preparations to partake of the Passover. **They cleansed out the leaven**, bought bitter herbs, had the lamb slain at the Temple (at 3 P.M.), then dressed and roasted it, all in preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which would begin three hours after Jesus's death on the beginning of the fifteenth (at 6 P.M.).

Why the emphasis on unleavened bread in this feast? Many have claimed that "leaven symbolized sin." However, the Scriptures do not say that. In the Bible, leaven is used as a symbol of different things; some negative, some positive. Matthew 13:33 and Luke 13:20-21 mention "leaven" of a positive kind:

- "He spoke another parable to them, 'The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.'" (Matt. 13:33 NASB)

Jesus used leaven as a symbol for the spreading of the Kingdom of God. Thus, it would be wrong to claim that leaven is simply a "symbol of sin." Leaven always carries with it the idea of influence. You take a little piece of leaven and place it in a lump of dough, which you are going to bake, and that little piece influences the entire lump, causing it to rise. Leaven was an appropriate metaphor for something that spreads.

- "And Jesus said to them, 'Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.'" (Matt. 16:6 NASB)

Both the Pharisees and Herod were parties of influence. Verse 12 explains that it was the Pharisees' and the Sadducees' **teachings (doctrines)** that Jesus called "leaven."

- "Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**" (Matt. 16:12 NASB)

So leaven seems to primarily have the idea of influence, it could be good or bad.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread commemorates the Exodus.

- "Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders. "You shall tell your son on that day, saying, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'" (Exodus 13:7-8 NASB)
- "You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance." (Exodus 12:17 NASB)

The rescue of the people of Israel from Egyptian slavery occurred during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Remembering God's deliverance and their exodus is a major theme of this festival.

The story of the Exodus is one of the most dramatic and breathtaking accounts in all of Scripture. God would tell Moses that He had seen the affliction of His people down in Egypt, that He had heard their cry for help, and that He knew their sorrows. And now, He was bringing a deliverer to bring them out of Egyptian bondage and bring them into a physical Promised Land. He was bringing them out to bring them in.

** Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus came to earth to bring man out of his bondage to sin, and with a mighty hand He brought His people out from under the condemnation in sin to eternal death. He bought His people out of the curse of sin and initiated His eternal New Covenant in His blood, established His church, grew them in maturity and led them to the **true Promised heavenly land** in AD 70 where they would have eternal life forevermore with God in heaven.

The Exodus took place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It started at the beginning of the feast, and they crossed the Red Sea at the end of the feast. This feast is all about deliverance.

The Feast of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are really merged into one eight day feast:

- "Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching." (Luke 22:1 NASB)

Josephus says, "We keep a feast for eight days, which is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread."

It's hard to separate these feasts because the deliverance that Unleavened Bread pictures is only possible because of Passover. On the 14th of *Abib/Nisan* at 3:00 pm the Passover lamb was slain, and on the 15th of *Abib/Nisan* the children of Israel ate the Passover meal and shortly after that they left the bondage of Egypt. And before the 7 day feast was over they had passed through the Red Sea where their enemies were destroyed. This deliverance was a **type**.

Nearly 1600 years later the **antitype**, our spiritual deliverance from the curse of sin and its condemnation to eternal death, took place on the very same dates. On the 14th of *Abib/Nisan* at 3:00 pm our Savior shed His physical blood and died on the cross of Calvary and His body was laid in the tomb, and His soul went to Hades/Sheol (Paradise) as our “scapegoat” before the start of the 15th of *Abib/Nisan* → commencing the second Exodus of the new covenant believers, which would consummate in the fulfilling of the last three fall Feasts on His return out from the heavenly Holy of Holies and the pouring out of God’s wrath on OC Israel in AD 66-70.

This OC Jewish exodus period was a type/shadow of deliverance! The type is the picture, the anti-type was the reality of the deliverance of those 1st century saints to eternal life in the afterlife in heaven for all of those in Christ in AD 70.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which included the Passover, was an eight-day feast, with the first day being the Passover. The people were to prepare by cleansing out all leaven from their presence and then to sacrifice the Passover lamb on the 14th day of *Abib/Nisan*, then to eat it on the 15th.

The eight day festival they celebrated each year was a memorial to how they were freed from their bondage in Egypt. They were to Exodus from Egypt after the Passover and to eat unleavened bread the entire week → signifying leaving behind them all of the “leaven/**influence**” of Egypt. The Exodus/Feast of Unleavened Bread completed when they crossed the Red Sea and the waters covered and destroyed the Egyptians and separated the people of Israel from all of the former bondage and influence they were under in Egypt.

This second exodus, which was the antitype, was spoken of in the Prophets:

- “Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious. Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people...” (Isaiah 11:10-11. NASB).

Feast 3: First Fruits (Leviticus 23:9-14):

Look at verse 10,

- "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest.'" (Leviticus 23:10 NASB)

This is referring to the barley harvest – the first crop planted in the winter is now, in the spring, beginning to ripen. The first sheaf of the harvest is cut and, in a carefully prescribed and meticulous ceremony, presented to Yahweh. The Lord's acceptance of the First Fruits is an "earnest," or pledge, on His part of a full harvest.

No grain was to be harvested at all until the First Fruits offering was brought to the Lord (Leviticus 23:14). The offering was made in remembrance of Israel's sojourn in Egypt, Yahweh's delivering them from slavery, and their possession of "*a land flowing with milk and honey.*" So First Fruits was the first portion of a larger harvest.

What date is this Feast to take place on? Passover was to take place on the 14th of *Abib/Nisan*. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to take place on the 15th of *Abib/Nisan*. What date is First Fruits? **There is no date given!** The inspired text says that this third feast occurs "*...on the day after the Sabbath...*"! Many scholars say the Feast of First Fruits took place on the 16th of *Abib/Nisan*. They take the Sabbath here to be the Sabbath of the first day of Unleavened Bread. If that was true, why not just say, on the 16th? I believe the biblical evidence is that the Sabbath referred to here is the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. Let me try to explain why: if "First Fruits" occurs on the 16th of *Abib/Nisan*, and it pictures Christ's resurrection, this only allows Christ to be in the grave for a day and a half at best:

- "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;" (Matthew 12:38-39 NASB)

The word translated "sign" is Greek *semeion*, which means: "a sign or distinguishing mark whereby something is known, sign, token, or indication." It can also mean: "an event that is an indication or confirmation of intervention by transcendent powers, a miracle." So they are saying, show us a miracle!

- “for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matthew 12:40 NASB)
- Mark 8:31 is quite clear that Yeshua was to fulfill this antitype exactly, “And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” (NASB)(See also Matt. 27:63)

I take this to mean 3 full days, or 72 hours. We know that Jesus was buried at the end of the 14th of *Abib/Nisan*, just before the sun went down (Matt. 27:57-58, 62; Luke 23:50-54; Mark 15:42; John 19:14, 30-31). He was in the tomb on the 15th of *Abib/Nisan* and would have remained in the tomb until the 18th of *Abib/Nisan*. There is no date given in Scripture for the Feast of First Fruits, because it is “...on the day after the Sabbath...”! It is always on a Sunday! So, the date would change from year to year, but it is always on a Sunday – the first day of the week. What is interesting is that on the year that Christ was crucified, there had to be three days between the 14th and the first day of the week. And it just so happens that there was (we will look at this a little later in **Appendix A**). Another coincidence?

If Christ spent the full 3 days and 3 nights in the grave, this would mean that the traditional idea of Christ being crucified on Friday is incorrect. I believe that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and was buried by the end of the day (before 6 pm Wednesday evening, which would be the start of Thursday for the Hebrews). He was in the grave by the start of the Hebrew Thursday (6 pm Wednesday for us) at sundown until Saturday at sundown, which is 3 days, and 3 nights, or 72 hours. He rose from the dead on Sunday – sometime after sundown on Saturday evening (after 6 pm Saturday, which is the start of Sunday for the Hebrews).

Here is a time line: Passover the 14th of *Abib/Nisan* (Wednesday) Jesus was tried early morning and declared faultless by Pilate. He was hung on the Cross from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Jesus dies the same time the final Passover lamb is being slaughtered in the Temple. He is prepared for burial and placed in tomb just before sunset (before 6 pm Wednesday).

Unleavened Bread the 15th of *Abib/Nisan* (Thursday – starts 6 pm Wednesday for the Hebrews) – the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which was a High Sabbath), Jesus is in the tomb (1st night and 1st day). The 16th of *Abib/Nisan* (Friday) Jesus spends the 2nd night and 2nd day in the tomb (this is the day after the Thursday “**annual High**” Sabbath that the women bought the spices to anoint Jesus, and then rested on the “weekly” Sabbath according to the commandment, before heading to the tomb on the 1st day of the week → Compare Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56 – 24:1; Matt. 28:1). The 17th of *Abib/Nisan* (Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath) Jesus spends the 3rd night and 3rd day in the tomb. The 18th of *Abib/Nisan* (Sunday – after 6 pm Saturday night for the Hebrews) Jesus is resurrected at the close of the Sabbath, beginning the first day of the week. This is the day of First Fruits. Jesus's body could not be found when the women come to the tomb early Sunday morning, the tomb was empty.

The confusion about Jesus being crucified on Friday may come from:

- “The Jews therefore, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.” (John 19:31 NASB)

Remember that the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a special High Sabbath and no work is to be done. Many have assumed they had to get Jesus's body in the tomb before the weekly Sabbath, **but it wasn't the weekly Sabbath, it was the High Sabbath of Unleavened Bread.**

So, Passover occurs on the 14th; Unleavened Bread occurs on the 15th (and lasts until the 22nd); and "First Fruits" occurs on the day after the weekly Sabbath, or Sunday, the first day of the week. So First Fruits is ALWAYS on a SUNDAY. As to the significance of the Feast of First Fruits, as with the other feasts, there is no room for doubt or speculation; it represents Christ's resurrection:

- “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,” (1 Cor. 15:20-23 NASB)

On one particular morning, on the first day of the week, the Feast of First Fruits of the harvest were being waved before the alter in the Temple in Jerusalem, and on that same particular morning some women were heading to an empty tomb. ([*See Appendix A “3 days & 3 nights,” Pg 7](#))

The crops that were gathered at the beginning of the harvest season were called "first fruits" (Exod. 23:16). These are the **first fruits of the barley harvest**, which **represents Jesus Christ and His resurrection**. The First Fruits consecrates the harvest. Jesus is really the first of the First Fruits. The First Fruits were transferred to the Lord as an assurance of Divine blessing on the harvest. That is reiterated in:

- "If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too." (Romans 11:16 NASB)

Then fifty days later at Pentecost there are the **first fruits of the wheat harvest**, which is **the Church**. We read in Romans 8:23,

- "And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:23 NASB. First Fruits → See also Jam 1:18; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 14:1, 3-4)

In Romans 8:23 Paul writes, "...*We ourselves*" – this is the New Covenant saints (Paul is including himself in with these 1st century Roman believers). Paul says that they have "*the First Fruits*" of the Spirit. The Spirit was given as a "pledge," which is the Greek word *arrhabon*. *Arrhabon* means: "a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase – money or property given in advance as security for the rest: earnest or guarantee." (See also Eph. 1:13-14)

* It is important that we get this correct understanding of the first fruits; as there are these two different sets of first fruits (**Barley** = Christ; **Wheat** = first Christian believers – church. (We will look more at this "wheat" offering in our next Feast of Shavuot/Pentecost)).

* (Side note: These first fruits are different from the crops gathered at the end of the harvest season, which were known as the summer fruit:

- "Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, there was a basket of summer fruit. He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me, "The end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. "The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day," declares the Lord GOD. "Many will be the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence." (Amos 8:1-3. NASB)

The Hebrew word for "summer fruit" is *qets* (*ky-its*) which means: "end." It was the last harvest in Palestine. It has the idea of completeness. This vision of a basket of summer fruit is symbolic of Israel's end. These Fall Feasts picture the end of physical Israel at the end of the forty year second exodus. (We will study into this further when we come to the latter Feasts in **Study Series 8 Lesson 2**)

First Fruits: God commanded the Israelites to present a portion of their harvest that ripened first as an offering to Him (Exod. 23:19; Neh. 10:35). This offering acknowledged that the whole harvest was from Him and was really His. It was an offering that the Israelites made in faith, confident that the rest of the harvest would follow. Similarly, God's gift of the Spirit to the first century believers is His pledge/guarantee that He will complete His redemptive promise and they will **inherit eternal life** with Him in the afterlife.

Fifteen hundred years before Christ's resurrection, Yahweh predicted in type and shadow that Jesus would be crucified on the 14th of *Abib/Nisan* and would rise from the dead three days later on the first day of the week, and it happened exactly as God said it would. Prophecy proves the truthfulness of the Bible. God said certain things would happen, and they happened. No other book in the world contains the kind of specific prophecies found all throughout the pages of the Bible.

In the study of the Feasts, we see that every single piece of the Christian Bible falls right into the framework of the Hebrew world. The whole Christian message is in the feasts that Yahweh gave to the Hebrews.

So hundreds of years before Christ was ever born, God was teaching His people that their Messiah would come, and He would die for them on Passover, the 14th of *Abib/Nisan*. Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. God was teaching His people that for three days Jesus body would be in the tomb, and His soul in Hades/Sheol (Abraham's Bosom/Paradise), and that He would arise from the dead on the first day of the week – the very day that Israel celebrated the Feast of First Fruits. Jesus became the **first** to be raised out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol to never die again and have to return there.

FIRST FRUITS pictures the RESURRECTION of the Messiah. This Feast took place after the first weekly Sabbath, or Sunday, after the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week after the first weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Are these just coincidence, or was God teaching us the history of redemption?

Do you remember what happened after the resurrection at the tomb?

- “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20:16-17 KJV)

"Touch me not..." Touch is from the Greek word *haptou*, which is the normal word for touch. Why was she not allowed to touch the risen Jesus? Let me give you a little tradition that just may answer this question.

Jewish Tradition says: As the lambs were taken off the Temple Mount and put in the ovens by the people, the high priest and his entourage would take their lambs into their chamber inside the Temple Mount (Mt. Moriah) and put them into the ovens. Then just before sunset, the high priest would lead his entourage over the Kidron Valley bridge on the side of the Mount Of Olives, where the priests had previously planted the barley for the First Fruit offering. The Levites would then bind ten stocks of barley together (still rooted in the ground). Then the high priest and Levites would go back to their chambers and eat the Passover lamb. The high priest would stay in the mountain in seclusion until the end of the weekly Sabbath, which was three days the year Christ was killed.

At the end of the weekly Sabbath, the high priest and his entourage would then leave their chamber with baskets and sickles. Once they were sure the sun had set, in front of thousands of on looking Israelites, they would cut the standing stocks of barley they had previously bound in the light, but now cut in the darkness. The high priest and Levites would then take the barley in their baskets to the Temple and grind the barley to make loaves of bread. Then the high priest would take them and offer them as a First Fruits offering to Yahweh on the morning of the first day of the week. Until this is done, no one may eat of the First Fruits of the barley.

It is said that the high priest had to remain in seclusion on the Temple Mount for the entire time between the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the presentation of the First Fruits offering, lest he be defiled. Jesus was also in seclusion for this time; which may be why He said to Mary, *"Don't touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father."* But later He tells Thomas to put his fingers into the nail prints and his hand into the wound in His side. Why did He tell Mary, "Don't touch Me," but told Thomas to touch Him?

The answer may lie in the First Fruits offering. As the High Priest He had to offer the First Fruits of the resurrection "harvest" (Barley harvest) before the throne of God in heaven, before returning that afternoon to talk with the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

That Jesus is the antitypical High Priest is abundantly shown in Scripture:

- "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;" (Hebrews 3:1 NASB)
- "being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:10 NASB)
- "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;" (Hebrews 9:11 NASB)

Jesus did just as the high priests had done for centuries, because He was the antitype (Fulfillment) of the Old Covenant high priest.

Let's look at another text that may have some light shed on it by understanding First Fruits:

- "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many." (Matthew 27:50-53 NASB)

When were these tombs opened? At the death of Christ on Passover. When did the bodies come out of the tombs? After the resurrection of Christ on the Feast of First Fruits.

The earth quaked and graves were opened on Passover, **but none of the people in them had risen yet**. Could this be the marking out of the First Fruits as the priests did on Passover? Then three days later after Christ rose from the dead after sundown at the end of weekly Sabbath, He took those whose graves had been marked and raised them from the dead, effectively "harvesting" them for the First Fruits offering the next morning.

So, summarizing so far, hundreds of years before Christ was ever born, God was teaching His people that their Messiah would come, and He would die for them on Passover, the 14th of *Abib/Nisan*. Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. God was teaching His people that for three days Jesus body would be in the tomb, and His soul in Hades/Sheol (Abraham's Bosom/Paradise), and that He would arise out from among the dead ones on the first day of the week – the very day that Israel celebrated the Feast of First Fruits. Jesus became the first to be raised out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol.

Passover pictures the substitutionary DEATH of Jesus as the Passover Lamb. The Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures the REDEMPTION that death had purchased. First Fruits pictures the RESURRECTION of the Messiah. This Feast took place on the third day after Passover. Jesus rose the third day. Are these just coincidences, or was God not teaching us the history of redemption?

(See: **Death, Burial and Resurrection chart** at the end of the Lesson)

Feast 4: The Feast of Shavuot or Weeks (Pentecost) (Leviticus 23:15-22):

The fourth feast is known in Hebrew as *Shavuot*, which means "weeks." It is found in our text in Leviticus 23:15-16:

This feast is called the Feast of Weeks, because God specifically told the sons of Jacob that they were to count seven weeks from First Fruits and then the day after, this fourth feast was to be observed:

- “You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. 'You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD.” (Leviticus 23:15-16 NASB)

Seven weeks are 49 days. Add one day "*the day after,*" and it brings the total to fifty days. This fourth feast was to occur precisely fifty days after First Fruits.

During these 50 days between the Resurrection and *Shavuot*, *Jesus* met with His disciples many times, and on the 40th day He ascended into heaven. Jesus had told them to stay in Jerusalem and "*...wait for what the Father had promised.*"

- “for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:5 NASB)

What were the disciples doing in the ten days between the Ascension of Christ and Pentecost? The selection of the twelfth apostle is the only incident that Luke recorded during the ten-day period of the disciples' waiting. Why did there need to be twelve apostles? Jesus was establishing His “new true Israel.” As such, twelve apostles were the perfect number; not only to show the ending of the Old, but of the beginning of the New. Luke tells us that the full complement of the twelve apostles has been restored. This is the beginning of the New Israel, the True Israel. And now the New Israel is ready for Pentecost.

What date was *Shavuot* to be celebrated? The *Tanakh* gives it no explicit place in the Jewish calendar. Instead, it is to be arrived at by counting seven weeks after the beginning of the *Omer*, on First Fruits. So this feast comes fifty days after First Fruits, which has no date either.

History of the Feast of *Shavuot*:

In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt, they arrived in the Sinai desert and camped opposite Mount Sinai. Moses was then told by God to gather the Israelites together to receive the Law (Exod. 19:1-6).

Moses then went up alone on the mountain, and as he neared the top, a mighty voice announced the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:20-25; 20:1-21). No date is actually associated with the giving of the Decalogue in the Bible. Yet, ask any observant Israelite concerning this event and he will tell you that it is celebrated fifty days after the Feast of First Fruits.

So, a very notable historical event happened on the first *Shavuot*, and that was the giving of the Ten Commandments. Israel came to Mount Sinai on the third day of the third month (Exodus 19:1). Yahweh visited the people three days later (Exodus 19:10-17). Therefore, the Law was given by God on the sixth day of the third month of the biblical religious calendar, which is the month of *Sivan* (*Sive-in*). This day is exactly 50 days from the crossing of the Red Sea.

***Shavuot* and Leaven:**

At Passover, leaven was absolutely forbidden (Exodus 12:15,19-20), and in the regular meal offering, no leaven was permitted (Leviticus 2:1,4-5, 11). We saw in an earlier study that leaven represents influence. It can be a good influence or a bad one. Passover and Unleavened Bread were to be without leaven, yet on Pentecost, God commanded just the opposite:

- “You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD.” (Leviticus 23:17 NASB)

The Temple services for *Shavuot* followed much the same pattern as that of the Feast of First Fruits, since both holy days were celebrated with first-fruit offerings. However, the offering for *Shavuot* was unique. It consisted of two long, flat, LEAVENED loaves of wheat bread as commanded by the Lord.

So on *Shavuot*, they were to wave **two loaves of leavened bread**. Why are the loaves leavened? As we said in our study of Unleavened Bread leaven represents influence. They were to take no leaven from Egypt, they were to break from the influence of Egypt. Now why two leavened loaves? I think these represent both houses of Israel who are to go into the world with the Word of *Yahweh*.

During the counting of the *Omer*, Psalm 67 was recited daily because it is composed of exactly 49 Hebrew words which correspond to the 49 days of the *Omer* count. The Psalm is seasonally appropriate because of its harvest motif. It is spiritually appropriate because it speaks clearly of God's salvation (*Jesus*) being made known over all the earth.

“God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us – Selah. That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.” (Psa. 67:1-7 NASB)

So in the year our Lord was crucified they are reciting this Psalm each day as they come to *Shavuot* or Pentecost.

The New Covenant anti-type of *Shavuot* is—Pentecost:

When you hear the word "Pentecost," what do you think of? Tongues? Charismatics? What should come to your mind is, **the birth of the Church**; the **beginning of the New Covenant**.

Jesus was crucified on Passover, which gave Israel deliverance on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, He was resurrected on the Feast of First Fruits. Then fifty days after the Resurrection of *Jesus*, the promised New Covenant arrived on the Feast of *Shavuot*/Pentecost. Do you see that the whole Christian message is in the Feasts? This is not Replacement Theology, but **Fulfillment Theology**. Christianity is the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel, because we are true Israel. Every single piece of the Christian Bible falls right into the framework of the Hebrew world. Believers, our roots are Hebrew.

To whom was the promise of the Spirit given? Israel. Pentecost is the fulfillment of that promise, and the Church – true Israel, is its recipient.

Pentecost Type and anti-type:

Hebrew dating and tradition states fifty four days after the first Passover in Egypt → the Law was given to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai, written upon tables of stone. Fifty four days after the final Passover where Jesus was sacrificed → the Law was given to the true New Covenant "Israel of God," written upon their hearts by the pouring out of the Spirit of God (2 Cor. 3:3), thus fulfilling God's promise to Israel:

- "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Jeremiah 31:33 NASB)

On the first *Shavuot*, the Law was given; **3,000 people died** for worshiping the golden calf, signifying the covenant of the Law that brought death (**read** Ex. 32:28; cf. 2 Cor. 3:16-18).

On the first New Covenant *Shavuot*/Pentecost Day, the Spirit was given; **3,000 people received life** and were added to the Church of *Jesus* the Christ (Acts 2:41), signifying the covenant of *the Spirit brought life*:

- "who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." (2 Corinthians 3:6 NASB)

We see here that the New Covenant is LIFE, but the Old Covenant KILLS:

- “But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,” (2 Corinthians 3:7 NASB)

The Old Testament and New Testament Shavuot/Pentecost can be beautifully compared and contrasted:

Old Testament Shavuot/Pentecost		New Testament Pentecost
The Fiftieth Day	--	The Fiftieth Day
Writing of Ten Commandments	--	Writing of Commandments of love on Tables of Heart and Mind (Matt. 22:34-40; Romans 13:8-10; Matt. 5,6,7)
By the Finger of God	--	By the Spirit of God (Luke 11:20; Matt. 12:28; 2 Cor. 3:3)
3,000 people slain	--	3,000 people live (Acts 2:41)
A ministration of death	--	A ministration of life (2 Cor. 3:3, 7-9)
The letter	--	The Spirit (2 Cor. 3:3, 7-9)
Glory on the face of Moses	--	Glory on the face of Jesus (2 Cor. 3:13, 18)
Face veiled so people could not behold the Glory	--	Unveiled face so we can be transformed into the same image from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:16-18)
Glory to be done away	--	Glory that remains (2 Cor. 3:11)
Ministers of the Old Covenant	--	Ministers of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6)
Mt. Sinai	--	Mt. Zion (Hebrews 12:22-24)

Pentecost was the fulfillment, the anti-type, of the type given to Israel. It was the birthday of the Church of Jesus Christ. God would now build His new temple where He would dwell, not in a tent, or physical building again, but with His people. We, the Church, are the New Israel of God and in us all the promises made to the Fathers are fulfilled.

All the promises that God made to Israel are fulfilled in Christ. All believers are in Christ and share all that Christ is and has.

To natural Israel, Passover was their freedom from the bondage of Egypt (Exodus 12). Unleavened Bread was the separation from the land of Egypt into the immersion (baptism) in the Red Sea and the Cloud in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). First Fruits was a guarantee of the coming harvest. Finally, God led the people to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1) where they experienced *Shavuot*, and God revealed Himself to the people in a deeper and greater way than He ever did previously.

The Spring Festivals were fulfilled by *Jesus*, who was our Passover Lamb Who died on the day of Passover, which brought deliverance from the bondage of sin during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. *Jesus* arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest; He Himself being the first of those to rise out from among the dead ones in Hades/Sheol. Finally, the promised New Covenant was inaugurated during the Feast of Pentecost where the first 3,000 souls were born again, as God's Spring Harvest in the earth. As these four feasts describe in detail the significant events during the first coming of Messiah, when He came to redeem man back to God following the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, we will also find in our next **Lesson 2** how the Fall Festivals give us tremendous insight and understanding concerning the events pertaining to *Jesus'* Second Coming.