

Message #42**Leviticus 23:9-25**

Just because a person doesn't go to church doesn't mean he has escaped the subject of God, for God ordained his very life. Every person who lives is religious in the sense that every person who lives is connected to God. God's people were to honor God in every area of life and that is what these festivals teach us.

GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO KEEP HIM FIRST IN EVERY AREA OF LIFE AND THOSE WHO ARE TRULY HOLY WILL DO THIS AND BE BLESSED BY HIM.

God wants to be a critical part of our work life, our play life, our love life, our business life, and, of course, our spiritual life. It is impossible to be holy and try to leave God's Word and will out of our life. The more spiritual and holy we are becoming, the more we will sense our need to honor God in every facet of life.

FESTIVAL #1 – The offering of First Fruits. 23:10-14

The offering of the first fruits was an offering that basically said to God—we realize that the entire crop that we have harvested is from you. This offering acknowledged that their yield had come from the hand of God. God was given His rightful place as the One who had given the prosperity and blessing.

23:11

Now according to **verse 11**, the person was to “wave” the offering before the Lord (see Lev. 7:28-38, message #14). According to Numbers 6:20 the wave offering seemed to have two motions—1) Waving - forward and backward toward the altar and 2) Lifting - movement up and down toward heaven.

We may also notice that this offering was to be presented to the Lord on the day after the Sabbath, which is the first day of the week or Sunday. Sunday was to be the day when the first fruit offerings were presented. Now this is significant because Jesus Christ is called the first fruits and He is called that in the context of the first day of the week—I Cor. 15:20, 23/ Matt. 28:1. The significance of this is that Jesus Christ is God and He is the key to worship, to holiness and to blessing. It is Jesus Christ who authorizes God's blessings.

23:13

The offering contained a male lamb and it contained a grain offering that was 2/10ths of an ephah of flour, plus nearly a quart of wine. This is double the normal amount of grain—Ex. 29:40-41; Num. 28:13. When God gives us more, He expects us to give Him more.

23:14

When God gives us abundance, He does not do it so we can hoard more and more and more. He gives us abundance so we may do more for His glory.

FESTIVAL #2 – The offering of the Feast of Weeks. **23:15-22**

This feast of weeks is called in the N. T., Pentecost (Acts 2:1). Actually, the Greek word “Pentecost” (literally “pentecostas”) means 50. This festival was celebrated seven weeks plus one day after the wave offering, which is day 50. This 50-day gap in time actually linked the first fruit harvest with the fall harvest in recognizing God gave all harvest blessings.

23:17

Now according to **verse 17**, this was the one time in the year when God permitted leavened bread to be brought to Him. Notice carefully there were two loaves waved by the priest.

23:18-19

Along with the leavened bread was the presentation of seven one-year-old lambs, a bull and two rams for a burnt offering.

23:20-21 - This was to be considered a very holy and sacred day when all work ceased.

23:22 - This was also a day when the poor, needy alien was remembered. They, too, were permitted to partake of the blessings of God.

Now there can be no doubt that all of this does relate to the Church Age. Jesus Christ arose from the dead as the first fruits on the first day of the week and 50 days later the Holy Spirit came and began the Church Age. Now the two leavened loaves represent two groups of people—the Jews and Gentiles. The leaven represents sin. All are leavened sinners who stand in need of the blood sacrifice. We are all poor needy sinners who, through faith in Christ, are able to partake of the sacred things of God.

FESTIVAL #3 – The offering of the Trumpets. **23:23-25**

On the seventh month on the first day of the seventh month, a holy Sabbath rest day was to be acknowledged by the blowing of trumpets. According to Numbers 10:1-10, the two silver trumpets were blown for three reasons: 1) To call people together; 2) To announce war; 3) To announce a special day of worship (Is. 27:13).

This was a day when God’s people rested and reflected on the great blessings of God. I do not think it a coincidence that after Pentecost, the thing we are waiting for is the blowing of a trumpet when we will be called to meet the Lord in the air (I Thess. 4:16ff). If we have lived our lives as holy people of God, we will face Him with confidence and not shame.