

Leviticus Chapter 23 Third Continued

Leviticus 23:37 "These [are] the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim [to be] holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day:"

Besides the Sabbath, as Gersom observes; even the Passover, the seven days of Unleavened Bread the Day of Pentecost, the day of blowing the trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

"Which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations": As they had been directed (Lev. 23:2).

"To offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord": Which is explained by;

"A burnt offering, and a meat offering": Which went along with it.

"A sacrifice": Which the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call the sacrifice of holy things. According to Gersom it was the sacrifice of the peace offerings. But rather it seems to be the sacrifice of the sin offering, which was ordered along with the rest in all those feasts.

"And drink offerings": Which also accompanied the meat offerings.

"Everything upon his day": There being different sacrifices on one day than on another. Everyone was to be offered peculiar to the day as was ordered, of which (see Num. 28:29).

We have been studying the Feast of Tabernacles in the previous lesson, and will continue on with that in this lesson. We notice in all of these feasts, that God's timetable is perfect. We will also see that the One we know as Jesus Christ fulfilled each of these feasts that we have already studied about, and He will fulfill every one of them in God's timetable. These holy convocations were a time of special prayer of thanks for all of the blessings He had provided. From the spiritual stand point, we can see in all of these feasts, that all of the promises God made Abraham and through Abraham, the believers certainly will all be fulfilled. This celebration was a time of rejoicing for the bountiful harvest, and in fact, for all the blessings God had bestowed on this people. Christians have much to rejoice for as well. We have been given the greatest gift that anyone can ever receive. We have received eternal life in Jesus. These booths that were their dwelling places for a short time during the celebration; remind us of how temporary the dwellings on this earth are. Our habitation is really in heaven with God. We are only camping here, until our heavenly home is prepared for us. Just as we have said in a previous lesson, this festival time was also, a time of complete rest. Jesus is our burnt offering, He is our meat offering, (He is the Bread), and He is our drink offering. This offering of rejoicing is a remembrance of God as our provider. This is very similar to the communion that Jesus spoke of in the next few verses.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the [same] night in which he was betrayed took bread." "And when he had

given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." "After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me." "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Leviticus 23:38 "Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD."

The seventh day Sabbaths, which were of his appointing, and sacred to his service and worship. On which, when any of the feasts fell, it did not hinder the observance of them, or the offering of the several sacrifices on them. Nor were those of the Sabbath to be omitted on the account of them.

"And beside your gifts": Either of the whole congregation, or of a private person, which they thought well to give of their own good will on these festivals, over and above the sacrifices enjoined.

"And beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the Lord": Which seem to explain what is meant before by gifts.

Gifts and freewill offerings, you remember, were not requirements, but were done out of love and appreciation for God. Tithes are requirements. You have not really given anything to God, until after the tithes are given. Things over and above 1/10 are gifts to God. We see from above, that keeping these special feasts were not sufficient to do just in themselves, the Sabbaths must be kept also. This reminds me so much of many Christians today who come to church just on special occasions, like Mother's day, and neglect the gathering together weekly.

Leviticus 23:39 "Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day [shall be] a sabbath, and on the eighth day [shall be] a sabbath."

The month Tisri or September, the same month, and the same day of the month before observed. Only another end and use of this feast is remarked, which was to give thanks for the fruits of the earth gathered in, as follows.

"When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land": The barley, wheat, oil and wine, and all others. This being now autumn, when the several fruits were ripe and gathered.

"Ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days": Not different from that before mentioned, but the same. One design of which is here suggested, to give thanks for the fruits of the earth. Hence this feast is sometimes called the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16). As another use of it is after mentioned, to commemorate the children of Israel dwelling in booths in the wilderness.

"On the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath": Because on both there was a cessation from servile work (Lev. 23:35).

Actually this feast lasts 8 days, because of the Sabbath on the beginning and the end of the celebration. This is the harvest festival. This symbolizes the harvest when Jesus comes for the Christians in:

Revelation 14:14-16 "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." "And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

We also see in the following verse, Jesus separating the Christians from the unbelievers.

Matthew 13:30 "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

This 7 days here, is one thing that makes some believers think that the Christians will be taken to heaven before the seven years of tribulation.

Leviticus 23:40 "And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days."

Which the three Targums interpret, of citrons. And so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; and the Jews are so tenacious of observing this, that in those countries where this fruit grows not, they will send for it from Spain, where there is plenty of it.

"Branches of palm trees": Which were very common in the land of Judea, and especially about Jericho (see John 12:13). The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call them "lulabs", which is the name the Jews give to the whole bundle they carried in their hands on this day.

"And the boughs of thick trees": Which the Targums and Jewish writers in general understand of myrtles, being full of branches and leaves.

"And willows of the brook": A sort of trees which delight to grow by brooks and small streams of water: These, according to the Jewish writers, were not taken to make their booths of, though that seems to be the use of them from (Neh. 8:15). But to tie up in bundles, and carry in their hands. The citron in their left hand, and a bundle made of the other three sorts of boughs of trees in the right hand, which they called the "lulab".

"And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days": Because of the blessings of his goodness bestowed upon them in the plentiful harvest and vintage they had been favored with. And in remembrance of past mercies, showed to their fathers in the wilderness. Giving them food and drink, and guiding and protecting them with the pillar of cloud and fire. And at the same time, also, thankful for the different circumstances they were in, having cities, towns, and houses to dwell in, and fields and vineyards to possess. when their fathers lived in a wilderness

for forty years all together. And especially such of them who expressed their joy before the Lord, who had any knowledge of this being a type of the Messiah that tabernacled in human nature. They had the promise of, to be their spiritual Redeemer and Savior. These seven days are kept by the Jews now, chiefly in carnal mirth. And so for ages past, as by carrying the above boughs in their hands, and going round about the altar with them, and, shaking them, and crying Hosanna. And by making use of all sorts of music, vocal and instrumental, piping, dancing, leaping, skipping, and various gestures. Even by persons of the highest rank, and of the greatest character for sobriety.

The branches, in the Scripture above, remind us again, that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches.

John 15:4 "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

This, rejoicing before the LORD 7 days, speaks of the completed spiritual work. Truly at the harvest of the believers, the work will be completed.

Leviticus 23:41 "And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. [It shall be] a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month."

Every year it was to be kept for the space of seven days, beginning on the fifteenth and ending on the twenty second of the month Tisri or September.

"It shall be a statute for ever in your generations": Until the Messiah should come and tabernacle among men. The substance of this shadow, on whose coming it was to flee away.

"Ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month": Which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and that no mistake might be made.

It would be the time to take a week of rest and celebration at the completion of the harvest. This time set aside for the purpose of reflecting on the past year and thanking God for the bountiful harvest, is like remembering the perfect work of salvation Jesus did for us at Calvary.

Leviticus 23:42 "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:"

So that it seems they were not obliged to dwell in them on the eighth day, which was a holy convocation, a Sabbath in which no servile work was to be done as the first (Lev. 23:36). The eighth day was a day by itself, a sort of an appendage to the feast of tabernacles, when they went into their houses again, and kept it as a holy day. And perhaps principally in giving thanks for the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, to which this seems to be appropriated from (Lev. 23:39). According to the Jewish writers, they did not go out of their booths until they had dined in them on this day. And as they went out used to say, "may it be the will of God that we may be worthy the next year to dwell in the booth of Leviathan." That is, to feast with the Messiah in the world to come. And to those days the Jews have added a ninth, which they call "the joy of the law", and

which they keep for joy of having finished the reading of the law. Which being divided into as many sections or lessons as weeks in the year, were so ordered to be read as to be finished at this time.

"All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths": The Targum of Jonathan is, "all the males in Israel, and even the little ones, that do not need their mothers, sit in the shades blessing their Creator, when they enter there." And, according to the Misnah, women, servants, and little ones, are free from the booths (i.e. are not obliged to dwell in one). But a little one, who hath no need of its mother, is obliged to dwell in the booths. And elsewhere it is said, that sick persons, and such as wait upon them, are not obliged. Nor messengers upon any business, nor travelers and watchmen in cities, and keepers of gardens and orchards. If such travel, or keep watch in the day, they are obliged to be in them at night. And if in the night, then they are to dwell in them in the day. Jarchi says, that everyone born in Israel comprehends proselytes, who were bound by this law.

Leviticus 23:43 "That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I [am] the LORD your God."

Which by the providence of God the Israelites were obliged to make for themselves to dwell in.

"When I brought them out of the land of Egypt": For the very first place they came to, when they departed from thence, was called Succoth, from the booths they there built.

"I am the Lord your God": Who brought them out of Egypt, made them to dwell in booths in the wilderness, and enjoined them the observance of the feast of tabernacles in memory of it, in which he expected to be obeyed.

We see that the LORD explains the reason for this yearly festival in the verse above. He does not want them to ever forget that it was the mighty hand of God that brought them out of Egypt. They had no permanent dwelling in their wilderness wanderings. Just as Abraham had no permanent dwelling place after he left Ur of the Chaldees. Abraham was looking for a city whose maker was God. These Israelites, led by Moses, were looking for their Promised Land. We Christians are looking for heaven. It is all the same. We have no permanent dwelling place here on this earth. Abraham, believed God, and it was counted unto him righteousness. These Israelites had to believe there was a Promised Land, to receive it. We must believe that Jesus is our door to heaven, or we will not go to heaven.

Leviticus 23:44 "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD."

The several feasts before recited, the order of them, the manner of observing them, and the time.

This just reminds us once again, that Moses declared the message God had for this people the exact way God gave it to him. Let me say one more time, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of these festivals.

Leviticus Chapter 23 Third Continued Questions

1. What were they to proclaim the feasts of the LORD to be?
2. What offerings are mentioned in verse 37 of Leviticus chapter 23?
3. Who fulfills all of the feasts?
4. What were these convocations a special time for?
5. What was the rejoicing in celebration of?
6. What is the greatest gift anyone can receive?
7. How is this festival in verse 37 similar to communion for the Christians?
8. What did Jesus say symbolized His body?
9. When we Christians drink the fruit of the vine and eat the communion bread, what are we remembering?
10. Verse 38 says these feasts are to be kept besides what?
11. When can you say you have given to God?
12. When is one special time when those who profess Christianity come to church?
13. What day of what month were they to celebrate the completing the harvest?
14. How many days did this festival last?
15. What does this harvest festival symbolize for Christians?
16. Where do we find the Scripture that says "Thrust in thy sickle and reap"?
17. Where, in Matthew, do we read to let them grow together until the harvest?
18. What is typical of the separation of the believers and non-believers in the above Scripture?
19. What are these booths to be made of?
20. The branches remind us of what about Jesus and the believers?
21. How many days in a year is this festival to be kept?
22. Who shall dwell in the booths?
23. Why does the LORD want them to celebrate at this festival time?

24. Who declared the festivals to the children of Israel?