

(Lev. 23:1-2) - Under the Old Covenant the Lord God required Israel to keep seven feasts. Each feast was typical of our Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation of His people. God began with a reminder of the sabbath, the sign of the covenant (*Exod. 31:12-18*). Each feast was associated with sabbath observance. This typified the eternal rest of His people based on Christ's finished work of redemption (*Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 4*). Salvation was (and is) all of grace and not of our works but by the one work of Christ as our Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer. Under the New Covenant we are not bound by law to keep these feast days (*Col. 2:16-17*). But we do keep them spiritually when we believe in and celebrate our complete salvation in and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Lev. 23:4-5) - THE PASSOVER was the first feast to be observed. This feast was a celebration of God's great and powerful work of bringing Israel out of Egypt by His mighty power because of the blood that was shed for them (*Ex. 12-14*). The spiritual and eternal significance of the Passover feast was to picture the promised Messiah (Christ) Who would come as the Lamb of God Who would bear away the sins of God's elect (spiritual Israel) according to God's promise (*1 Cor. 5:7*). Like the blood on Jewish altars, the lamb's blood over the doorposts in Egypt could never take away sins spiritually and eternally. The blood of Christ cleanses God's people from all sin and provides all righteousness for God to justify His elect. Christ is our Passover and our Righteousness before God (*Rom. 3:21-26; 1 Pet. 1:18-20*).

(Lev. 23:6-8) - THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD was a continuation of the Passover in which the Israelites were to keep a sabbath and eat unleavened bread along with bringing an offering made by fire unto the Lord. The Passover (and the offering made by fire) typifies the GROUND of salvation and justification before God, and the feast of unleavened bread typifies the effect (result) of the blood of Christ shed for our sins. As leaven is a type of sin, this feast pointed to the sinless Christ, Who died for our sins which were legally imputed to Him, and the legal sinlessness of all for whom He shed His precious blood. We are justified by His blood, which is His righteousness imputed to us. And though, while in this body of flesh, we are still sinners within ourselves, Christ has completely taken away (purged) our sins so that God does not impute them to us or keep a record of them to hold them against us (*Rom. 8:33-34; Heb. 10:14-22*). We have been judged for all our sins in Christ crucified. Eating this bread for seven days pictures the complete work of Christ as He forever purged our sins and finished the work of righteousness (*Rom. 10:4; Heb. 1:3*). Eating it also typifies our feeding spiritually upon Christ and by faith in Christ Who is the Bread of life for His people (*John 6:53-56*).

(Lev. 23:9-14) - THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS was during the barley harvest in Israel. The people were to bring the firstfruits of that harvest and offer it unto the Lord in recognition that the blessing of the harvest was totally from God and giving Him thanks for the bountiful harvest. Spiritually, this feast speaks of the resurrection of Christ (the harvest of His death which is likened to planting seed - *John 12:23-33*). His being planted in death to satisfy the justice of God brought forth righteousness (evidenced by His resurrection from the dead) and which assures the absolute certainty of the spiritual and eternal resurrection and life for all His people for whom He died (*Rom. 4:21-25; 11:16; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; James 1:18; Rev. 14:4*). Notice in *verse 12* how the sheaf of the firstfruits were to be offered with the lamb of burnt offering, showing how that spiritual life can only come by the death of Christ.

(Lev. 23:15-22) - THE FEAST OF WEEKS was held fifty days (seven weeks and a day—a sabbath) after the feast of first fruits. It is commonly called “Pentecost” because it was held on the 50th day. This was held at the beginning of the wheat harvest. The first fruits of the wheat, like the first fruits of the barley, were to be offered to the Lord, but not a sheaf. The wheat offering was to be offered in the form of two loaves of bread, and it was to be leavened bread which the priests would eat. The loaves were to be offered with specific animal sacrifices, and, finally, waved with two lambs of the first year before the Lord by God’s appointed priest. This feast was a picture of the ingathering of God’s elect, all redeemed by the blood of Christ, through the work of God the Holy Spirit (*Joel 2, Acts 2*). The two loaves of leavened bread represent God’s elect (sinners saved by grace), gathered from the four corners of the earth by the Holy Ghost, and presented before him, in connection with the righteousness of Christ our Passover, who was sacrificed for us. In the Passover, we see the sacrificial death of Christ, the Lamb of God. In the sheaf of first fruits, we see the resurrection, ascension, and acceptance of Christ as our sin-atonement Substitute, and the guarantee of our resurrection unto life. Here, in the feast of Pentecost, we see the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit for the ingathering of God’s elect, which was the result of Christ’s accomplished redemption (*Gal. 3:13-14; 4:4-6*).

(Lev. 23:23-25) - THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS was held in the Fall. No work was to be done. Burnt offerings and a sin offering were to be brought before the Lord. The trumpets were calls to the people to stop their work and bring their offerings before the Lord. Spiritually, this feast was a type of spiritual joy and gladness that belongs to God’s elect when the Holy Spirit brings them to hear the joyful sound of the Gospel of God’s grace and mercy in Christ (*Psa. 89:14-18; Isa. 35:10*). Every saved sinner enters into the joyful sound of grace proclaimed in the Gospel. We hear the sweet sounds of mercy and truth, justice and judgment, righteousness and peace blended together in blessed harmony, and rejoice. We hear of justice satisfied, redemption accomplished, our sins are purged and pardoned by His blood, righteousness finished and imputed to us, God glorified, salvation secured, all of grace!

(Lev. 23:26-32) - THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (see Lesson 38) - The word “atonement” in *verse 27* should be plural - “atonements.” It would be better translated “expiations.” This is the same as the day of atonement described in *Leviticus 16* and typifies our perfect, complete restoration to our God through the blood of Christ sprinkled on the mercy seat. As stated in Lesson 38, this was the most important day of the year for the nation. For us today, this is the day of the cross-death of Christ when by His ONE offering He perfected forever all whom the Father had given Him before the world began (*Heb. 10:14*).

(Lev. 23:33-43) - THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES was a time when Israel was reminded that they dwelt in tents (booths) in the wilderness, that God dwelt with them in the cloudy and fiery pillar, and that God delivered them out of the wilderness and into the promised land. It was to be a time of remembrance and repentance. Spiritually, it was a type of Christ Who came to this wilderness of sin and death and united Himself with sinless human flesh to save us from our sins and bring us out of the wilderness of sin and death into the blessedness of salvation by His grace. The eighth day mentioned in *verse 36* is the day of new beginnings. It is the day that God’s children are born again and brought to faith in Christ and repentance of dead works and idolatry (*cf. Php. 3:3-9*). Like all of the other feasts, this one pointed sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ in the glory of His Person and the power and success of His finished work of redemption for His people and the salvation God freely and fully provides us in and by Him (*cf. John 7:37-38; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 21:5-7*). These feasts were all truly meant to be celebrations of Christ!