

Chapter 9

The Feast of Pentecost, Mount Sinai

Israel reckoned the timing of the feast of Pentecost by counting seven weeks of days from the Feast of Firstfruits, forty-nine days. The day after that period was a high Sabbath (in total 50 days from the feast of Firstfruits). This feast fell on the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, the “birthday of Israel” This initiated the first generation of the Mosaic covenant as they wandered in the Sinai desert for a period of forty years.



Four important things were established at Sinai

- God delivered the ceremonial and moral laws.
- The priesthood was established
- A tabernacle was to be constructed according to God’s plan
- The Feasts of the Lord established

The Law delivered to Israel not only included the Ten Commandments written on stone, but all the laws and ordinances that structured every aspect of their lives.

Laws regulated the priesthood concerning duties and functions for every division of the tribe of Levi. Laws for marriage covenants, liability, and compensation for loss of life, limb, or personal property were all included in a comprehensive covenant sealed with the blood of many innocent unsuspecting animals.

Most infractions of the Law required an atonement of blood ranging from that of a bull, to a turtledove. There were sins that could not satisfy the Mosaic system of reconciliation. Those sins required death for the transgressor. Murder, rape, adultery, and homosexuality are a short list of unpardonable sins that the Law could not cover.

- The priesthood functioned as a bridge to God in behalf of the people. They oversaw every aspect of Israel's ceremonial approach to God. He never designed this approach to take away sin. It did demonstrate the impossibility of men to keep or satisfy the demands the Law made upon their lives.

The priesthood and all that pertained to that system of worship served as a type or shadow of a better covenant to come. The Law added transgression to transgression, but was powerless to remedy the central malady of the sinful condition of humanity. Sin burdened the conscience of man from his youth. The law and its ceremony fell short in its feeble attempt to alleviate the pain of guilt and shame.

Heb 10:1-5

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

- The Tabernacle in the wilderness served as the epicenter or the focal point of all spiritual activity for God's people. God designed it to be a mobile structure that would enable the priesthood to follow the Spirit wherever it led them. The Bible also referred to it as the tent of meeting. Man met God there for holy fellowship and spiritual direction. The corporate identity of the entire nation revolved around its existence. Without the Tabernacle, Israel would lose its function and identity.

A functioning priesthood perpetuated this point of identity. Later on in history, they would forfeit this status and no longer be a people.

The feasts were agricultural feasts. The covenant between God and Israel required that the people of God cultivate and inhabit the land of promise. Therefore, the feasts could not become operational until Israel settled in the land and cultivated the crops. Thus, the forty years of wandering in the desert delayed the precious

convocations to the Lord. We will study the fulfillment of this on page 78.

Wave loaves of leaven were waved before the Lord

On the fiftieth day after the Feast of Firstfruits, the priest waved two loaves of wheat containing leaven before the Lord as a part of the sacrificial order of that day. This was the defining moment for this feast. The waving of the two loaves of wheat was positive proof the harvest had arrived.

Lev 23:16-17

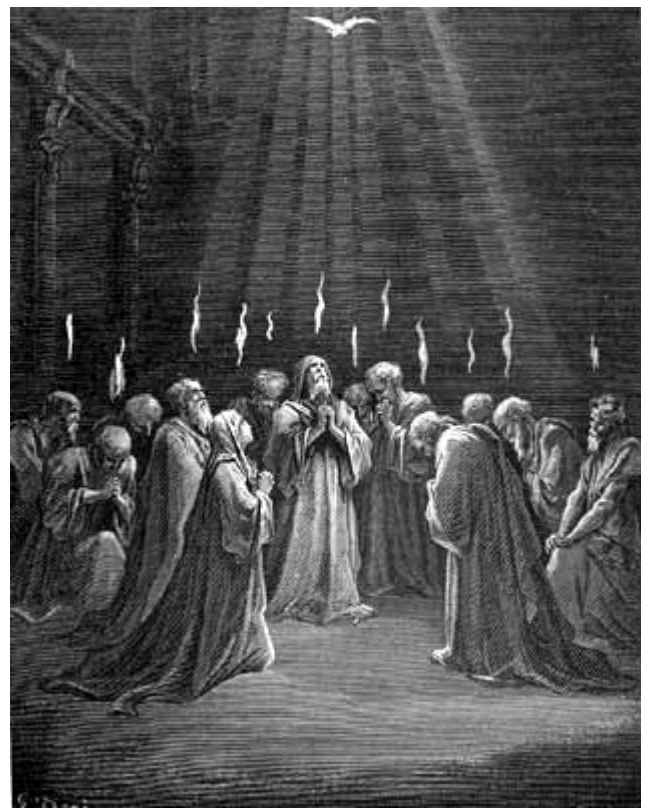
16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number *fifty days*; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be *baken with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.*

Pentecost in New Testament fulfillment

Bible scholars generally understand the Feast of Pentecost as the birth of the New Testament Church.

Four things were established on that day:



- The law engraved on the fleshly tables of their hearts.
- They became a holy priesthood.
- They also became the Temple of the Holy Ghost
- The feast is fulfilled

Pentecost is the national rebirth of Israel. This is the first crop of New Testament believers who enter into a resurrection of the Spirit. At one time, they were dead in sins and trespasses, but God translated them from the penalty of sin and death to the realm of the eternal.

The Law Engraved by the Spirit

Israel was no longer under the auspices of the Law, but under the governmental authority of Grace. The Law demanded judgment, and the precious blood of Jesus satisfied that judgment. The fire of his presence then replaced the Law written by the finger of God on cold stone. The Spirit recorded the dictates of his will on a daily basis as they walked in it. The lively will of God if you please, is an epistle from heaven in their hearts known and read of all men!

2 Cor 3:2-3

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of

the living God; *not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.*

A Holy Priesthood

To function in the Levitical priesthood of the Old Covenant, one had to have been born into the tribe of Levi. They were the only ones designated to approach God for the body of Israel with the specified sacrifices and offerings demanded by scripture. This sacrificial system kept the worshipper at bay since he was unable to have a direct connection with the sacrifice. This is because the Levites officiated the ceremony and the function of the people was relegated to that of a spectator. This all changed with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. All who were born into the new kingdom would assume the role of a priest. There were no limitations to membership. Men and women of all nations could be a part of what the Bible calls the royal priesthood. No longer would there be a need for an earthly mediator. The worshipper now came boldly to the throne of God to offer gifts and sacrifices.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

We are Priests of the Temple

The Roman army decimated the glory of Herod's Temple as our Lord predicted. God's intent was to dwell in temples made without hands. He designed this spiritual house in such a way that *our* thoughts and *His* thoughts would mingle in holy intimacy throughout our earthly journey on earth. No longer would God's covenant people be subject to rituals that were powerless to make them mature. The shadow had come into fulfillment.

The crowning achievement of His creation was approaching its final resting place.

1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

The new sacrificial order no longer required blood or a percentage of the yearly crop. Those were the days when Israel walked in the shadow of prophecy. Now they were walking in the blazing light of its fulfillment! The sacrifices of God would be a broken and a contrite spirit. The sacrifice of God would also be to present their bodies a living sacrifice. They would function as the Temple, the Priesthood, and the Sacrifice. Together, these lively stones comprise the body of Christ functioning in His stead.

The Firstfruit Generation

The bible portrays the first 40 years of the new church as the first fruit generation.

James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of *firstfruits* of his creatures.”

Rev. 14:2-4

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but *the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the *firstfruits* unto God and to the Lamb.

The hundred and forty four thousand just referred to portrayed the Church as the firstfruits redeemed from the earth. The connection and the timing of this event are important to understand because they identify who those people were and when they emerge in history. If this event is in the future, as many propose, then they have a major problem.

Dispensationalism teaches that this group of people represents a future ingathering of Israel. Historical reality challenges the conundrum presented by this doctrine. The historical reality that I refer to is the twelve Tribes of Israel, which no longer exist in our present day. This is due to the Roman siege and the total destruction of all the genealogical records. The Roman army

burned all the records stored in the Temple. There is absolutely no way the present Jewish population can provide proof of their particular genealogical ties to the ancient order of the twelve Tribes of Israel! Therefore, the Bible will only associate prophecy concerning the twelve tribes of Israel to a time when it was identified as such:

**“The official genealogies of Jewish ancestry were kept in the temple. These genealogies perished when the Romans burned the temple and the archives in Jerusalem at 70 A.D. “
By Mario Seiglie**

The following passage is significant because it also identifies these saints as the tribes of the children of Israel. Since the term firstfruits is an agricultural term meaning the first harvest, it makes a lot of sense to properly identify this group of people with the first saints that were harvested into the New Testament Church. We all know that the Holy Ghost fell on the heads of “Jews out of every nation under heaven”. Jerusalem was the focal point of Apostolic activity. Thus, the first Pentecostal revival was placed in the hands of those who had descended out of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Rev 7:4 And I heard the number of them which *were sealed*: and there were sealed *an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

Those who God redeemed from the earth, sealed with the Holy Ghost, and commissioned to preach in the first century were of Jewish lineage. The Gentiles quickly grew in number after the conversion of Cornelius. It would be incorrect for me to state that

the hundred and forty four thousand were solely of Jewish origin. I say this because God does not see his people in the New Testament in terms of race as much as he sees them in terms of Grace. Another reason for this position is that there is a question concerning the true status of the ten tribes lost to the Assyrian invasion in the eighth century B.C. The expression “Jew” has been derived from the word “Judean” meaning a resident or a citizen of Judea.

The New Testament only refers to them as Jews; therefore, the expression “Jew” is not an inclusive, but an exclusive term used apart from the balance of the remaining tribes.

An expression God uses through Paul in addressing the Church was “the Israel of God”. This expression is an excellent summation of how God identified a very diverse congregation of both Jews and Gentiles. The Bible never uses the term “Gentile Church”; therefore, the imagery in Revelation 7:4 is a word picture of the first generation of believers, Jews and Gentiles in one body; the Israel of God.

The Church is Sealed with the Holy Ghost

In chapter seven of the book of Revelation, the Twelve Tribes of Israel are sealed. This seal is none other than the infilling of the Holy Ghost. God gave it as an earnest, or down payment, until the consummation of the age that would bring the Church into its fullness.

2 Cor 1:21-22

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Eph 4:30

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby *ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*

The Wave loaves of leaven in N.T fulfillment

The loaves of leavened bread waved by the priest in this feast always puzzled me when I was a young Bible student.

In terms of the context of the ceremonial law, I knew that the Bible treated leaven contemptuously. The Word viewed leaven as a source of corruption, and an influence Israel should avoid at all costs. However, the defining moment of this very important feast focused upon two corrupted loaves of bread.

In the Bible, unleavened bread teaches us that sound doctrine is pure and undefiled. The unleavened bread of His body (the Church) should also be without sin or corruption. This corruption was present on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost fell on the heads of Jews who understood the oral tradition of the elders. Essentially, this tradition or system of religious training carried more authority than the writings of Moses. About 350 A.D., the

Jews recorded these oral traditions, and they became known as the Talmud. The Jews developed this system of biblical interpretation in Babylon during their seventy years of exile. This orientation caused tremendous conflict in the infant Church. Nothing caused more confusion and damage to the Church than the false teaching of the Judaizers of the first generation.

This also parallels the Old Testament type of the first generation in the wilderness with their internal conflicts. In that day, a mixed multitude fermented a continual apostasy in the midst of the Mosaic body. Paul made great pains to relate the similarities of the two forty year periods that were separated by approximately fifteen hundred years.

Heb 3:15-17

15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?

Paul recognized that the new Church was reenacting biblical history before his very eyes. Jewish believers engendered a wholesale rejection of “grace through faith” in favor of ceremony and tradition. Because of this, the Apostles devoted a great volume of scripture to the subject of the Law verses Grace.

The wheat loaves of leaven waved by the priest on the feast of Pentecost accurately predicted the spiritual state of the first generation of apostolic believers. The falling away, apostasy, or spirit of antichrist was already working in THE TEMPLE OF GOD

as a personification of the “man of sin” from the very beginning. The newly converted Jewish Christians were steeped in generations of the Oral Tradition, and it took its toll on the first century church. They were determined to go back to the “work” of the old law, and to resist the rest that Grace offered. The ceremonial works of the law were a central preoccupation tied to the Feasts. We see a reference associating the Church’s bondage due to a preoccupation with the Feasts in the following scripture.

Colossians 2:16 refers to the Sabbath days. The whole book of Hebrews was devoted to reaching a contingent of believers who sincerely believed the church was incomplete without the old ceremonial approach to God.

Galatians 4:9-10

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly *elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*

10 *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.*

These “elements” were to be “burned up” at the end of the age.

2 Peter 3:10

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and *the elements* shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also *and the works* that are therein shall be burned up.

The “old heavens” or old covenant was soon to come under judgment. Moreover, the old sacrificial order was about to come

into its total fulfillment. Soon there would be a new heaven and a new earth: The Church, His Bride.

The Firstfruit Generation Espoused to Christ

2 Cor 11:2

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have *espoused* you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

An attention to audience relevance in the previous passage makes it abundantly clear that Paul was addressing the Church of *his* generation. It should also be clear the Church was not married to the Lord at the time of this writing. Paul plainly told the Church at Corinth that he they would present *them* to Christ as a chaste virgin, thus signifying that the consummation of that betrothal was in the near future. If this event had not already transpired, then it would mean that the Church today is not presently married to Jesus Christ. I cover this aspect of the feasts in the twelfth chapter of this publication under the Feast of Tabernacles and its fulfillment.

The prelude to the actual marriage is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

This supper of the great God was the vengeance poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the judgment against all of those who opposed him, both within the body and without.

Rev 19:17-19

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto *the supper of the great God*;

18 *That ye may eat the flesh of kings*, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.



The Destruction of Jerusalem A.D.70