

### Should We Keep God's Feasts Today?

One of the most important – and fun! – things in the Bible is completely ignored by just about all religions today. There are churches that teach the law, there are churches that teach the truth about the trinity, there are churches that teach the Sabbath. But practically no one understands the truth about the Holy Days and observes them.

You've probably never even heard of them – and if you have, you were no doubt told they don't matter to us today. But if that's true, why did Jesus promise His disciples that when He returned to set up His Kingdom on Earth He would again keep the Passover with them? **Luke 22:15-18**. And why does God say that after His return, all the nations of earth will be required to observe the Feast of Tabernacles? **Zechariah 14:16**.

Decades after the death of Christ, why does Paul hasten to keep Pentecost at Jerusalem? **Acts 20:16**. Why does Paul command Gentile Corinthians to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread? **1 Corinthians 5:7-8**. Why was the New Testament church founded on the day of Pentecost, a Holy Day commanded to Israel over 1,500 years before? **Acts 2:1**.

These are questions no church can give a satisfactory answer to, because the only answer available is one they refuse to accept – that the New Testament church DID observe these days as God commanded, and that every true Christian since, has done the same. But don't take my word for it, see for yourself – ask the Bible...

### LESSON 15: SHOULD WE KEEP GOD'S FEASTS TODAY?

The Holy Days are only spelled out in the Old Testament, mostly in **Leviticus 23**. Does that mean we shouldn't keep them today? Well, let me ask you a question; how many times should God have to tell you to do something?

Once God said to Adam, "Don't eat of that fruit!", did God have to come back *every day and say it again*? Could Adam have said to God, "But God! You didn't tell me not to eat it TODAY!" – do you think that would have worked?

God commanded the observance of His Holy Days forever; *how long is forever?* See, if a person will only apply the most basic common sense to the Word of God, all the complications simply vanish! It's EASY to understand, if you just believe it!

God doesn't have to tell us to do something every day for it to be a command! A command of God given yesterday is as powerful as one given today, or one given 10,000 years ago! And until GOD

repeals it, it **STAYS** a command! So when God commanded something in the Old Testament, IT **STUCK**.

And if God wanted a certain practice abolished, HE **TOLD US!** And told us clearly! How many verses make it clear that the sacrifices were replaced by Christ, and therefore no longer should be practiced? How many show that Jesus has replaced Moses as mediator? How many make it clear that circumcision is abolished? Hundreds of verses, right?

The New Testament does not spell out all Ten Commandments – they are all mentioned, but they are not laid out in order, nor is the full text of each quoted. But we know they are even more binding on us today than ever before! And the New Testament doesn't specifically command Sabbath observance – but it has been amply proven the Sabbath should be observed by three facts:

1. It was commanded forever.
2. It was never repealed.
3. The New Testament shows the early church observed it.

And all those same facts will prove the Holy Days as well. Remember, the New Testament church already **HAD** the Old Testament. It wasn't necessary to spell out everything that was said, only to talk about the *differences!*

The Jews believe only the Old Testament, most of modern Christianity believes only the New – but to truly understand God you must have **BOTH!** The New Testament is about the *differences* between the new and old covenant, but it is **NOT** a complete recital of all the things necessary for salvation!

As you will prove for yourself in a moment, these days are as binding on the New Covenant Church as they were on the Old Covenant Church; in fact, they're even more important for us today. To the Old Covenant Church these days were shrouded in mystery, but through the spirit which God gave to the New Covenant Church on the Holy Day of Pentecost, the mystery can be revealed!

However, as with all Truth, to really understand the purpose and meaning of these days, you must keep them! Yet sadly, today's churches refuse to observe them. Instead they have substituted holidays of their own devising, holidays riddled with pagan rituals, so they cannot understand these things. They do not understand God's plan for them. They do not understand at all the prophecies which fill nearly a third of the Bible they carry to church each week, **because these days are the biggest single key to prophecy.**

## HOLY DAYS NEVER ABOLISHED

Despite the fact that almost no one today keeps them, there is not a single scripture abolishing the Holy Days. There's really only one passage that men abuse to discredit them, and if you just read what it says, it winds up proving them even better!

That passage is **Colossians 2:16**, which you may remember from Lesson 9 was also used to discredit the Sabbath, and the same answer holds true here: **READ THE VERSE!** If you just read it, it says plainly "let no man judge you ... in respect of an Holy Day..."; that doesn't say, as people seem to think, "don't keep the Holy Days". It says when you **DO** keep the Holy Days don't let people's opinions trouble you!

Don't fear their sneers, don't worry about their opinions or their trite phrases like, "ewww, you just want to keep those JEWISH days". It tells you to do what God commanded and not to fear their reproaches (**Isaiah 51:7**)! Just as you do when they use the same tactics to discredit the Sabbath! God calls the Sabbath "My Sabbath", and He calls the Holy Days, "My feasts"; nowhere are they referred to as the "Jewish Sabbath", or the "Jewish Feasts"! Men made up these phrases, as terms of derision, because they hated the Jews, and they simply didn't want to obey God!

Others will object saying something like this: "But all the Holy Days were fulfilled in Christ". This objection stems from the very next verse in **Colossians**:

**Colossians 2:16-17** *Let no man therefore judge you ... in respect of an holyday ... Which are a shadow of things to COME; but the body is of Christ.*

Again, is that really what it says? Think about it! If the Holy Days were fulfilled in Christ... they are NOT shadows of things to come, but shadows of things *that are past!*

But decades after the death and resurrection of Christ this verse plainly says these days are STILL shadows of things YET TO COME! STILL in the future! So HOW could they have been fulfilled (past tense) BY Christ??

Look at your shadow sometime. It shows no details. It is merely an outline; a rough idea of what you look like. One that is uniquely yours, but one which requires a lot more information before a statue of you could be constructed from it.

These Holy Days are SHADOWS of God's plan – the things to come. When understood they give us the OUTLINE of God's plans – the OUTLINE of prophecy. In fact, it is impossible to fully understand prophecy without them. Read **Hebrews 8:4-5**. These priests and the things they do, the temple, the sacrifices, the Holy Days, these are all SHADOWS, portrayals of what things are like in Heaven or what they will be like in Man's future.

Some of these shadows, like the sacrifices, have been fulfilled. Others like circumcision or the physical priesthood have been replaced with something better, and the old has been abolished. But others Paul plainly says are shadows of things to COME – things to come still yet in our future!

So once again, the scripture they use to disprove these days in fact helps to prove they MUST be kept, because they CAN'T have been fulfilled!

## WHAT ARE GOD'S HOLY DAYS?

God's calendar is quite different from ours. The new year isn't in the dead of winter, it is when life begins to return to the land in the spring. The nearest new moon to the spring equinox begins the first month of the year, so the first day of God's year is usually sometime in March. Likewise, the new day doesn't begin at midnight, but at sunset (**Genesis 1, Leviticus 23:32**).

The calendar is a large and complicated subject, and something you shouldn't worry about for now. For this lesson, all that really matters is the *relative* positions of the days. So this lesson will speak only in terms of God's calendar; thus the "first month" is sometime in March or April, and the "seventh month" is sometime in September or October.

Now read **Leviticus 23:1-2**. Whose feasts are these? **Verse 2**. Are they the Jew's feasts? Are they Man's feasts? No! They are GOD'S feasts. MY feasts, God says.

And notice what else they are: "holy meetings", or "convocations", or "gatherings" (depending on your translation). Most of these days are times when God's people are commanded to assemble for worship – just as the Sabbath day is a time to assemble and worship. In fact, these days are called "Sabbaths", literally meaning "days of rest".

These special holidays – which we will call Holy Days to distinguish them from the world's holidays – are times when God's people gather together and learn more about Him and His plan. And to help us understand that plan, God commands certain rituals that are to be done on some of the days.

Some of those rituals, like the sacrifices and all things connected with the literal temple, are clearly abolished by the New Testament. Others the Bible does not say are done away, and so they are not done away. Remember, if God wants to change something He wrote, He wrote something else to tell us what to change and how; **if He didn't tell us to change it, He didn't want us to change it!**

## THE LIST

God begins with the weekly Sabbath (**verse 3**); we talked about it at length in Lesson 9. You will see as we go along all the arguments that prove the Sabbath will also prove the Holy Days, so to believe in the one is to believe in the other. We will study each of these days separately later in this lesson and the next; for now we are just trying to get the outline.

It will help you understand and remember these days if you download and print a 30-day calendar template (one with the first day of the month on Sunday) and mark out what happens on each of these days. I recommend writing down the festivals from the first month on a calendar in the top half of each day's square, and writing the festivals from the seventh month on the bottom half of each day's square on the same calendar. You might be surprised at what you discover!

In **Leviticus 23:5**, God first speaks of Passover, the 14th day of the first month. The next day, the 15th, (**verse 7**) God says is a "holy convocation" – that is, a time to meet together with people who believe like you do – on which no work is to be done. So this is a day to rest from your labors, just as you do on the weekly Sabbath.

Beginning the 15th day, God commands that you must eat unleavened bread for seven days (**verse 6**) – bread baked without yeast, baking soda, or baking powder. On the seventh day of this feast (the 21st day of the month) there is again another Sabbath – a day to do no physical work (**verse 8**). The days in between are not Sabbaths, and work may be done.

The offering (**verse 8**) is not done today, because that was part of the sacrifices and was abolished with Christ. But the Holy Day itself wasn't, as you will later see Paul keeping it with Gentiles. The Bible calls these "the Days of Unleavened Bread" or the "Feast of Unleavened Bread", for obvious reasons.

**Verses 9-15** speak of the Wavesheaf Day, a day that has great symbolic importance and fell on the day after the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. It was always on a Sunday. But this day has no command for a gathering together, resting, or worshiping, and so we don't. It only has instructions on sacrifices and offerings, which again, we don't do today.

But we do use that day to figure out when the next Holy Day will be (**verses 15-16**). We count from that Wavesheaf Day seven weeks; and after seven weeks (which is 49 days), the 50th day is a Holy Day, where no work is to be done and there is to be a holy meeting – a church service (**verse 21**). And notice how long this day is to be observed (**same verse**)!

Because of the fact this feast day comes after seven weeks of counting, it is called “the Feast of Weeks” in the Old Testament, and because it happens on the fiftieth day, it is called “Pentecost” (Greek for “count fifty”) in the New. Because the first day of the count is a Sunday, and it takes place fifty days later, it always falls on a Sunday, sometime in late May or early June.

The next feast days are in the seventh month. Start reading in **verses 23-25**. This day is again a rest day, again a day for church service, and again mentions physical offerings we no longer do since Christ came. It should be noted that while most modern Bible versions call this day “a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets”, the original Hebrew doesn’t say that at all.

The Young’s Literal Translation (YLT) makes it a point to translate the Bible literally and accurately – sometimes making it hard to read, but it helps to weed out bad translations. Here it translates this verse “a Sabbath, a memorial of shouting, a holy convocation”; notice the word “trumpets” is not found there, or in any other verse about this Holy Day.

So Moses didn’t record God saying, “This is the Feast of Trumpets”. Moses recorded God calling this day “a memorial of shouting”. Calling it “the feast of shouting” wouldn’t be a bad stretch, but calling it “a Feast of Trumpets” (as those few who know of the Holy Days do) is simply un-Biblical.

In **verses 27-32** is the Day of Atonement. This is a day to do no work, and “keep a Sabbath” (some Bibles say “celebrate a Sabbath”, which is a poor translation, as this is not a day for celebration), and to “afflict your souls”, or as other translations have it “humble your souls”. But what does that mean?

This phrase is not used for any other Holy Day, only the Day of Atonement. The other Holy Days are all called “Feasts”. Only on this day must we “afflict our souls”. What does that mean? Must we guess what God meant for us to do? Must we ask the traditions of men what it means, how we should observe this day? **No, we simply read the other places where the Bible uses that phrase and see what it means to God to “afflict your soul”.**

How did David humble his soul? **Psalms 35:13, Psalms 69:10**. How did Israel afflict their soul? **Isaiah 58:3**. How did Ezra’s people afflict themselves? **Ezra 8:21**. So this Day of Atonement was a day of *fasting*. How does God define fasting? **Esther 4:16, Daniel 10:2-3**.

Fasting symbolizes a deep remorse. If you think about it, if you’ve ever lost a loved one, you usually lose your appetite. People in mourning don’t care about food, their loss is so great. Similarly, something terrible happened on this day, and we remember it year by year by eating and drinking nothing – **nothing at all** – from sundown on the ninth day of the month until sundown on the tenth day of the month.

The fifteenth day of the seventh month (**Leviticus 23:34**) begins the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasts for seven days. “Tabernacles” means “temporary dwellings”, so in our modern language it would be called “the Feast of Tents”. The first day of this Feast is another Holy Day of rest and gathering together (**verse 35**) but the seventh day is not. And note carefully this is a seven-day feast, and on the eighth day is a wholly separate Feast day that IS holy (**verse 36**).

God concludes and says these are the Feasts – implying these are ALL the Feasts – of God that we are commanded to keep, and they are to be kept in addition to the Sabbath day (**verses 37-38**). Then in **verses 39-43**, He digresses to explain how the Feast of Tabernacles is to be kept and why.

Note the command is for them to “dwell in booths”, meaning temporary dwellings, and God then goes on to tell them how to make tents. It is not necessary to specifically make tents in that fashion today, as the key command is that we must “dwell in tents”, or at the very least, temporary dwellings.

## TO SUMMARIZE

The feasts take place in three seasons (**Exodus 23:14-17**). Most are in the first and seventh month, with one exception, Pentecost, which falls in the third month (May/June of our calendar).

In the spring, usually in early April, we keep the Passover. There is no command to rest on this day. The next night begins the first Holy Day of Unleavened Bread, and for seven days we eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh there is another Holy Day.

Counting from the day after the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread, on Sunday seven weeks later we keep the Holy Day of Pentecost in late May or early June.

No more Holy Days are found until we get to September, when we keep a Holy Day called “the Memorial of Shouting”. On the tenth day after that, we fast and eat no food on the Day of Atonement, and mourn something – we’ll find out what in the next lesson. The fifth day after that we keep the first Holy Day of Tabernacles and dwell in temporary dwellings for seven days, and on the eighth day we have the final Holy Day of the year.

That makes a total of seven annual holy days (Sabbaths). This part of the lesson was not intended as proof we should keep these days, per se, beyond the simple fact God commanded them. It was intended to show you what they are, so you can intelligently consider the arguments for and against them in the rest of the Bible.

Bear in mind the early church was made up primarily of converted Jews, all of whom were thoroughly familiar with all these days, so they wrote and understood the New Testament *in that light*. And now you have a better idea of what they all took for granted when they wrote the New Testament, so casual New Testament references to the Holy Days will make more sense to you.

## NEW TESTAMENT HOLY DAYS

Every Christian knows it was on the Day of Pentecost when the holy spirit was given (**Acts 2:1-4**). But no one seems to stop to wonder WHY the New Testament church, fifty days after Christ was resurrected, almost two months after he had first ascended to heaven, was keeping a so-called “Jewish” Holy Day!

Christ’s death had made all the changes in the law that were ever going to be made. If His blood blotted things out, then those things were already blotted and gone. And yet God chose to start His new church ON one of these musty old Holy Days. Why? Was God Himself observing Pentecost?

This is an example that cannot be overly stressed. At its very inception, the church Christ built was keeping Pentecost! It was keeping one of those Holy Days, which strongly implies it was keeping all of



them. Did it perhaps change later? Did Paul teach Pentecost had been abolished in Christ? **1 Corinthians 16:8**. Did Paul in fact hurry to make it to Jerusalem to keep Pentecost? **Acts 20:16**.

Remember what you learned about the Sabbath; there is no New Testament command, “thou shalt keep the Sabbath day”. But then, there is also no New Testament command, “the Sabbath day hath been abolished”. But God commanded the Sabbath in the Old Testament, and He commanded it to be kept FOREVER. **How often does God need to say something before you are obligated to do it?**

Does He need to say it once? Twice? At the beginning of every book of the Bible? Need He put it on every page, to remind you that no, He *still* hasn’t changed His mind? **Hebrews 13:8, Malachi 3:6**. Of course not. If God says keep the Sabbath, we keep it until *God* tells us not to keep it anymore – not until a group of men who call themselves a church decide to move the Sabbath to Sunday!

This proof alone should be enough for any sincere Christian who truly yearns to follow God’s ways, and not his own. But in addition, we find the New Testament Church kept the Sabbath. Jesus kept it. Paul kept it. Paul taught Gentiles to keep it. And nowhere in the New Testament was it abolished. And the same is true of Pentecost.

God commanded it to be kept forever. God never abolished it. The New Testament church was founded on the day of Pentecost, Paul kept it, *and no one ever said it was abolished*. Hence, it is still binding on us today. Of course, there are not nearly so many examples of Pentecost being observed as the Sabbath... because the Sabbath happens 52 times a year and Pentecost happens only once. **But every example we do have is in favor of it.**

Of course, the exact manner of observing these days has changed since the original command was given, because the temple has been destroyed and the need for physical sacrifices was abolished by Christ’s own sacrifice. All of these physical sacrifices were given as a type, a “shadow,” of the then future sacrifice of Christ and so were fulfilled by that sacrifice; but the day itself is still holy, and should still be observed year by year, just as the original Christians did. Why? Because the giving of the holy spirit to the Church on Pentecost was only a portion of the full meaning of this day! There is MORE to come, an even GREATER fulfillment for it and the other days yet in our future!

But those original Christians kept other Holy Days too! Passover immediately precedes the Days of Unleavened Bread, and because of that, it became customary to speak of the two as one feast; either all eight days were called “the Days of Unleavened Bread” or all eight days were called the “Feast of the Passover”. These days were actually quite distinct in observance and meaning, as **Leviticus 23** and other scriptures make clear.

Nevertheless, they were often casually lumped together in conversation just as the world today says “the Christmas holidays”, which includes over a week from before Christmas until after New Year’s – even though New Year’s is a distinct holiday on its own, it’s usually lumped in with Christmas. Interestingly, you never hear it called “New Year’s break” from school, or the “New Year’s holidays” – always the other way around.

So because of this, you’ll often find them spoken of in the same breath, or silently lumped together. For example Jesus’ parents kept them every year (**Luke 2:41-43**). Notice they “fulfilled the DAYS of Passover”, proving they kept not only the Passover but also the DAYS that followed it – the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The author of the book of Acts, Luke, was aware of the Days of Unleavened Bread because he used them as a time reference in **Acts 12:3**. It seems Paul kept the Days of Unleavened Bread at Troas in **Acts 20:5-6**. At the very least, Paul was aware of it and said nothing against it. But later he specifically commanded the Gentile church at Corinth to keep the Days of Unleavened Bread: **1 Corinthians 5:7-8**.

Note his phrasing: “let us keep the Feast”. Not “let the Jews keep the Feast”, but “**let US**”, speaking to **Gentile Christians**, “**keep the Feast**”! And they were told to keep it with unleavened bread, just as God commanded. Now read **Exodus 12:15**, and compare it to what Paul said in **1 Corinthians 5:7**, commanding them to “purge out the old leaven”, just as ancient Israel did.

Paul then goes on to show that these concepts, while literally commanded, have a *spiritual meaning* as well. In fact, it is by obeying the physical commands – whether we understand why or not – that we can in time, understand the spiritual application. And all of these Holy Days are richer with meaning than you can imagine. Once you begin keeping them, you’ll start to understand what that meaning is.

Most other Holy Days also make an appearance in the New Testament, always mentioned in passing because again, these commands didn’t need repeating on every page of the Bible. They had the Old Testament, God had commanded them to listen to it (**2 Timothy 3:15-16**), and that was enough.

Jesus kept the Feast of Tabernacles in **John 7**; the chapter covers the time from just before the Feast until the eighth day, the separate Feast called here “the Last Day, that Great Day”, which for simplicity’s sake we call simply “the Last Great Day”. There are references to the Feast scattered throughout the chapter (**John 7:2, 8-11, 14**).

Note that even though it is here called “the Jews’ feast”, that God had already staked His claim on the Feast calling it HIS Feast in **Leviticus 23:2**. The Jews no doubt considered it theirs, but God had the prior claim. What God claims as His cannot be taken away or given to someone else just because a man or group of men says, “This is MY feast!” – when God had already said it was His. That same year on the Last Great Day, Jesus stood up and gave a special sermon (**John 7:37-39**), which if you study it will reveal a great deal about what that day represents.

Atonement also makes an appearance, called simply “the fast”, in **Acts 27:9**. We can be certain which day of fasting this was, because it was said in context of worsening weather, something that always happened in the Mediterranean around the fall equinox (October 21). Atonement generally falls in early October or late September, so “after the fast” the weather always got bad in the Mediterranean. So Paul can only be referring to the Day of Atonement.

The Feast of Shouting is the only one that makes no appearance in the New Testament, but at the risk of repeating myself, it didn’t have to appear in the New Testament for us to observe it. All these other days appeared, and every single time it was in a positive “let’s keep the Feast!” attitude, and none of them in a “those musty old days were abolished!” And since no other day in **Leviticus 23** was abolished, it would be foolish to assume this one was.

## OBJECTIONS

Earlier I mentioned the argument that “Jesus fulfilled the Holy Days”, and offered a solid proof against it. But there are two other proofs I should mention. First, they were observed after the death and resurrection of Christ, and so obviously they weren’t fulfilled by Him.



And secondly, several Holy Days are NOT about Christ! God said we observe Tabernacles for this reason: **Leviticus 23:42-43**. It is to remind us Israel dwelt as slaves in Egypt (and for us, it's a reminder that we came out of spiritual Egypt, where we were spiritual slaves). Does that say, "Tabernacles is about Christ"?

The Feast of Shouting is specifically called a MEMORIAL of shouting. How can that be fulfilled in Christ when it is a memorial, to remind us of a PAST event? A memorial of some event, that had already happened when the command was given, over 1500 years before Christ was born?

Think about it! Will the fourth of July ever be fulfilled? Of course not. It is a MEMORIAL of an event. And because it points BACK, not FORWARD, it is not waiting for something to fulfill it! We keep memorials to constantly remind us every year of events that ALREADY HAPPENED!

You cannot ever fulfill a memorial, something given to remind you of what already happened! A similar argument can be made for most Holy Days. The fact is, most Holy Days point both forward and backward – remember, prophecies are often dual – there is something they memorialize and something they foreshadow. Until you keep them and study them, you can't understand what all that is.

### **"WHEN THE SACRIFICES WERE DONE AWAY, SO WERE THE HOLY DAYS"**

No scripture supports this idea, but one large church in particular uses this reasoning: "Sacrifices were done on those days, so when the sacrifices were abolished, the days were too". The primary church that teaches this actually keeps the Sabbath, but refuses to keep the holy days because of this argument.

But ironically, sacrifices were done on the Sabbath every week (**Numbers 28:9-10**). So by that logic, the Sabbath was done away too – and yet we have abundantly proved that it was not done away, nor will it ever be done away.

It seems rather obvious that you can take away certain elements of observance of a day, without stopping the observance of the day altogether. Many American towns and some states ban fireworks on the fourth of July. Does that mean the day itself is abolished? Do Americans no longer gather for cookouts, ball games, and parties? Was the Declaration of Independence no longer signed on that day in 1776? How absurd.

The change of one element of observance, however fundamental, does not mean the day itself no longer exists. Nor can any change made later affect the events that already happened which are memorialized in the day. So while the sacrifices were indeed abolished, New Testament Gentile Christians continued to observe the Holy Days long after the death of Christ – and in fact, observe it up to this very day.

### **"THOSE ARE JUST JEWISH DAYS"**

I've said this before, but it bears repeating. First, God specifically says these days are HIS days, they don't belong to any man, or any group of men. God commanded these days, not the Jews. The fact that the Jews still keep them at all is to their credit, and a shame on Christians everywhere.

Secondly, sneering "that's Jewish" doesn't prove anything. Read **Romans 3:1-2** for what Paul Himself said. The Jews were given these laws 3,500 years ago. Laws which Paul said initially gave them a huge advantage over the Gentiles. Unfortunately for them, their religion rejected Christ which prevents them from ever *understanding* the laws He gave them, or even keeping them correctly.

So we are not trying to keep the Jewish feasts. The Jews do observe some of these days in a heavily corrupted, traditionalized form; but these are God's feasts. And if we are to have any hope of understanding what God said, we have to ignore everything and cut straight to the source by reading the Bible and bypassing the millennia of opinions and manmade traditions.

## WHAT ABOUT NEW MOONS?

New moons are mentioned periodically throughout the Bible. But they are not mentioned in **Leviticus 23**, where it says “these are the feasts of the Lord” and pointedly excludes them. The conclusion then must be that they are NOT part of these feasts.

They are always mentioned separately from God's Feasts and Sabbaths (**1 Chronicles 23:31**, **2 Chronicles 2:4**, and several others), and separately from the Holy Days (**Colossians 2:16**), which again implies they are completely separate.

**Psalms 81:3** speaks of a new moon on a “solemn feast day”. The only feast day that falls on a new moon is the Feast of Shouting on the first day of the seventh month, so this can only be speaking of that particular new moon, not every new moon of the year.

The New Moons were a part of Israel's calendar routine, and knowing when they were was necessary in order to establish and count the Holy Days. Over time these apparently were used as excuses to party by Israel's kings (**1 Samuel 20:24**). By the time of Isaiah their method of observing these days was repugnant to God (**Isaiah 1:13-14**) – surely because they were simply making something up to do on those days.

We can make something up, as others have in modern times, but God doesn't want that. If it wasn't important enough to God to tell me HOW to keep something, then it isn't important enough to me to keep it. We don't observe the new moons today, because *God never told us how to keep them, nor specifically commanded us to keep them.*

**Deuteronomy 12:32** *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*

Man is specifically forbidden to make up things to help them worship God. (See also **Mark 7:7-13**, **Revelation 22:18**, **Deuteronomy 12:28-32**.) Man-made rituals cannot lead you to God, no matter how good the intentions. If God wanted you to do something when you worshiped Him, or wanted worshiped in a certain way, He told you what to do. If He didn't tell you to do it, *He didn't want you to do it.*

And that is why we don't keep new moons today. Now that you have an idea what the Holy Days are, and why we should keep them, it's time to study each of them one-by-one. There is a lot to say about each, so this will flow over into the next lesson – and even after this, there will be much for you to learn about the days. But this will be a great start.

## PASSOVER

In **1 Corinthians 5:7**, Paul refers to “Christ our Passover”. Christ *replaced* the Old Testament Passover service, and *gave us a new one* by His personal example and instruction in all four gospels. Yet somehow, no one reads and does what He clearly commanded.

What was Jesus' command to His disciples? **Luke 22:8**. What did Jesus tell them to tell the master of the house where they were to prepare the Passover? **Verse 11**. And what did they do? **Verse 13**. And what did He do? **Verse 14**. And what did He call this thing He was setting down to do? **Verse 15**.

So there is no doubt whatsoever that Jesus did in fact eat the Passover that night. Did this fulfill the Passover? **Verse 16**. So it would be fulfilled IN THE KINGDOM – not before. The Kingdom isn't here yet, so it hasn't been fulfilled yet... and so it is still binding on us! Then He gave them two symbols – bread and wine (**verses 17-20**), and told us what they represent – His body, and His blood.

This, incidentally, is what He was referring to in **John 6:53-56**. Those are the symbols He later gave his disciples at the Passover. Notice how IMPORTANT this is. If you do NOT eat his flesh and drink His blood, YOU ARE NOT A CHRISTIAN. You have no life in you, and Jesus does not dwell in you. This is THAT IMPORTANT. **Without the Passover, you cannot be saved!**

Those are Jesus' words, not mine. In **Matthew 26:26-28** He tells us more about the wine's symbolism; it represents His blood, which was shed as the payment for our sins; it symbolically washes them off. **Luke 22:19**, which you already read, tells us that the bread represents His body (His flesh) which was given for us. Notice, there are two parts to this sacrifice – the bread and the wine, symbolizing the body and the blood. More on that later.

In that same verse, Jesus said, “this do in remembrance of me”. Have YOU ever done it? Jesus said “DO THIS”. Do the world's churches do it? If you don't drink His blood (the wine) and His body (the bread) you do not have salvation. You are dead in your sins.

The version related in John's gospel adds more details, and omits others. As you read it, bear in mind John's gospel was written about 90 A.D., over 30 years after the other gospels, so John saw what the others omitted and focused on filling in the blanks. That is why John's gospel is so different from the others. John omits the bread and wine, which the other gospels say in such detail, and focuses on the other events they forgot to mention.

Read **John 13:1**. Remember that “Feast of the Passover” was commonly used to refer to either Passover OR Unleavened Bread (Read both **Mark 14:1** and **Luke 22:1** to prove that). This was in fact at the Passover service, the same night referred to in **Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke 22**.

Remember, Jesus had to fulfill all the law in order to be a perfect sacrifice, so before instituting these new symbols of bread and wine He first had to perfectly observe the original Passover service commanded by Moses. Otherwise, He would have been sinning.

So when the disciples asked Jesus, “Where should we prepare the Passover”, and Jesus said, “Prepare the Passover that we may eat”, this was speaking of the OLD Passover, involving a lamb, which was prepared as Jesus commanded in **Mark 14:12-18**.

**John 13:2** says that it was AFTER the Passover supper these things took place. Then in **verses 4-13**, Jesus washed the disciple's feet and then gave them another command: **verses 14-17**. They did not wash one another's feet that night; this command was to be observed on *next year's Passover, when Jesus was gone!*

So we have the commands of Jesus “this do, in remembrance of me”, speaking of the bread and wine, and “wash one another's feet” on this same night. Now when you do something in remembrance of

someone, how often do you do it? When you celebrate a birthday, how often do you do it? Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Of course not. You do it once a year, *on the day of their birth*.

When someone in the world loses a loved one, what is the worst time of year for them after that? The day of their loved one's death. Not every day, not weekly, not monthly – but yearly. Yearly they remember the loss of this person they loved. Jesus said DO THIS in His memory, and He said it on the night of the Passover service, the 14th of the first month – the same day He died. What can we conclude except that every year on the Passover, we are to do these three things – the bread, the wine, and the foot washing?

No one really teaches this was abolished, per se, they just ignore it; but how can they ignore it when PAUL, who most people suppose taught against all these things, was teaching GENTILES to keep the Passover?

Read **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**. Here Paul recaps the information which he says he received *personally* from Jesus. Remember, Paul wasn't converted until MANY YEARS after Jesus died. So many years after Jesus died and had ascended to heaven, Jesus felt compelled to teach PAUL, an apostle to the GENTILES, about the Passover service. Does it sound like it was done away to you?

But there is more in these verses than a casual reading reveals. First, he says, "in the same night he was betrayed he took bread". This means that the Passover Jesus ate was eaten *at night*, and on the *same night* he was betrayed – which is the darkness portion of the 14th day. Meaning He ate the Passover at the beginning of the day, shortly after sunset, was betrayed and given a mock trial all night, and crucified the next morning and died the next afternoon – on the daylight portion of the 14th.

**Verse 24**, Weymouth, says, "*This is my body which is about to be broken for you. Do this in memory of me.*" This was not a full payment of the sacrifice. This was a down payment – a PROMISE of His sacrifice. He said take this bread in exchange for His body which was ABOUT TO BE BROKEN, the next day. As a promise of payment, something like a post-dated check.

He also says in **verse 25** "*as oft as you drink it*", or as Weymouth puts it, "*Do this, every time that you drink it, in memory of me*". This doesn't say, "as often as you want to", like some claim, nor does it say "whenever you get around to it", but "every time that you DO drink it, do it like THIS, like I just showed you".

So we keep the Passover in MEMORY of Jesus. In memory of what exactly? **Verse 26**. And for how long? (Same verse). So if He hasn't returned yet, WHY doesn't anyone proclaim His death this way, as He commanded?

He said to proclaim His DEATH with this ceremony. He died on the 14th day and gave us these symbols the evening before, at the beginning of the 14th, not long after sundown. He said do THIS, as often as you keep it – and how often do you keep a memorial service? How often do you remember Independence Day, Veterans Day, or President's Day? Exactly once a year, commemorating some important date. For more information, request the free booklet "How Often Should We Eat Communion?"

The Passover was commanded in the Old Testament forever. And it is to be kept forever. Jesus says He will keep it again with us in the Kingdom – so if Jesus Himself will be keeping it then, how dare we not keep it now as He commanded us? **If we don't keep it, year by year, on the day He commanded and in the way He commanded, we are not following His commands, and we are not Christians.**

## 1. IT IS NOT A PARTY

The Passover commemorates the death of your Savior; God died to save you. Died for no reason, without cause, in a quite horrible fashion in order to pay for YOUR lazy, careless sins and dig you out of a pit you got yourself into. It is not a feast, and it is not a party. It is a solemn event.

But most religions have a celebration in the springtime, commemorating the death and rebirth of their false god; the Corinthians were all newly converted from paganism and they were gradually changing this Passover service into a *feast* to God, calling it “the Lord’s Supper”. They weren’t trying to be evil – they thought it would be more fun, and honor God “that much more”! And so they were coming to the Passover drunk, and shaming the church.

Read what Paul said to them in **1 Corinthians 11:20-22**. Of those few churches that keep anything close to a Passover service today, ALL of them call it the Lord’s Supper. But Paul plainly said when you come together (for the Passover), “this is not to eat the Lord’s Supper”, or as Rotherham translates it clearly “it is not to eat, a supper unto the Lord”.

This is not a time to gather and feast. It is not a time to come and get drunk. It is a solemn memorial service for the best friend mankind ever had (**John 15:13**). **Zechariah 12:10** speaks of the attitude you should have as you commemorate His death – a bitterness or sadness of spirit. The same word correctly translated as “bitterness” there was wrongly translated “bitter herbs” in **Exodus 12:8**, where it should read “with bitterness they shall eat it”; it was commanding those who ate that Passover to eat it with the same attitude of solemnity and respect that we should show today.

## 2. OLD TESTAMENT

You will be learning more about these days for years, decades even, and as you keep them every year you will learn more – that is why it is so important to keep them. So you won’t learn all about it in this lesson. But you do need to know the basics of the Old Testament Passover to better understand the New.

We don’t keep the trappings of the Old Testament anymore; the lamb isn’t killed every year, because our Lamb was already slain once and for all (**Hebrews 9:26**). We don’t eat it standing up, with a staff in our hand, or any of those other things. But those all had, and have, meaning for us today. You won’t learn what all that is today, but you need to know where to look for it.

**Exodus 12** lays out the story of the Passover. The primary difference is that a lamb was killed, roasted, and none of it was left until the next day; and it was killed by the head of each house, not by a priest as sacrifices normally were. It was called the Passover because on that night the death angel *passed over* the Israelites and killed the Egyptians.

When the angel saw the blood on their houses, he moved on, because that house was under protection; their sins had been paid for with the sacrifice. This is the night that Israel was bought back or redeemed from Pharaoh by God, to secure the promise of their deliverance from bondage to Egypt.

On the next night, Israel was actually delivered from Egypt, according to God’s promise the night before and actually began walking out of Egypt. In the New Testament, we (spiritual Israel) received the *promise* of Jesus’ sacrifice the night before, **by partaking of the new symbols of the Passover**; the promise which was to buy us out of bondage to sin; but it wasn’t until the next day that Jesus actually

died and was buried, and THEN we KNEW the sacrifice *had actually been made* and we were truly delivered.

This next night is called in **Exodus 12:41-42** “The Night to be Much Observed”, the beginning of the exodus from Egypt and the beginning of the seven days of Unleavened Bread, and the first holy day. The Passover gave us the promise of leaving Egypt; The Night to be Much Observed fulfilled the promise and began the deliverance; and for seven days we walked out of Egypt, and the seventh day Pharaoh drowned in the Red Sea, just as on the seventh millennial day Satan will be cast in the bottomless pit (**Revelation 20:1-3**).

### 3. WHO CAN EAT THE PASSOVER?

Read **Exodus 12:43, 45, 48**. Only circumcised members of the nation of Israel were permitted to eat the Old Testament Passover. What does circumcision represent in the New Testament? **Colossians 2:11-12**. So Baptism replaced circumcision. Then the un-baptized are “strangers” from the New Covenant just as the uncircumcised were strangers from the old, and neither dare eat the Passover.

Read **1 Corinthians 11:27-32**. After telling the Corinthians how to keep the Passover, Paul warns them severely about eating it “unworthily”. And we needn’t guess at what “unworthy means”, for Paul makes it clear in these same verses: “let a man examine himself”. Examine for what? **2 Corinthians 13:5**. “Judge ourselves”; judge what? Your sins!

Passover is a time when you will be symbolically taking the blood of Christ in you. It is a time to make sure you are following God **with all you understand**; a time to do spiritual housecleaning and examine yourself and see if you need to make changes, BEFORE the Passover. Because if you take the Passover with a dirty conscience, you will be taking it “unworthily”, and God will judge you harshly for it (**1 Corinthians 11:29**).

The Corinthians’ were sinning and they were not judging themselves. Therefore, God was judging them, and punishing them appropriately (**verse 30**). The Passover is not to be taken lightly! Not without first committing to follow God and deeply repenting of your sins.

So if you’re learning this, and you aren’t baptized, and spring is coming, don’t worry (**Acts 17:30**). God knows you are still learning this and gives you grace to cover these things for now. You are far better off skipping this Passover than eating it unworthily – and eating it without committing yourself permanently to God’s way of life by baptism, IS eating it unworthily. A lesson on baptism won’t be too far in the future, so hang on until then.

### UNLEAVENED BREAD

As was just said, Israel left Egypt the day after the Passover, on the evening beginning the first day of Unleavened Bread, and for seven days fled Egypt. Why did they do that, and what does it mean for us?

Was Israel in bondage? **Joshua 24:17**. And does Passover/ULB specifically commemorate being delivered from that bondage? **Exodus 13:3, 14**. Israel was in physical bondage, and were physically delivered by the Old Testament Passover, and ULB commemorates their journey away from that physical bondage.



Are we in bondage? **Galatians 4:3**. To whom were we in bondage? **Romans 6:16**. Who is the “king (father) of sin”? **John 8:44**. Did the Jews know they were in bondage? **John 8:32-33**. What did Jesus say? **Verse 34**. And how can we be made free from bondage? **Verse 36**.

So we are in bondage to sin; the devil is the king of sin. Israel was in bondage to Egypt; Pharoah was the king of Egypt. Israel was delivered from bondage to Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb, and led out of Egypt over the next seven days until the king of Egypt was drowned in the Red Sea on the seventh day of ULB.

We are delivered from bondage to sin by the blood of Christ, the real Passover lamb, and this stage of the plan of God has mankind being led out of sin for seven thousand years. And on the seventh millennial day of this plan the devil will be “drowned” (removed from power and covered out of sight, see **Revelation 20:1-3**).

So you see Israel/Egypt/Pharoah was just a type of the true Church/Sin/Satan. This holds true throughout the Bible, where Egypt is often used as a type of sin; a symbol of bondage to Satan’s regime that we all were in until we found the truth. The shortest answer as to the meaning of these days is that Passover commemorates Christ buying us back from Satan with His blood, and ULB commemorates Him leading us out of Satan’s world (**Romans 8:21**).

## 1. HOW ULB SHOULD BE OBSERVED?

The next summary of the Passover and ULB is found in **Deuteronomy 16:1-4**. Here God reiterates what you read above, making it clear that there must be no leavened bread “in your coasts” – that is, on your property or in anything that you own – for seven days. For this reason we clean our houses, cars, offices, and so on every year to remove any leavening.

Paul reminded the Corinthians of this command in **1 Corinthians 5:7-8**. Paul makes the same command that we must “purge out” (get rid of) old leavening. As usual, Paul is making a spiritual point from a literal command. He shows us this old leavening that was not to be seen “in your coasts” represents spiritual “malice and wickedness” – sin. Unleavened bread represents “sincerity and truth”. And for seven days, we are commanded to avoid leaven, and eat instead unleavened bread.

Just as we keep both the letter and the spirit of the Ten Commandments today, so we also keep both the letter (literal leaven) and the spirit (spiritual leaven) today. The command from God is clear, in both the Old and New Testaments: get the leavening off your property for those seven days in spring.

Clean your house. Clean your car, your office. Imagine that each leavened crumb is a sin in your life, hiding behind your spiritual desk, lurking under your spiritual bed, and attack those crumbs as you would your sins. You might be surprised what you’ll learn if you think about it as you clean your house, and think about spiritual housecleaning.

If you do it lazily, half-heartedly, sloppily, put it off until the last minute, or make excuses and don’t do it at all, it is certain you’ll do the same thing with real sins (**Luke 16:10**). If you get in there and shine your house up like a hospital, you’ll probably attack your sins with equal fervor.

And throw away or burn the leavening you find; don’t give it to an unconverted friend. Would you give a friend your sins to dirty him up just to clean your own house? Ten dollars’ worth of baking soda and yeast and half a loaf of bread isn’t worth much to anyone, so destroy it; turn your back on it like you would on your sins and hope you never see it again.

It is important to not only avoid leavened bread, *but also to go out of your way to eat unleavened bread*. The command in **Exodus 12:15, 20** is not only a negative (DON'T eat leavened bread) but also a positive (DO eat *unleavened* bread). Certain types of wheat crackers qualify; just check the ingredients and avoid anything that contains leavening, yeast (including wild yeasted breads like sourdough), baking soda (also called sodium bicarbonate, bicarbonate of soda), or baking powder – or you can make your own, it's quite easy.

There is much more to say, as there will be about all these days, and those are things you will learn as you keep these days and assemble with other true Christians who do likewise.

## PENTECOST

Today, we have no particular rituals to observe on Pentecost, except the command to gather for a church service. So I will jump straight into the meaning of the day.

The church was started on Pentecost. On that day, God gave the holy spirit. Now God could have chosen any day of the year to do that, but He didn't – He did it then. Do you suppose God had no reason to choose that particular day?

Did Christ's disciples know when Pentecost was, and gather specifically to observe it? **Acts 2:1**. What time of day was it? **Acts 2:15** [Note: The third hour was about 9am]. And on the morning of that Holy Day, what happened? **Verses 2-4**. So if someone had refused to keep Pentecost that year *for any reason, he would not have been there – and would have missed the giving of the holy spirit!*

Did Peter explain what was going on? **Verses 14-20**. Did Peter say a particular prophecy (not the holy day) was fulfilled on that day? **Verse 16**. And what did people who believed receive on that day? **Verses 37-38**.

So on that day God (by His spirit) spoke to Man. The spirit “gave them utterance” to speak His will. Remember that fact. On the same day, they saw fire descend from heaven, heard loud noises like wind, and Peter said it fulfilled Joel's prophecy of smoke and other signs.

When God gives someone His spirit, what happens? **1 John 4:13**. Are there conditions on having that spirit dwell in you? **1 John 3:24**. Are you a place for God to live? **Ephesians 2:22**. So God lives in you? **1 Corinthians 3:16**. And where is that spirit? **2 Corinthians 1:22**.

But what is God trying to accomplish in you? **Hebrews 10:16**. How is God going to write that law in your hearts? **2 Corinthians 3:3**. Can you know God without keeping His law? **1 John 2:4**.

So God is writing His laws on your heart *by His spirit*. Without His spirit – without Him living in you to help you understand the law, *you couldn't understand it!* (**1 Corinthians 2:14, 16**). You could only understand the letter of that Law as ancient Israel did; but to understand the spirit of God's Law, you must have God's holy spirit present within you, interpreting it during every experience you encounter in life.

You may have noticed in **2 Corinthians 3:3** that Paul makes a clear contrast between the spirit writing laws on your hearts and God writing laws on the tablets at Sinai. This is no accident – for the Bible reveals the Ten Commandments were given ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST! Over 1,500 years before the holy spirit was given, God gave Israel the Ten Commandments – accompanied by many of the same signs as in **Acts 2!**

Read **Exodus 19:16-18**. The third day here was Pentecost, as you'll prove for yourself in a moment. Notice many of the same signs; smoke, loud noise, "the Lord descending in a fire" (compare with **Acts 2:3**), and God speaking His will to Man. Notice also that it was at the *same time of day in both places!* "In the morning"!

And on this day, God gave Man the laws that were to be written on stone – just as 1,500-odd years later, He gave Man the spirit to "decode" that law and make it apply to every conceivable situation! More on that in a minute – first let's prove that this happened on the day of Pentecost.

Israel left Egypt on the 15th day of the first month. The first day they were still in Egypt, fleeing Pharaoh, and on the last day they crossed the Red Sea and escaped. Then they worked their way to Mt. Sinai where they received the law. But few realize it is possible to precisely date all these events.

Download and print three blank calendar sheets with no day numbers on them, make them in a word processor, or draw them on a chalkboard or dry-erase board. Don't skip this step, it's important, and fun! Now number the months 1, 2, 3. Then read all of **Exodus 16**. The purpose of this chapter was to record how Israel was officially given the Sabbath command, and when the manna began to fall.

They arrived in the wilderness of Sin on the 15th day of the second month (and no, the Hebrew name "Sin" doesn't mean "sin"). On this day, the Israelites were complaining, so God promised them manna on the next day (**verses 4-8**). Then the manna fell for six days (**verse 22**), and on that sixth day God said the NEXT day was a Sabbath. So since that would be a Sabbath, the sixth day was a Friday; and so counting back six days shows that the promise of the manna, given the 15th day of the second month, was made on a Sabbath!

So on your calendar, find the Sabbath column, and on the third row down mark that it was the 15th of the month, and write beneath it "the wilderness of Sin, manna promised". On the next day (Sunday, the 16th), write that the manna fell, and then find the next Sabbath and number it the 22nd day of the month.

Then fill in the un-numbered days in between, then count backwards; when you get to the first day of the second month, go to the bottom of the first month on the day before (it should be a Friday) and write "30" (God's ideal months are always 30 days), and keep going until you have all three calendars filled.

Now you'll see that the 14th day of the first month, the Passover, fell on a Wednesday; the Exodus on a Thursday; and the drowning of Pharaoh next Wednesday. Until after the drowning of Pharaoh, they had been fleeing Egypt. They didn't take the time to camp until they were trapped at the Red Sea, on the night that began the 21st day (remember, sunset to sunset!). This encampment was at Succoth.

Now read **Numbers 33:5-8**. Rameses was where they left Egypt from (**verse 3**), the next site was Succoth, where they spent the 21st. The 22nd was spent at Etham, the 23rd at Pihahiroth, and the 24th at Marah. So Marah was on a Sabbath, which your calendar should show as well. So write "Marah" on that day.

Back in **Exodus 15:22-23**, it again records that they went three days from the Red Sea and encamped at Marah. The rest of Exodus only records encampments once a week; so every time it records an encampment it was on a Sabbath, as you'll see it lays out perfectly. **Verse 27** says they came to Elim and encamped; write "Elim" on the next Sabbath.

**Exodus 16:1** says they left Egypt, and came to the wilderness of Sin. This is the third encampment after the Red Sea, so write “Wilderness of Sin” on that day; the same day the manna was promised that you already read about. The next Sabbath they were still at the wilderness of Sin (**verses 23-27**). Then they moved to Rephidim in **Exodus 17:1**, where water came from the stone. This event took place at Mt. Horeb (**verse 5**), and Horeb is another name for Sinai – see **Exodus 3:1** and **Deuteronomy 4:15**.

So they were at Sinai – but were apparently on the wrong side, for though they are in “Rephidim”, **Exodus 17:6** and **18:5** place them at the “mount of God”, “Horeb”, and yet **Exodus 19:1-2** shows them moving FROM Rephidim to Sinai. So Rephidim was near Sinai, on one side of the mountain, and then they moved from there to the other side – a short journey.

**Exodus 19:1** says they arrived at Sinai “in the third month... the same day...”. This can mean one of two things; the same day of the *month* that they left Egypt (the 15th), or the same day of the *week* (a Thursday). We know they were in the neighborhood of Sinai on the 29th day of the second month, it is inconceivable it took them over two weeks to travel the rest of the way. So it probably wasn’t the same day of the month.

But if they arrived on a Thursday, the same day of the WEEK that they left Egypt, in the week following their last encampment at Rephidim, then they would have arrived at Sinai on the fourth day of the third month. Write that in your calendar. The next day, Friday, **Exodus 19:3-6** records that Moses went up to the mountain to receive a message from God.

Then he returned to the people, and then went up the mountain again to get more instructions in **verses 8-9**. What were those instructions? **Verses 10-11**. What did Moses do? **Verses 15-16**.

So in your calendar, on the 5th day of the third month, write “Today”, then “Tomorrow” and then “The Third Day”. You’ll find it falls on a *Sunday*. In fact, you’ll find it falls after exactly SEVEN WEEKS from the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread! Because it was the day of *PENTECOST!*

*The morning of that Holy Day, God gave Mankind His law; the same day, a little over 1,500 years later, God gave Mankind His spirit to interpret that law! And on the same day, yet in our future... something even greater is going to happen!*

Anyone not keeping Pentecost with Moses 3,500 years ago would not have been a part of the Covenant God made with Israel! Anyone not keeping Pentecost with Peter 2,000 years ago would not have been a part of the NEW Covenant God made with His church! And anyone not keeping Pentecost when God returns... just think about that.

## BUT WHAT DOES PENTECOST MEAN?

God gave Man His law on Pentecost, and His spirit on Pentecost. What do those have in common? Here is a simple logical equation;

The nature of God is love (**1 John 4:8**) – a simple equation of  $A = B$ .

Love is the keeping of the law (**Romans 13:10, 2 John 1:6, 1 John 5:3**). A simple equation of  $B = C$ . And that equation requires the conclusion that  $C = A$ : The keeping of the law is God’s nature.

To put it in clearer terms, the law is the most basic expression God’s nature. The law defines what God’s nature is like. God cannot break any of those laws (**James 1:13, 1 John 3:9**). So if you know

those facts about God, you KNOW what God would do in any situation. You know what God WANTS in any situation – He wants the solution that fulfills those laws, which is always the solution that is the most loving, because love is the keeping of those laws.

But without those laws, you can't know God. It is impossible! You might know His name, where He lived, something He did 2,000 years ago... but you can't know HIM, you can't know His NATURE, without the laws that DEFINE His nature! (**1 John 2:4**).

It would be like claiming to know me based on where I lived, my name, and the fact that I once traveled to Mexico. You don't know me! You only know a few unimportant things *about* me – *and* without God's law, that's as good as you can ever hope to know God!

You can't know anyone until you know their *character*; will they steal from you? Can you trust them with your life? Will they lie to you, kill you, cheat you? The Ten Commandments answer all those questions about God, so you can truly get to know His holy nature.

So for ancient Israel to have any hope of being God's people, and KNOWING God, He had to introduce Himself to them, which He did by giving them His law. But Man is carnal, and his nature rebelled against that law (**Romans 8:7**). So God had to send the law AND a way of understanding it, which was His spirit – He lives in us and helps us *apply* the law, so that we can know Him better.

The giving of the law was God's business card, in a manner of speaking; it defined His nature on paper (well, stone actually). But that could be misinterpreted, because words on stone are not alive. So God sent us His spirit – a piece of His nature living inside of us and explaining those words to us, helping us to understand them and know Him better.

It's rather like the difference between knowing a person through letters you've exchanged with them, and knowing them over a telephone; no amount of words can convey the thoughts and feelings of a person as well as a few minutes on the phone. This is the difference between knowing God through laws written on stone and knowing God through His spirit.

And yet even over the phone, you can't truly know a person. You can become quite close, but it's still not the same as literally knowing a person face-to-face. And so it is with God, too. Read **Revelation 21:3**. One day, far in the future when the Earth is cleansed and the plan of God is finished, God intends to literally, physically dwell with man. On that day, we will truly meet Him for the first time. No more phone calls, no more letters... face to face (**1 Corinthians 13:12**).

And that is the ultimate fulfillment of Pentecost. Three successive stages of introduction; first in word, then in spirit, finally in body; each Pentecost bringing us closer to that state Jesus prayed for when He said...

**John 17:21** *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

And that's the meaning of Pentecost. The next lesson will pick up and explain the fall Holy Days – the most exciting ones!

This work is completely non-denominational and is meant to fulfill Christ's great commission to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" (**Mark 16:15**). **This publication is not to be sold;** "*freely ye have received, freely give*" (**Matthew 10:8**).

The Bible tells us to PROVE ALL THINGS, and The Simple Answers encourages people to do just that. If you cannot PROVE what you believe, you have no right to believe it! Many of the things we print are shocking because they are different from what you've heard, but if something we say offends or upsets you, we hope you will take the time to set aside your preconceived ideas and PROVE your point from the Bible to see if you truly have been right all these years.

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