

THE GLORY OF GOD

Week 6 – The Feasts of the Lord; Meeting with God

October 16, 2018

Francis Chan, in the preface of his book, *Crazy Love*, wrote, “The core problem isn’t the fact that we’re lukewarm, halfhearted, or stagnant Christians. The crux of it all is why we are this way, and it is because we have an inaccurate view of God. We see Him as a benevolent Being Who is satisfied when people manage to fit Him into their lives in some small way. God...deserves to be the center of our lives. Jesus came humbly as a servant, but He never begs us to give Him some small part of ourselves. He commands everything from His followers.” Chan then writes in the book’s preface, “Come with me on this journey. I don’t promise it will be painless. Change, as we all know, is uncomfortable. It’s up to you to respond (to what God is revealing to you). But you will have a choice: to adjust how you live daily or to stay the same.”

The questions we each need to ask as we study God’s word, “God, what do You want FROM me in this situation?” and “God, what do you want FOR me in this situation?” Bottom line: How does this matter to God? How can we GLORIFY HIM?

Feasting – a shared meal. We find tables in the OT and in the NT: Abraham prepared a feast for God when God appeared at Abraham’s tent (Gen. 18); “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies” (Psa. 23:5); “He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love” (Song of Solomon 2:4); “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” (Lk. 14:15); “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son...” (Matt. 22:2ff); “I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,” (Matt. 8:11)....

When Jesus himself wanted to explain to his disciples what his forthcoming death was all about, He gave them a meal.

A great feast was depicted when the OT prophets wanted to speak of the day when God would dwell with man in the Millennial Kingdom. Isaiah spoke of a coming day when Yahweh will prepare “a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines” ([Isa 25:6](#)).

We’re going to understand FEASTING WITH GOD.

Lev. 23:1-2 - *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,* ² *“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts. God is directing His instructions to Moses for a specific people group - the children of Israel. The Hebrew word for feasts is mow-ed which means appointed time. These appointed times are to be proclaimed as holy (set apart) convocations (a calling together; a sacred assembly)*

God calls the feasts in Lev. 23 “MY feasts” - they belong to God, they reflect Who God is! They are sacred assemblies during which to gather.

Lev. 23:4 - *These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.* These appointed times which are sacred/set apart assemblies – they are to be called out loudly – they are to be broadcast at their appointed times. These are appointed meetings between God and the children of Israel. They’re fixed. They’re set in stone. They’re not going to change. God does not change – Malachi 3:6 – “I am the Lord, I change not.” He has laid before us His plan which WILL NEVER CHANGE: His plan of redemption which is His plan for the world! AND, we see a timetable in this plan! God gave the children of Israel a GRAPHIC calendar with object lessons and visual aids! This timeline was for the purpose of causing the children of Israel to recognize that God is Lord and He is in control of every moment and must rule over every second of their lives.

The word “appointed” speaks to not only a specific time...it encompasses an appointed place and an appointed meeting – a meeting among the people and GOD! God desired to draw near to the children of Israel and to have them draw near to Him. What a beautiful picture of God’s heart!

God gave the Jewish people the seven feasts to point them to the Messiah – Jesus. Israel has been a nation in waiting. For Whom were they waiting? THE MESSIAH.

Each feast commemorates an event in Israel’s history or a harvest time. AND, each feast is PROPHETIC – each feast looks forward to a future event - its fulfillment. Each feast looks forward to a fulfillment having to do with God’s plan of redemption. AND, THE FULFILLMENT OF EACH FEAST MUST OCCUR ON THE DAY OF THE FEAST.

PASSOVER

Lev. 23:5 - God told the Jewish people, *On the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) at twilight is the LORD’s Passover.*

Historically: Passover commemorates the first Passover in Egypt when unblemished lambs were slaughtered and their blood applied on the doorposts and lintels of their homes. God passed over those homes with the blood applied. God delivered people and spared the first born in each home with the lamb’s blood applied...and delivered them from BONDAGE to slavery.

Fulfillment: Jesus crucifixion. Jesus was crucified **ON** the day of Passover. The Apostle Paul proclaims in I Cor. 5:7 – *for indeed, Christ, Messiah, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.* Passover is clearly a picture of REDEMPTION – buying out of bondage. I Cor. 5:7 - *For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

Application: when we apply His blood to our hearts (metaphorically speaking) through acknowledging our sin, receiving His forgiveness and trusting in Jesus ALONE for our salvation – we are delivered from the wrath of God (Rom. 5:9) and redeemed from bondage to sin. At the moment of salvation – we are justified. Justification means that God declares us righteous.

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Historically: occurred on the 15th day of Nisan, the day following the first Passover in Egypt (Ex. 12:31-39). With the lambs' blood applied to the doors - the entrance to the homes of those obeying God's instructions, God having passed over those homes with the blood, the children of Israel left Egypt. God separated them from Egypt, from bondage. This was a new beginning. Egypt is understood as a symbol of the world in Scripture (Isa. 30:1-3; Isa. 31:1).

On the day of Unleavened Bread, the children of Israel left Egypt with a "mixed multitude" – people other than Jews. The "mixed multitude" were Gentiles from many nations who had been conquered by Egypt. These Gentiles who had been enslaved in Egypt (Ex. 12:38) were delivered with the children of Israel. God had already told Abraham in Gen. 12:3 – through you and your descendants, all the families of the earth will be blessed. God had already told Abraham in Gen. 18:18 that he, Abraham, *shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him*. God delivering the Jewish people at the first Passover blessed others...Gentiles from many, perhaps from all other nations! And, the Jewish people also left Egypt with unleavened bread. Unleavened bread is bread without leaven. Leaven is yeast which spreads, expands, puffs up! In Scripture leaven is more often used as a symbol of corruption, fermentation, deterioration and pride (Matt. 16:6). "Leaven" is understood as being symbolic of sin. Bread without leaven depicts a life that is free from sin. By leaving Egypt, the children of Israel were beginning a new life. God separated them from Egypt – from the world.

Fulfillment: Jesus' burial. Jesus was crucified on Passover. After sundown, when evening had come (Matt. 27:57), when it was a new day (Jewish days begin at sundown), **ON** the 15th of Nisan, Jesus was buried in the tomb. Death is a separation – a separation of the body and the soul.

Application: to the believer...God delivers us/separates us from the world, from sin, and then He sets us apart – He SANCTIFIES US. The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ..." As believers, we identify with Jesus in His death. As we mature in Christ, we die more and more to self! As we are set apart/separated from the world, God sanctifies us. He sets us apart for a specific purpose – HIS purpose.

THE FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS

Historically - the Feast of First Fruits is the third feast which is in the Passover week (Lev. 23:9-14). The Feast of First Fruits was NOT celebrated on a given date. No specific date is noted in Leviticus. Lev. 23:11 - ...*on the day after the Sabbath*.... On Sunday. The Feast of First Fruits is commemorated by the barley harvest which was the earliest harvest. Regarding harvests, the Jewish people believed..."If God has blessed us with this harvest, surely He will bless us with the later harvest" – which was the wheat harvest. This mindset truly speaks of trust in God...of dependence upon Him. This Feast of First Fruits was a dedication of the entire harvest to God through bringing the first gleanings – a portion of the harvest – to Him.

Fulfillment: Jesus' resurrection! I Cor. 15:20, 23 – Jesus is our first fruits.

On the day after Sabbath in the Passover week, when it was still dark, designated men from the Sanhedrin would go to a small open field of barley across from the Kidron

Valley. They would wait, while it was still dark, for the first pinpoint of light to come up over the Mount of Olives. When they saw the first pinpoint of sunlight, they would ceremonially harvest the first stalks of grain. These were the first fruits. The first fruits offered to God consecrated the entire harvest. All four Gospels tell us that Jesus' resurrection was at the very "crack of dawn" – while it was still dark (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). The very hour of the very day of the year, the day after the Sabbath, on SUNDAY, when the men were reaping and bundling the grain and the priest was bringing the first fruit from that harvest into the Temple to wave before the Lord – **JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD ON THE FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS!**

John 12:24 - *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

Application: Believers' resurrection! Jesus' as our first fruits has gone before us. Jesus' resurrection guarantees the rest of the harvest – US! Jesus' resurrection guarantees the resurrection of believers. At our resurrection – body and soul will be united and we'll be given glorified bodies. This speaks to our glorification. When we're saved, we're justified. As we grow in Christ, we're sanctified. When we're in our glorified bodies, we'll be glorified.

PILGRIM FEASTS

In Deut. 16:16 - *Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened (used interchangeably with Passover), at the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot [Pentecost]), and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.* Jewish males were obligated to travel to Jerusalem from ALL over the known world for three of the seven feasts! Imagine what the people witnessed during those feasts in Jesus' day. God provided graphic displays of His plan of redemption.

Passover/Unleavened Bread

They saw a man scourged and crucified. He was sentenced to a criminals death and hung on the cross from 9 a.m. (Mk. 15:25) to 3 p.m. as the Passover lambs were slain in the Temple. In Matt. 27:45 we read that as Jesus hung on the cross there was darkness over all the land for three hours - from the 6th hour (noon) until the 9th hour (3 p.m.). When Jesus cried "It is finished," the veil of the Temple (60' high/4" thick; made of fine twisted linen [Josephus]) was torn in two from THE TOP to the bottom. The veil separated the Holy Place in the Temple from the Holy of Holies. GOD opened the way to the Holy of Holies – to direct access to HIM through the blood of Jesus!

Matt. 27:51b-53 - . . . *and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;⁵³ and coming out of the graves **after His resurrection**, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."*

Shavuot/Pentecost

Occurred 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits when the Holy Spirit descended and God's power and might were displayed in the tongues of fire, the disciples speaking in known languages, and about 3,000 Jewish pilgrims along with proselytes coming to faith in Jesus!

Tabernacles

Water drawing ceremony (Week 7)

THE FEAST OF SHAVUOT/WEEKS

Historically: Occurred 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits. Lev. 23:15-16. Jewish pilgrims from the known world traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the wheat harvest. Jewish tradition teaches that the Feast of Shavuot commemorates the giving of the law at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:1). The golden calf account Ex. 32:28 “about 3,000” died when the law was given.

Fulfillment: Pentecost – the Holy Spirit descended and indwelt “about 3,000” who came to faith in Jesus.

Application: Birth of the Church - comprised of Jew and Gentile – fellow heirs in the body of Christ (Eph. 3:6).

Jesus has fulfilled the spring feasts, the first 4 feasts, in His first coming. Therefore, we anticipate with confidence Jesus fulfilling the last 3 feasts, the fall feasts, which address His Second Coming. The spring feasts are celebrated over a period of three months. The fall feasts begin in the seventh month on the Jewish calendar. What falls in between? US - we, the Church!

Lev. 23:22 - *‘When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleanings from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.’* God is telling the Jewish people to provide for the poor and for the stranger. Poor could encompass both Jews and Gentiles. “Stranger” is specifically the Gentiles. How have the Jewish people provided for the Gentiles? Jesus told the woman at the well – the Samaritan woman in John 4 – *Salvation is of the Jews* – the Messiah was to come from the Jews (Dt. 18:15-18; Gen. 49:10; Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:5; Isa. 53....).

Isa. 49:6 – God the Father told God the Son - *‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’*

To complete the broad overview of the seven feasts so that we can understand that they convey the gospel and while also providing the chronology of God’s plan of redemption, the following notes will provide a brief rundown on the Feast of Trumpets, Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement, and on the Feast of Tabernacles. Week 7 will complete the feasts lesson with detail concerning the fall feasts.

CONSIDER – we are now in the Church Age. What occurs next in God’s plan for Israel? Keep in mind that God is NOT using Israel as His redemptive tool at this time. God is using the Church as His redemptive tool. God has not yet delivered the Kingdom of God on earth to the Jewish people – but He will in the future.

The three fall feasts address the end times for Israel.

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

Lev. 23:23-25 - *In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. ²⁵ You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'*

Historically: the Feast of Trumpets speaks of blowing the trumpets and assembling the Jewish people. Looking ahead to Yom Kippur. Themes of judgment, reflection, and repentance. Trumpets were blown for many reasons in Biblical times: to assemble the people; to warn of impending doom; to call the children of Israel to war; the trumpet was blown when a king ascended to his throne; to announce the resurrection of the dead; the trumpet was blown as a call to repentance; it was a call to the dead to arise and live again!

Fulfillment: the seven-year tribulation; regathering of Israel (Jer. 32:37-41; Eze. 20:33-38a; Eze. 22:17-22)

Application for Israel as a nation: judgment/purging

YOM KIPPUR/DAY OF ATONEMENT

Historically: yearly atonement for individual sins, national sins, and cleansing of the sanctuary (Lev. 16).

Fulfillment: Jesus' Second Coming following Israel's repentance (Zech. 12:10) when God will pour out His Spirit upon those Jewish people left after the Tribulation and they will realize that Jesus is their Messiah.

Application for Israel as a nation: restoration

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Historically: God's desire to dwell with man (Ez. 25:8). God's provision of shelter, food, protection during the 40 year journey to the Promised Land.

Fulfillment: Millennial Kingdom. Jesus will establish His Kingdom and rule and reign for 1,000 years from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Application for Israel as a nation: rejoicing

QUESTIONS:

What do you understand from this lesson?

What do you not understand?

Do you see God's plan of redemption in the feasts?

What is the significance of the feasts?

How did this lesson impact you?

What questions do you have?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread the notes with the cross references

Continue journaling

Share whatever you learned with someone

Read Week 7 when you receive it