

# EVERYTHING SUMMED UP IN CHRIST

Excerpts from Informed and Faithful

April 1,2 ..... THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

April 8,9 ..... THE KINSMAN REDEEMER  
JEWISH MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

April 15, 16 ..... NO MEETING; SPRING BREAK

April 22, 23 ..... SPRING FEASTS  
Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, First Fruits

April 29, 30 ..... FALL FEASTS  
Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles

## **Ephesians 1:9-10**

<sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him

<sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

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## THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

We begin by understanding that God gave the Law as a way of revealing his righteousness and our sinfulness. The Law cannot save anyone, but its restraints help point out our sin. It is good to know and remember the purpose of the Law.

1. **THE LAW SETS FORTH THE RIGHTEOUS STANDARDS OF GOD.** Read Romans 7:12 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Mankind is lost in sin—people are ungodly and unrighteous. The Law shows God’s expectations.

2. **THE LAW GIVES US KNOWLEDGE OF SIN.** When we realize what God expects, we can then see our failure to live up to His expectations: our sin is revealed. It is for sinners that Jesus came.
3. **THE LAW IS A TUTOR THAT POINTS US TO CHRIST.** Read Galatians 3:23-25 . Summarize what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

The law is a teacher that shows our need for God’s grace. If we pay attention to the Law, it will guard us against a life of blatant sin.

It is precisely this last area where our culture is going so far afield. It is extremely important that we understand the difference between right and wrong. The Law shows us these differences.

In the space below, write the Ten Commandments. Don’t cheat! Write them from memory.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20 lists these commandments. Now read Matthew 22:36-40. What does the Law and the Prophets depend on? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Romans 13:8-10. According to this passage, what fulfills the law? \_\_\_\_\_

Looking at the Ten Commandments, how does this one action fulfill the law? \_\_\_\_\_

There are tremendous ramifications for evangelism inherent in the law. Sometimes we become so eager for people to receive Christ that we fail to allow the Law the time necessary to convict sinners of their sinfulness!

There are some important things to remember about salvation:

1. When someone is saved, they are not only saved from a fate in hell; they are also saved from the power of sin.

We sometimes tell people that they need to be saved so that they won't spend eternity in hell. Hell is merely the eternal consequence of sin. Salvation also takes away the strangle-hold of sin in lives now.

2. When someone is saved, they are saved from sin's consequence, from sin's presence, and from sin's power.

Does this mean that someone who is saved will never sin? No, but it does mean that they are delivered from a perpetual lifestyle of sinning.

**Consequently, when we share the good news of salvation, we need to understand some truths and communicate them well:**

- A. **ALL PEOPLE ARE SINNERS.** Read Romans 3:9-18 and record what you learn:

\_\_\_\_\_

- B. **THE PENALTY FOR SIN IS ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD.** Read Revelation 20:11-15. Record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. **JESUS CAME TO SAVE SINNERS.** Read Hebrews 2:9 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Read also Matthew 1:21 \_\_\_\_\_

Read also 1 Timothy 1:15 \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to these three things, we also need to be certain that people understand these truths:

1. **GOD TOOK OUR SIN AND PLACED IT ON JESUS.** Jesus literally took our sin on Himself. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. **REPENTANCE IS NECESSARY.** Repentance requires a change of mindset, which is evidenced, by a change of direction. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Luke 24:46-48 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 13:2-5 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 26:15-20 \_\_\_\_\_

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the world. Their sin was wanting to be like God. Salvation acknowledges that a person is unable to be like God. A person coming into a salvation relationship with Christ must be willing to submit to God and God's law.

3. **PEOPLE ARE UNABLE TO MAKE THEMSELVES RIGHTEOUS.** Only God can change people. He does it by His grace, through faith. Read Ephesians 2:8-10 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When we share the gospel, it isn't our place to worry about whether the person actually accepts Christ right that moment. Our job is to share—God's job is to lead the person to faith. Some people are sowers, some people reap. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

John 4:35-36 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 3:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_

People do not appreciate the grace of God until they come to the realization that they are sinners. Many people in our culture simply do not see their sin, so they feel no need to be free from it.

In Romans 7:7-10, Paul uses one of the commandments as an illustration. Read these verses and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

**Use the holy Law of God to help men see their sin. Allow conviction to settle in. Don't seek to bypass this crucial work of God. Don't be premature in seeking to relieve people of their misery. Wait and pray.** Kay Arthur

God is "not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

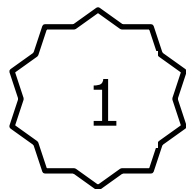
## THE TABERNACLE MODEL

There is another area of God's instructions that we need to look at very carefully. In addition to giving the Law, that showed men their sin, and their need for a Redeemer, God also instructed the people to build a tabernacle.

The word "tabernacle" means "a dwelling place." This was the place that God met with the people during the times after the Exodus from Egypt. Eventually, when God's people moved into the Promised Land, the tabernacle was given a permanent form as the temple, which was envisioned by David and built during the reign of David's son, Solomon. The basic components were the same, but the temple was built of stone on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. The tabernacle that the people had in the wilderness was made of materials that were portable. As they moved about, they could take the tabernacle with them.

God gave very specific instructions regarding the building of the tabernacle, and the items inside it, including dimensions, methods of construction, materials, etc. A complete study of the tabernacle and its implications would take an entire semester! Today, we will only be seeing the very basics.

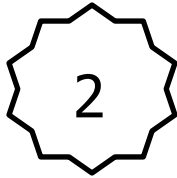
The tabernacle consisted of three parts:



The Outer Court, which was enclosed, was open to the sky. It was entered by a side gate on the end. The gate was simply known as the way inside. It was sufficiently large to allow several people to enter at once.

The Outer Court had two items in it:

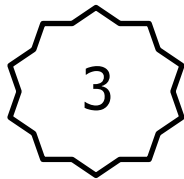
- a. The altar of sacrifice
- b. The laver



The second area, called the Holy Place, was entered by a door, known as the door of truth. This area was enclosed and roofed.

The Holy Place had the following items:

- a. The table of the presence (showbread)
- b. The altar of incense
- c. The lampstand



The third area, called the Holy of Holies, or most holy place, was entered through a veil. The veil was known as the veil of life. God's Shekinah presence indwelt the Holy of Holies. Although the tabernacle veil was smaller, the veil in the temple was 30' x 30' and 4" thick! Inside the Holy of Holies were the following:

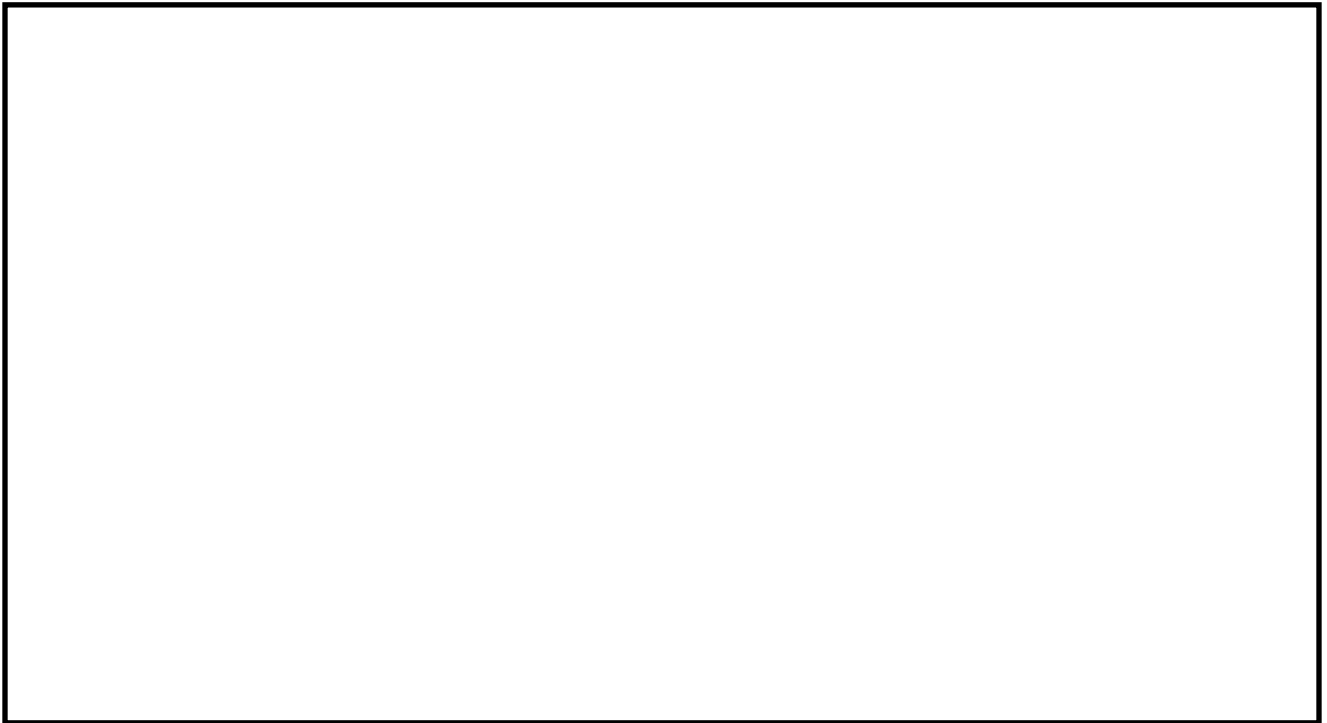
- a. The Ark of the Covenant
- b. The mercy seat and its covering cherubim

There are some very important insights that we need to understand with regard to the tabernacle.

1. The people could go in through the gate to the outer courtyard. It was here that they brought their animals to be sacrificed. The blood sacrifice was made here by the priests. The laver was for ceremonial washing.
2. Only the priests could go into the Holy Place. They did ministry on behalf of the people here. The table of the presence represented God's presence with His people. The showbread on the table represented feeding on His word. The altar of incense represented the prayers of the people. Coals from the sacrificial altar fueled the altar of incense. The lampstand (the only item in the inner tabernacle that didn't have dimensions set by God) represented the church—the light shining to the world. The potential size of the church was limited by man and not by God. The priests entering this area wore the full priestly regalia including a robe with bells on the bottom.

3. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, the presence of God. This priest could come only one time each year, on the Day of Atonement. There were specific instructions for how the high priest came into God's presence. He had to take off his outer robe, with the bells on the bottom, before entering in his undergarment of white. He entered to make atonement at the mercy seat for the unintentional sins of the people during the prior year.

Begin reading Exodus 25 and draw the tabernacle as described in scripture:



Jesus said a lot of things that caused an uproar with the religious leaders of His time. Among them was the following statement:

**I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO MAN COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME. John 14:6**

With this statement, Jesus closely identified His ministry with the model that God had given His people in the Tabernacle that carried over into the Temple. So closely, in fact, that He could also say:

**DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, AND IN THREE DAYS I WILL RAISE IT UP. John 2:19**

Jesus, of course, was comparing Himself to the tabernacle/temple model established by God. He had become the way, the truth, and the life. He was the one who would make atonement for sins. It was His body that would be destroyed and raised up in three days. And, it was precisely this statement that the Sanhedrin eventually used against Jesus at His "trial" to show Him a heretic.

Jesus, our high priest, made the ultimate atonement for sin. The sacrifice wasn't good for just a year! He didn't have to come back in a year and make another atonement. Jesus sacrifice was acceptable to the Father, and it was good forever! There was no longer reason for men who accepted Christ to be separated from God because of sin. To symbolize this, when Jesus died the veil of the temple was torn by God Himself! (we know this because it was torn from the top to the bottom—remember it was 30 feet high and 4" thick!) The Jewish historian, Josephus, had written of the veil that four teams of horses attached to opposing sides couldn't "rend it."

After Jesus death, those that believed in Christ—those who appropriated His sacrifice into their lives through faith--could enter God's presence where only the priest could stand before. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, all who believe in Him become a priesthood of believers.

Read 1 Peter 2:9 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Peter tells us that we have been made a royal priesthood for a reason: so that we can proclaim the excellencies of Him who called us out of the darkness and into His marvelous light.

We are priests so that we can:

1. Worship God
2. Tell others about Him

Like the priests of old, there are some things that we should do:

1. The priests presented the sacrifice to God. Do we bring a sacrifice? Read Romans 12:1, and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



What, then, would you say is your sacrifice? How might it be offered?

2. The priests had to prepare themselves extensively to come into God's presence. As the priest purified himself, so we need to purify ourselves. It is possible for the things of the world to come between us and God. We need to get rid of those things! How can we do this? Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Philippians 4:8 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 6:13-20 \_\_\_\_\_

As we begin to look at the tabernacle model carefully, some truths begin to emerge. Many people enter the outer court. This court represents salvation. It is here that the blood sacrifice of Jesus avails for us personally, and here we are washed clean by the Blood of the Lamb. To enter the outer court is totally **FREE**. Read Romans 6:23 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

People, who accept the free gift of God's grace, enter through the **way** by accepting the sacrifice (altar of sacrifice) and have been washed clean by the Blood of the Lamb (laver).

The early church was called the **Way**. Read the following verses carefully:

Acts 9:2

...and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the **Way**, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Acts 19:9

But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the **Way** before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Acts 19:23

About that time there occurred no small disturbance concerning the **Way**.

Acts 22:4

"I persecuted this **Way** to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons,

Acts 24:14

"But this I admit to you, that according to the **Way** which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;

Acts 24:22

But Felix, having a more exact knowledge about the **Way**, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case."

Fewer people, however, pass from the Outer Court into the Holy Place or the Holy of Holies.

In the Holy Place, we begin to feed on the bread of life, God's word. This represents the setting forth of God's purpose. Read Romans 8:28 and do a word study on purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

We begin to sacrificially offer prayer from a sanctified heart (altar of incense).

We begin to become a light to the world (lampstand). The entrance was called the **door of truth** because inside the truths of God are being revealed to those who enter.

When we enter into the Holy of Holies, experiencing intimacy with God, we understand that offering ourselves as a living sacrifice is a "spiritual service of worship." The Holy Place was closed off by the **veil of life**. Man suffered spiritual death as a result of original sin. However, when we accept Christ, we are reborn of the Spirit. We are given new life. It is because of our spiritual rebirth that we can communicate with God intimately.

As we begin to understand these concepts, we begin to see why some are content to stay in the outer court. Salvation is free, but there is no sense in which the lifestyle of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies is free. This sort of discipleship is very costly.

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well that true worshippers would move beyond the outer court. Read John 4:23 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you begin to see why Jesus said that true worshippers worship in "spirit and truth?" This is real lifestyle worship.



In 2 Corinthians 3:5-9, Paul compares the Old and New Covenants. Read these passages carefully. Now, read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12. What is the treasure mentioned here? \_\_\_\_\_

Why are believers delivered over to death? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What sort of death is referred to in this passage? Include the death and the outcome on this chart:

THE "DEATH" MENTIONED	THE RESULT

We must absolutely understand that grace is more than just the phrase, "unmerited favor."

1. **GRACE FREES US FROM RELIGION AND BRINGS US INTO RELATIONSHIP.**
2. **GRACE GIVES LIFE, AND ALSO THE MEANS TO LIVE LIFE AND PLEASE GOD.**

**Once you fully understand grace, you will never deny yourself the blessing of being God’s child because of feelings of unworthiness. No one comes to God on the basis of what is deserved. We do not come on the basis of what we have earned. We come into the covenant of grace on faith alone.** Kay Arthur

Read Hebrews 10:29 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Read Titus 2:11-14 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Read Romans 10:3. Why did these people miss the righteousness of God? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Now, read Romans 4:5. Who is justified? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Why? \_\_\_\_\_

The Jews tried to find righteousness through the Law. They further defined the law, adding 248 positive rules and 365 negative rules. They believed that God had an obligation to admit them to heaven if they kept these Laws. Because of their mindset, the Jews did not see their sin and their need for forgiveness.

Paul’s letter to the Galatians confronted these believers about a “different gospel.” Read Galatians 1:6-7. What were they teaching that was wrong? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Now read Galatians 2:16 and record what this verse says about the Law: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Now, we will contrast the Old and New Covenants. Read 2 Corinthians 3:5-16. Record what you learn about the Law and Grace:

<b>THE LAW (OLD COVENANT)</b>	<b>GRACE (NEW COVENANT)</b>

Why had Moses been veiled? What was fading away and why? What has happened to the veil? Go back to the veil in the tabernacle for more insight. Is the veil removed from your eyes? Do you go behind the veil and enter God’s presence? \_\_\_\_\_

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Finally, today we are going to look at Galatians 5:2-4. Think through the following questions:

1. If a person tries to be holy in God's eyes by doing right things, what is his relationship to grace? \_\_\_\_\_
2. If a person viewed circumcision as valuable, why was Christ of no usefulness?

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Paul's point is that the law and grace are not compatible; you are justified by one, not both

If you want to be justified by the law, then you must keep the whole law—that is, you must live up to God's perfection. Men cannot do this. Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has there ever been anyone who was able to keep the whole law? \_\_\_\_\_

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## THE REDEMPTION MODEL

During the past weeks, we have been looking at the enemy of our souls. We have looked at his origin and his methodology. We have looked at the way sin entered the world, and we have looked at the results of sin. Everything would be looking very bleak, except **GOD HAS A PLAN!**

HE MADE KNOWN TO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, ACCORDING TO HIS KIND INTENTION WHICH HE PURPOSED IN HIM WITH A VIEW TO AN ADMINISTRATION SUITABLE TO THE FULLNESS OF THE TIMES, THAT IS, THE SUMMING UP OF ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, THINGS IN THE HEAVENS AND THINGS UPON THE EARTH.  
EPHESIANS 1:9-10

FOR THIS REASON HE IS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT, SO THAT, SINCE A DEATH HAS TAKEN PLACE FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE TRANSGRESSIONS THAT WERE *COMMITTED* UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED MAY RECEIVE THE PROMISE OF THE ETERNAL INHERITANCE. HEBREWS 9:15

An administration is a long-range plan to accomplish goals established by someone in a position of power or authority. In the above verses, Paul is telling us that God had a plan that would solve man's dilemma. But, the plan would be a mystery until God was ready to reveal it. When that time came, God would use the church as a vehicle to reveal the plan to angelic beings (good and bad). God was showing us that He is in control!

Because of Adam's sin, all of Adam's offspring came under Satan's power and authority, and mankind moved into the domain of darkness. It looked like Satan had won, but God had a long-range plan that would be revealed in the fullness of time. Even though God didn't bring His mystery to light until the birth of Christ, His plan was being developed throughout the Old Testament through the teaching of the kinsman redeemer.

A kinsman redeemer or "ga'al" was a person who had the right to buy back a relative or a relative's property which had been lost through death or debt.

There are three words that are interpreted "redeem" in the Old Testament.

**padah** means a transfer of ownership through a payment of some sort

**koper** means ransom—atonement by making a substitutional payment

***ga'al (or go'el)*** was a third party redeemer when the one sold could not redeem himself. In other words, it took a third party to work out the release. A strong emphasis is put on the relationship of the redeemed and the redeemer. We are primarily interested in this sort of redemption.

Leviticus 25:47-55 records God's law regarding the kinsman redeemer. Read these verses and record your insights on the following themes:

1. Why would a person need to be redeemed? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who could redeem such a person? \_\_\_\_\_

Now, read John 8:34-36. Record your thoughts on how these verses reflect the teaching of the kinsman redeemer. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

From the verses we have studied above, we can see three qualifications of a kinsman redeemer.

1. **THE REDEEMER HAD TO BE A BLOOD RELATIVE.** We have learned in our study so far, that all men are born with a sin nature. **All** descendants of Adam are sinful. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Hebrews 2:14-16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 1:18 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:35 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

From these verses, we see that God provided our kinsman redeemer by the incarnation of His Son. Jesus was a blood relative of mankind, born of a flesh and blood woman. But He was the seed of God. Therefore, He was a blood relative, but without the sin nature inherent in the seed of Adam's offspring. But, only being a blood relative was only one part of the qualification for kinsman redeemer.

2. **THE KINSMAN REDEEMER HAD TO BE ABLE TO PAY THE PRICE.** The Greek word *exagorazo* means "to purchase a slave with the idea of turning him

loose.” What would be required to turn man loose from his slavery to sin? Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Hebrews 10:4-10 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 1:13-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 17:11 \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. **THE KINSMAN REDEEMER HAD TO BE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE.**

Luke 19:10 tells us that Jesus came to seek and save what was lost—us! In the story of Ruth, the nearest relative didn’t want to risk the redemption for fear of jeopardizing his own inheritance. But Jesus left everything—a throne in glory—to redeem people who were without hope. Although Jesus came for the purpose of our redemption, He struggled with His flesh. Read the following passages and record what you learn:

Hebrews 5:7-9 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 26:36-44 \_\_\_\_\_

Even though other verses tell us that Jesus knew that He would die, be buried, and rise on the third day, we still see Him in His humanity in these verses. In His humanity, Jesus three times asked the Father if there was another way, but there was not, so Jesus “became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:8)

These verses reveal that God loved us so much that He Himself took on the role of kinsman redeemer. At His own expense, He paid the price needed to free us from slavery to sin. These works are accomplished. Our eternal spirits are no longer separated from God by sin once we have accepted the grace extended to us by Jesus on the cross.

Read the following verses and record what you learn:



Ephesians 1:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

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Hebrews 2:14 \_\_\_\_\_

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**So far, we have established three things about the kinsman redeemer:**

1. The redeemer had to be a blood relative.
2. The redeemer had to be able to pay the price.
3. The redeemer had to be willing to pay the price.

When mankind fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, we not only lost our land (earth) but we were also separated by God by sin and subject to death. Our Kinsman Redeemer is capable of recovering all that we lost because He does away with Satan's control over us—sin. Read Hebrews 10:8-12 and record what you learn about Jesus' sacrifice for us: \_\_\_\_\_

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Colossians 2:13-14 tells us that God forgave "all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Since our sin was paid for in full at Calvary, when we accept this gift of God's grace, Satan's power over us has been taken away. Satan no longer has a legitimate authority over us. We have been redeemed—we have been purchased from slavery.

Jesus' ability is key in understanding why the Law, although it provided a method for sin, could not provide the means! Although Jesus was a man, He never sinned. Previous to Jesus, there was no man outside the grip of sin. All traced their lineage to Adam and were thus born into sin. But Jesus was not born of the seed of man—He was born of the Holy Spirit and therefore not enslaved in sin. Satan tempted Jesus just as he did Adam, but Jesus remained sinless. Therefore, Jesus was not in slavery and was eligible (able) to pay the price. The virgin birth is critical in the long-term plan of God. Jesus was a blood relative who was willing and able to make our redemption.

As we look at verses carefully, four major duties of the ga'al begin to emerge from scripture.

1. The Ga'al redeemed his relative who was enslaved.
2. The Ga'al redeemed his relative's lost land.
3. The Ga'al served as the judicial executioner of a family member's murderer.
4. The Ga'al married the one who had no heirs

### **THE KINSMAN REDEEMER REDEEMED HIS ENSLAVED RELATIVE.**

Because we are all born of the seed of man, every person living on the earth is born in a state of slavery to sin. Jesus emphasized this when He was on earth.

Read John 8:34 and view Jesus' position on slavery to sin: \_\_\_\_\_

When we accept the redemption of Jesus, when we accept Him as our redeemer, or savior, we are spiritually restored into relationship with God. We have been purchased away from sin. Read the following verses carefully:

1 Corinthians 6:20

For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 7:23

You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

When a ga'al made a purchase, it was customary to put a seal of ownership and authenticity on the purchased object. The object would then be put into a clay jar so that it would last. Only the rightful owner could break the seal and transact business with what he has purchased.

Read information about the ownership seal of Jesus:

Ephesians 1:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:30 \_\_\_\_\_

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The imagery is carried to completion when we are described as having a sealed and redeemed spirit in a clay jar.

**2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;**

This means that we have a redeemed spirit in a body of flesh that is not yet redeemed. But our bodies will be redeemed. Our Ga'al has already paid the price and our bodily redemption is coming!

Study these verses to learn more:

**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.**

This redeemed body will be like Christ's.

**1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.**

This will happen at a time we call the "rapture" of the church. This word does not appear in the English Bible; however, it is translated as "caught up." Remember that the early church often spoke of death as "sleep." This meant that they believed the body would "get up" or "rise" again.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we, who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

These verses tell us that Jesus will return for the church. He will "shout," *keleuma*, which is a shouted command. The bodies of the dead in Christ will rise and be changed. People alive on earth at His coming will be glorified from a living state.

## THE KINSMAN REDEEMER REDEEMED HIS RELATIVE'S LOST LAND

We see implications of what is to come in the book of Jeremiah, where Jeremiah serves as a ga'al for his family. Read Jeremiah 32:6-15. Discuss what you learn about the kinsman redeemer from these passages. \_\_\_\_\_

In these passages, Jeremiah was serving as the kinsman redeemer of land that had been lost by one of his relatives. None of his other relatives wanted to redeem the land. Babylon was approaching Judah to conquer it. Jeremiah's own prophecies said that Judah would be 70 years in exile in Babylon and he knew that the land would be useless to him. This meant, in effect, that Jeremiah was never going to get to enjoy the land, but he redeemed it anyway because God had told him to do so. Write down all that you see Jeremiah doing as kinsman redeemer: \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the significance of the seal, when it could be opened, and what was contained in the scroll that Jeremiah sealed. \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of sin, people lost authority over the earth that had been given by God. Read John 12:31 and record who is currently the ruler of this world: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Revelation 5:1-7 and 9-10. Record what you learn about Jesus in these verses: \_\_\_\_\_

Why could Jesus break the seal on the scroll? \_\_\_\_\_

Now read Ephesians 1:13-14. Record what you learn about Jesus in these verses: \_\_\_\_\_

Continue reading in Romans 8:12-17: \_\_\_\_\_

Explore Galatians 4:4-8 \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus was worthy to open the title deed to the earth because He met the qualifications of kinsman redeemer. He was a blood relative, He was willing, and He was able.

Read Matthew 4:1-11 and record what you learn about the temptation of Jesus:

How many times is "it is written" used? \_\_\_\_\_

Were any of the things Satan offered to Jesus not legitimately Satan's to offer?

Jesus had to come to redeem the earth and its kingdoms. Satan offered them forthright. This reinforces the fact that the end doesn't justify the means. Satan offered Jesus a shortcut. But it wouldn't have resulted in our redemption.

How did Jesus finally get the devil to leave? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus refuted Satan by using scripture and speaking to the devil. Now read Ephesians 6:10-17. What is the only offensive weaponry mentioned? This sort of "word" is "rhema" which is a portion of scripture that is brought to bear on the situation at hand.

If Jesus would have yielded to any of the temptations, how would it have affected His relationship to God? \_\_\_\_\_

How would it have affected us? \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus had the authority to tell Satan to go away. We walk in the authority of Christ.

**THE KINSMAN REDEEMER MARRIED A FEMALE RELATIVE WITHOUT HEIRS.**

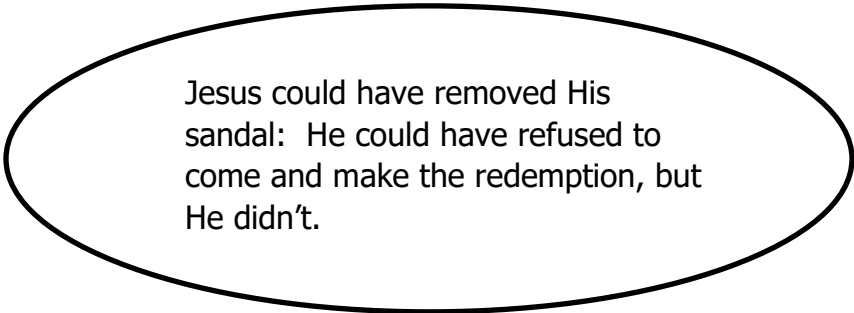
Deuteronomy 25:5-10 records God's law regarding a widow when a man died and left his wife without an heir. From these passages, what can we learn? \_\_\_\_\_

We can see these laws reflected in the story of Ruth and Boaz. Read Ruth 4:1-10, 13-14. Record what you learn from these verses. \_\_\_\_\_

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We see that 4:14 was carried out and Jesus, our kinsman redeemer, was from the line of Boaz. It is exciting to see God begin to reveal His plan in the lineage of Christ. Boaz and Ruth became the parents of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. Jesus was a descendant of David. (Romans 1:3)



Jesus could have removed His sandal: He could have refused to come and make the redemption, but He didn't.

Knowing about these stories begins to explain to us why the church is pictured as the "bride" of Christ. Before the coming of Jesus, there were no heirs for the Kingdom of Heaven because no one could be saved. The future marriage supper of the Lamb is described in Revelation. Read the following verses and discuss their importance:

Revelation 19:7-9 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

Revelation 21:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

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### **THE KINSMAN REDEEMER SERVED AS JUDICIAL EXECUTIONER OF THE MURDERER OF HIS FAMILY MEMBER(S).**

When it seems as if our enemy has hopelessly harmed us, we have hope in the sure knowledge that our Kinsman Redeemer will ultimately triumph over the enemy and hold him accountable for all that he has done.

Because we are made in the image of God, human life is sacred. Discuss what it means to be made in the image of God: \_\_\_\_\_

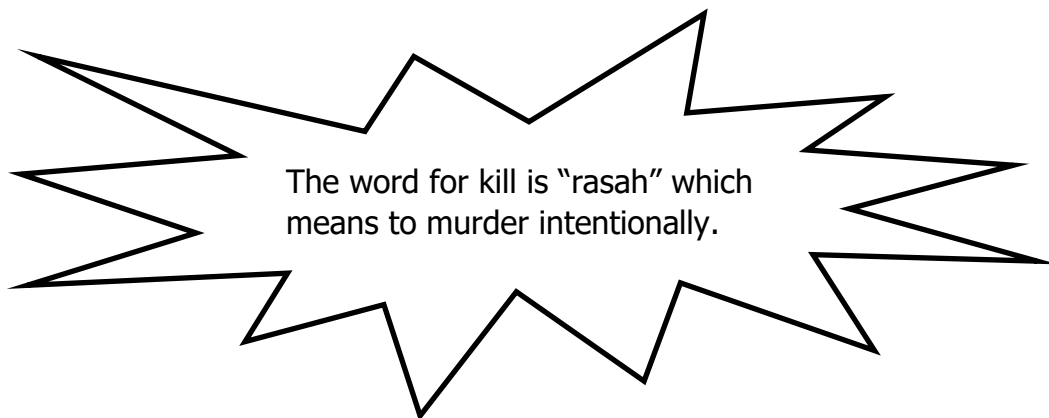
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Read Genesis 9:5-6 and record what you learn from these verses: \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Exodus 20:13. Does this contradict the Genesis passage? \_\_\_\_\_

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Read also Exodus 21:12-15 and write what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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As we look at these passages, it becomes evident that intentional murder is never acceptable to God. God places great value on human life.

In this passage from Deuteronomy 19:10-13, underline the word "avenger." The word ga'al is translated "avenger of blood" when kinsman redeemer is serving in this capacity. From what you know about the kinsman redeemer, who would become this avenger? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Deuteronomy 19:10**

SO INNOCENT BLOOD WILL NOT BE SHED IN THE MIDST OF YOUR LAND WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVES YOU AS AN INHERITANCE, AND BLOOD GUILTINESS BE ON YOU.

**Deuteronomy 19:11**

BUT THERE IS A MAN WHO HATES HIS NEIGHBOR AND LIES IN WAIT FOR HIM AND RISES UP AGAINST HIM AND STRIKES HIM SO THAT HE DIES, AND HE FLEES TO ONE OF THESE CITIES.

**Deuteronomy 19:12**

THEN THE ELDERS OF HIS CITY SHALL SEND AND TAKE HIM FROM THERE AND DELIVER HIM INTO THE HAND OF THE AVENGER OF BLOOD THAT HE MAY DIE.

**Deuteronomy 19:13**

YOU SHALL NOT PITY HIM; BUT YOU SHALL PURGE THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT FROM ISRAEL, THAT IT MAY GO WELL WITH YOU.

From these passages, we begin to see the importance of this role of the ga'al in God's eyes.

The primary scripture section that discusses this duty is found in Numbers 35:15-33. Read this section and discuss the following questions:

1. What does murder do to the land? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What makes payment when someone is murdered? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did God specifically forbid with regard to the murderer? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. When is the kinsman redeemer supposed to conduct the execution? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The ga'al was a guiltless executioner—in other words; he could not be murdered in turn. He was outside the realm of either accidental or intentional murder. He represented justice and could not be punished for the execution of a murderer.

Discuss the ways in which Jesus has or will fulfill this responsibility as our blood avenger. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Who instigated Adam's death? \_\_\_\_\_

Read John 8:44. What does Jesus say Satan is? \_\_\_\_\_

We have already read Genesis 3:14-15, where we saw the judgment pronounced against Satan.

Now, read the following verses and comment on the fate of Satan at the hands of our judicial executioner:

John 12:31 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 12:13 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:10 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clearly, we have seen that Jesus is our avenger. What vengeance are we to take for ourselves?

Read Romans 12:17-21 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Does this mean that those who are murderers should go without punishment here on earth? No! Read 1 Timothy 1:9-11 and read who the law is for. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It is clear that the scripture finds laws in a land to be acceptable—laws that restrain ungodly behavior. Many times, however, men fail to appropriately enforce the law. What do you think will happen to people who "get away with murder" in this life? Find scriptures to support your position. Particularly read Jude 15 and Romans 2:8-11.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a family member living in a state of death because of the work of Satan? What is your responsibility now that Jesus, the ultimate kinsman redeemer, has come?

Use the following space to record your insights on Jesus, our Kinsman Redeemer, and what His redemptive work means to you as you stand against the evil one:

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## JEWISH MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

**It was the night of destiny. Jesus had gathered with His disciples in the Upper Room. In a few more hours He would be crucified on a cross. Jesus had been warning His disciples concerning His coming death, resurrection and ascension to heaven. The prospect of these vents caused the disciples to be greatly disturbed. In order to ease their fears, Jesus made the following comforting promise: Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:1-3). Dr. Renald Showers**

Those who live in the modern western world do not catch the full significance of Jesus' promise. This is due to the fact that in His promise Jesus was drawing an analogy from Jewish marriage customs in biblical times. Since this is so, those marriage customs must be examined if one is to grasp the significance of the promise.

The first major step in a Jewish marriage was betrothal.

1. Betrothal involved the establishment of a marriage covenant. By Jesus' time it was usual for such a covenant to be established as the result of the prospective bridegroom taking the initiative.
2. The prospective bridegroom would travel from his father's house to the home of the prospective bride. There he would negotiate with the father of the young woman to determine the price (mohar) that he must pay to purchase his bride.
3. Once the bridegroom paid the purchase price, the marriage covenant was thereby established, and the young man and woman regarded to be husband and wife.
4. From that moment on the bride was declared to be consecrated or sanctified, set apart exclusively for her bridegroom.

5. As a symbol of the covenant relationship that had been established, the groom and bride would drink from a cup of wine over which a betrothal benediction had been pronounced.
6. After the marriage covenant had been established, the groom would leave the home of the bride and return to his father's house. There he would remain separate from his bride for a period of twelve months.
7. This period of separation afforded the bride time to gather her trousseau and to prepare for married life.
8. The groom occupied himself with the preparation of living accommodations in his father's house to which he could bring his bride.

At the end of the period of separation the groom would come to take his bride to live with him. The taking of the bride usually took place at night. The groom, best man and other male escorts would leave the groom's father's house and conduct a torch light procession to the home of the bride.

9. Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the exact time of his coming.
10. As a result the groom's arrival would be preceded by a shout.
11. This shout would forewarn the bride to be prepared for the coming of the groom.

After the groom received his bride together with her female attendants, the enlarged wedding party would return from the bride's home to the groom's father's house.

12. Upon arrival there the wedding party would find that the wedding guests had assembled already.

Shortly after arrival the bride and groom would be escorted by the other members of the wedding party to the bridal chamber (huppah). Prior to entering the chamber the bride remained veiled so that one could see her face.

13. While the groomsmen and bridesmaids would wait outside, the bride and groom would enter the bridal chamber alone. There in the privacy of that place they would enter into physical union for the first time, thereby consummating the marriage that had been covenanted earlier.

14. After the marriage was consummated, the groom would announce the consummation to the other members of the wedding party waiting outside the chamber (John 3:29). These people would pass on the news of the marital union to the wedding guests.
15. Upon receiving this good news the wedding guests would feast and make merry for the next seven days.
16. During the seven days of the wedding festivities, which were sometimes called "the seven days of the huppah," the bride remained hidden in the bridal chamber.
17. At the conclusion of these seven days the groom would bring his bride out of the bridal chamber, now with her veil removed, so that all could see who his bride was.

The Examination of the Analogy. In His promise in John 14 Jesus drew an analogy from Jewish marriage customs in biblical times. Now that the marriage customs have been considered, it is essential that the analogy be examined. In what ways was Jesus' promise analogous with Jewish marriage customs? In the examination of the analogy the first thing that should be noted is the fact that the Scriptures regard the Church to be the Bride of Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-23 \_\_\_\_\_

In addition, just as the Jewish bridegroom took the initiative in marriage by leaving his father's house and traveling to the home of the prospective bride, so Jesus left His Father's house in heaven and travelled to earth, the home of His prospective Church, over 1900 years ago.

In the same manner as the Jewish bridegroom came to the bride's home for the purpose of obtaining her through the establishment of a marriage covenant, so Jesus came to earth for the purpose of obtaining the Church through the establishment of a covenant. On the same night in which Jesus made His promise in John 14 He instituted communion. As He passed the cup of wine to His disciples, He said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

1 Corinthians 11:25 \_\_\_\_\_

This was His way of saying that He would establish a new covenant through the shedding of His blood on the cross. Parallel to the custom of the Jewish groom paying

a price to purchase his bride, Jesus paid a price to purchase His bride, the Church. The price that He paid was His own blood. It was because of this purchase price that Paul wrote the following to members of the Church:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 \_\_\_\_\_

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Analogous with the Jewish bride being declared to be sanctified or set apart exclusively for her groom once the marriage covenant was established, the Church has been declared to be sanctified or set apart exclusively for Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-27 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 10:10; 13:12 \_\_\_\_\_

In the same way that a cup of wine served as a symbol of the marriage covenant through which the Jewish groom obtained his bride, so the cup of communion serves as the symbol of the covenant through which Christ has obtained the Church. (1 Corinthians 11:25).

Just as the Jewish groom left the home of his bride and returned to his father's house after the marriage covenant had been established, so Jesus left the earth, the home of the Church, and returned to His Father's house in heaven after he had established the new covenant and risen from the dead.

Corresponding with the period of separation between the Jewish groom and bride, Christ has remained separate from the Church for over 1900 years. The Church is now living in that period of separation.

Parallel to the custom of the Jewish groom preparing living accommodations for his bride in his father's house during the time of separation, Christ has been preparing living accommodations for the Church in His Father's house in heaven during His separation from His Bride (John 14:2).

In the same manner as the Jewish groom came to take his bride to live with him at the end of the period of separation, so Christ will come to take His Church to live with Him at the end of His period of separation from the Church (John 14:3).

Just as the taking of the Jewish bride was accomplished by a procession of the groom and male escorts from the groom's father's house to the home of the bride, so the taking of the Church will be accomplished by a procession of Christ and an angelic escort from Christ's Father's house in heaven to the home of the Church.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Analogous with the Jewish bride not knowing the exact time of the groom's coming for her, the Church does not know the exact time of Christ's coming for her.

In the same way that the Jewish groom's arrival was preceded by a shout, so Christ's arrival to take the Church will be preceded by a shout:

1 Thessalonians 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Similar to the Jewish bride's return with the groom to his father's house after her departure from her home, the Church will return with Christ to His Father's house in heaven after she is snatched from the earth to meet Him in the air.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 \_\_\_\_\_

John 14:2-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Parallel to the custom of the Jewish groom and bride entering into physical union after their arrival at the groom's father's house, thereby consummating the marriage that had been covenanted earlier, Christ and the Church will experience spiritual union after their arrival at His Father's house in heaven, thereby consummating their relationship that had been covenanted earlier.

Some believe that corresponding with the Jewish bride remaining hidden in the bridal chamber for a period of seven days after arrival at the groom's father's house, the Church will remain hidden for a period of seven after arrival at Christ's Father's house in heaven. While the seven year Tribulation Period is taking place on the earth, the Church will be in heaven totally hidden from the sight of those living on the earth.

Just as the Jewish groom brought his bride out of the bridal chamber at the conclusion of the seven days with her veil removed, so that all could see who his bride was, so Christ will bring His Church out of heaven in His Second Coming at the conclusion of the seven year Tribulation Period in full view of all who are alive, so that all can see who the true church is.

Just as the proposal that the Jewish bridegroom made could be accepted or rejected, so Christ's proposal to you can be accepted or rejected. If you reject it throughout this lifetime, then you never will be rightly related to Jesus Christ. The tragic result will be that you will spend eternity separated from God and Christ in the eternal lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SPRING FEASTS: PASSOVER, UNLEAVENED BREAD, PENTECOST

**The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.** Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a unit constituted the most important of the three great annual festivals of Israel.

It was called both the feast of Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread, but where the object was to mark the distinction between the Passover as a sacrifice and as a feast following the sacrifice, the latter was designated the feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:5-6)

Read Exodus 12:21-27, 48 and do a word study of "Passover." \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The paschal lamb sacrifice, by virtue of which the passing over was effected, was followed by the paschal meal was on the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, and the seven days following are called the feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:5-6). The whole feast, including the paschal eve, is called the festival of Unleavened Bread. The simple name "Passover" (Hebrew *Pesah*) is the one commonly used by the Jews to the present day for the festival of Unleavened Bread.

Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Exodus 23:15 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 23:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 22:1, 7 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12:3; 20:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark 14:1 \_\_\_\_\_

**Institution.** The Passover was instituted in memory of Israel's preservation from the last plague visited upon Egypt (the death of the firstborn) and their deliverance from bondage.

Exodus 12:1-28 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

"The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was accompanied by their adoption as the nation of Yahweh. For this a divine consecration was necessary that their outward severance

from Egypt might be accompanied by an inward severance from everything of an Egyptian or heathen nature.

This consecration was imparted by the Passover, a festival which was to lay the foundation of Israel's birth into the new life of grace and fellowship with God and to perpetuate it in time to come."

**Observance.** Observances connected with the Passover are in two categories, those established at the keeping of the first Passover and those enacted after the Exodus.

*Before the Exodus.* At its first institution, just before the Exodus, the keeping of the Passover was as follows: Every head of family chose a male of the first year without blemish from the small cattle—sheep or goats—on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (Exodus 12:3). Later it became the fixed practice to take a lamb.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> Nisan the animal was slain "at twilight" (Exodus 12:6); according to the Karaite Jews between actual sunset and complete darkness but understood by the Pharisees and rabbis as the time when the sun begins to descend to its real setting (from 3:00 to 6:00 P.M.). A bunch of hyssop was dipped in the blood of the animal and applied to the two posts and the lintel of the house where the meal was to be eaten. Then the whole animal, without a broken bone, was roasted and eaten by each family, including slaves and strangers, if circumcised.

If the number of the family was too small, the neighboring family might join in the eating. It was eaten that same night with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, probably endives, wild lettuce, which are eaten by Jews of the present day in Egypt and Arabia with the paschal lamb. The meal was eaten the same evening, all who partook having their loins girded, shoes on their feet, and a staff in hand, ready to march out of Egypt. What of the lamb could not be eaten was to be burned the next morning, and nothing of it was to be carried out of the house. Exodus 12:1-13, 21-23, 43-51 \_\_\_\_\_

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According to Jewish authorities this was called the "Egyptian" Passover in distinction from the "Permanent" Passover. The paschal lamb was a sacrifice, combining in itself the significance of the sin offerings and holy offerings. It shadowed reconciliation as well as glad fellowship with God; the lamb suffered instead of the partakers.

Because there was no fixed sanctuary, the houses were converted into such places of grace or altars, and the blood put on the posts and lintel of the door was the sign that the house was to be spared. This sparing and reconciliation accomplished through forgiveness of sins was immediately associated with the meal. The unleavened bread



symbolized the spiritual purity after which Israel in covenant with the Lord is to strive, and the bitter herbs were intended to call to mind the bitter experiences that the Israelites had suffered in Egypt.

After the Exodus. The following supplementary enactments were introduced after the Exodus:

1. All male members of the congregation were to appear before the Lord with "the choice first fruits." (Exodus 23:14-19)
2. The first sheaf of the harvest to be offered on "the day after the Sabbath." (Leviticus 23:10-14)
3. Those prevented from keeping the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan were to observe it on the fourteenth of the following month. (Numbers 9:6-14).

Special sacrifices were to be offered each day of the festival. The paschal animals were to be slain in the national sanctuary and the blood sprinkled on the altar instead of the doorposts and lintels of the homes.

**Feast of Unleavened Bread.** The feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed the Passover and lasted seven days, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Nisan. On each of those days, after the morning sacrifice, a sacrifice in connection with the feast was presented; unleavened bread alone was eaten.

**Sacrifices.** (1) The usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings. (2) Two young bulls, one ram, seven lambs of the first year, with their grain and drink offerings. These were presented after the morning sacrifice (Numbers 28:19-24).

**Convocations.** The first and seventh day of the feast were celebrated by a holy convocation and resting from work, with the exception of preparing food. On the intervening days work might be carried on unless the weekly Sabbath fell on one of them, in which case the full strictness of Sabbath-keeping was observed, and the special feast sacrifice was not presented until after the Sabbath offering.

**Barley Sheaf.** On the second feast day (16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan) the first sheaf of the new harvest (barley) was symbolically offered to the Lord by waving—not burning on the altar—accompanied with a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, with its grain and drink offerings.

Previous to this offering neither bread nor roasted grain of the new harvest was allowed to be eaten. (Leviticus 23:9-14).

Those attending presented freewill, burnt, and holy offerings of sheep and oxen (Exodus 23:15, 19; Deuteronomy 16:2), and sacrificial meals were eaten. The feast closed on the 21<sup>st</sup>, with rest from work and a holy convocation.

**History.** Scripture records that the Passover was kept on the evening before the Israelites left Egypt (Exodus 12:28), the second year after the Exodus (Numbers 9:1-5), and then not again until they entered Canaan (Exodus 13:5; Joshua 5:10).

Only three instances are recorded in which the Passover was celebrated between the entrance into the Promised Land and the Babylonian captivity.

1. Under Solomon: 2 Chronicles 8:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Under Hezekiah when he restored the national worship: 2 Chronicles 30:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Under Josiah: 2 Kings 23:21; 2 Chronicles 35:1-19 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

But since the Passover was timely celebrated on later occasions, we cannot assume that it wasn't celebrated timely at other times than the three above.

**Postexilic Observance.** After the return of the Jews from captivity the celebration of the Passover, like that of other institutions, became more regular and systematic; and its laws, rites, manners, and customs have been faithfully transmitted to us. These were the same as those in the time of Christ and His apostles and are, therefore, of the utmost importance and interest to us in understanding the NT. We give the various practices in connection with the days of the festival on which they were respectively observed.

1. **The Great Sabbath (10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan).** The Sabbath immediately preceding the Passover, it is so called because, according to tradition, the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, when the paschal lamb was to be selected, originally fell on the Sabbath. In later legislation the animal was not required to be set aside four days beforehand, yet the Sabbath was used for the instruction of the people in the duties of this great festival. In addition to the regular ritual, special prayers bearing on the redemption from Egypt, the love of God to Israel, and Israel's obligation to keep the Passover, were prescribed for that Sabbath. Malachi 3:1-4:6 was read as the lesson of the day, and discourses were delivered explaining the laws and domestic duties connected with the festival. This is likely the Sabbath referred to in John 19:31.
2. **The 13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.** On the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, which, until that of the 14<sup>th</sup>, was called the "preparation for the Passover" (John 19:14), every head of a family searched for and collected by the light of a candle all the leaven. Before

beginning the search, he pronounced the following benediction: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with the commandments, and has enjoined us to remove the leaven." After the search he said, "Whatever leaven remains in my possession which I cannot see, behold, it is null, and accounted as the dust of the earth."

- 3. The 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.** This day, called until the evening the preparation for the Passover was also known as the "first day" of Passover (Leviticus 23:5-7). Handicraftsmen, with the exception of tailors, barbers, and laundresses, were obliged to cease from work, either from morning or from noon, according to the custom of the different places in Palestine. No leaven was allowed to be eaten after noon, when all that had been found either on this day or the preceding one was to be burned.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan every Israelite who was physically able, not in a state of Levitical uncleanness, or further distant from Jerusalem than fifteen miles, was to appear before the Lord with an offering proportionate to his means. Exodus 23:15 and; Deuteronomy 16:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Women, though not legally bound to appear in the sanctuary, were not excluded. 1 Samuel 1:7; Luke 2:41-42 \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. Offering of the Paschal Lamb.** The lamb was to be free from all blemish and neither less than eight days nor more than exactly one year old. Each paschal lamb was to serve a "company" of not less than ten nor more than twenty, the representatives of each company going to the Temple. The daily evening sacrifice (Exodus 29:38-39), usually killed at the eighth and a half hour (i.e., 2:30 P.M.), and offered up at the ninth and a half hour (i.e., 3:30 P.M.), was on this day killed at 1:30 and offered at 2:30 P.M., an hour earlier. And if the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan happened on a Friday, it was killed at 12:30 and offered at 1:30 P.M., two hours earlier than usual, so as to avoid any needless breach of the Sabbath.

Before the incense was burned or the lamps were trimmed, the paschal sacrifice had to be offered. It was done in this way: The first of the three festive divisions, with their paschal lambs, was admitted within the court of the priests. Each division was to consist of not less than thirty persons. Immediately, the massive gates were closed behind them, and the priests blew a threefold blast from their silver trumpets when the Passover was slain; altogether, the scene

was most impressive. All along the court up to the altar of burnt offering priests stood in two rows, the one holding golden, the other silver, bowls. In these the blood of the paschal lambs, which each Israelite slew for himself (as representative of his company at the paschal supper), was caught up by a priest, who handed it to his colleague, receiving back an empty bowl, and so the bowls with the blood were passed up to the priest at the altar, who jerked it in one jet at the base of the altar.

While this was going on, a most solemn "hymn" of praise was sung, the Levites leading in the song and the officers either repeating after them or merely responding. The *Hallel* was recited the whole time, and if it was finished before all the paschal animals were slain it might be repeated a second and even a third time.

Next the sacrifices were hung up on hooks along the court, or laid on staves which rested on the shoulders of two men (on Sabbaths they were not laid on staves), then flayed, the entrails taken out and cleansed, and the inside fat separated, put in a dish, salted, and placed on the fire of the altar of burnt offering. This completed the sacrifice.

The first division of priests left and the second entered, and finally the third, the service in each case being conducted in precisely the same manner. Then the whole service concluded by burning the incense and trimming the lamps for the night. If it was the Sabbath, the first division waited in the court of the Gentiles, the second in the open space between the walls of the court of the women and the trellis work in the Temple, whereas the third remained in its place. At dark all paschal lamb was roasted on a spit of pomegranate wood, the spit passing through from mouth to vent. If it touched the oven the part so touched was to be cut away, thus carrying out the idea that the lamb must not be defiled by any contact with foreign matter. It was not to be "sodden," because the flesh must remain pure, without the addition even of water, and no bone of it was to be broken.

5. **The Paschal Supper.** As the guests gathered around the paschal table they were arrayed in the best festive garments, joyous and at rest, as became the children of the king. To express this idea the rabbis insisted that at least a part of the feast should be partaken in recumbent position. The left elbow was placed on the table, the head resting on the hand, with sufficient room between each guest for the free movement of the right hand. This explains in what sense

John "was reclining on Jesus' breast," and afterward "leaning back thus on Jesus' breast," when he leaned back to speak to Him.

John 13:23, 25; Luke 22:14 \_\_\_\_\_

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The father, or other person presiding, took the place of honor at the table, probably somewhat raised above the rest.

The paschal supper commenced by the head of the "company" pronouncing a benediction over the first cup of wine, which had been filled for each person. It was then drunk, and a basin of water and a towel were handed around or the guests got up to wash their hands, after which the appropriate blessing was pronounced.

These preliminaries ended, a table was brought in, upon which was the paschal meal. The leader of the feast first took some of the herbs, dipped them in the sauce (*charoseath*), ate some, and gave to the others.

Immediately after this all the dishes were removed from the table (to excite curiosity), and the second cup of wine was filled. Then the son asked his father as follows: "Wherefore is this night distinguished from all other nights? For on all other nights we eat leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night only unleavened bread? On all other nights we eat any kind of herbs, but on this night only bitter herbs? On all other nights we eat meat roasted, stewed, or boiled but on this night only roasted? On all other nights we dip [the herbs] only once, but on this night twice?" In reply the head of the house related the whole national history, commencing with Terah, Abraham's father, Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and the giving of the law.

The paschal dishes were now placed back upon the table. The leader took up in succession the dish with the Passover lamb, that with the bitter herbs, and that with the unleavened bread, briefly explaining the importance of each; the first part of the Hallel was sung (Psalm 113-114), with this brief thanksgiving at the close: "Blessed art thou, Yahweh our God, King of the universe, who hast redeemed us and redeemed our father from Egypt."

The second cup of wine was then drunk, and hands were washed a second time, with the same prayer as before, and one of the two unleavened cakes broken and "thanks given."

Pieces of the broken cake, with "bitter herbs" between them and "dipped" in the *charoseath*, were next handed to each of the company. This, in all probability,

was the “dipped morsel” which, in answer to John’s inquiry about the betrayer, the Lord “gave” to Judas.

John 13:25-30; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:21 \_\_\_\_\_

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The paschal supper itself consisted of the unleavened bread, with bitter herbs, and the paschal lamb itself. After that nothing more was to be eaten, so that the flesh of the paschal sacrifice might be the last meat partaken of. But since the cessation of the paschal sacrifice, the Jews conclude the supper with a piece of unleavened cake called the *Aphikomen*, or after dish. Hands were again washed, the third cup was filled, and grace after meal said. The service concluded with the fourth cup over which the second portion of the Hallel was sung (Psalm 115-118), the whole ending with the so-called “blessing of the song.”

6. **The 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan**, Unleavened Bread. On this day there was a holy convocation, and it was one of the six days on which, as on the Sabbath, no manner of work was allowed, with this exception: whereas on the Sabbath the preparation of necessary food was not allowed (Exodus 16:5, 23, 29; Exodus 35:2-3), on holy convocation it was permitted (Exodus 12:16; Leviticus 23:7; Numbers 28:18). The other five days on which the Bible prohibits servile work are the seventh of this festival, the day of Pentecost, New Year’s Day, and the first and last of the feast of Booths.

In addition to the ordinary sacrifices there were offered on this and the following six days two bulls, a ram, and seven lambs of the first year (with grain offerings) for a burnt offering, and a goat for a sin offering. Besides these public sacrifices voluntary offerings were made by each individual appearing before the Lord in Jerusalem. The Jewish canon prescribed that this freewill offering should be a burnt offering, worth not less than sixteen grains of corn; a festive offering of not less value than thirty-two grains; and a peace, or joyful offering, the value to be determined by the offerer.

7. **The 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan**, Cutting the Barley Sheaf. This day was also called “the day after the Sabbath”; and on it the omer of the first produce of the harvest was waved before the Lord (Leviticus 23:10-14).

Though for obvious reasons it was customary to choose barley grown in the sheltered Ashes valley across the Kidron, there were no restrictions, except that

the barley was to be grown in Palestine and without being forced by manuring and artificial watering. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, delegates from the Sanhedrin had marked out the spot where the first sheaf was to be cut by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley to be reaped. When the time came for cutting the sheaf, the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, even if it was a Sabbath, just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, began the work.

In order to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked the bystanders the following questions three times each: "Has the sun gone down?" "With this sickle?" "Into this basket?" "On this Sabbath?" and, last, "Shall I cut?" Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down the barley to the amount of one ephah (nearly three and a half pecks). The ears were brought into the court of the Temple and threshed out with canes or stalks, so that the grains might not be crushed. The grain was then "parched" on a perforated pan, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. It was then ground and sifted to the required fineness, which was ascertained by one of the "Gizbarim" (treasurers) plunging his hand into it. The sifting process was continued as long as any of the flour adhered to the hand. In this manner the prescribed omer of flour was secured and offered in the Temple on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Whatever was in excess of an omer was redeemed and could be used for any purpose. The omer of flour was mixed with a "log" of oil, and a handful of frankincense put upon it. It was then waved before the Lord, and a handful taken out and burned on the altar (Leviticus 2:15-16). This was what is popularly, though not correctly, called "the presentation of the first, or wave sheaf." This offering was designated as the offering of First Fruits.

8. **The 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.** These days constituted a half holy day and were "the lesser festival." As regards work during this period, all that was necessary for the public interest or to prevent private loss was allowed, but no new work of any kind for public or private purposes might be begun. The following work was allowed: irrigating dry land; digging watercourses; repairing conduits, reservoirs, roads, marketplaces, and baths; and whitewashing tombs, etc. Dealers in fruit, garments, or utensils were allowed to sell privately what was required for immediate use. In the Temple the additional sacrifices appointed for the festival were offered up, and the lesser Hallel was sung instead of the greater.

9. **The 21<sup>st</sup> of Nisan**, or the Last Day of the Passover. The last day of the Passover was observed by a holy convocation and was celebrated in all respects like the first day, except that it did not commence with the paschal meal.
10. **The second, or Little Passover.** Anyone prevented by Levitical defilement, disability, or distance from keeping the regular Passover might observe the "second," or the "little Passover," exactly a month later.

Numbers 9:9-12 \_\_\_\_\_

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In this "second" Passover both leaved and unleavened bread might be kept in the house; the Hallel was not to be sung as the paschal supper. The supper could not be eaten by any defiled person.

11. **Release of Prisoners.** It is not certain whether the release of a prisoner at the Passover was a custom of Roman origin, or whether it was an old Jewish custom that Pilate allowed them to retain.

Matthew 27:15; Mark 15:6; Luke 23:17; John 18:39 \_\_\_\_\_

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12. **Preparations for the Passover.** A month previous (the 15<sup>th</sup> of Adar) bridges and roads had been repaired for the use of pilgrims. This was also the time for administering the testing women suspected of *adultery*, for burning the red heifer, and for boring the ears of those wishing to remain in bondage.

One of these preliminary arrangements is especially interesting when recalling the words of the Savior. Any dead body found in the field was buried where found, and, as the pilgrims coming to the feast might have contracted "uncleanness" by unwittingly touching such graves, it was ordered that all tombs should be whitened a month before the Passover. Evidently it was in reference to what our Lord was going on around Him at the time He spoke that He compared the Pharisees to "whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27).

Two weeks before the Passover, and at the corresponding time before the other two great festivals, the flocks and herds were to be tithed and the treasure



chests publicly opened and emptied. Last, "many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves." Cross reference to John 11:55 and 1 Corinthians 11:27-28. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Pentecost** The second of the three great annual festivals, the others being the Passover and Tabernacles. The most important Bible passages relating to it are the following:

Exodus 23:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 23:15-22 \_\_\_\_\_

Numbers 28:26-31 \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 16:9-12 \_\_\_\_\_

This festival is called

- (1) The feast of Weeks because it was celebrated seven complete weeks, or fifty days, after the Passover.
- (2) The fest of the Harvest, because it concluded the harvest of the later grains.
- (3) The day of the first fruits (Numbers 28:26), because the first loaves made from the new grain were then offered on the altar.

The Scriptures do not clearly attach any historical significance to this festival but seem to teach that Pentecost owes its origin to the harvest that terminated at this time. It is to be expected that, in common with other nations of antiquity who celebrated the ingathering of grain by offering to a deity among other firstling offerings of fine flour of wheat, the Jews would recognize Jehovah's bounty with the first fruits of their harvest. The Jews, at least as early as the days of Christ, connected with the Passover and commemorated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan the giving of the Ten Commandments. It was made out from Exodus 19 that the law was delivered of the fiftieth day after the Exodus. It has been conjectured that a connection between the event and the festival may possibly be hinted at in the reference to the observance of the law in Deuteronomy 16:12.

Pentecost was essentially lined to the Passover—the festival that above all others expressed the fact of a race chosen and separated from other nations—and was the solemn termination of the consecrated period.

The time fixed for celebrating Pentecost is the fiftieth day from "the day after the Sabbath" of the Passover or, seven full weeks after the sickle was put to the corn. The

precise meaning of the word *Sabbath* in this connection, which determines the date for celebrating this festival, has been from time immemorial a matter of dispute. The Boethusians and the Sadducees in the time of the second Temple, and the Karaites since the eighth century of the Christian era, have taken "Sabbath" in the sense of the "seventh day of the week" and have maintained that the omer was offered on the day following the weekly Sabbath that might happen to fall within the seven days of the Passover. This would make Pentecost always come on the first day of the week.

Many arguments are presented against this, showing that such an opinion involves many arbitrary and improbable arrangements. Most scholars agree that 'the morrow after the seventh Sabbath' is the day after the seventh week, not after the seventh Sabbath. It is therefore evident that the Jews, who during the second Temple kept Pentecost fifty days after the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, rightly interpreted the injunction in Leviticus 23:15-22. The fiftieth day, according to the Jewish canons, may fall on 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> of Sivan.

The Mosaic ordinances provided that on the Day of Pentecost there was to be a holy convocation, on which no manner of work was to be done; all the able-bodied men of the congregation were to be present (unless legally precluded) at the sanctuary; and a special sacrifice was to be offered.

Leviticus 23:15-22 and Numbers 28:26-31 \_\_\_\_\_

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The sacrifices offered were

- (1) **The morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings.**
- (2) **A burnt offering, consisting of seven lambs, one young bull, two rams, with their grain and drink offering.**
- (3) **The two wave loaves, the new grain offering, of two-tenths of an ephah of new flour.**
- (4) **With the loaves, a kid of the goats for a sin offering and two lambs for a peace offering.** The firstling loaves, with the two lambs (peace offering), were devoted to the Lord by waving, as a thank offering for the harvest that had been gathered in during the seven previous weeks. The words "You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offerings" (Leviticus 23:17) are not to be understood as if every head of a house was to bring two such loaves, but that the two loaves were presented for all the people. "From your dwelling places" appears to mean that they were to be loaves prepared for the daily nourishment of the house

and not specially for a holy purpose or paid for out of the treasury. They were freewill offerings, presented by each person in proportion to the blessings received from God.

This festival was to be a season of rejoicing, in which were to share the children, men and women servants, the Levites, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow.

Deuteronomy 16:11 \_\_\_\_\_

Israel was also to recall her bondage in Egypt and was admonished to keep the divine law.

From Acts 2:9-11, we infer that, perhaps more than to any other great festival, the Jews came from distant countries to Jerusalem. On the day before Pentecost the pilgrims entered Jerusalem, and the approach of the holy convocation was proclaimed in the evening by blasts of the trumpets. The great altar was cleansed in the first watch, and immediately after midnight the Temple gates were thrown open. Before the morning sacrifice all burnt and peace offerings brought by the people were examined by the priests.

The following order was observed for the various sacrifices:

- (1) The regular morning sacrifice.**
- (2) The festive offerings, as prescribed (Numbers 28:26-31); the Levites chanting the Hallel, in which the people joined.**
- (3) The firstling loaves, with their accompanying offerings. These loaves were prepared as follows: new wheat was brought to the temple, threshed like other grain offerings, ground and passed through twelve sieves, and the remainder was redeemed and eaten by anyone. Care was taken that the flour for each loaf should be taken of equal size, that it should be separately kneaded with luke-warm water (like all thank offerings), and separately baked in the temple itself.**

The loaves were made the evening preceding the festival; or, if that fell of the Sabbath, two evenings before. These loaves, with the two lambs, formed part of the same wave offering.

- (4) The freewill offerings of the people, which formed the cheerful and hospitable meal of the family and to which the Levite, the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger were invited.**

This festival is annually and sacredly kept by Jews of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, between the second half of May and the first half of June, thus prolonging it to two days. In

accordance with the injunction in Leviticus 23:15-16, the Jews regularly count every evening the fifty days from the second day of Passover until Pentecost and recite a prayer over it. The three days preceding the festival, on which the Jews commemorate the giving of the law, are called "the three days of separation and sanctification," because the Lord commanded Moses to set bounds about the mount and that the people should sanctify themselves three days prior to the giving of the law.

Exodus 19:12, 14, 23 \_\_\_\_\_

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On the preparation day the synagogues and private houses are adorned with flowers and fragrant herbs; the males purify themselves by immersion and confession of sins, put on festive garments, and go to the synagogue, where, after evening prayer, the hallowed nature of the festival is proclaimed by the cantor in the blessing pronounced over a cup of wine. The same is also done by every head of a family before the evening meal. After supper, either in the synagogue or in private houses, the reading of Scripture continues all night, the reason given being that, when God was about to reveal His law to Israel, He had to awaken them from sleep; to remove that sin they now keep awake during the night.

In the general festival service of the morning special prayers are inserted for the day, which set forth the glory of the Lawgiver and of Israel; the Great Hallel is recited; the lesson from the law (Exodus 19:1-28; Ezekiel 3:12) are read, the evening prayer is offered, and the benediction is received by the congregation, their heads covered by the fringed wrapper.

On the second evening they again go to the synagogue, using there the ritual for the festivals, in which are again inserted special prayers for the occasion, chiefly those on the greatness of God and on the giving of the law and the Ten Commandments. The sanctification of the festival is again pronounced, both by the head of the synagogue and by the heads of the families at home. Prayers different from those of the first day, also celebrating the giving of the law, are mingled with the ordinary prayers; the Hallel is recited, as well as the book of Ruth; the lesson read from the law is Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17, and the lesson from the prophets is Habakkuk 2:20-3:19, or Habakkuk 3:1-19; prayer is offered for departed relatives; the *Musaph Ritual* is recited; the priests pronounce the benediction; and the festival concludes after the afternoon service, as soon as the stars appear or darkness sets in.

## FALL FEASTS: TRUMPETS; DAY OF ATONEMENT; TABERNACLES

**The Seventh New Moon, or Feast of Trumpets.** This day in Hebrew is called "day of blowing." It is also the feast of the New Moon, which fell on the seventh month, or Tishri. This differed from the ordinary festivals of the new moon because of the symbolic meaning of the seventh or sabbatical month and partly, perhaps, because it marked the beginning of the civil year. This month was distinguished above all the other months of the year by the multitude of ordinances connected with it, the first day being consecrated to sacred rest and spiritual employment, the tenth being the Day of Atonement, whereas the fifteenth began the feast of Booths, or Tabernacles.

- (1) **The usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings.**
- (2) **The ordinary sacrifice for the New Moon, except the sin offering, namely, two young bulls, one ram, seven yearling lambs, with their grain and drink offerings (Numbers 28:11-14).**
- (3) **Another festive offering of one young bull, one ram, seven lambs, with their grain and drink offerings, together with "one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you" (Numbers 29:1-6).**

This day was observed as a feast day, in the strict sense, by resting from all work, and as a holy convocation, by the blowing of horns. In later times, while the drink offering of the sacrifice was being poured out, the priests and Levites changed Psalm 81, whereas in the evening sacrifice they sang Psalm 29.

Throughout the day trumpets were blown at Jerusalem from morning to evening. In the Temple it was done even on a Sabbath, but not outside its walls. The Day of Atonement, which falls on this month, provides expiation of sins and the removal of all uncleanness; and the Feast of Tabernacles, beginning five days thereafter, provides a foretaste of the blessedness of life in fellowship with the Lord. This significance of the seventh month is indicated by the sounding of trumpets, whereby the congregation present a memorial of themselves loudly and strongly before Jehovah, calling on Him to remember the promised blessings of grace in fulfillment of His covenant.

The fact that Tishri was the great month for sowing might easily have suggested the thought of commemorating on this day the finished work of creation, and thus the feast of Trumpets came to be regarded as the anniversary of the beginning of the world. The rabbis believed that on this day God judges all men, and that they pass before Him as a flock of sheep passes before a shepherd.

**Day of Atonement.** The day appointed for a yearly, general, and perfect expiation for sins and uncleanness that might remain, despite the regular sacrifices.

Cross reference to Hebrews 9:7 and record the exact sins forgiven here: \_\_\_\_\_

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The Levitical ritual was a constant reminder that "the Law...can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near" (Hebrews 10:1). Even with the most scrupulous observance of the prescribed ordinances many sins and defilements would still remain unacknowledged and therefore without expiation. This want was met by the appointment of a yearly, general expiation of all the unintentional or unknown sins and uncleanness that had remained unatoned for and uncleansed in the course of the year (Leviticus 16:33).

Thus on the Day of Atonement Israel reconciled to Jehovah, which was necessary before the feast of Booths, the feast that prefigured the ingathering of all nations. In connection with this point it may also be well to remember that the Jubilee year was always proclaimed on the Day of Atonement. We will be looking at the Jubilee year later in this study.

Atonement occurred on the tenth day of the seventh month, or Tishri (October). The day was a high Sabbath, on which no work was done. All the people were to afflict their souls, to fast (from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth), under penalty of being cut off from Israel. The chronological link connecting the Day of Atonement with the death of Aaron's sons (Leviticus 10:1-5) was intended to point out that event as leading to it and also to show the importance and holiness attached to an entrance into the inmost sanctuary of God. Read Leviticus 16:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

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From Leviticus 16:5-28 and Numbers 29:7-11, it would appear that the sacrifices for the day were as follows:

- (1) The ordinary morning sacrifice.**
- (2) The expiatory sacrifices for the priesthood, namely, a young bull.**
- (3) The sin offering for the people, a kid from the goats for Jehovah and another for Azazel.**
- (4) The festive burnt offerings of the priests and people and, with them, another sin offering.**
- (5) The ordinary evening sacrifice.**

If the Day of Atonement fell on a Sabbath, the ordinary Sabbath sacrifices were offered besides all these.

Ceremonies of the Day of Atonement were connected with the preparations for the high priests, the expiatory rites, and the festive offerings. The center point of this feast was the expiation offered by the high priest after the morning sacrifice. In later times, at least, the high priest underwent a special preparation for this service. Seven days before, he had left his own home and taken up his residence in the Temple chambers. A substitute was provided, lest the high priest should die or become Levitically unclean. During this week he practiced the various priestly duties, such as sprinkling the blood, burning incense, lighting the lamps, offering the daily sacrifices, etc.; for every part of the service on Atonement Day depended upon the high priest, and he could make no mistake. Further, he was to abstain from all that could render him unclean or disturb his devotions. On the morning of the Day of Atonement the high priest bathed his entire person, not in the place ordinarily used by the priests but one specially set apart for him. He then put on the holy garments—the coat, drawers, girdle, and headdress of white cloth—thus signifying that he was entirely cleansed from the defilement of sin and was arrayed in holiness.

After everything was ready, the high priest slew the bull (the sin offering for himself and his house), then filled a censer with burning coals from the altar of burnt offering, and, putting two handfuls of incense into a vase, bore them into the Holy of Holies. He poured the incense upon the coals, “that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat.” As the burning incense was a symbol of prayer, this covering of the Mercy Seat with the cloud of incense was a symbolic covering of the glory of the Holy One with prayer to God, and thus served as to protect the worshiper. The high priest now returned to the altar of burnt offering to fetch some of the blood of the bull, which he sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat (“on the east side,” Leviticus 16:14) and seven times upon the ground before it.

After this he slew the goat selected for a sin offering and did the same as with the blood of the bull, namely, sprinkled it upon and before the Mercy Seat. He thus made atonement for the Holy of Holies because of the uncleanness of both priests and people (Leviticus 16:16).

He was then required to atone for the “tent of meeting,” which he did by sprinkling the blood of both the bull and the goat, first on the horns of the golden altar once, and then seven times toward the altar, on the ground. Atonement having been made for the building, the high priest was to expiate the altar of burnt offering, which he did by first putting some of the blood of the bull and the goat upon the horns of the altar and sprinkling it seven times. Thus the dwelling, the court, and the holy things were expiated and cleansed. The question as to how often the high priest went into the Holy of Holies on this day is not of great importance. The biblical account seems to indicate that he entered four times:

- (1) With the incense, while a priest continued to agitate the blood of the bull lest it should coagulate.**
- (2) With the blood of the bull.**
- (3) With the blood of the goat.**
- (4) To bring the censer, which, according to the Talmud, was done after the evening sacrifice. The high priest then, going out into the court of the Tabernacle, laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, confessing over it all the sins and transgressions of the people. It was led away into the wilderness by a man standing ready and there let go free to signify the carrying away of Israel's sins that God had forgiven.**

**Festive Offerings.** The high priest then went into the Tabernacle, took off his white garments, laid them down there (because they were to be worn only in the expiatory ritual of this day), washed himself in the Holy Place (in the laver of the court), put on his usual official robes, and completed his own and the people's burnt offering in the court, at the same time burning the fat of the sin offerings on the altar. But both of the sin offerings were carried outside of the camp and burned with skin, flesh, and dung. The persons who had taken the live goat into the wilderness and burned the sin offerings outside the camp were, before they returned to it, to wash their clothes and bathe their bodies.

This act of expiation for the people and the holy places being finished, there was presented immediately before the evening sacrifice, according to Jewish tradition, the offering prescribed for the feast of the day:

- A goat as sin offering.
- A bullock, a ram, and several lambs as burnt offerings, with the corresponding meat and drink offerings (Numbers 29:7-11).

According to the rabbis, the high priest on this day performed all the duties of the regular daily service; sprinkled the blood eight times, once toward the ceiling and seven times on the floor; and after returning the third time from the Holy of Holies to the Holy Place sprinkled the blood of bull and goat toward the veil, mixed the blood of the two animals together, and sprinkled the altar of incense with the mixture, pouring out what remained at the foot of the altar of burnt offerings. The two goats were similar in appearance (size and value); the lots with which they were chosen were originally of boxwood, later of gold. The high priest, as soon as he received the signal that the goat had reached the wilderness, read some lessons from the law and offered prayer. Very strict rules are given by the Mishnah for the fasting of the people.



**Modern Observance.** The strict Jews, on the day previous to the Day of Atonement, provide a cock slain by a lower-ranking rabbi; the person whose property it is then takes the fowl by the legs, swings it over the heads of himself and company, and at the same time prays to God that the sins committed by them during the year may enter the fowl. This fowl seems to be a substitute for the scapegoat of old. In the evening, after a sumptuous meal, they go to the synagogue dressed in their best. After a blessing by the clerk, each contributes toward the free gift offering, and which begins the evening prayer.

The reader, the chief rabbi, and many of the congregation are clad with the shrouds in which they are to be buried, continuing in prayer and supplication for upward of three hours. Some remain, all night, and those who go to their homes come again in the morning at five o'clock and remain until dark. The following is the order of the day:

- Morning prayers.
- The usual prayers and supplications peculiar to the day.
- Reading the portion from Leviticus 16.
- Reading Numbers 19:7-11.
- Reading the portion from the prophets (Isaiah 57:14-58:14).
- Prayer of supplication asking Jehovah to be favorable.
- The offering of the day from Numbers 29:7-28.

They abstain from food altogether during the day.

**Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles).** The third of the great annual feasts, the other two being the Passover and Pentecost.

This festival is alternately called:

- (1) The festival of Tents.
- (2) "Feast of Booths."
- (3) The feast of Ingathering because it was held after the ingathering of the harvest and fruits.
- (4) The festival of Jehovah, "feast of the Lord," or simply *the festival*.

Read the principle passages referring to this feast:

Exodus 23:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 23:34-36 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 39:43 \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 16:13-15; 31:10-13 \_\_\_\_\_

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## Nehemiah 8

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The origin of this feast is connected by some with Succoth, the first halting place of the Israelites on their march out of Egypt, and the booths are taken to commemorate those in which they lodged for the last time before they entered the desert. It was ordered by Moses in the regulations he gave to the Israelites respecting their festivals, and it unites two elements: the ingathering of the labor of the field, the fruits of the earth—or the ingathering of the threshing floor and the wine press—and the dwelling in booths, which were to be matters of joy to Israel.

The dwelling in booths was to be a reminder to them of the fatherly care and protection of Jehovah while Israel was journeying from Egypt to Canaan. In comparison with the 'house of bondage' the dwelling in booths on the march through the wilderness was in itself an image of freedom. Such a reminder of God's loving care and Israel's dependence would, naturally, keep the Israelites from pride and conceit.

The festival began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri (the seventh month), five days before the Day of Atonement, and although, strictly speaking, it lasted only seven days another day was added. This day was observed with a sabbatic rest.

Read Nehemiah 8:18

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To distinguish between the pentateuchal enactments and the rites, and ceremonies, that gradually developed, scholars generally divide the description of its observance into three sections: Mosaic, postexilic, and post-Dispersion.

*Mosaic.* On the first day of the feast, booths were constructed of fresh branches of fruit and palm trees, "boughs of leafy trees and willows." These were located in courts, streets, public squares, and on house roofs. In these all home-born Israelites were to dwell during the festival, in memory of their fathers' dwelling in booths after their exodus from Egypt. The day was also to be observed as a Sabbath and a holy convocation, in which no secular work was to be done, and all able-bodied male members of the congregation not legally precluded were to appear before the Lord. The booth in Scripture is not an image of privation and misery but of protection, preservation, and shelter from heat, storm, and tempest. Every sabbatical year the law was to be read publicly in the sanctuary on the first day of the festival.

Read Deuteronomy 31:10-13

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The six following days were half festivals, probably devoted to social enjoyments and friendly gatherings, when every family head was to extend hospitality, especially to the poor and the stranger. To these seven days there was added an eighth, the twenty-

second of the month, as the close of the feast. This day was observed with the sabbatic rest and holy convocation but had only a simple sacrifice, similar to the first and tenth days of the seventh month.

*Postexilic.* After the Babylonian captivity the feast of Booths began to be strictly and generally kept, and more minute definitions and more expanded applications of the concise pentateuchal injunction were imperatively demanded, in order to secure uniformity of practice, as well as to infuse devotion and joy into the celebration.

It was ordained that the booth must be a detached and temporary habitation, constructed for the festival and not for permanent residence; the interior must neither be higher than twenty cubits nor lower than ten palms; it must have not less than three walls and must be so thatched as to admit the view of the sky and the stars. The part open to the rays of the sun was not to exceed the part shaded by the cover; it must not be under a tree, or covered with a cloth or with anything that contracts defilement or does not derive its growth from the ground. The furniture of the booths must be of the plainest, and only such as was fairly necessary. Every Israelite was to dwell in the booth during the whole of the seven days of the festival, while his house was to be only his occasional abode; and he was only to quit the booth when it rained heavily. Even a child, as soon as it ceased to be dependent upon its mother, must dwell in the booth. The only persons exempt were those deputed on pious missions, invalids, nurses, women, and infants.

There was a controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees respecting the use of the branches of trees mentioned in Leviticus 23:40; the latter, from Nehemiah 8:15-16, understanding them to be for the erection of the booths, whereas the Pharisees applied them to what the worshipers were to carry in their hands. The rabbis ruled that the *aethrog*, or citron, was the fruit of the "beautiful trees," and "the boughs of leafy trees" meant the myrtle, provided it did not have more berries than leaves. Every worshiper carried the *aethrog* in his left hand, and in his right the *lulab*, or palm, with myrtle and willow branch on either side of it tied together on the outside with its own kind, though on the inside it might be fastened with a gold thread. The *lulab* was used in the Temple on each of the seven festive days; even children, if able to shake it, were required to carry one.

1. The day before the feast, 14<sup>th</sup> of Tishri, was the *Preparation Day*. On this day the pilgrims came to Jerusalem and prepared all that was necessary for the solemn observance of the festival. When evening set in, the blasts of the priests' trumpets on the Temple mount announced the advent of the feast. As at the Passover and at Pentecost, the altar of burnt offering was cleansed during the first night watch, and the Temple gates were thrown open immediately after midnight. The time until the beginning of the ordinary morning sacrifice was occupied in examining the various sacrifices and offerings that were to be

brought during the day. If this day was the Sabbath all *lulabs* had to be deposited somewhere in the Temple, as it was contrary to law to carry the palms from the booths of the pilgrims to the Temple on the Sabbath.

2. On the first day of the feast, 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri, while the morning sacrifice was being prepared, a priest, accompanied by a joyous procession and with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam, where he drew water into a golden pitcher. On the Sabbaths the water was brought from a golden vessel in the Temple itself, to which it had been carried from Siloam the preceding day. At the same time that the procession started for Siloam, another went to a place in the Kidron Valley, to which they brought willow branches. These they stuck on either side of the great altar, bending them over so as to form a canopy. The priest who had gone to Siloam timed his return so as to join his brother priests as they carried the sacrifice to the altar. On reaching the water gate he was welcomed by three blasts of the trumpet. He ascended the steps of the altar with another priest, who carried a pitcher of wine for a drink offering. They turned to the left, where there were two silver basins with holes in the bottom; the basin for the water at the W with a narrower hole, that for the wine at the E with wider hole, so that both might empty at the same time. Into these respective basins the water and wine were poured; the people shouting to the priest, "Raise thy hand," to show that he really poured the water into the basin. The reason for this was that Alexander Jannaeus, a Sadducee (about 95 B.C.), had shown his contempt for the Pharisees by pouring the water upon the ground. He was pelted by the people with their *aethrogs*, and the soldiers, being called in, killed nearly six thousand Jews in the Temple.

As soon as the altar was decorated with the willow branches the morning sacrifice was offered, followed by the special festive sacrifices. While these sacrifices were being offered, the Levites chanted the Great Hallel, as at the Passover and Pentecost. When the choir came to the words "Give thanks to the Lord" (Psalm 118:1), again when they sang, "O Lord, do save, we beseech Thee" (Psalm 118:29), all the worshipers shook their *lulabs* toward the altar. The chant finished, the priests marched around the altar, exclaiming, "Hosanna, O Jehovah: give us help, O Jehovah, give prosperity" (cf. Psalm 118:25). The benediction was then pronounced, and the people dispersed, amid the repeated exclamation "How beautiful art thou, O altar!" or "To Jehovah and thee, O altar, we give thanks!"

Each pilgrim went to his booth, there to enjoy his social repast with the Levite, the stranger, etc. On the first day of the festival every Israelite carried about his *lulab*, or palm, all day—to the synagogue, on his visits to the sick and mourners.

3. The second through the sixth days of the feast, 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> of Tishri, were called also the middle days of the feast (John 7:14), or *the lesser festival*. These days were half holy days, on which necessary food or raiment might be privately purchased, and work required for the observance of the festival might be performed. During these days the sacrifices were offered, the palm and the citron were used, and the priests marched around the altar as on the first day of the festival, with the exception that the number of animals offered diminished daily.
4. The seventh or the last day of the feast fell on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Tishri (but according to some authorities this title was given to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Tishri). This seventh day of the festival was distinguished from the other days as follows: after the *Musaph*, or special festival sacrifices of the day, the priests marched seven times around the altar instead of once, as on other days; the willows that surrounded the altar were then so thoroughly shaken by the people that the leaves lay thickly on the ground; the people also brought palm branches and beat them to pieces at the side of the altar, from which the day was called *the day of willows* and *the branch-threshing day*. This over, the children who were present threw away their palms and ate their *aethrogs*, or citrons; on the afternoon of this day the pilgrims began to move the furniture from the booths, the obligation to dwell in them ceasing at that time. This, the great Hosanna day, was regarded as one of the four days whereon God judges the world. It seems that it was on this day that Jesus uttered those memorable words, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37).
5. The eighth day of the feast, 22<sup>nd</sup> of Tishri, was added as the close of the festival and was observed with sabbatic rest and holy convocation. It had only a simple sacrifice (similar to the first and tenth day of the seventh month. The people no longer dwelt in booths, the joyful procession for the drawing of water was discontinued, the illumination of the court of the women ceased, and the palms and willows were not used.

The ceremony of drawing the water was repeated every morning during the seven days of the festival but was discontinued on the eighth.

When the feast of Booths fell on a sabbatic year, the reading of portions of the law was afterward confined to one book of the Pentateuch, the number of synagogues in which the law was read every week rendering it less needful to read extensive portions in the Temple. A peculiarity of this festival was that on the first seven days all twenty-four divisions of the priests officiated, whereas at all the other festivals only those upon whom the lot fell served. On the eighth day the twenty-four divisions were not all present; only those upon whom the lot fell. As the close of the first day of the feast was celebrated, the "joy of the pouring out of the water," the worshipers descended to the court of the women, where great preparations had been made.

Four giant candelabra were there, each with four golden bowls, a ladder resting against each candelabra and upon them standing four sons of the priests holding pitchers of oil with which they fed the lamps, while the cast-off breeches and girdles of the priests served for wicks. The light from these lamps illuminated the whole city, and around them danced men with lighted torches in their hands, singing hymns and songs of praise. The Levites, stationed on the fifteen steps that led into the court, corresponding to the fifteen psalms of degrees, accompanied the songs with harps, lyres, cymbals, and other musical instruments. The dancing, as well as the music, continued until daybreak. It is probably that Jesus referred to this custom when He spoke those well-known words "I am the light of the world." John 8:12 \_\_\_\_\_

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*Since the Dispersion.* Except for the adaptation of the rites to the altered condition of the nation, the Jews of present day continue to celebrate the feast of Booths as in the days of the second Temple.

As soon as the Day of Atonement is over, every orthodox Jew begins to erect the booth in which he and his family are to take up their abode during the festival, and he also provides himself with a *lulab* (palm) and *aethrog* (citron). The festival begins on the eve of 14<sup>th</sup> of Tishri (Preparation Day). All the Jews, attire in the festive garments, resort to the synagogues, where, after the evening prayer, the hallowed nature of the festival is proclaimed by the cantor in the blessing pronounced over the wine. After the evening service every family goes to its booth, which is illuminated and adorned with leaves and fruit and in which the first festive meal is taken. Before this is eaten, the head of the family pronounces the sanctity of the festival over a cup of wine. Each member of the family washes his hands, pronouncing the prescribed benediction while drying them, and all begin to eat. Orthodox Jews sleep in the booths all night.

The following morning, the first day of the feast, they go to the synagogue holding the palms and citrons in their hands, laying them down during the former part of the prayer, but taking them up after the eighteen benedictions, when about to recite the Hallel. Holding the palm in the right hand and the citron in the left, they recite the following prayer: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Thy commandments, and has enjoined us to take the palm branch."

Then each turns his citron upside down and waves his palm branch three times toward each point of the compass, and the legate of the congregation pronounces the benediction; the Hallel is chanted; the lesson are read from the law and from the prophets. After this the *Musaph* prayer is recited; when the reader comes to the passage where the word *priests* occurs, the Aaronites and the Levites rise, and, after the latter have washed the hands of the former, the priests, with uplifted hands, pronounce the priestly benediction. The morning service concluded, the people again go to their booths to partake of the festive meal with the poor and the stranger. About five or six o'clock they recite, in the synagogue, the *Minchah* prayer, answering to the daily evening sacrifice in the Temple.

The ritual and rites of the second evening and morning are similar to those of the first; the lesson from the prophets, however, is from 1 Kings 8:2-21. After the afternoon service of this day the middle days of the festival begin, which last four days, when the ritual is like that of ordinary days, a few prayers being inserted in the regular formula; lessons are read on each day, and the procession goes around the ark.

The seventh day, the Great Hosanna, is celebrated with peculiar solemnity, because it is believed that on this day God decrees the rain for the future harvest. On the evening previous every Israelite supplies himself with a small bunch of willows tied with palm bark. Some pious Jews read all night from Deuteronomy, the Psalms, the Mishnah, etc., and are immersed before the morning prayer. Candles are lighted at the time of morning service, and after the morning prayer.

On the evening of the seventh day the festival commences, which concludes the whole cycle of the feast. Being a day of holy convocation, the *Kiddush* (i.e., proclamation) of its sanctity is offered. On the following morning, in the synagogue, the prayers of the first two days are offered; the special lesson of the day is read; the *Musaph*, or additional prayer, is offered, and the priests pronounce the benediction. The people no longer take their meals in the booths on this day. On the evening of this day begins the festival called the *Rejoicing of the Law*. The eighteen benedictions are recited.

On the following morning the Jews resort again to the synagogue, recite the Hallel after the eighteen benedictions, empty the ark of all its scrolls, put a lighted candle on it, and with the scrolls go around the reading desk amid jubilant songs. The scrolls are returned to the ark, with the exception of two, from one of which is read Deuteronomy 33. Four persons are at first called, then all the little children, and then again several adults.

The design of this festival is to celebrate the annual completion of the perusal of the Pentateuch, inasmuch as on this day the last section of the law is read. Hence the name of the festival, *The Rejoicing of Finishing the Law*.

## SABBATH YEARS; JUBILEE

We find the first introduction of this institution in the so-called Covenant Book (Exodus 21-23). Its connection with the day of rest (Sabbath) is obvious, although it seems unusual that in Exodus 23:10-12 the regulation regarding the 7<sup>th</sup> year should precede the statute respecting the 7<sup>th</sup> day.

Read that scripture and record your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

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In this early period of the history of Israel the regulation regarding the 7<sup>th</sup> year was primarily intended for the relief of the poor and the awakening of a sense of responsibility in the hearts of those better provided with the means of subsistence. It would be wrong, however, to deny its Sabbatic character, for the text says expressly that the land was entitled to a rest because it needed it; it must be released for a time in order to gain fresh strength and insure its future fertility. Two motives, then, present themselves most clearly, one of a social, the other of an economic character, and both are rooted in God's dealings with Israel.

Another evidence of the humane spirit in the Mosaic Law may be found in Exodus 21:2-6 where, in the case of a Hebrew slave, the length of his servitude is limited to six years. The connection with the idea of the Sabbath is clear. However it is also clear that the 7<sup>th</sup> year in which a slave might be set free need not align with the Sabbatical year, though it might.

Read Deuteronomy 15:1-18 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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Many scholars believe that the scope had been enlarged in later years so as to include the release from pecuniary obligation such as the remission of debts or, at least, their temporary suspension. This seems to have happened as the children of Israel were developing from a purely agricultural people to a commercial nation.

Still the same spirit of compassion for the poor and those struggling for a living asserts itself as in the earlier period, and it goes without saying that the old regulation concerning the release of the land in the 7<sup>th</sup> year was still in force.

According to Deuteronomy 15:1, this proclamation occurred at the end of every 7 years, or, as 15:9 seems to indicate, during "the year of release."

The Sabbatical year was a solemn and general proclamation, the date of which was very likely the Day of Atonement in the 7<sup>th</sup> month (the Sabbatical month). The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (booths) began five days later and it last from the 15<sup>th</sup> day to the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month. In the Sabbatical year, at that time, the Law was read "before all Israel in their hearing," a fact which tends to prove that the Sabbatical year had become a matter of general observance. Another lesson may be deduced from this passage: it gives us a hint respecting the use to which the people may have put their leisure time during the 12 months of Sabbatical rest; it may have been a period of religious and probably other instruction.

In Leviticus 25:1-7 the central idea of the Sabbatical year is unfolded. We should not lose sight of the religious and educational character even of their ancient legislation.

One central thought is brought home: God is the owner of the soil, and through His grace only the chosen people have come into its possession. Their time, and they themselves, belong to Him. It was Yahweh's pleasure to call the children of Israel into life, and if they live and work and prosper, they are indebted to His unmerited loving-kindness. They should, therefore, put their absolute trust in Him, never doubt His word or His power, always obey Him and so always receive His unbounded blessings.

If we thus put all the emphasis on the religious character of the Sabbatical year, we are in keeping with the idea permeating the Old Testament, namely that the children of Israel are the chosen people of Yahweh. All their agricultural, social, commercial and political relations were to be built upon their divine calling and shaped according to God's sovereign will.

But did they really observe the Sabbatical year? There are those who hold that the law regarding the Sabbatical year was not observed before the captivity.

Read Leviticus 26:34-43 and 2 Chronicles 36:21 and record your opinion here:

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But all we can gather from these passages is the palpable conclusion that the law regarding the Sabbatical year had not been strictly obeyed, a deficiency which may mar the effect of any law. The possibility of observing the precept of the Sabbatical year is demonstrated by the post-exilic history of the Jewish people. Nehemiah registers the solemn fact that the reestablished nation entered into a covenant to keep the law and to maintain the temple worship.

Read Nehemiah 9:38-10:32

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In Nehemiah 10:31, he alludes to the 7<sup>th</sup> year, "that we would forego the 7<sup>th</sup> year, and the exaction of every debt." We are not sure the exact meaning of this short allusion; it may refer to the Sabbatical rest of the land and the suspension of debts.

For a certainty we know that the Sabbatical year was observed by the Jews at the time of Alexander the Great. When he was petitioned by the Samaritans "that he would remit the tribute of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to them, because they did not sow therein, he asked who they were that made such a petition": he was told they were Hebrews. (Josephus, Antiquities XI, viii, 6).

During Maccabean and Hasmonean times, the law regarding the Sabbatical year was strictly observed, although it frequently weakened the cause of the Jews. Josephus also mentions the observance of the Sabbatical year in the Herodian era. The words of Tacitus show the proud Romans' estimate of the Jewish character and customs: "For the 7<sup>th</sup> day they are said to have prescribed rest because this day ended their labors; then, in addition, being allured by their lack of energy, they also spend the 7<sup>th</sup> year in laziness."

### **YEAR OF JUBILEE**

Read Leviticus 25:13-28 and Numbers 36:4

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The Hebrew word yobel, translated roughly as jubilee, stands for the horn of a ram. Such a horn can be made into a trumpet, and thus the word yobel came to be used as a synonym of trumpet. According to Leviticus 25:9 a loud trumpet should proclaim liberty throughout the country on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month (the Day of Atonement), after the lapse of 7 Sabbaths of years – 49 years.

In this manner, every 50<sup>th</sup> year was to be announced as a jubilee year. All real property should automatically revert to its original owner, and those who, compelled by poverty, had sold themselves as slaves to their brothers, should regain their liberty.

In addition to this, the Jubilee Year was to be observed after the manner of the sabbatic year. There should be neither sowing nor reaping nor pruning of vines, and everybody was expected to live on what the fields and the vineyards produced "of themselves," and no attempt should be made at storing up the products of the land. Thus there are three distinct factors constituting the essential features of the Jubilee Year: personal liberty, restitution of property, and what we might call the simple life.

### **1. Personal Liberty.**

The 50<sup>th</sup> year was to be a time in which liberty should be proclaimed to all the inhabitants of the country. We should, indeed, diminish the import of this institution if we should apply it only to those who were to be freed from the bonds of physical servitude. Undoubtedly, they must have been the foremost in realizing its beneficial effects. But the law was intended to benefit all, the masters as well as the servants. They should never lose sight of their being brothers and citizens of theocratic kingdom. They owned their life to God and were subject to His sovereign will. Only through loyalty to Him were they free and could ever hope to be free and independent of all other masters.

### **2. Restitution of Property.**

The institution of the Jubilee Year should become the means of fixing the price of real property. It should exclude the possibility of selling any piece of land permanently because the land belongs to God.

The same rule was to be applied to dwelling-houses outside of the walled cities and also to the houses owned by Levites, although they were built within walled cities.

In the same manner the price of Hebrew slaves was to vary according to the proximity of the Jubilee Year.

Read Leviticus 25:47-54 \_\_\_\_\_

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This passage deals with the enslaving of a Hebrew by a foreigner living among the Jews; it goes without saying that the same rule would hold good in the case of a Hebrew selling himself to one of his own people.

In Leviticus 27:17-25 we find a similar arrangement respecting such lands that were "sanctified to Yahweh." In all these cases the original owner was at liberty to redeem his property at any time, or have it redeemed by some of his nearest relatives.

The crowning feature, though, was the full restitution of all real property in the Jubilee year. The primary object of this regulation was, of course, the reversion of all hereditary property to the family which originally possessed it, and the reestablishment of the original arrangement regarding the division of the land. But that was not all; for this legal disposition and regulation of external matters was closely connected with the high calling of the Jewish people. It was a part of the Divine plan looking forward to the salvation of mankind. In the Year of Jubilee a great future era of Yahweh's favor is foreshadowed, that period which, according to Isaiah, shall be ushered in to all those that labor and are heavy laden, by Him who was anointed by the spirit of the Lord Yahweh.

Read Isaiah 61:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

### **3. The Simple Life.**

The Jubilee Year, being the crowning point of all sabbatical institutions, gave the finishing touch as it were to the whole cycle of sabbatic days, months and years. It is, therefore, quite appropriate that it should be a year of rest for the land like the preceding sabbatic year. It follows, of course, that in this instance there were two years, one after the other, in which there should be no sowing or systematic ingathering.

This seems to be clear from Leviticus 25:18-22: "And you shall sow the eighth year, and eat of the fruits, the old store; until the ninth year, until its fruits come in, you shall eat the old store." Thus in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> years the people were to live on what the fields produced in the 6<sup>th</sup> year and whatever grew spontaneously.

This shows the reason why we may say that one of the factors constituting the Jubilee Year was the "simple life." They could not help but live simply for two consecutive years. Nobody can deny that this afforded ample opportunity to develop the habit of living within very limited means.

Read Leviticus 25:18-22, and record the answer to the question: "What shall we eat the seventh year?" \_\_\_\_\_

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Nothing was expected of the people but faith in Yahweh and confidence in His power, which was not to be shaken by any doubtful reflection. And right here we have found the root of the simple life: no life without God, and no simplicity of life without true faith in Him.

Compare Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3 \_\_\_\_\_

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Did the Jewish people ever observe the Jubilee Year? There is no reason why they should not have observed it in pre-exilic but they may have failed in it, and if so, we should not be surprised at all. Not that the institution in itself was cumbered with any obstacles that could not have been overcome; but what is more common than unbelief and unwillingness to trust God absolutely. There is a tradition according to which the Jubilee Year has never been observed—neither in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah nor at any later period. The truth of this seems to be corroborated by the silence of Josephus, who, while referring quite frequently to the sabbatic year, never once mentions the Year of Jubilee.