

# The Exodus Journey Through the Appointed Times

This is Part two of my Appointed Times article. Please read “The Appointed Times and the Meaning of Life” first if you have not done so or need a simpler introduction to this topic.

## The Journey

“These *are* the feasts of Yehovah, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.” Leviticus 23: 4.

We’re going to look at each of these days in detail, using the first year of Israel’s journey from Egypt to the promised land as a guide, as it will take us through all of God’s appointed times, and it is the first Biblical example we have of people keeping these days, even though most of them are not named as such. Even where Israel is not shown as directly keeping the appointed times, they set out a pattern for us to follow about their meaning.

It is fairly widely understood that the entire Exodus is symbolic of the feast of Unleavened Bread, as it takes place directly after the first Passover. What is not as well understood is that all of the Holy Days can be found in the very first year of the Exodus, with God’s exact calendar being kept for each day. By leading them through this journey, Yehovah\* set the pattern that we are

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\*Yehovah was the name that Jesus went by in the Old Covenant, before He became a man. He was already the Father’s son. The original Hebrew that it was written in wrote out the Hebrew characters YHVH, the name Yehovah (or another similar transliteration), wherever you now see printed

all to follow. Please try to keep in mind the story we went over in the last section. If we can grasp the things that are laid out on this journey we will gain tremendous understanding about God’s plan for us. We will also glean bits from other areas of the Bible that will fill in a bit more of the patterns and meaning. Some time will be spent in Revelation, as it is the final and ultimate representation of what these days are about. However it is also important to note that, as Revelation is a book of events that have yet to happen, there is no mention of events directly related to Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as those events had already been fulfilled during Jesus’ first coming.

## **Passover**

Leviticus 23 is the most commonly cited chapter that gives instructions about the Holy days, so lets see what it says about Passover. Verse 5, “On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Lord's Passover” That is all that Leviticus 23 has to say about the Passover because that chapter states it is giving instructions about Feasts and Holy Convocations, not all appointed times. It is the first of the appointed times for God's year, and as such is mentioned here as a time marker for keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread. However, it is not part of the Festival Seasons, or a Holy Convocation. It is not listed at all in Exodus 23 with

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THE LORD. It was changed by superstitious translators who thought that they could not speak or print this name without it being blasphemy. I will refer to Yehovah in this study from now on when it is important to designate that it is the pre-incarnate Christ that is being talked about, and not the Godhead, which includes the Father and the Son, referred to as Elohiym, in Hebrew. The Father on His own is rarely mentioned in the Old Covenant. All Biblical quotations are from the New Kings James Version (NKJV), but I’ve taken the liberty of changing THE LORD wherever it is printed to Yehovah.

the Feasts to be kept. Many will try to lump this day in with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as it occurs the day before that weeklong Feast. In fact, this is what the Jews did in the New Testament, where it is referred to as “the Passover of the Jews” to differentiate it from “the Lord's Passover.” In fact, this is what is still practiced in most Judaism today. In Exodus 23 the Feast of Unleavened Bread is stated to be only 7 days long. Had the Passover been a part of that, it would have been 8 days.

So where are the instructions for the Passover, then? They are given during the first Passover itself in Exodus 12, before the rest of the law was given at Mt Sinai. Chapter 11 precedes it with the tenth plague on Pharaoh and the Egyptians being announced, which was the death of the firstborn of everything that was not protected by the blood of the lamb. Chapter 12 starts with God proclaiming that month (the month of Aviv, or Abib) to be the beginning of the new year, and then gets into very specific instruction on how the Israelites were to keep the Passover. The Bible covers it much more thoroughly than I can. Exodus 12:1-14

<sup>1</sup> Now Yehovah spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, <sup>2</sup> “This month shall be your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. [*Here is our new year. No celebrations are commanded. It is only mentioned as a place to start calculating when to keep the other days.*] <sup>3</sup> Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. <sup>4</sup> And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where

they eat it. <sup>8</sup> Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. <sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. <sup>11</sup> And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It *is* Yehovah’s Passover.

<sup>12</sup> ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* Yehovah. <sup>13</sup> Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

<sup>14</sup> ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to Yehovah throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

These were very specific instructions given for the very first Passover. This is the start of Israel’s journey from Egypt to the promised land that will take us through all of the appointed times and Holy Days (actually we will get through them all in just the first year of the Exodus). It corresponds in our initial story to when the Father is setting aside the nation to be sanctified and cleansed before they take their journey. All of the symbolism you just read in Exodus 12 above is about the nation of Israel being cleansed. They are the first ones that God the Father chose to work with to find a bride for His Son, who later became Jesus Christ.

Without going into every detail, let’s look at some of this basic symbolism. There is a lamb that is to be sacrificed. That lamb symbolizes Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed on Passover in the New Covenant. That may seem obvious to many who grew up Christian, but to those who didn’t that information may not be readily picked up on. The Jews, who keep the Passover, still do

not understand that bit of basic information (or, rather they simply refuse to believe it). None of the rest of this passage will make sense without that understanding, though.

The blood from the sacrifice of that lamb was to be put on the doorposts and lintel of the house. It is interesting to view the symbolism of this doorway with how Jesus talked about himself. John 10:7-9;

<sup>7</sup> Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

There is also another shape, that these doorposts and lintels are similar to: Upright members with a cross members – remarkably similar to the cross that Jesus died on, where His blood was shed through the nails that held him to this cross. We just need to put two and two together then to understand how this cross was a very important, protective doorway to those called by the Father.

What was the purpose of the blood? In Exodus, it protected the household from the curse that Yehovah was putting on the Egyptians, to kill the firstborn of every household. Guess what it did in the New Covenant? It did the same thing. Jesus blood saved the firstborn. It is important to understand that it is only the Firstborn that this sacrifice is protecting at this time, not all of humanity, or even all of Israel. It is a Godly, eternal life that is at stake, not our current lives. Since only the firstborn are at risk of death, they are the only ones who need to be saved. Jesus explained this blood to His disciples during the Passover service in Matthew 26:28, “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Shed for **many**, not for all. This by no means says that everyone will not have a chance at salvation. But at this time the firstborn are the only

ones who are at risk of death, because they are the only ones who have been called by the Father to the knowledge of these things, and have answered the call through Baptism. Baptism puts God’s spirit into our body, alongside our human spirits. We then have a seed of God living and growing inside of us. Without this there is no eternal Godly life in us, and without that Godly life, we cannot be at risk of having that life die, which is the state that those who have not been called and baptized find themselves in. You cannot be at risk of losing something if you never had it in the first place. Matthew 22:14, “For many are called, but few [are] chosen.” These many who have been called by the Father are the ones that Jesus Christ is choosing His bride from. They will not all become the bride, but they are in the running, having been given the Godly seed of the holy spirit. The bride are the few that are chosen.

I am getting ahead of myself here, talking about things that are now well beyond the cleansing of Passover, and well into the events of Pentecost. But it easy to see how interconnected these appointed times are. There needs to be an understanding of the whole picture to understand the meaning of its parts, which is why I told the whole story up front.

The theme of cleansing us is given more detail in the foot washing ceremony that Jesus showed us during His Passover service. John 13:3-17;

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup> After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. <sup>6</sup> Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”

<sup>8</sup> Peter said to Him, “You shall never wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”  
<sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”  
<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” <sup>11</sup> For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”  
<sup>12</sup> So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for *so* I am. <sup>14</sup> If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Here we are shown why it is critical to do this every year, and how this cleansing is closely related to, but differs from that of baptism.

When we are baptized, we are immersed from head to toe in water to cleanse us from our sin. Our sinful lives before that time have covered us completely in filth. We repent of our prior ways and are cleansed in the water to wash it all away so that God’s spirit can have a clean residence. Then with prayer and hands laid on us, we ask God’s spirit to enter us, which it does if we are sincere in our need for forgiveness and commitment to living our lives new in His ways. However, this baptism cannot make us perfect. Even though we then have God’s spirit living in us, we also still have our human spirit fighting against it, and we will often fail in living up to what it is we should be doing. Because of this, we have an ongoing need for forgiveness, and this is what the foot washing pictures. While walking in this

world, our feet are sure to get soiled, but it is only our feet. Baptism covered our whole body, but once that is clean only our feet have direct contact with the earth. So Jesus taught us to cleanse each other’s feet once a year at Passover, as He did for the disciples.

So we also start to see an important link between the blood of the Lamb, of Jesus, that was shed and our baptism. They are both integral to our being cleansed and becoming acceptable to the Godhead, but are separate things serving two distinct purposes. The shedding of the blood of the lamb comes first, to allow the firstborn to even see that we need saving. Without our sins forgiven, we cannot even have any idea how filthy we were. The blood of the Passover lamb removes that filth, cleansing our bodies, which we are told are the temple of God in 1 Corinthians 6:19, “Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit [who is] in you, whom you have from God and you are not your own?”

So baptism comes next, and it is at this point that our interconnected story turns to the next appointed time, which contains the first of the Holy Days, the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

But first, a closing quote which sums up the reason for Passover, stated in Exodus 13:1-2, “Then Yehovah spoke to Moses, saying, “Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine.” Yes, it is His. Everyone will not be called His, only the firstborn, and they are being consecrated (also translated as sanctified, set apart as Holy) to Him.

## **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

The most important symbolism to understand about this Feast is that leavening equals sin. When bread is leavened, it gets puffed

up, or full of itself. Just like we do when we are full of sin. It takes only the smallest amount of leavening – yeast, soda, or whatever – to raise a whole loaf of dough. It is easy enough to find analogies between sin and leavening and their pervasiveness. We have all experienced the work of sin in our bodies, and how it only takes a bit of pride to puff up our egos to an unhealthy level, so this should be easy to understand.

God made Israel leave Egypt before their bread dough had time for it's natural yeasts to cause it to rise, or before their natural disobedient selves had time to react and refuse to leave. He also told succeeding generations to unleaven their whole homes before Passover as a memorial to this.

Israel's entire journey through the wilderness is symbolized in this feast. It was a time of testing and trying to stay clean, out of sin. How many times did they complain and wish that they were back in Egypt where they had all the food they could eat? How blind were they made that they could not even remember the slavery they had been in, and the freedom they now had to worship their God? This is exactly how our path is when we start on the trip to the promised land, towards a life with Christ. Oh, the worldly comforts that we have to leave behind! How we wish we could have them back! Oh, how we forget that those same comforts kept us away from the God we are now trying to follow!

This is a time where we are pushed to the edge of our capacity to believe that God will take care of us. Then, just when we are getting to the point where we can take it no more and we are complaining to God, He delivers us and gives us what we need. Not necessarily what we wanted, but what we need. This was where the Manna was given to Israel. God's own unleavened bread was there for the gathering every day for 40 years. This is the meaning of the line in the prayer that Jesus taught us in Matthew 6:11, "Give us this day our daily bread." Let us pray to

receive what God would have us live on for that day, knowing that He will indeed provide for us, instead of demanding the food that we want but that would drive us back into Egypt and sin.

Now I want to get back to what I had started to talk about at the end of the Passover section – baptism. How does the Feast of Unleavened Bread have anything to do with Baptism? It will become apparent by continuing to follow the pattern of the Exodus. I'll start with another piece of basic symbolism that is probably common knowledge to many, but not necessarily to everyone. I just mentioned it in the last paragraph. Egypt also equals sin, just like leavening does. So when the Bible talks over and over again about "coming out of Egypt" it is not just talking about God's strength in that physical application, it is talking about how He is bringing us out of sin in a spiritual sense as well.

When the Israelites left Egypt, they left as a sanctified people on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, immediately after the Passover. They left from the city of Rameses and camped at an area known as Succoth\* (Ex. 12:37) for the first night. The next day they made it to Etham (Ex. 13:20), and the next to Pi Hahiroth by the Red Sea (Ex. 14:2), being led by a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. They camped there by the Red Sea and the Egyptian army caught up with them there. This is, of course, the famous scene of Moses parting the Red Sea for Israel to cross over on dry land, and of Pharaoh's army pursuing them into the middle of the Sea before it collapsed around and destroyed them.

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\* "Succoth" means booth, tent or tabernacle in Hebrew, and is the same word used to describe the "Feast of Tabernacles," which is often called the feast of Booths. The feasts of Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles are analogous in many ways. That this is Israel's first stop on the feast of Unleavened Bread says a lot about the importance of Israel's living in temporary dwellings during these times.

We should look at this a little closer to see what else is going on here besides a physical triumph. They were, as a nation, deciding to follow God - to “stand still and see the salvation of Yehovah” – Exodus 14:13. Passing through the Red Sea was their baptism. Today our baptism is when we accept that it is Christ whom is responsible for our salvation. We show our acceptance by passing through water. Christ will be our salvation despite our constant grumblings against Him and His ways, as long as we do make the decision to follow Him. To finish the quote from Exodus 14:13-14, “Stand still and see the salvation of Yehovah, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. <sup>14</sup>Yehovah will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.” Yes, our salvation is dependent entirely on Him. When was Jesus Christ first accepted as the one who did this for us in the new covenant? It happens to be on the very same day - the wave sheaf day that falls during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Attached to this paper is a chart that shows beyond any doubt, from the scriptures, the exact timeline of both Jesus death and resurrection, and how that exactly parallels the Passover and Unleavened Bread, including the wave sheaf day, of Exodus. Please take a look at it carefully. The parallels are incredible. (It should also put to rest any talk about Jesus rising on Sunday and any associated nonsense for changing the Sabbath to that day.)

The Crossing of the Red Sea took place on the day of the wave sheaf offering, which was on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Christ was accepted as the wave sheaf offering on this same day during the same feast. In order for Him to be accepted as such, He had to have already risen. It would have been useless if He were still dead at that point. It would also have made Him to be in the grave for 4 nights, which would be against all of the prophecies that He and others made concerning this. He was killed as a sacrificial lamb on the

Passover, spent 3 days and 3 nights in the grave, then rose from the grave on the Sabbath, just before sundown, as the first of the firstfruits, able to perform His function of being accepted as the wave sheaf offering. Remember that the sheaf that was waved was the first ripe barley – the first fruit of the season. God’s year could not start until the Barley could be shown to be in a state where it would be ready for this offering. Our baptism is our acceptance of His offer of salvation, just as Israel took up Yehovah’s offer of salvation by crossing through the Red Sea.

I mentioned that Jesus grants our Salvation even though we grumble and complain about our lives constantly. We somehow have a hard time just standing back and watching our salvation take place. We passed through the water of baptism, but those waters often seem bitter to us when we see the hardships we must endure in following Him. That is very much what the rest of the feast of Unleavened Bread is about. But there is a gift at the end of it. Exodus 15:22-26,

<sup>22</sup> So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.<sup>23</sup> Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. <sup>24</sup> And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” <sup>25</sup> So he cried out to Yehovah, and Yehovah showed him a tree. When he cast *it* into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them,<sup>26</sup> and said, “If you diligently heed the voice of Yehovah your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For *I am* Yehovah who heals you.”

<sup>27</sup> Then they came to Elim, where there *were* twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

These bitter waters of ours will be made sweet. We will understand why we had to go through our hardships and will truly appreciate what was done for us. Discipline is not something anyone enjoys, but its fruits are certainly worth it. A child does not always want to do his piano lessons, but later, as a trained musician, he can enjoy playing music in a way that cannot be explained to those who never learned. So, if we haven't figured it out yet, that is why our lives are hard – we are being disciplined. We can either grumble about our lessons or we can take them in stride and get them done, learning as much as we can by them because someday we will appreciate it more than we know. Verse 22 told us that the bitter waters being made sweet was three days from the Red Sea Crossing. On the timeline, that would bring us exactly to the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I mentioned before that these patterns are strewn throughout the Bible, so I want to give one other example that not many people associate with the feast of Unleavened Bread – the account of Noah's Ark. I started thinking about the word ark one day and wondered if it was the same as the one used for the Ark of the Covenant. It turns out that they are different words in the Hebrew, but they do have essentially the same meaning - a box. It then occurred to me that there are some real similarities between the account of the Exodus, which pictures coming out of sin, and that of the account of Noah's ark. Noah and his family were doing exactly the same as Israel was in leaving Egypt. In Noah's case, the entire earth was overrun with sin to the point that God just wanted to start over with a clean slate. Noah was to go on a journey, leaving this sin far behind, taking along only that which was necessary to start over fresh - the animals to repopulate the earth and, more importantly, a righteous heart. He journeyed through 40 days and 40 nights of rain and upheaval. Israel left sin (Egypt) behind and travelled for

40 years through the wilderness, carrying in an ark only what was essential to start a new life in the promised land - stone tablets containing the Word of God.

With this pattern in mind, we can take a sneak peak at how this pattern is continued in God's plan. The Ark of the Covenant later became the righteous heart of both the Tabernacle and the Temple, when it was built, placed in the Holy of Holies. This is very significant when you think about our bodies as being the Temple of God now. God is writing His word on our hearts (let our hearts not be of stone this time, as the tablets were!). Our hearts are now becoming the new Holy of Holies, the new ark. We will bring only what is essential, God's word written on our hearts, into the next stage of His plan. So let's move on to that next stage.

### **Pentecost/Feast of Weeks**

After this time of wandering and testing in our story, we come to the part where the Son chooses His bride from among those that the Father had called. This is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost. Both names refer to the same day, but to different aspects of it. The word Pentecost simply means “fiftieth day” and refers to the timing on when to keep it. It is the term used in the new covenant, where Feast of Weeks are used in the old. Counting is started at the wave sheaf day during the feast of Unleavened Bread, where the harvest of the firstfruits of the barley started. Christ was our wave sheaf offering, the first of the firstfruits. It continues until the 50<sup>th</sup> day, which is Pentecost, where the harvest of barley ends and the firstfruits of the wheat harvest begins. Christ's bride was the barley harvested during this 50 day count, and its end starts the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, which will be the firstborn of the marriage. Pentecost will always fall on a Sunday. If you take a calendar and count that first wave sheaf day as day 1 (which will also always be a Sunday), then go

through 7 full weeks (49 days) and add one more day, you will always end up on another Sunday. This is the time of year of the beginning of the wheat harvest in Israel. Unleavened Bread took place during the beginning of the barley harvest, sometimes referred to in the Bible as the early harvest. The timing of Pentecost is at the very end of the early harvest and the start of the wheat harvest, or late harvest. This shows a transition to a new stage of God's plan, where the harvest of the first fruit, barley, is complete. The count of 50 days has been the time where Christ was harvesting, or choosing, His bride. Now that she has been chosen, the marriage can take place, transitioning into a new season in their life as a family.

I want to point out here that this is the point in the plan of salvation where we are now. Ever since Jesus was accepted as the true wave sheaf offering we have been in the process gathering together the Bride under the terms of the New Covenant. Some were gathered under the first Covenant with Israel, and then with Judah, now they are being gathered from the highways of the whole world (Matt. 22: 9. We'll read more about that shortly). The next event to take place is Pentecost, and it will happen as soon as the number of the Bride is complete.

Let's read about the feast of Pentecost (Firstfruits/Weeks) in Leviticus 23:15-21, where it was first commanded in detail.

<sup>15</sup> 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. <sup>16</sup> Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to Yehovah. <sup>17</sup> You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* the firstfruits to Yehovah. <sup>18</sup> And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be *as* a burnt offering to Yehovah, with their grain offering

and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to Yehovah.<sup>19</sup> Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering. <sup>20</sup> The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits *as* a wave offering before Yehovah, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to Yehovah for the priest. <sup>21</sup> And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work *on it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

<sup>22</sup> '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* Yehovah your God.'"

There is, of course, so much to go into about the symbolism of all of the sacrifices given here - of the loaves and flour and the goats and bull and rams and lambs. But for now I mostly want to establish the general importance that this day has in redeeming the firstfruits of the land. We have finished our count of 50 days of gathering the barley (always made into unleavened loaves), and have started in on the wheat harvest (leavened loaves – verse 17).

Now let's look at this in Exodus. We have followed the calendar so far, showing the Passover through the last day of Unleavened Bread, and how those days matched up with the events that occurred in the Exodus. So let's see where we get to if we count 50 days from the wave sheaf day, which we have shown aligned with the Red Sea Crossing. Pentecost will always fall on a Sunday during the third lunar month of the year, whether there were 29 or 30 days in those lunar months (the only possibilities). Exodus 19:1 tells us "In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day [*the same day of the week*], they came to the Wilderness of Sinai." We can see, if we

refer back to the timeline at the end, that they left Ramses on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the week\*. So we know that when they arrived at Sinai, it was the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the week during the third month. As Pentecost must always be on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week, we know that this could not be Pentecost, but we must be close, as it is the correct month.

When they arrived here at Sinai, Moses was called up to the mountain by God and given special instructions to prepare the people of Israel. Verse 10 says, “Then Yehovah said to Moses, ‘Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day Yehovah will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.’” So they were to get ready for something very special happening in three days. If we count three days from the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the week, when they arrived at Sinai, we come to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week. This would be Pentecost.

So what happened on that Pentecost? God gave Moses the law to give to the People. It started with the ten commandments in Exodus 20 and continued straight through Exodus 23 with more laws and statutes and ordinances. God was expounding on His ways to Israel, giving them the house rules for them to dwell together. Chapter 24, 1-8 reads,

Now He said to Moses, “Come up to Yehovah, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship

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\* I will use the numbered days of the week to avoid confusion. We should not impose our modern midnight to midnight days (i.e. Sunday-Saturday) as it will only add confusion. Israel’s days were sunset to sunset. Looking at the chart, we can see that when they left Ramses, it was still Wednesday night, but that it changed to Thursday in the middle of the night, yet it was on their 5<sup>th</sup> day of the week the whole time.

from afar. <sup>2</sup> And Moses alone shall come near Yehovah, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him.”

<sup>3</sup> So Moses came and told the people all the words of Yehovah and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words which Yehovah has said we will do.” <sup>4</sup> And Moses wrote all the words of Yehovah. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>5</sup> Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to Yehovah. <sup>6</sup> And Moses took half the blood and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. <sup>7</sup> Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that Yehovah has said we will do, and be obedient.” <sup>8</sup> And Moses took the blood, sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, “This is the blood of the covenant which Yehovah has made with you according to all these words.”

Israel had just said, “I do” to God and made a marriage covenant. Yes, Yehovah, the pre-incarnate Christ, was married to the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai on Pentecost.

Was the whole nation chosen to be the bride, or just a few, as our story has laid out? Well, both, depending on which part of the pattern we are looking at. You will notice above that only 74 people (Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and 70 elders) were invited to come close to God and see Him. These represent the few that would be chosen to be the actual bride. But these elders are also representatives of the entire nation, and it was the entire nation that said they would obey His words and keep His covenant. You see, the bride was only the select few, yet He was marrying into the entire family. That is something people often forget at the time of their own marriages – it is not just our spouse who will be in our lives forever, but their whole family, too. So here, the entire family is agreeing to obey the covenant, which was then sealed with blood. This is why you will often hear Israel referred

to as a “covenant people.” They were in a marriage covenant with Yehovah.

Listen to the special bonus that the 74 were treated to in verse 9-11;

Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel,<sup>10</sup> and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity.<sup>11</sup> But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.

They got to see God and live to tell about it. This only happened because of their special status as the bride. The paved work of Sapphire is seen in Revelation 4:6 and 15:2, and is called the Sea of Glass. This is where Christ resides and we will see it when He comes to redeem His bride at the end of the age.

Most Christians today think of Pentecost only as the day, in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit landed on the Apostles, and thousands were baptized and added to the church. That was certainly an important day, but it seems on the surface very different in nature to what I have been talking about. How does that fit into our story, and that of Exodus? Is there any relationship there? I won't print that whole chapter here, but please read it if you are not familiar with it. It was the first Pentecost after Jesus death, and the timing holds up, 50 days after He was accepted as the wave sheaf offering at His resurrection. But what about the meaning we have been talking about of a wedding? There is no mention of that in Acts, just as there was no mention of a wedding in Exodus. We'll have to start gathering a little here and a little there to make sense of it, so let's go back to Genesis to see a little about the nature of Eve, the first bride in the Bible. Genesis 2:18-20;

<sup>18</sup> And Yehovah God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” <sup>19</sup> Out of the ground Yehovah God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

This is the reason that Eve, Adam's bride, was made. She was to be a helper to him. That, quite simply, was her entire job description and reason for being. Read Proverbs 31:10-31 for an expanded view of this job description, but the essence of it is being a helper to her husband at all times. All other brides would and/or should follow that same pattern of being a helper. The nation of Israel was supposed to be acting in the same capacity. Yehovah gave them the rules of the marriage covenant and they said they would obey them. Those rules were setting up how to be a helper for Him in letting the rest of the world see how powerful His ways are and the blessings that would come with keeping them. The Hebrew word used for helper (or “help meet” in the King James) is Strong's 5828, ezer. It's meaning, from Gesenius Lexicon, is simple, “aid help; a helper, aider; a female helper.”

In the book of John we see similar language referring to the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17, “If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him.” Verse 26 says, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” John 15:26, “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the father, He will testify of Me.” John 16:7, “It is to your

advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you, but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” These references are all clearly pointing to the Holy Spirit that would come upon the disciples at Pentecost.

In the King James version, the word here translated as “Helper” is translated “Comforter,” which I do not find to be the best translation. The Greek word is Parakletos, Strong’s 3875. Its literal meaning, according to Vines;

“lit., "called to one's side," i.e., to one's aid is primarily a verbal adjective, and suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid. It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate; then, generally, one who pleads another's cause, an intercessor, advocate, as in 1Jo 2:1, of the Lord Jesus. In the widest sense, it signifies a "succorer, comforter." Christ was this to His disciples, by the implication of His word "another (allos, "another of the same sort," not heteros, "different") Comforter," when speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jhn 14:16. In Jhn 14:26; 15:26; 16:7 He calls Him "the Comforter." "Comforter" or "Consoler" corresponds to the name "Menahem," given by the Hebrews to the Messiah.

I find this meaning to be very revealing in light of the nature of the Holy Spirit. It has certainly been summoned to our side, by Jesus, for our aid. It also calls into view an important distinction made in John 14:16 about the word “another”. This word is supposed to convey the meaning of another of the same kind, not of a different kind. This is important because these verses are often used as support for the Trinity doctrine, which says that the Holy Spirit is as separate from Jesus and the Father as they are from each other (yet they would also be One being, in a great mystery which cannot be understood). But the meaning of the statement that Jesus is making here is that this Spirit, or Helper is no different than that of His own spirit. It is a spirit that belongs

to both Jesus and the Father, but is not a separate being in any way.

So when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples, this was very much symbolic of our marrying Christ, just as the first Pentecost at Mt. Sinai was. Jesus was gaining a Helper. In fact He was gaining thousands of them.

To bring this all home to what this is really pointing to, we now have to turn to a few places in Revelation. Revelation 14:1-5;

<sup>1</sup> Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. <sup>2</sup> And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.<sup>3</sup> They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. <sup>4</sup> These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. <sup>5</sup> And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Here are the thousands of helpers that Jesus is gaining: 144,000 to be precise. They are virgins, as a bride should be, and they are redeemed as firstfruits, just as we read about happening in Leviticus 23. But are they really marrying Christ just because it says they are firstfruits? Lets read Revelation 19:6-8;

<sup>6</sup> And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! <sup>7</sup> Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” <sup>8</sup> And to her it

was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

<sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’”

Here a little, there a little. The first passage in Revelation refers to Christ’s bride only as virgins. The second one clothes those virgins in white linen for the acts that have qualified them to maintain their virgin status, but also calls them the wife of the Lamb. The term Lamb is used in both accounts, and we know that that refers to Christ. This last passage also refers to the “marriage supper.” We can read about that in another place worth turning to. Matthew 22 mentions the same marriage supper in a parable that Jesus gives. It also sounds remarkably like the overall story that I told earlier. Matthew 22:1-14;

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: <sup>2</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, <sup>3</sup> and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. <sup>4</sup> Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding.’” <sup>5</sup> But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. <sup>6</sup> And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*. <sup>7</sup> But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup> Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ <sup>10</sup> So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

<sup>11</sup> “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. <sup>12</sup> So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’

And he was speechless. <sup>13</sup> Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

<sup>14</sup> “For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”

This is a fascinating passage, and at first (or even second or third) read it is a bit cryptic. Many questions come up, but the one I want to concentrate on here is why isn’t the bride ever mentioned? Again, the answer is in a different place, but only a few chapters later this time, over in Matthew 25: 1-10.

<sup>1</sup> “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. <sup>3</sup> Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup> but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. <sup>5</sup> But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

<sup>6</sup> “And at midnight a cry was *heard*: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ <sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ <sup>9</sup> But the wise answered, saying, ‘*No*, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup> And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

<sup>11</sup> “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ <sup>12</sup> But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

<sup>13</sup> “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

These virgins are the bride. We already established in the Revelation passages that virgins and Christ’s bride are used to refer to the same people. What tends to throw us off about both of these passages in Matthew is that we look at them through our assumption that the bridegroom would know whom He is

marrying before the wedding takes place. The reason we don't see a bride mentioned is because she is referred to as a guest at the wedding. She is invited to the wedding as a guest and chosen from among the other guests. In Matthew 22 she is invited in three different shifts (which refer to Israel, then Judah, then the Gentiles). Those who didn't have on the correct wedding garment, though (this would be a white, linen robe), were kicked back out of the wedding. In Matthew 25 we see 10 virgins, but apparently half of them were not qualified, as their robes were not white linen either. Apparently being a virgin by itself is not enough; the bride must "excel them all," as Proverbs 31:29 states. We should study Proverbs 31, applying it as best we can to its spiritual sense, and do all we can to meet that job description.

I hope that we've connected enough dots on this Appointed Time to let us see the picture and how the seemingly disparate examples from the old and new covenants actually fit perfectly together. So let's move on to the next part of the plan.

## Trumpets

This is now starting the feasts of the fall Holy Day season. I mentioned that Pentecost is where we are now in the timeline, at least drawing very near to it. Because that is where we are in the timeline, God has allowed many of His people to understand clearly the events that have unfolded and are about to unfold up to that point. Starting with Trumpets, however, we get a little beyond where our focus needs to be. Certainly we have some understanding of these days and what they are pointing to, but the clarity around them is not as crisp. We are seeing these things "through a glass darkly". I will take you through them as best I can with the understanding that I have been given, and try not to make any leaps I am unsure about.

After the house rules, or law, were given and Israel said, "I do," Moses was called up to see God with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders. They all saw God and lived to tell about it as we just read in Exodus 24:9-11.

We do not know how long of a time they were all there with God. Then Moses went with Joshua, his assistant, to the mountain to receive the law and commandments written on the tablets of stone, leaving Aaron and Hur in charge of the children of Israel in Moses absence, and they were gone at least 47 days from that point (verses 12-18). During that time period, the children of Israel got impatient waiting for Moses and assumed that he had died on the mountain, consumed by the fire of God they saw. Their mistake, however, wasn't that Moses was actually alive, but that God was still alive. Somehow they saw Moses as their God and not Yehovah, who was leading them. So they asked Aaron to make them a God like that of the nations surrounding them, and Aaron obliged them. Of course it did not take long for Yehovah to see what had been done. Let's read what happened there. Exodus 32:7-14;

<sup>7</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted *themselves*. <sup>8</sup> They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This *is* your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!' " <sup>9</sup> And Yehovah said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and indeed it *is* a stiff-necked people! <sup>10</sup> Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."

<sup>11</sup> Then Moses pleaded with Yehovah his God, and said: "Yehovah, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? <sup>12</sup> Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and

to consume them from the face of the earth?’ Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. <sup>13</sup> Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit *it* forever.’ ” <sup>14</sup> So Yehovah relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

Yehovah surely thought that his people could keep their vow at least long enough for Him to talk with Moses about what He needed to teach the people, which was how to build the house they would be dwelling in. But immediately rebels sprung up to lead the nation into idolatry. This is exactly the situation we see in the story I laid out after the Marriage. It was not a good place for God and His new bride to make a home and some cleansing was going to have to happen to make things right. God wanted to destroy the entire nation and start over with Moses, as he had done before with Noah (Ex. 32:10). But Moses convinced God to keep His covenant with Abraham and Isaac and have mercy on them. Still, there was something that had to be done with the situation. So after Moses went down, broke the tablets of stone and had it out with Aaron, he proclaimed an act of war on his own people. This is the Day of Trumpets. We aren’t given enough specifics in the timeline to count the exact number of days from Pentecost in the narrative (as I mentioned, things get a little foggier now), but using the rough timeline of 47 days plus an undefined amount of time both before and after those days, it is quite feasible the timing could be at Trumpets. The pattern certainly fits perfectly. Look at the call to war that Moses proclaims. Exodus 32: 25-29;

<sup>25</sup> Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), <sup>26</sup> then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and

said, “whoever is on Yehovah’s side-come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. <sup>27</sup> And he said to them, “Thus says Yehovah God of Israel: ‘Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.’” <sup>28</sup> So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. <sup>29</sup> Then Moses said, “Consecrate yourselves today to Yehovah, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.”

This may sound harsh, but think of what Yehovah had originally planned. It would have been far more than 3000 people! It would have been everyone save Moses. Think about that – He would have been destroying His very bride, too! This was tremendous mercy, yet was still a fitting punishment that would hopefully make a point to the nation.

Let’s compare this to Revelation 19: 11-16.

<sup>11</sup> Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. <sup>13</sup> He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup> And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:  
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

This was just after the marriage in verses 6-9 that we read in the last section about Pentecost. If you read through all of Revelation, up until this point all of the destruction that

happened on the earth was done by angels. There is a change here. Yehovah Himself is coming down, along with His new bride, to make war. The bride is clothed in white linen as we talked about before, so we can be certain who is being talked about here.

In the Exodus account we see the tribe of Levi doing the killing. The Levites were the ones who would inherit the priesthood. The bride is also referred to as a nation of priests (1 Peter 2:5-10). Let's read where the Levites were given the duty of the priesthood in Numbers 3: 5-6 and 11-13.

<sup>5</sup> And Yehovah spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>6</sup> "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. <sup>7</sup> And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle. ...

<sup>11</sup> Then Yehovah spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>12</sup> "Now behold, I Myself have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the children of Israel. Therefore the Levites shall be Mine,<sup>13</sup> because all the firstborn are Mine. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: I am Yehovah."

Notice that the Levites were taken instead of the firstborn. They are acting as firstfruits to God. Yes, they are representing His bride. I believe that they earned that right through their actions of coming to Moses when he offered the challenge of "whoever is on Yehovah's side-come to me!" God's chosen bride at the Time – Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and 70 other elders - had failed him. They did not keep the children of Israel from falling headlong into idolatry and actually ordered and made the idol! Somehow, Aaron kept his role as high priest, but Nadab and Abihu (Aaron's sons) actually got vaporized after offering profane fire to God. So God replaced them with a new priesthood.

One other thing to point out in the Revelation 19 account is verse 16, "And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This name on His thigh is confusing to many. The thigh was used for making covenants. Abraham made his servant swear with his hand under Abraham's thigh that he would take a bride for Isaac only from his own country. Now remember that in the Exodus account, Yehovah had relented from destroying His people and His bride when He remembered His covenant with Abraham and Isaac. That covenant had been made in the same place, on His thigh.

## Atonement

By far, the most complete set of instructions for this day is given in Leviticus 16. The entire chapter is dedicated to these instructions. It starts, not surprisingly, with one of the last things I mentioned in the Exodus account of Trumpets: Nadab and Abihu's profane fire.

<sup>1</sup> Now Yehovah spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered *profane fire* before Yehovah, and died; <sup>2</sup> and Yehovah said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at *just* any time into the Holy *Place* inside the veil, before the mercy seat which *is* on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

<sup>3</sup> "Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy *Place*: with *the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering.* <sup>4</sup> He shall put the holy linen tunic and the linen trousers on his body; he shall be girded with a linen sash, and with the linen turban he shall be attired. These *are* holy garments. [*Remember that these linen garments represent the righteous acts of the saints – Revelation 19:8*] Therefore he shall wash his body in water, and put them on. <sup>5</sup> And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.

<sup>6</sup> "Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. <sup>7</sup> He shall take

the two goats and present them before Yehovah *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting. <sup>8</sup> Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for Yehovah and the other lot for the scapegoat.<sup>9</sup> And Aaron shall bring the goat on which Yehovah's lot fell, and offer it *as* a sin offering. <sup>10</sup> But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before Yehovah, to make atonement upon it, *and* to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

<sup>11</sup> "And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which *is* for himself. <sup>12</sup> Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before Yehovah, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring *it* inside the veil. <sup>13</sup> And he shall put the incense on the fire before Yehovah, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* on the Testimony, lest he die. <sup>14</sup> He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

<sup>15</sup> "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. <sup>16</sup> So he shall make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.<sup>17</sup> There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel. <sup>18</sup> And he shall go out to the altar that *is* before Yehovah, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. <sup>19</sup> Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

<sup>20</sup> "And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy *Place*, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. <sup>21</sup> Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. <sup>22</sup> The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

<sup>23</sup> "Then Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of meeting, shall take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the Holy *Place*, and shall leave them there. <sup>24</sup> And he shall wash his body with water in a holy place, put on his garments, come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people. <sup>25</sup> The fat of the sin offering he shall burn on the altar. <sup>26</sup> And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. <sup>27</sup> The bull *for* the sin offering and the goat *for* the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy *Place*, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal.<sup>28</sup> Then he who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.

<sup>29</sup> "This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether* a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. <sup>30</sup> For on that day *the priest* shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* you may be clean from all your sins before Yehovah. <sup>31</sup> It *is* a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever. <sup>32</sup> And the priest, who is anointed and consecrated to minister as priest in his father's place, shall make atonement, and put on the linen clothes, the holy garments; <sup>33</sup> then he shall make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tabernacle of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. <sup>34</sup> This shall be an

everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year.” And he did as Yehovah commanded Moses.

This is probably more specific instruction than is given for any other appointed time, except for possibly Passover. That is because it plays such a pivotal role in our salvation. As mentioned before, none of this was necessary in God’s original creation; it exists solely because of sin and no other reason. I expect that when we are keeping this day in the upcoming thousand year reign of Christ, we will see another side of this day that has been masked, because the atonement will have been completed, and we will be able to see something more akin to the symbolism set out on day five of creation. But for now that is not important, because we must concentrate on understanding our need for atonement. These instructions for the old covenant atonement are the best place to start our understanding.

I won’t attempt to pick apart every detail of this Atonement ritual, as I’m sure there is more than enough for an entire volume on it. But we can cover a good part of the basics. These instructions, as with all of the holy days, involved sacrifices that we, of course, do not do today. Yet verse 29 very clearly states that these things “shall be a statute **forever** for you.” I addressed this quandary at the beginning of this article, but it is worth revisiting quickly. Jesus was indeed the ultimate sacrifice that all of these sacrifices pointed to in the old covenant. So when He fulfilled the need we have had since man’s fall in the garden of Eden for blood sacrifice from a pure, unblemished (sin free) source, the need to continue the sacrificial system of the Levitical priesthood ended. But that is *all* that ended! Christ never said that there was no need to keep these days any more just as He did not say to do away with all of the law. We just do not have a need to redundantly make sacrifices that have already been made. For us to throw away all of the knowledge and understanding that

these days give us because we don’t need to physically slaughter animals anymore is tragic. If anything we should be more willing to keep them now because we do not have that added burden. It is critical that we look at these days and keep them in the spirit of the day as best that we possibly can, and understanding what all those sacrifices were for is more important than ever in order to do so. We do not want the real sacrifice that was made to be lost on us by not understanding all of the facets to its meaning.

So let’s look at the instructions that we just read in Leviticus 16. We can break them down into 4 major parts: The priest’s atoning for himself, the sacrifice of the goat sin offering, the release of the live goat into the wilderness and finally, more cleansing and sacrifice.

Part one begins with Aaron, the priest, cleansing himself, putting on the holy linen garments and offering a bull and a ram for sin and burnt offerings for *himself* just to be able to enter the holy of holies. As a sinful human, he needed to do these things to be clean before the sight of God. Any trace of sin was not allowed in His dwelling then, and will not be allowed in our future spiritual home either.

Next Aaron is ordered to take two kids of the goats and draw lots for them, “one lot for Yehovah and the other lot for the scapegoat” (verse 8). What is going to happen with these goats is critical to understand the ultimate meaning of this day. They each serve a very distinct purpose in the plan of salvation from sin.

The first goat, “for Yehovah,” is killed in verse 15 with these instructions:

Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which *is* for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and

before the mercy seat. <sup>16</sup> So he shall make atonement for the Holy *Place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Verse 8 stated that this goat was to represent Yehovah. We know that Yehovah was the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. Jesus was killed to make atonement for the sins of the people, that they might attain salvation. That is exactly what just happened with this goat. The bull was sacrificed for Aaron the priest's own sin so that he could be clean enough to conduct the sacrifice of the first goat, symbolizing Jesus Christ, for the sins of Israel.

So why aren't we done here after Israel's sin has been forgiven? What is with the second goat and why is it necessary? Verse 8 stated that the second goat was "the scapegoat." The word scapegoat (*azazel*, in Hebrew) is one that translators have a hard time with; as this entry is the only time that it appears in the Bible. But it is made up of two roots, *az* (Strong's 5795), which means "female goat, she-goat, goat, kid" and *azal* (Strong's 235), which means "to go away, to go about, to be used up, be exhausted, be gone, evaporated." Literally this is exactly what the *azazel* does. It is a goat that has the sins of Israel put on its head, and then goes away into the wilderness. This goat is symbolic of Satan. Let's re-read the instructions for the *azazel* goat, starting in verse 20.

And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy *Place*, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. <sup>21</sup> Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. <sup>22</sup> The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

Yehovah does not want His atoning sacrifice to go to waste. Had the process of atonement stopped with the sacrifice of the first goat, sin would have crept right back in quickly, as its source would still be around. Not only is this a time picturing our sins being forgiven, or "covered", but it is also a time where those sins are finally put back onto the head of our accuser, Satan the devil. All of the prayers of so many people asking, "how long?" until justice is served on those who deserve it are finally answered here. So, with Israel's sins rightly attached to their accuser's head, this goat was let go into the wilderness (or an uninhabited land) where it could not bother the Israelites any more.

But why was it not killed? Why leave it roaming in the wilderness? This is because God still has a use for Satan after this point in His plan. He is not completely done with him yet. To see this in its ultimate context, we need to now look at Revelation 20.

<sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years [*and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man*]; <sup>3</sup> and he cast him into the bottomless pit [*an uninhabitable land, or wilderness*], and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

This is an exact rendering of the same events of Leviticus 16: 20-22, in their ultimate form. We see that God does have a plan to release Satan temporally after he is bound up here. We will see why during the very last appointed time, the 8<sup>th</sup> day, or Last Great Day as many call it (in the mean time, don't worry, he'll die in the end!).

After the main part of this ritual is done being performed, verses 23-28 are dealing with regular sacrifices and more necessary cleansing.

Then there is some important information about the general nature of this day, which will lead us back into the story we have been following about the King and His Son. Here is what it says, “you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all...It *is* a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. *It is* a statute forever.” This is setting the tone that our hearts will be in on this day. Remember this happens right after the great war of Trumpets. There has just been bloodshed as has never been seen on the earth. The need to atone for sin has never been greater. But now the war is over and the good guys won. It is a happy time because of that, yes, but it is not the time yet to celebrate with the mess that is lying around us. Our adversary will, for the first time in our lives, not be around to cloud our vision, so we will be able to clearly see the destructiveness that our sin has caused, and that is why we will be afflicting our souls. This is also the only day in the Bible commanded to do “no work at all.” Most Sabbaths (whether of weekly Sabbaths or other Holy Days - Shabbathon's) command “no regular work” which can allow for certain activities to be done, but atonement says no work whatsoever. God makes it very clear that we are to spend this day focusing on nothing but Him and our need for Him.

This is a day of fasting as well. Since we are not to do even the simplest food preparation, it should seem obvious that we would need to fast. The Hebrew for afflict is anah, Strong's 6031, “to afflict, oppress, humble, be afflicted, be bowed down”. This does not directly say fasting, but fasting certainly fits the spirit of anah, and combined with our inability to do simple food preparation, it seems the logical way for us to afflict ourselves on this day. There are also examples from scripture of people fasting on this day.

So where did this day fall in our coverage of the first year of the Exodus? Let's read what happened after the slaughtering of 3000 men on Trumpets. Exodus 32: 30 – 33:6

Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, “You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to Yehovah; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.”<sup>31</sup> Then Moses returned to Yehovah and said, “Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold!<sup>32</sup> Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

<sup>33</sup> And Yehovah said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.<sup>34</sup> Now therefore, go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.”

<sup>35</sup> So Yehovah plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

[Chapter 33]<sup>1</sup> Then Yehovah said to Moses, “Depart *and* go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, “To your descendants I will give it.”<sup>2</sup> And I will send *My* Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.<sup>3</sup> *Go up* to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you *are* a stiff-necked people.” [This, verses 1-3, is talking about where we and Israel will be going next, to the promised land at the Feast of Tabernacles,]

<sup>4</sup> And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.<sup>5</sup> For Yehovah had said to Moses, “Say to the children of Israel, ‘You *are* a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.’”<sup>6</sup> So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.

We see Moses going up to make atonement for the children of Israel. The atonement is not being made for the 3000 people that were slaughtered, but for the people who turned to worshipping an idol. This will be the case in the future as well; atonement will be made not for the slaughter that happens on Trumpets, but for the sin that caused the slaughter to be necessary.

The definition of the Hebrew word for Atonement is Strong's 3722, *kapar*, and means, according to Gesenius's Lexicon, "TO COVER, TO COVER OVER, a covering. (2) *to cover over, to overspread* with anything, as with pitch. (3) covered with hair, to be hairy, shaggy. (4) *to cover* sins, i.e. to pardon; to expiate a crime." (All emphasis in original). Amazingly, every one of these definitions can be found in different aspects of the day of Atonement.

The Hebrew word translated as Mercy Seat is actually just the noun form of atonement. It is Strong's 3727, and Vine's says of it:

*kapporet*, "mercy seat; throne of mercy." This noun form of *kapar* has been variously interpreted by the English versions as "mercy seat" (KJV, RSV); "cover" (NEB); "lid" (TEV); "throne of mercy" (JB); and "throne" (Knox). It refers to a slab of gold that rested on top of the ark of the covenant. Images of two cherubims stood on this slab, facing each other. This slab of gold represented the throne of God and symbolized His real presence in the worship shrine. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sin offering on it, apparently symbolizing the blood's reception by God. Thus the *kapporet* was the central point at which Israel, through its high priest, could come into the presence of God.

So the mercy seat, or the very place where Yehovah resided in the Holy of Holies, was itself a covering of sorts – a solid gold slab that covered the ark of the covenant, inside which were the stone tablets with the law written on them. The priest was to then cover

the mercy seat with blood, sprinkled on it from the goat of the sin offering.

There was another ark that was covered in the Bible, too. We need to turn back to Genesis 6 and the account of Noah. Genesis 6:14 – "Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch." The word for cover here is exactly the same word used for the day of Atonement. Think for a minute about what was being accomplished during Noah's flood. All sin was being done away with so that there could be a fresh start, which is the basic premise of Atonement. There was also water covering all of the earth – did that water also have the same word connected to it? Genesis 7:19 says, "And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered." This word "covered" is different, though. It is Strong's 3680, "to cover, conceal, hide." These words are chosen for a reason. It was not the water that atoned for the sin that had been happening on the earth any more than killing 3000 people had atoned for the sin of the golden calf. The ark was the container housing the hope for the future. That was where the atonement was needed. The pitch covered the ark, inside and out, to make sure that sin could not creep in. It was an intentionally applied covering that kept the old ways out. On the day of Atonement, we intentionally apply a covering to ourselves as well; we afflict our souls and do no work whatsoever. These things will keep us spiritually out of this sin-laden world for a day. We will be able to see more clearly that which is of God, and so be able to picture God's plan and the upcoming time of peace, the Feast of Tabernacles.

## The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths/Ingathering

Exodus 33:7-11

<sup>7</sup> Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass *that* everyone who sought Yehovah went out to the tabernacle of meeting which *was* outside the camp. <sup>8</sup> So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, *that* all the people rose, and each man stood *at* his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle.<sup>9</sup> And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood *at* the door of the tabernacle, and *Yehovah* talked with Moses.<sup>10</sup> All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing *at* the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshiped, each man *in* his tent door. <sup>11</sup> So Yehovah spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle.

This is next in the narrative, after Moses visited Yehovah to make atonement for them. It does not sound much like a big feast, but there is more to this feast than a party, and this account typifies some of the patterns and instructions given for the Feast of Tabernacles. Let's look into what is happening in this passage, getting some help along the way from other passages that deal with this feast time.

In different places in the Bible, the words Tabernacle and Booth are used to describe this day. The Hebrew word for both is the same, Strong's 5521 - *cukkah*, simply meaning "a rude or temporary shelter". It is symbolizing a time where people are dwelling not in their own houses, but with Yehovah. The Exodus account shows Moses leaving the camp to live directly with Yehovah. The people themselves were living in booths during the entire Exodus. Leviticus 23: 39-43 gives the instructions that Moses was to give to the people concerning this day.

<sup>39</sup> 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of Yehovah for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. <sup>40</sup> And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before Yehovah your God for seven days. <sup>41</sup> You shall keep it as a feast to Yehovah for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. <sup>42</sup> You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, <sup>43</sup> that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am Yehovah your God.'"

Nehemiah 8:13-18 explains what all those branches and boughs were for. In the time of Nehemiah, the people had not kept the Feast of Tabernacles (nor most of the law) since the time of Joshua (who led Israel into the promised land).

<sup>13</sup> Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' *houses* of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. <sup>14</sup> And they found written in the Law, which Yehovah had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, <sup>15</sup> and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, *as it is* written."

<sup>16</sup> Then the people went out and brought *them* and made themselves booths, each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. <sup>17</sup> So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness. <sup>18</sup> Also

day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *there was* a sacred assembly, according to the *prescribed* manner.

The branches we read about being gathered in Leviticus are to be used to build their temporary shelters. In Nehemiah, they built them wherever there was space – on their roofs, in their courtyards, in the courtyard of the temple or the city gates.

The tent door was the place where communication, or exchange of information happened between men and God. When Moses went into the Tabernacle (tent) to talk with Yehovah, Yehovah (in the form of a pillar of cloud) was positioned in the tabernacle doorway. The people watched this communication from their own tent doorways and worshiped. I believe that these tent doors spoken of in Exodus 33:10, were referring to these temporary shelters of branches leaning up against their tents – an even more temporary shelter built up against their regular temporary shelters. The Hebrew word for “tent” is the same word used for both tabernacles; the tent that Moses was going into and out of and the tents of the people. The word for door can also be translated as gate, as in “the Water Gate” and “the Gate of Ephraim,” so the pattern of where these shelters were built remained true in the time of Nehemiah. Did you ever wonder why in most of Biblical times, the city gates were used as a place for important meetings and as a gathering place for discussion and worship? Jesus called Himself “the Door of the sheep,” in John 10:7 and performed a significant sign at the Sheep gate because of this as well.

Exodus 33:11 said, “So Yehovah spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” This is so important as to what this day is about because it is what we have to look forward to during the time of Yehovah/Jesus’ 1000 year reign. He will be there,

married to His bride, who will be able to talk to Him face to face as a man speaks to his friend.

Let’s read now the Revelation account of what this time period is about. Revelation 20:4-6,

<sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. [*This is the bride, the 144,000, on these thrones – they had already been resurrected by now – sitting and ruling with Christ.*] Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

We will speak to Him face to face as friends because we will (if we are indeed part of the first resurrection) be reigning with Him as priests of God and of Christ, teaching the nations around about His ways. This time the nations will listen and understand, too because Satan will be bound up so as not to deceive them.

I have one more question to answer before we move on to the Eighth Day, and this will lead us right into it. Why were these specific branches used, those of olive, myrtle, palm, willow and other leafy and oil bearing trees? Revelation 22:2 says, “In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” The context here is the description of the new Jerusalem, which takes place after the appointed times are finished, and that will be discussed more later. But we can apply the use of the leafy parts of the tree to these feast days as well,

and here is why; because it says that the leafy parts are used to heal the nations, a process that started during the thousand-year reign. During the thousand-year reign, those who took part in the first resurrection will be taking part in that healing, having recently eaten from the tree of life. This will be real healing – permanent healing. The verse we just read refers to those leaves being for the healing of “the nations”, a term that is always used to refer to Gentile, or non-Israelite nations. Those are the nations who finally received their turn to eat from the tree of life at the second resurrection and would be in need of healing at that time.

Everyone is not given eternal life at the same time. There is a process, or birth order in the creation of God’s Family, just as there is in our own families, which God gave us as physical examples to learn from. Christ was the very first of the firstfruits to conquer death, earning eternal life as the Son of God during the feast of Unleavened Bread. Christ’s bride was then resurrected at the Marriage of the Lamb, at Pentecost. The Eighth Day then pictures the birth of both the firstborn of the marriage and also the many younger siblings at the resurrection unto life of all the dead who make it through the great white throne judgment. Having this knowledge will make reading much of the end time prophecies much clearer to those who have thought that all are resurrected at once, or worse, that we simply go to heaven when we die if we are good.

These patterns will become much, much clearer by keeping them every year than by reading my explanations. If we haven’t been doing so, then we need to have the attitude that they had in the time of Nehemiah, when they listened to the word of God and were greatly humbled that they had not been following it. This passage, Nehemiah 8: 8-12, is also very much after the pattern of teaching that occurs during the thousand-years. Picture Nehemiah and Ezra as the bride here, the Levites as the first resurrection, and the people being the gentile nations:

<sup>8</sup> So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

<sup>9</sup> And Nehemiah, who *was* the governor, Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day *is* holy to Yehovah your God; do not mourn nor weep.” For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.

<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day *is* holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of Yehovah is your strength.”

<sup>11</sup> So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day *is* holy; do not be grieved.” <sup>12</sup> And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.

They wept because they knew they had not been keeping the law. But because they did not know about these things beforehand, they were not held responsible. They were told to have joy instead! That is the forgiving nature of our creator. According to the very law that had been laid out at Mount Sinai, they could have been cut off from Israel for not keeping these appointed times, but instead they were told here to not weep and to have joy. That is the spirit of the feast of Tabernacles, and should be the overriding spirit we have in our understanding of God’s plan for us, as this time pictures so well. It also shows the attitude we need to have towards God, of humility and repentance. As we learn and understand new information we become responsible for following it. That is what is meant by following Jesus wherever He goes. We can’t cling to old ways after we know better just because it is more convenient. Revelation 14:4, “These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” The truth that is found in Jesus Christ does not change, but our understanding can and will change as we follow Him, growing in grace and knowledge.

## The Eighth Day

I'm afraid there is a lot of baggage many people carry around concerning events and themes that will be covered during this day, so I'll have to spend some time clearing up those things. To get them out of the way we'll start this time with the Revelation account of the Eighth Day, as it is the clearest description of the multiple events that encompass it and will give us a lot of material to dig into. Revelation 20: 7-15;

<sup>7</sup> Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

There are three distinct events occurring here: The testing, or deception, of the nations, the destruction of Satan, and the judgment of all people. The first thing that happens is that Satan is released from the pit that he had been being held in for 1000 years. God is going to use Him to test the nations again. They

had just been living without his influence for 1000 years as part of God's plan for showing what can be accomplished without a deceiver running to and fro, but these people have had an unfair advantage this way and will need to be tested before they are judged. So Satan is used one last time to test the nations. And you can be sure that old snake will come out with a vengeance and a plan after having been chained for so long with nothing to do but fume and think. He knows he will only have a short time to do his best. He will be able to quickly deceive enough people to assemble an army whose number is "as the sand of the sea." I guess that after living so long without any deception in their lives, people will be pretty gullible, not having hardened themselves to the possibility of such lies as the devil will tell them. In short order he will be able to convince these people to attack the land of their leaders who had taught them righteousness for the last millennium. But the one characteristic of Satan that has been his downfall from the very beginning, when he went from being the most respected of all the angels to having sin found in him and was thrown to the earth, is that he was able to deceive even himself. He actually believes his own lies, that he can raise his own throne up higher than that of God's. So he will believe that this is his mighty hour of victory, just before God sends down fire out of heaven to destroy his entire army without the saints having to do so much as lift a finger against them. The devil will finally be cast into and permanently destroyed in the lake of fire. No, he will not be tortured forever like the translation you just read said. Neither will anyone else who does not make it through the white throne judgment.

So let me clear up this thing about eternal torture in a place called Hell before I go any further, as it will need to be understood before I talk about the white throne judgment. The traditional teaching in most mainstream Christian churches is that those who are baptized will be saved and everybody else will not be saved.

Most then also think that those who are not saved are condemned to an eternity in some form of eternal torture called “Hell”. Clearing up these points is critical to understanding God’s plan for our salvation and the function of the Eighth Day in that plan in particular, because this is what it all comes down to. It is the eternal life we all strive for.

Since we just read it, let’s talk about Revelation 20:10, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet [**are**]. And **they** will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Both words that I have bolded, **are** and **they**, are not actually in the original Greek. The “are” is inferred in the Greek, but as such can easily be translated as “were”, which the Interlinear Bible properly does. The sense that should be conveyed is that the beast and false prophet are no longer there, having been completely destroyed when they entered the lake of fire. But there will also be no eternal torture for Satan. The word translated as torment is Strong’s 928, *basanizo*, of which the Blue Letter Bible says, “to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the colour of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal” It can also be used to mean torture or other forms of testing, which is why translators put that word in there, but it is clear that the context here is testing. The nations had just been tested by Satan and now it is finally Satan’s turn to be tested in the refiners fire to see the color of his heart, whether it is gold or silver or completely impure (I hope we know the answer). The fire he is thrown into may burn forever, but those thrown in will die immediately. There is some biblical evidence that Satan will be turned into a man before being thrown into the lake of fire, as a spirit being cannot die, but that is a study beyond the scope of this one. The testing theme will continue into the white throne judgment in the next verses, although without Satan’s influence.

Regardless of whether you agree with me that Satan will be destroyed or tortured forever, however, I want you to understand that at least as far as us humans are concerned, our Father is not willing that anyone perish, much less be tortured forever. There is no Biblical support for eternal damnation or torture that cannot be easily debunked. Our Father is simply too merciful for that. It is not in His character and would be contrary to everything else we have learned about.

So just to be sure, we’ll go ahead and do a little debunking. The verses that have been used to invent a Hell of eternal torture do not really say anything of the sort. In the Old Covenant, the word used for Hell is invariably “Sheol,” and is simply the Hebrew word for the grave. In the New Covenant we see a few different terms used. The first is “Gehenna”, as is used in Mark 9:45-44 and other similar verses;

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell [*Gebenna*], into the fire that shall never be quenched—<sup>44</sup> where ‘Their worm does not die  
And the fire is not quenched.’

The Blue Letter Bible says of it,

Hell is the place of the future punishment called "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.

This Gehenna was a literal place outside of Jerusalem where the filth was burned. Being thrown into this fire was reserved for the lowest of the low. This fire never went out because there was a constant supply of garbage and dead things to burn, so that the worms (“skolex” - a very specific variety of worm that eats dead bodies) would always have something to eat. But the bodies that

went into this fire certainly were dead, or if not (as may have happened with some criminals) they would die very shortly. They were not tortured in the fire forever simply because the fire burned forever.

The second Greek word is Hades, which is really the Greek equivalent of Sheol, meaning the Grave.

Tartaroo is the only other word that is translated as Hell, and is only used once. 2 Peter 2:4 says, “For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [*Tartaroo*] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;” Tartaroo is clearly only referring to angels, spirit beings, being kept there as a temporary holding place while awaiting their own judgment, where they too will either receive life or be completely destroyed, certainly not a burning eternity of torture.

In 2 Peter 3:9 we are told He “is longsuffering toward us, not willing that **any** should perish but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter doesn't give us the timeline for how it will happen here, but he does explain that it is God's plan for everyone to have their chance to come to repentance. There have obviously been many people who have lived and died throughout the earth's history that never had a chance to hear God's word. Our merciful God certainly does not want them to be tortured in an eternal hell. There are also many who *have* had a chance to hear of God, but could not, for whatever reason, believe or understand what they heard. We all know people who fall in to this category. God has a plan for their salvation as well.

The explanation and timeline for how this salvation happens is given in various places, including the appointed times themselves, but perhaps the clearest is in 1 Corinthians 15;

<sup>20</sup> But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.<sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For “He has put all things under His feet.”

Notice that verse 22 states that “ALL shall be made alive.” Then he tells us the process. “Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.” These are different resurrections, the same ones that are outlined in Revelation 20.

We have talked about the meaning of “firstfruits” already. They refer, basically, to those who repent and are baptized now. They are given the Holy Spirit to help them in their growth and understanding.

As I brought up the purpose of the Holy Spirit, I should, for the record, make another important point of clarification, to point out that there is no Biblical basis to believe in a “Trinity”. The Holy Spirit is not a separate being from the Father and the Son, or part of a three-in-one being. The Bible never mentions a trinity or triune God. Do a word search for Trinity or Triune in any concordance for any version of the Bible. It isn't there. It simply refers to the Godly Spirit that dwells in both God the Father and His Son Jesus the Christ, just as a human spirit dwells inside of us. After we are baptized we also receive the seed of God's Spirit, and if we nurture and use it, it can help us to overcome our worldly spirit and become more Godly. It is really that simple. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit being mentioned together in the same sentence in the Bible one time (Matthew 28:19) cannot

justify a doctrine that dominates the modern view of God's nature, that God is one spirit in three persons, or three aspects of one great being, in some great mystery that never really makes sense to anyone, yet you are expected to believe.

These first group of people to receive God's Spirit after being called by God and accepting His calling through baptism are the firstfruits. The term firstfruits actually encompasses a few different groups: First Christ, then those who become His bride, and also the firstborn of the marriage, because they all will have accepted His calling during their physical lifetime. They are also the ones the Bible is written for. Everyone is not meant to understand the Bible at this time. In fact, God even tells us that he has closed the ears and eyes of many so that they won't understand! Luke 8:10, "And He said, 'To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that "Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand." ' " This is not because he does not desire them to know the truth, but because He knows it is not their time yet.

There is a birth order to God's family, and all of the children cannot be born into it at one time. This is why there are so many analogies about birth in the Bible, and why he created us with our own families. We are to learn about His purpose through His creation. Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."

The multiple resurrections are laid out in Revelation in a clear manner. Both Revelation 7 and 14 talk about a group of 144,000 people who are sealed. These are the firstfruits. Rev. 14:3-4 says;

No one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

This very elite group of people is also often referred to as the bride of Christ. They come first because in a family there must be a bride before there can be offspring. They are the ones who are swept up to the sky when Jesus comes back on a sea of glass to marry His bride. It is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17:

<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Taken alone, any individual passage like this does not describe all of the events necessary to make a complete picture. But if you can put like events together, you can fill in the details that are missing elsewhere and the picture becomes beautiful. This event happens before the great tribulation. This group, Christ's bride, has excelled all others and gained a reward for it. They fulfilled the job description of the virtuous wife as laid out in Proverbs 31:10-31. I won't quote it now, but you can read it if you wish. Salvation is a gift that is not based on our works and will be extended to everyone who will receive it. But there are rewards beyond just salvation for those whose works excel, too. The resurrection of the bride here is not referred to as a resurrection per se, but those who are asleep (dead) do rise to meet Christ. They are the first, and by far the smallest, group to be resurrected to eternal life.

Then, in Revelation 7:9, just after the 144,000 are sealed, there is another group that shows up. These are an innumerable multitude, so they are obviously different than the 144,000 because a specific number cannot be referred to as innumerable. In verses 13-15 it says of this group,

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”

<sup>14</sup> And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup> Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

They lived through or died in the great tribulation and are shown here serving God day and night in the final spiritual kingdom, as they have earned the right to do as the firstborn of the marriage “because all the firstborn [are] Mine.” (Numbers 3:13).

Back to Revelation 20.

<sup>7</sup> Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are* [were]. And ~~they~~ will be tormented [tested] day and night forever and ever.

Now on to the last event of the Eighth Day. I hope that I’ve clarified enough to move on.

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was

found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, [*this is everyone, not just those who have been baptized – small and great it says*] and books were opened. [*These books are God's Word, His Truth. They are having a chance to know the truth before they accept Him. Realize that Satan has been destroyed by now, so they are under no deception anymore. Who would not decide to accept God at this point?*] And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. [*However, Acts 3:19 explains that once we truly repent and accept the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, all of our sins are blotted out of the Book of Life, “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” All the dead just had this opportunity, if they had not had it before.*] <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. [*Those works will look pretty good, though, without any sins attached to them!*] <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Apparently there will be some stubborn folks who still refuse to accept Jesus' sacrifice. They will be cast into the lake of fire and be mercifully destroyed, not tortured forever. It is amazing that at that point, Death itself is cast into the lake of fire! We will have finally gotten back to eating from the tree of life instead of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This has all been exactly the same pattern that we read earlier in 1 Corinthians 15.

The understanding that the mainstream churches have about everyone needing to accept Jesus in order to be saved is correct. But that is the entire point to the final resurrection; people are not resurrected to immediate judgment based solely on whether they accepted Jesus during their lifetimes. If they had not been given that chance, or did not understand enough to make a good decision during their life, they will be given that chance during the resurrection, without Satan influencing their own judgment.

If you didn't accept Him before, you will almost certainly do so then. Our Father truly is extremely merciful and is not willing for anyone to perish. Yes, there will be those few truly evil individuals who will choose perishing over salvation, whose pride has caused them to intentionally become an enemy to God even while understanding the truth, but I think that number will be extremely minimal.

Remember the three main events that happened in Revelation 20: 7-15 – The testing, or deception, of the nations, the destruction of Satan, and the judgment of all people. What was the main purpose for these three things? What do they all have in common? Yehovah, our God, is granting grace to His people. Throughout the Bible He has been promising mercy and grace to us, yet we have all continued to go through trials of all sorts. We have known, since Christ came, that this grace will be granted, but there has been little outward sign to most of us that we could see beyond having faith in His word (“Blessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.” John 20:29). Finally, in these last events, it is granted in the permanent way He has been promising. All of the prayers of “O Lord, how long?” Are finally answered here. This Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles is all about the final granting of His grace to those He has judged.

So we’re ready now to look at the pattern of the 8<sup>th</sup> day in the first year of the Exodus account. Exodus 33: 12 to 34:9;

<sup>12</sup> Then Moses said to the LORD, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ <sup>13</sup> Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people.”

Notice the theme of grace starting here. Moses has already been sealed by God and is now ready for the grace that has been promised him, but is also concerned with the rest of the people who have not yet been sealed. He asks God for His mercy in their judgment, knowing that God has made promises to them and that their time of judgment is at hand.

<sup>14</sup> And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

<sup>15</sup> Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. <sup>16</sup> For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”

This is how it will be in God’s Kingdom. God’s people are separate from the other nations. This is why there is a birth order. Each one is a separate body just as I am a separate person from my brother and from my Mother.

<sup>17</sup> So the LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.”

God knows him by name. Moses at this point has already been written into the book of life. He is one of the sealed of God. His bride.

<sup>18</sup> And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.”

<sup>19</sup> Then He said, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of Yehovah before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.”

<sup>20</sup> But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.” <sup>21</sup> And Yehovah said, “Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. <sup>22</sup> So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with

My hand while I pass by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.”

After the final resurrection, we shall finally be able to see His face. But here, God lets Moses get as close as humanly possible to seeing God’s full Glory without dying by not letting him view His face. When Moses went into the tent during the first seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles and spoke to God “face to face, as a man speaks to his friend,” this did not refer to Moses beholding the full glory of God, only of His speaking plainly and openly as two people have a real conversation, not in prayer or any other way of speaking to God. But in this passage it is referring to the full Glory of God, as it will be in His Kingdom in the New Jerusalem. This is done to symbolize the time when we will all truly be able to comprehend His full Glory. We are not allowed to see it now because we would not be able to comprehend it anyways.

[Ch. 34] <sup>1</sup> And Yehovah said to Moses, “Cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones*, and I will write on *these* tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. <sup>2</sup> So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. <sup>3</sup> And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.” <sup>4</sup> So he cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones*. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as Yehovah had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. <sup>5</sup> Now Yehovah descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of Yehovah. <sup>6</sup> And Yehovah passed before him and proclaimed, “Yehovah, Yehovah God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, <sup>7</sup> keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”

This is the pattern of the great white throne judgment. God will have mercy on whomever He decides, forgiving their sins, but also sending to the lake of fire those who are truly guilty of unforgivable sin. This judgment is based on the laws which have been written and broken, but which are here being prepared for being written again. These laws will still be around during the new Kingdom, too; only they will be written in our hearts at that time, which is what this second set of tablets is symbolizing.

<sup>8</sup> So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.<sup>9</sup> Then he said, “If now I have found grace in Your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray, go among us, even though we *are* a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your inheritance.”

Truly He will take us, His stiff-necked people, forgive our sins at this great Eighth Day and make us His inheritance forever.

## **What’s Next?**

The Eighth Day kind of left us standing just as it seemed the really good stuff was finally going to start. All of the hard work and toil and labor were finally finished, we were judged and ready to enter into the eternal Kingdom as God’s inheritance, but we didn’t actually enter. Why didn’t Moses get to bring Israel into the promised land here? What about the New Jerusalem, and no more pain or tears and all of that? Doesn’t that have a picture in the appointed times, too? Well, yes and no. Yes because that is the destination that the path of the appointed times has been leading us to. No because the destination is not actually part of the path.

The appointed times are all about the plan of salvation: The plan of our being saved from our sin and all the baggage that sin brought along with it, of getting back onto the track we were put onto during the original seven days of creation. Once that plan is

accomplished, the whole story isn't over by any means, but the need for the plan is done. When you are watching a movie, the plot is all about the exciting turmoil and conflict that throws everything off and how it is finally set right by some kind of resolution. Once the resolution happens, the movie is over and everybody lives happily ever after, but happily ever after makes a pretty boring movie, so that part is only mentioned and then the credits roll. That pattern for movies (and stories in general, going back much farther than motion pictures have been around) is effective because it was robbed from the Bible. The Bible just barely gets to the part where everything works out right, then it is over after two short chapters of explanation about what that "happily ever after" looks like.

Luckily, though, those two chapters (Revelation 21-22) are full of the most beautiful descriptions of peace and perfection that could ever be. They tell the story of starting over, the right way. The New Jerusalem appears with the Lamb of God as its temple and the River of life running through it, from which all may freely drink. The tree of life, which hasn't been seen since the Garden of Eden, is there too. There is no more sea and no more sun. God Himself will be the light, and we will finally be able to see His face. And it will last forever without any crying or pain.

But this is all after the plan for our salvation has taken place. It is not an Appointed Time because time will really be irrelevant at that point. The appointed times were the path. God's Kingdom in the New Jerusalem, in the New Heaven and the New Earth are the destination. The 40 years of wandering during the Exodus were the path, with the Promised Land being the destination. But once Israel actually made it to the promised land, the Bible didn't dwell on any happily ever after for two reasons. First, because there wasn't any: At the time it was merely after the eternal pattern, not eternal itself, so Israel simply started the pattern over again, in a hammering process that we should still be

continuing today. The second reason is that it is not necessary to dwell too much on that time or we would just get lost in a sort of pointless dreamland. Our focus now needs to be learning to stay on that straight and narrow path, knowing that there is a great prize at the end, but not needing to know all the details about it.

Right now we need to be practicing over and over again, as one learns a difficult passage on the piano, hopefully getting better each time. If we turn back to Exodus again, this pattern of starting over again is maintained directly after the eighth day. Exodus 34: 10-28;

And He said: "Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people among whom you *are* shall see the work of Yehovah. For it *is* an awesome thing that I will do with you. <sup>11</sup> Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. <sup>12</sup> Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. <sup>13</sup> But you shall destroy their altars, break their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images <sup>14</sup> (for you shall worship no other god, for Yehovah, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God), <sup>15</sup> lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and *one of them* invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, <sup>16</sup> and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods. <sup>17</sup> "You shall make no molded gods for yourselves. <sup>18</sup> "The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt. <sup>19</sup> "All that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, *whether* ox or sheep. <sup>20</sup> But the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not

redeem *him*, then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem.

“And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.

<sup>21</sup> “Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.

<sup>22</sup> “And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end.

<sup>23</sup> “Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, Yehovah God of Israel. <sup>24</sup> For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before Yehovah your God three times in the year.

<sup>25</sup> “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven, nor shall the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover be left until morning.

<sup>26</sup> “The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring to the house of Yehovah your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

<sup>27</sup> Then Yehovah said to Moses, “Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” <sup>28</sup> So he was there with Yehovah forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

The pattern is starting over, with even better promises this time, “I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth... For it *is* an awesome thing that I will do with you.” Think of those statements with regard to the ultimate meaning of these things – our eternal life in the New Jerusalem. Yehovah then repeats how to best allow these promises to happen. The commandments, which had previously been broken (in more ways than one – the Golden Calf and smashed tablets), almost before they were even given a chance (after the pattern of the Garden of Eden), are rewritten on the stone tablets. God promises to Help His people in their quest for the promised land and reiterates the command to keep the appointed times.

These patterns are repeated over and over, year after year, as long as God’s people keep the appointed times to see them. They teach us about the very meaning of life: Why we are alive and what we are to be doing and learning during this precious life that God gave us.

It is a great privilege to understand this information at this time. How many are swimming around in this life having no idea why they are here, even among Christians? But not everyone is meant to understand right now. Everyone will have their turn, as we’ve laid out the birth order in this study. If you start to comprehend these promises the Bible makes and the patterns it lays out, though, remember also that God is allowing you to understand this information not because you are such a good person, but because He is choosing the foolish of the world to work with first. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29;

For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. <sup>27</sup> But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; <sup>28</sup> and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, <sup>29</sup> that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Please, let us not think that these times are antiquated and unnecessary or only for Jews. Christ never did away with our need to keep these Appointed times. Why would Christ do away with something that teaches us so much about His plan for our salvation? It is the great deceiver who has taught doing away with these things, for he knows that they will bring us closer to the truth that he so despises.

These patterns can be found in many other places than I have given. Really I have only touched the surface with a few examples.

They are absolutely central to the core mission of the Bible, Gods plan for us and the true meaning of life, so let us not ignore them any more! It is God's great desire for us to know these things, but there is only one way to learn them, and that is by keeping His commandments and laws.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all."

Amen.