

Deuteronomy 16:9-12
You Shall Keep the Feast of Weeks
April 25, 2021

⁹ "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. ¹⁰ Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses you. ¹¹ You shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. ¹² And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

I'm always giddy about the thought of the rapture, except for one – and only one – reason. No, it's not about an upcoming wedding, scheduled cruise, retirement, or coming inheritance. It's not about my next anniversary (sorry, Hideko), or the thought of getting a new car (the old pickup suites me just fine).

There is, literally, nothing that I do from day to day, nor anything that is yet ahead of me that I can experience or possess that at all makes me think, "I really want to be here for that." But there is something that I have done that keeps me from wanting to be raptured.

Our friend Sergio has memorized pretty much every password I have. He can access my computer and my life at any given moment to bail me out of a crisis, to print something off with my printer without asking permission (how dare he!), or to pretend he is me in order to send himself an email that he then sends back to me with a response to something I never wrote.

We are kids like that. But from time to time I send him the same email that involves this ability of his to access my life – "Sergio, if something happens to me, please be sure the sermons are read to the church." He knows where they are, and it is his obligation to get them printed for either someone here, or for him personally, to read to the church.

That is, literally, the only thing I will wish had been presented before the rapture. But, as long as I keep typing new sermons, there will always be a time that a certain number of sermons will go unread – not heard by anyone. That is assuming, of course, that Sergio actually makes the rapture too.

It is for this reason that I wouldn't mind punching my ticket a couple months before the rapture – if it could be planned that way. It is the word of God, and apart from seeing the face of the Lord with my own two eyes, it is all that I care about in any measure.

Everything else is temporary and will come to an end, but the word of the Lord stands forever, and I just want my part of analyzing it available for those who are left behind. When I sit down

to type on Monday morning, it is a point of rejoicing because it is a blessing from the Lord that I can do so.

Text Verse: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”*
Ephesians 1:3-6

The passage today tells the people to rejoice before the Lord, and that rejoicing is to be an acknowledgement of how the Lord God had blessed them. The temporal blessings of Israel are mere shadows and types of the spiritual blessings found in the church.

Where Israel celebrated the Passover with a lamb, we celebrate it with *the* Lamb. Where Israel celebrated Firstfruits with a sheaf of the first harvest of grain, we celebrate it in the resurrection of the Lord. Where Israel celebrated the Feast of Weeks with a new grain offering to the Lord, we celebrate it with...

Well, we will go through the verses and remind ourselves of some of the typology already seen in the past sermons concerning this feast. So, there is no need to spoil what lies ahead during the introduction.

But the fact is that every material blessing of these feasts for Israel is realized in spiritual blessings for the church. And so, how can we not rejoice? We were sinners and Christ died for our sins. We were in bondage, and Christ has set us free. We were without the Spirit, and we are now reconnected to God because of the Spirit.

What is there to not rejoice about when we consider where we stand in relation to where we were! Typing these sermons is a point of rejoicing because they analyze the word of the Lord from a perspective Israel had no idea about.

To them, they were words of law. To us, they are words of grace. To them, they spoke of condemnation. To us, they speak of salvation. When one sees Christ Jesus in what is presented, it goes from a temporal blessing to a spiritual blessing.

Yes, the law was a blessing to them because it unified them and kept them as a people, but it could not bring them life, except as it was finally fulfilled in Christ. To us, it is life because Jesus embodies what it presents. Let us consider this and rejoice before the Lord God all our days.

And if I die before the rapture, don't feel bad – even one bit. It will be its own blessing to me and a grace from God. But... the rapture is still the best deal of all. We'll leave such things in the Lord's hands and continue on awaiting whatever He determines for each of us.

Until then, great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. The Tribute of a Freewill Offering (verses 9 & 10)

The feast now to be described was first introduced in Exodus 23:14-17 with the introduction of the three annual pilgrim feasts –

“Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: ¹⁵You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); ¹⁶and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field.

¹⁷“Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.”

This was repeated in Exodus 34:22 where it is called the Feast of Weeks. After that, it was detailed in the listing of the eight Feasts of the Lord. That will be cited in a few minutes. It was again referred to in Numbers 28 which provided details concerning the offerings to be made to the Lord during the feast.

Moses is repeating the requirement and he will build upon it in these few short verses. The main ideas to be conveyed here are in relation to the people's responsibilities during the feast. Remembering that Christ is the fulfillment of the typology found in these feasts, there is to be a connection to His people in what He has done.

That is the purpose of the symbolism of these three pilgrim feasts. They take what Christ has done and then deal with the responsibility of those who participate in what was fulfilled in Him. What Israel, the people, did under the law as is recorded in these verses is to be lived out by the people of the church because of our relationship to what Jesus did.

The first of these pilgrim feasts was recorded and looked over last week, meaning the Passover which is immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Christ is the Passover Lamb, and we are to live our lives in sinless holiness before God, represented by the seven days of having no leaven in the territory.

Obviously, none of us are sinless in our conduct, but because of the non-imputation of sin for those who have entered the New Covenant, we are deemed as sinless before God. When one is under law, the imputation of sin is the result.

However, Paul repeatedly conveys the thought that believers in Christ are not under law, but we are rather under grace. Without law, sin is not imputed. That is the idea which was typologically lived out by Israel when the yeast was purged from the land during that feast.

The next pilgrim feast, that of Weeks, will now present another typological anticipation. What Israel did under the law anticipates what we are to do under grace. What Christ did in fulfillment of the symbolism, we are now to participate in with the reality. Where the typology was only shadow, we now possess the Substance. With that, we begin with...

⁹“You shall count seven weeks for yourself;

The words here and in the next clause follow after Leviticus 23 where the Feast of Weeks is first described –

“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. ¹⁶Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.” Leviticus 23:15, 16

It is “*from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.*” That was clearly identified in the Feasts of the Lord sermons to be a picture of the resurrection of Christ.

As was seen in the earlier Leviticus 23 verses dealing with the Feast of Firstfruits, Christ’s resurrection was on a Sunday (the first day of the week) after the Sabbath. The waving of the sheaf of the wave offering looked forward to the presentation of Christ Jesus alive and well before the Father.

It is from this starting point that a set counting was to take place. As it says here, “*You shall count seven weeks for yourself.*” That is in accord with the counting of Leviticus 23, of which Moses is now restating for the people who are about to cross over the Jordan and enter the land of promise. And so, he says...

⁹ (con’t) **begin to count the seven weeks from *the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.***

mehakhel khermesh baqamah takhel lispor shivah shavuoth – “from begin sickle in the standing, begin to count seven weeks.” Here, we have a new word, *khermesh*, meaning a sickle. It comes from *kharam* which is the act of devoting something to God through

destruction, exterminating, and so on. This word will be found only here and in Deuteronomy 23:25.

It is interesting that the root signifies something devoted to God, and that is exactly what happens to the sheaf of the Firstfruits. Though the word is usually taken in a negative context, it can be positive as well, such as in Leviticus 27:28 –

“Nevertheless no devoted offering that a man may devote to the LORD of all that he has, both man and beast, or the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted offering is most holy to the LORD.”

This sheaf was solely devoted as a presentation to the Lord, just as the work of Jesus in destroying sin and annulling the law is solely set apart and dedicated to the Lord.

The sickle, as a tool of devotion, anticipates what happens to that which is cut down. Christ was cut down for the utter destruction of sin, but He was raised as an acceptable offering before the Lord because He had no sin of His own. The idea here of the Firstfruits as an offering before the Lord was precisely detailed in Leviticus 23:10-14 –

“When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³ Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴ You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”

As I just said, this sheaf of the firstfruits, which Moses is alluding to here again, is a picture of Christ in His resurrection. Though He was cut down, He was presented alive before the Father, symbolized by the waving of the sheaf before the Lord by the priest.

As was seen during that sermon, the word translated as “wave,” *nuph*, gives the sense of “to quiver,” because of the motion of it vibrating up and down or rocking to and fro. Elsewhere the word is translated as “to wave,” “to beckon,” “to sprinkle,” “to rub,” “to saw,” and so on. Each of these implies motion and vibrancy.

In this was seen a picture of Christ, the true High Priest causing this preeminent sheaf to be vibrant before the Lord, just as occurred in the resurrection. His life that was cut down was reanimated. The fulfillment of that symbolism is found in Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 15 –

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

The background information is necessary to understand the timeline of what Moses is now referring to in Deuteronomy. From that day, meaning the day of the presentation of this sheaf of the Firstfruits, seven weeks are counted off...

¹⁰ Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God

In this clause, the word *khag*, or pilgrim feast, is used. It comes from *khagag* which signifies to make a pilgrimage or a pilgrim feast. That, in turn, comes from a primitive root signifying to move in a circle. Thus, one thinks of being giddy and celebrating.

When this term is used, it signifies the people's part of what the Lord has initiated. In other words, the Lord was the first of the resurrection and thus the first of the church. He is emblematic of all others in the church who follow after Him. This *khag*, or pilgrim feast, is given as an anticipatory type to the people of the Lord whose work made the feast possible.

As far as the dating, the seven weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits means one arrives at the fiftieth day. We just read that from Leviticus 23, but let us read it once again –

“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. ¹⁶Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.” Leviticus 23:15, 16

The day after the Sabbath means a Sunday. It is the first day of the week. Fifty days after the Firstfruits of Israel equates to fifty days after the resurrection of Christ Jesus.

As a point of correction of doctrine which should always be remembered when discussing these things, is that these words of Leviticus 23, along with the words of Exodus (and elsewhere), and which form the basis for the timeline of the work of the Lord, clearly indicate that Christ, the Passover Lamb, was crucified on the 14th and raised on the 16th of the first month –

“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.” Exodus 12:6

“And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath [which would be the sixteenth], from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.”

Leviticus 23:15

Christ was crucified on a Friday and resurrected on a Sunday. This is evidenced in the Old Testament typology, and it is clearly revealed in the New Testament. For reference, a detailed timeline of this will be included at the end of this sermon, as posted to the Superior Word website, to substantiate this.

For now, the period of fifty days after Firstfruits is directly equated to fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus. As it says in Acts 2 –

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4

In other words, Pentecost, the day which the Holy Spirit was poured out on the believers – thus establishing the church – is the fulfillment of the presentation of the new grain offering to the Lord. The shadow is fulfilled in the Substance. The type is realized in the reality. With the work of the Lord fulfilled in the giving of the Holy Spirit, the typology of Israel’s pilgrim feast is then applied to the reality which is to be lived out by those in the church.

It should be noted, however, that of these three pilgrim feasts, this is the only one that does not give a timeframe for how long the feast was to be held. Passover is one plus seven, meaning Passover and then seven days of the feast. On the first and last days there were sacred assemblies. Tabernacles is seven plus one, meaning an eighth-day closing affixed to the feast.

In Numbers 28, the Feast of Weeks only records offerings for one day, the day of firstfruits. If the people were there longer, the Bible says nothing of that. The reason seems clear. The Holy Spirit is given to the believer only once.

Unlike Unleavened Bread, which looks to believers living sinlessly before the Lord, and like Tabernacles that looks to living our lives working in the harvest field before the Lord, Weeks looks to the time when the believer is sealed with the Spirit. It is a one-time and for-all-time event in the believer’s life.

As a short insert to the thought of what occurred at Pentecost, the typology that anticipated the Lord's work for His people – and that of how the people are to live out their lives in the Lord – reveals the false teaching of hyperdispensationalism.

It is a heretical doctrine which says that there are two gospels and that the church did not start until Paul was commissioned as the apostle to the Gentiles. If the teachers of this false doctrine understood the typology presented in the Old Testament, they would not make this fundamental error in thinking.

Despite this, the presentation of these pilgrim feasts anticipates those who are truly of the church, meaning saved believers in Jesus Christ. For Israel, at the time of the feast, Moses continues the thought of keeping the feast to the Lord...

^{10 (con't)} **with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand,**

misat nidbat yadekha – “tribute of free will offering your hand.” There is no article before the word tribute, as if it is understood what is being referred to. Further, the word *misah*, or tribute, is found only here in the Bible. It is from *masas* meaning to dissolve or melt. Thus, it speaks of abundance or giving liberally.

What is of note in this is that it does not say what is done with the tribute. One can assume that it is presented to the priests, but that is only an assumption. This is perplexing, because everything in the law is so precise and clearly defined.

As this is a freewill offering, it cannot be speaking of the mandatory offerings that are listed in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28 that are prescribed for the feast.

The word *nedeveh*, or freewill offering, generally speaks of an offering to the Lord, but one would think, like in such cases, it would then say, “to the Lord.” Again, it does not. The word is used elsewhere when speaking of the Lord loving freely (Hosea 14:4), making an offering of the mouth (Psalm 119:108), and so on.

Nothing concerning the offering (type or amount) is defined, and what is to be done with it is left undefined. All that is noted is...

^{10 (con't)} **which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses you.**

The entire thought of this verse, and how it points in type to a New Testament truth, is surely summed up in these words. Unlike all of the other mandatory prescriptions of the law – each pointing to Christ in some way or another, this points to the blessing from the Lord and it is

completely voluntary, without set limit, and without set type. It is what Paul lays out in several places in the New Testament, such as –

“On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” 1 Corinthians 16:2

“Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. ⁶ But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:5

“For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God, ¹³ while, through the proof of this ministry, they glorify God for the obedience of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal sharing with them and all men, ¹⁴ and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding grace of God in you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” 2 Corinthians 9:12-15

The Corinthians had made a freewill offering from their liberality. There was no condition set upon it. There was no amount prescribed, and there was no type mandated. Paul’s only desire was to see that what had been vowed would, in fact, be prepared and presented accordingly.

This sets the pattern for all other giving within the church. It is to be voluntary, of whatever amount is decided upon solely by the giver, and in whatever manner and type the giver decides is right. And it is to be, just as Moses says to the individual Israelite now, “as the Lord your God blesses you.”

The type in Israel is only a shadow of the substance for the church. It is the Lord who has blessed, and thus, each individual is to determine what that blessing means to him. Everything is to be in relation to the gratefulness of the believer for what the Lord has done in his life. With that in mind, and with that thought upon the heart, Moses will continue when we get to verse 11. For now...

Rejoice before the Lord! Again, I say, “Rejoice!”
You have been redeemed, what could possibly rob your joy?
Rejoice before the Lord! Lift up your cheerful voice
Let it be that shouts of thanks and praise you willfully employ

The Lord has given you of His Spirit, and for that rejoice!

He has sealed you for the glorious coming day
To Himself He will gather His people, so lift up your voice
And, let all of the Lord's redeemed jubilantly say...

"We will rejoice in our God while we yet live!"
We will raise our hands and our voices to Him forevermore
To Him, eternal praises we shall give
When He carries us across to the other shore

O great and glorious Lord, in You we shall rejoice
To You, O mighty Savior, we shall forever raise our voice

II. Be Careful to Observe These Statutes (verses 11 & 12)

¹¹ You shall rejoice before the Lord your God,

This is now the fifth of nine times the word "rejoice" is found in Deuteronomy. It is a positive command. The people are not to be unhappy or miserable. Rather, they are to actively rejoice before the Lord.

As the Feast of Weeks anticipates the giving of the Holy Spirit, and because it is also a pilgrim feast, it is typical of life in Christ, having been sealed with the Holy Spirit. Because of this, the imperative to "rejoice" is obvious, and it is abundantly stated in various ways in the New Testament.

Most especially, Paul says, "rejoice in the Lord" (Philippians 3:1), rejoice in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:3), "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4), and "Rejoice always" (1 Thessalonians 5:16).

These, and other examples – found in abundance in the epistles – are given as prescriptions to those of the church because of the blessings of the Lord upon them, just as the people of Israel were to rejoice because of the blessings of the Lord upon them. The typology of the Old leads directly to the fulfillment of it in the New.

For those in the church, the words of our text verse today concerning every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ are meant for every saved believer. And the knowledge of them is to be shared with every person we can share them with. For Israel, rejoicing in the temporal blessings was not just for the men of the house, but for...

^{11 (con't)} **you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who *is* within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who *are* among you,**

When I lived in Japan, I climbed Mt. Fuji one night. The goal for those who climbed was to leave at evening and make it to the top by sunrise. In this, you would see innumerable torches and lamps being carried up the various paths that crisscrossed the side of the mountain.

If you drove by it on a highway at night, the same sight could be seen for vast distances. Thousands upon thousands of individual lights zigzagging upwards toward the summit.

If one has seen the movie, “Field of dreams,” the very ending of the movie had something similar – a line of cars with their lights on stretching back for miles that were heading to the field at night.

The words of Moses in this verse are a matter of law. None were to be excluded. It is incorrect to say that only the men were required to attend the three annual pilgrim feasts. Rather, all the men were to go, and they were to be accompanied by all of these categories.

Like Mt. Fuji, Israel would have looked like an ant farm as every path, every road, and every highway was filled with people heading to the place where the Lord God resided. Some walked, some rode animals, some may have been carried, but all were heading to one specific location in order to feast and to rejoice.

It should be noted that the wife is noticeably missing from the list mentioned in this verse. Moses says you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, but nothing is said of the wife.

What seems obvious is that this is not saying that the wives were to stay home and take care of the pets. Rather, it is a way of acknowledging her importance within the household. It takes us back to the very beginning of man’s time on earth –

“And Adam said:

‘This is now bone of my bones

And flesh of my flesh;

She shall be called Woman,

Because she was taken out of Man.’

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father

and mother and be joined to his wife,

and they shall become one flesh.” Genesis 2:23, 24

Rather than being an oversight by Moses, it appears he is reiterating the fact that the man and his wife are one. In mentioning him, she is implicitly mentioned as well. Therefore, there is no reason to include her in the list. It would be unthinkable for him to observe the feast without her. Thus, all were to attend...

¹¹ (con't) **at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide.**

These words have been stated again and again. The people were to gather in the presence of the Lord, right where He resided, and they were to rejoice and have a feast, even to the point of being giddy. It speaks of unity of worship This is the type. The antitype is first seen in Jesus' words of John 4 –

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:23

What is supposed to be the case, in order to fulfill the typology, is that Christians are to rejoice *wherever* they are. As the nations saw Israel rejoicing before the Lord in Israel, so the nations should see the people of the church doing so before the Lord at any place they currently are standing.

What Israel experienced for a week at a time, the church is to experience in a fuller way from moment to moment. We have been redeemed. How can we do anything, but rejoice? As he next says...

¹² **And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt,**

As he has done time and time again in Deuteronomy, Moses again reminds the people of where they came from and what that meant while they were there. They were slaves, they are now the Lord's people. They were in Egypt, Double Distress, and now they are on the shores of the Jordan, free from Pharaoh and from their harsh taskmasters.

Because of this, the act of remembering as stated here is probably twofold. First, it is to spur the people on to generosity in the tribute offering mentioned earlier, and also toward those who came together with them on the pilgrim feast. They were once in bondage, and so now they were to remember those who currently had less than they did.

And, secondly, the purpose of the pilgrim feasts was to have them experience the joy of delighting in the abundance of the Lord. In Egypt, they suffered and had lack. In Canaan, they could expect prosperity and abundance. In Egypt they were slaves. In Canaan they were property owners.

Because of these truths, the contrast was to be remembered by them so that they would always be grateful for what they did have. They were never to focus on what they didn't have, but they were rather to be grateful for what they possessed.

And what they possessed and were blessed with was a result of the covenant that they agreed to. Therefore...

***12 (fin) and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.**

After all of the words of blessing, abundance, and rejoicing, these words serve as a reminder and even a warning. Israel had what they had because the Lord gave it to them. They had nothing substantial to speak of before He did.

Israel was where they were because the Lord had brought them out from where they previously were. They could not save themselves, and without His hand of intervention, they would still be where they were.

Israel had covenanted with the Lord, and in that covenant, they had agreed to the stipulations. What they possessed, and where they were to be in Canaan was a result of that agreement. If the agreement was made based on obedience, and it was, then disobedience to it would incur the opposite of the blessing.

That was previously laid out, and Moses was telling them now that they were to carefully observe the stipulations in order to remain in that state of abundance, blessing, and the ability to rejoice. Should they fail, they could expect it to end.

In this, one can see the contrast and the similarities between the type and the antitype. When Israel was obedient to the covenant they agreed to, they would receive the temporal blessings. When we receive the work of the Lord, we receive the spiritual blessings.

Israel was freed from physical bondage, but they were brought into a spiritual bondage being servants to the law. We are the Lord's freedmen from spiritual bondage, and we are brought in to being the Lord's slaves to righteousness.

When Israel was not obedient to the words of law, they received temporal judgments, but they were never cast off permanently from the Lord. When we fail to live out our lives in accord with the obligations expected of us, we too can expect temporal judgments, but the Lord has promised to never cast us off permanently.

Israel was promised earthly reward; we are promised heavenly reward. Israel is a nation and a culture set apart from the world. The church is a body taken out of the world.

There are differences and there are similarities, but both reflect the workings of God in Christ, leading all to anticipate Him and to glory in what God has done through Him for us. Let us remember this as we contemplate the Feast of Weeks and what it signifies in us.

We have been given the Holy Spirit, poured out upon us. In this, we have been sealed for the day of redemption as the Lord's purchased possession. It isn't a day that might come, it is a day that is coming. We weren't saved in order to fight our way until the end. Rather, Christ did the fighting and He prevailed.

There is no struggling to attain the promise. Rather, in Him, we are those who have prevailed; we have received the promise. And so, remember this. When life is beating you up, when it seems your prayers aren't being heard, when you are sick, in pain, agonizing over circumstances, or even facing the end of your physical existence – remember this.

We have every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. They are ours with a guarantee, and they will never be taken from us. Cling to this, and even in times of the greatest of distress – even in those times – rejoice in the Lord. Again, I say, "Rejoice in the Lord!"

Closing Verse: *"For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. ²³ You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men." 1 Corinthians 7:22, 23*

Next Week: Deuteronomy 16:13-22 *Hey ma! Why is everyone building little shackles?...*
(Observe the Feast of Tabernacles) (51st Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Observe the Feast of Tabernacles

"You shall count seven weeks for yourself
Begin to count the seven weeks, as I explain
From the time you begin
To put the sickle to the grain

Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks
To the Lord your God with the tribute, so you shall
do
Of a freewill offering from your hand
Which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses
you

You shall rejoice before the Lord your God
You and your son and your daughter, also
Your male servant and your female servant
The Levite who is within your gates shall also go

The stranger and the fatherless
And the widow who are among you, all side by side
At the place where the Lord your God chooses
To make His name abide

And you shall remember that you were a slave in
Egypt
And you shall be careful to observe these statutes
-----none shall be skipped

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your
word

Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

Burial and Resurrection of Jesus

Misconceptions -

1) Sign of Jonah / Three days and three nights. Matthew 12:40 –

a: The sign of Jonah is not the Lord's time in the belly of the great fish. It is the message He preached and which will be rejected. Jonah cried out, **"Yet forty days and Nineveh will be destroyed."** As is consistent in the Bible, it was a warning, a day for a year. Israel would be destroyed in 40 years.

With a cursory look at Jesus' words in Matthew, the sign seems to be His death and resurrection. But Luke leaves out both the time frame and the entire account of the fish. When he does this, he clears up the context – that the sign of Jonah is his preaching, and what that preaching stated... that destruction was decreed in 40 days. The preaching to the Ninevites was the sign.

When Israel disobeyed in the wilderness, they were given a day for a year punishment for every day that the spies were gone. It was 40 days, and thus 40 years of punishment. In Ezekiel chapter 4, he was told to lay on his right side for 40 days signifying a day for a year of punishment for Judah. He was told to do the same for his left side, but for 390 days. It was a day for a year for the house of Israel. Together, they form the prophetic basis for the return of Israel in 1948.

In forty years after Jesus' words, a day for a year, Israel was destroyed and carried away in exile. The Romans came in and did what Nineveh was spared of. God's judgment fell heavy upon them for failing to repent, receive their long-awaited Messiah, and conform to the will of God which is found in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

b: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matthew 12:40

This is an idiomatic expression. It does not mean literally three days and three nights. This is a misunderstanding of the phrase as it related to Biblical time. It's important to note that this verse is from Matthew and is directed to the Jewish people – Jesus as King.

Hebrew idioms would have been understood and not needed any clarification or verbal amending. To the audience Matthew was writing to any part of a day is considered to be inclusive of the whole day. It's no different than terminology we use today. If I arrive in Florida on a plane at 11:30pm on 11 April, during a later conversation I would still say I was in Florida on that day.

The biblical pattern of “evening and morning” being a day goes back to the first chapter of the Bible and includes an entire day – regardless of what part of a day one is referring to. If you want to understand the term day and night as an idiomatic expression, simply type “day and night” into your Bible search engine and see how many times, throughout the Bible, the term is used in this way. It goes on and on. Jeremiah does a great job of using it in this way. Study!

The same verse, as recorded in Luke says, “And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say,

“This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ³⁰ For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. ³¹ The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here. ³² The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here.” Luke 11:29-32

As you can see, Jesus explicitly states that the sign is the preaching of Jonah. In this instance, Luke was not writing to only Jewish people, but predominately to non-Jewish people – Jesus as the Son of Man. Therefore, the terminology is amended to avoid confusion. This occurs many times in the gospels and therefore the addressees (or the background of the writers themselves) need to be identified to understand proper terminology.

The same phrase is given in Esther 4:16 –

“Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”

This is then explained in Esther 5:1 –

“Now it happened on the third day (*b’yom ha’shelishi*) that Esther put on *her* royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king’s palace, across from the king’s house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.”

As you can see, what she said in verse 4:16 is explained as an idiomatic expression in verse 5:1. This same phrase is exactly repeated in the NT 13 times – “On the third day,” not, “After the third day.”

2) High Sabbath. John 19:31 –

“Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.”

The second issue to be resolved is that some scholars claim that John “appears” to place the crucifixion on a different date than the other writers. Because of this, an attempt to insert some second type of Passover meal, or a second Sabbath into the Bible. This supposedly helps the Bible out of an apparent problem.

However, no such meal, or Sabbath, is identified in the Bible – at any time. Nor is it necessary to make something erroneous like this up. The Bible identifies the timing of the entire Passion Week, dispelling the problem. The terminology for “Preparation Day” used in all four gospel accounts absolutely clears this up and will be noted as we go on.

The terminology "high Sabbath" is pointing to the fact that the Sabbath (there is only one Sabbath, Saturday) coincided with the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a "holy convocation" according to Exodus 12:16 and Leviticus 23:7. There are only six times in the Bible that something is called a Shabbath Shabaton, or “Sabbath of complete rest.” Four of them speak of the Seventh Day Sabbath, one concerns the Day of Atonement, and the last speaks of the seventh year Sabbath rest for the land.

Thus, there is no second Sabbath. A holy convocation is not a Sabbath. On a Sabbath, meals could not be prepared. However, Exodus 12:16 says –

“On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.*”

3) Four days. Exodus 12:3 –

“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.’”

This requirement has nothing to do with the Passover at Jesus’ time. Nothing in Scripture can be used to justify what is commonly taught, saying that the Passover lamb was selected each year to test it for defects. The opposite is true. The lamb was selected because it had no defect. Thus, this has nothing to do with Palm Sunday and the subsequent days leading up to Passover. Rather, this animal was selected early to ensure that every household had a lamb before the plague of darkness which fell on Egypt. It is

never mandated again. People bought their lambs, in Jerusalem, from keepers of the flock who already inspected them. Further, they did it within a day of the Passover.

There are four things that occurred at the first Passover that are not required in the annual celebration found in Leviticus 23 -

1. The eating of the lamb in their houses dispersed through Goshen.
2. The taking the lamb on the tenth day.
3. The striking of its blood on the door posts and lintels of their houses. And,
4. Their eating it in haste.

The four-day requirement never occurred again. There is no biblical support of it. People have picked and chosen selected verses, without following through on the study, to come to an incorrect conclusion on this.

Chronology of the Events –

1) The easiest way to identify the day of Passover from the gospels is by reviewing the term “Preparation Day.” It is in all four gospels, and it exactly identifies the day of the Passover –

Matthew 27:62 – “The next day, the one after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate.” This was the day after the crucifixion. Matthew says it is the day “after Preparation Day.” After this is recorded the day after the Sabbath (Matt 28:1, the first day of the week).

Mark 15:42 – “It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached...” This is the day of the crucifixion. Mark says “It was Preparation Day.” Mark 14 ends on the night of Christ’s time in the Garden of Gethsemane. Mark 15:1 then identifies that it is “immediately, in the morning,” meaning Preparation Day.

Luke 23:54 – “It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.” This is the day of the crucifixion. Luke says “It was Preparation Day.” Luke 23:56 then says that they rested on the Sabbath, and then He was raised on the day after the Sabbath, Sunday, the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week (Luke 24:1).

John 19:14 – “Now it was Preparation Day of the Passover.” This is the day of the crucifixion. John says “It was Preparation Day.”

This definitively, and without any chance of coming to any other conclusion, identifies the day as Friday, followed by the Saturday Sabbath. As sad as it is that this is denied by many, it is what the Bible actually teaches.. The four gospels are harmonious in this, and it is... irrefutable. However, the rest of the Passion week identifies this as well.

And so let's break all this down. Here's what you need to know:

Paul plainly states that the Feast of Firstfruits is a picture of the resurrection:

“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

The feast of Firstfruits was a Sunday according to Leviticus 23:15 – “From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks.” Note: the Sabbath referred to here is a Saturday. We don't need to go any further there to know this is correct and that Christ rose on a Sunday.

Here is the math from the gospel accounts. It's all there in black and white and very easy to look up –

**“Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.” John 12:1 This would have been a Sabbath day (Saturday.)

**“The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.” John 12:12 This would have been 5 days before the Passover, meaning Sunday (Palm Sunday) as the Passover would have started Thursday night at sundown and run until Friday night at sundown (remember biblical days start at sundown).

The account couldn't be clearer that the next day after the Passover was a Sabbath. This is indicated several times. As I said, some people have attempted to use the terminology in John (it was a “high day” or a “special Sabbath”) to indicate that it could have been a day other than a Saturday. All special Sabbaths are specified in Leviticus and don't necessarily fall on Saturdays. However, the term “Sabbath” as used in the other gospel accounts is indicating a Saturday. There is nothing to support, anywhere in Scripture, that there were two Sabbaths in a row on this particular week. Further, the special Sabbaths in Leviticus do not apply here. As I said, one is the Day of Atonement, which occurs in the seventh month. The other is a Sabbath for the land every seventh year. Neither applies.

In fact, such an analysis does an injustice to the reading of the text. Therefore, the special Sabbath occurred on a regular Sabbath day (Saturday). As I said earlier, it was a great (high) Sabbath because it coincided with the holy convocation which is the first day of Unleavened Bread.

From this we can give the entire week's schedule (refer to the cited verses in your own Bible to familiarize yourself with what's being said) –

Sabbath 6 before // John 12:1 - ...six days before the Passover. Bethany/Lazarus.

Sunday 5 before // John 12:12 & Mark 11:10 - The next day... Palm Sunday/Riding the donkey.

Monday 4 before // Mark 11:12 Now on the next day... Jesus cursed the fig tree.

Tuesday 3 before // Mark 11:20 Now in the morning... The withered fig is identified.

Wednesday 2 before // The gospels are silent on what occurred on this day.

Thursday 1 before - Passover starts at Sundown //Mark 14:1 After two days it was the Passover... (this is the first timing mentioned since Mark 11:20 which was Tuesday).

-

Note: Pay special attention to the fact that in the following accounts Mark is using Jewish time (sunset to sunset and John is using Roman time – from midnight) –

Mark 14:12 - "Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread when they killed the Passover Lamb." Here Mark, like Luke, unites the Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

John 13:1 - "Now before the Feast of the Passover...."

Both Mark and John are speaking of the same day – The meal, washing of feet, Gethsemane, etc.

***Christ crucified this same 24 hour period, but it was obviously after the final night at Gethsemane and then the illegal trial. Mark is speaking of this event from sundown, John is speaking of it in Roman time (this is obvious because they use different terminology for the same meal where Judas left to betray the Lord... can't miss this point and get it right).

6 days before – Saturday

5 days before – Sunday

4 days before – Monday

3 days before – Tuesday

2 days before – Wednesday

1 day before – Thursday

The Day – Friday

The problem with people believing that John was speaking of a different day (as mentioned above) is that they miss the fact that the terminology for the day is different based on the author. To clear up any misunderstanding here, one needs only to compare the uses for the term "Preparation Day." Once one does this, there are no discrepancies

in the accounts. Go back and review what I said about that earlier. The timeline is set, it is irrefutable, and it is the only biblical option. Anything else inserts unbliblical information into the record.

Based on the biblical evidence, there is

- 1) No discrepancy between any of the accounts.
- 2) Jesus was crucified on a Friday.
- 3) Jesus rose on a Sunday.

Again, the Bible says 13 times that He was raised “on” the third day. This is mentioned by Jesus himself as well as the apostles. Therefore, it must have been Friday that Christ was crucified.

Finally, please don't believe (as some have claimed) that Christ rode the donkey into Jerusalem on a Saturday instead of a Sunday. This would have been the Sabbath. If He did, He would have violated the law –

“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.” Deuteronomy 5:12-14

There is no need to make the assertion it was a Saturday unless you simply wanted to finagle the dating. There is also no biblical provision for an exemption to the commandment prohibiting working a donkey.