The Seven Feasts of Jehovah

Leviticus 23

"Return, Return Ye Captives!
Return unto Your Home!"

"The Silver Trumpet Soundeth,
The Jubilee has Come"

The Seven Feasts of Jehovah

Leviticus 23

By

G. C. WILLIS

Second Edition

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PREFACE

The following pages are largely the result of Bible Readings, or addresses, on The Feasts of Jehovah. The addresses were first given after reading, and greatly enjoying, Mr. John Ritchie's little book, "The Feasts of Jehovah: Bright Foreshadowings of Grace and Glory."

The writer's first thought was to seek to translate that little book into Chinese, but as the work progressed, it seemed well to go beyond the limits of the original, and the present book could not in any way be said to be a translation of it. At the same time Mr. Ritchie's little book has been the groundwork on which this has been based, and the writer very gratefully acknowledges his great debt to its author. Many parts of this book are taken directly from Mr. Ritchie's work.

The writer is also indebted to many other authors. He has freely drawn on all works that have been available to him. Especially must he mention "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects" by Mr. W. Trotter, and "Synopsis of the Books of the Bible" and other books by Mr. J. N. Darby.

He would also like to acknowledge with the deepest gratitude the loving, faithful service of Mr. Shih T'ien Min, who has done all the translation work, and without whose labour this book would never have appeared.

It is the earnest desire of those who have laboured over these pages that they may be like a finger pointing our hearts to the Feasts of Jehovah, Feasts that were designed and arranged by the Lord to turn our hearts to Himself, that we might better learn to know His grace, and to cheer us for the dark pathway down here, by a sight of the bright Glory ahead.

Jeroboam arranged a feast on "the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had

devised of his own heart." (i Kings 12.33). This was abominable to the Lord. May it act as a warning to us to be subject to the Word of God, and as a proof of the importance of each Feast, just in its own appointed time and way. If we approach this most lovely subject in such a spirit, we believe that we cannot fail to be refreshed.

The greater part of the English Manuscripts were prepared only with a view to their translation into Chinese, and were shown to two or three trusted Christian friends at home for their criticism. One of these has urged their publication in English, and by his liberality has made it possible to carry out this work. The writer is deeply thankful for this friend's kindness and encouragement, and for his valuable criticisms and corrections.

No effort has been made to change the style, which aims only at simplicity for translation work, and was not intended for English readers. We must ask their forbearance, and hope that in spite of this "mao p'ing", the Feasts of Jehovah may so direct each heart to the Grace and Glory of God, that it may overflow in worship to the One who graciously ordained these Feasts.

The abbreviation "N.T." with the references, means that the quotation is taken from The "New Translation" by J. N. Darby.

* * * * *

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

Through God's mercy, a second edition of this little book has been called for. A few additions and corrections have been made, but otherwise it is similar to the first edition. May the Lord graciously use it to the encouragement and building up of His people: and for His Own Glory.

G.C.W.

Hong Kong, October 25th, 1957.

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THE FEASTS OF JEHOVAH

Leviticus 23

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we have the seven great feasts which Jehovah commanded His people to keep every year in the land of Canaan. In these seven feasts, we may see a picture of the way that God has dealt with man from the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, until His kingdom, at the time of the millenium,—and truly this chapter looks back to God's Rest before sin entered, and forward to God's Eternal Rest.

Although it is now perhaps about 3300 years since this chapter was written, it is only about 1900 years since the death of the Lord Jesus; and some of the feasts have already been fulfilled, but some of them have not yet been fulfilled. When written they formed a prophecy; and they still tell us of things to happen in the future.

In Hebrews 10-1, we read:—"For the law having a *shadow* of good things to come, and not the very image of the things", and in Col. 2-17, we read that the feast or "new moon" or "Sabbaths" are "a *shadow* of things to come; but the body is of Christ".

So we may understand that these seven feasts in Lev. 23, are shadows. Some of the real images we have now seen clearly, and we may see how exactly the shadows fit the real image. So we may expect that the images of the things we do not yet see, will also exactly fit the shadows, which we hope to examine by God's help, in this chapter. How wonderful for us to

consider that when God drew the pictures of these shadows we are now looking at, that He Himself saw clearly the real image of these things. We may remember that He delighted to look forward and consider these wonderful events, of which He has here given us the picture. If God delights to look at these events, and if God has taken the trouble to draw the pictures of them for us, How glad you and I should be to have the privilege of also looking at them, and in this way to share God's secrets and God's pleasure.

May we not despise these precious pictures God has given to us in the Old Testament! It is exceedingly sad to see the way Israel of old despised these Feasts of Jehovah. The Feast of the Passover, the Foundation of everything for Israel, was neglected from the time of Solomon to the days of Hezekiah: yet when they did at last keep it once more, with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it afforded such joy to their hearts that "the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness." (ii Chron. 30.23). But even so, it remained to a later and darker day to keep the Passover still more in accordance with the Word, so that it is said of Josiah's Passover, "There was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept." (ii Chron. 35.18). And the most joyous of all the Feasts, The Feast of Tabernacles, was so despised and forgotten that from the days of Joshua until the days of Ezra and Nehemiah it was not kept in accordance to the Word. (Neh. 8:17) May God keep His people in these days from treating His Feasts with the same contempt. I hope that as we look more closely at these feasts we may see that in this chapter, Lev. 23, we have one of the fullest and clearest and most beautiful pictures we could get, of the way in which God has deal with men.

We pray that God may truly feed our souls, and

give us more spiritual strength as we read and meditate on these feasts, and that He may by them draw us nearer to the Lord Jesus, and make our hearts burn within us, as He opens to us the Scripture.

Chapter 2

"THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD"

"Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Deut. 33-29)

"The Children of Israel, a people near unto Him." (Ps. 148-14)

Perhaps it will help us to understand "the Feasts of Jehovah" better, if we look first at the people of Jehovah,—those people whom He commanded to keep the feasts.

The book of Leviticus, where we read the account of these feasts, is the third book of the Old Testament. In the first book of the Old Testament, Genesis, we read of the way God made man, put him in a beautiful garden, and came down in the cool of the day to walk in the garden with the man whom he had made. Here we find the wonderful fact that God was seeking the companionship of man. I suppose we all know how man sinned, and so spoiled this communion with God. In the very brief history of man before the flood, God pauses to speak of one man who "walked with God for three hundred years." God lets us see His joy in this man, with whom He could have companionship.

Then we read of the general apostacy, and of the flood. After the flood things were no better, we read of the Tower of Babel, and of the way man again turned from God. Then God chose one man, Abraham; he was the "friend of God." We see again God's joy in one man with whom He could have companionship. We read of this same joy in Proverbs 8-31, where the

Lord Jesus Christ, typified by "Wisdom" says, "My delights were with the sons of men."

God chose Abraham to be the father of a special nation. This nation was to be God's own people,—"a people near unto Him." I expect that most of my readers know the story of Abraham and his descendents. You know the way they became slaves in Egypt, and when the second book of the Old Testament, (Exodus), opens, we see Abraham's descendents, a great and mighty nation, in Egypt, but helpless slaves there under the cruel dominion of the great king Pharaoh. But not only were they slaves, they had also forgotten the God Who had chosen them, and made them His Own. They were idolators in Egypt, (see Josh 24-14). When God was about to send Moses to deliver them, we see in Ex. 3-13, 14, that when God told Moses to say to the people, "The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you," Moses asked God, "They shall say to me, What is His Name? What *shall I say?" God's people had so far forgotten their* God, that they had even forgotten His great Name.

There were no "Feasts of Jehovah" in Egypt. There were no "holy convocations." There were no times of rejoicing. Pharaoh tried to make Israel keep the feast in Egypt, but that was impossible. (Ex. 5-1, 8-25) They were slaves and idolators there. This shows us a picture of man, *every man,* in his natural state, He has departed from God. He is a slave of Satan, the prince of this world. Anything and everything has a place in his heart, but "God is not in all his thoughts." (Ps. 10.4)

Did God forsake His people because they were in this terrible condition? No, He did not. With mighty power He brought His people out of Egypt. He delivered them from under the cruel hand of Pharaoh. He separated them from the people and the idols of Egypt, to become the chosen people of Jehovah, according to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob. Afterwards He could say to them, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto MYSELF." (Ex. 19-4)

The wicked ways of these people in Egypt demanded death, and God brought them out of Egypt by means of death, as we shall see. But it was the death of another: not of Israel, who deserved to die. They were *redeemed* from Egypt and slavery, *by blood.*

They were Redeemed, they were separated, to be Jehovah's "peculiar treasure." "A people near unto Him" (Ps. 148-14); with Jehovah in the midst of them, shielding, protecting, and ruling over them. Jehovah again was devising a way whereby He might dwell amongst men.

But please consider what wonderful grace for God to take up such poor rebel slaves, and to redeem them, to save them from their cruel master, to bring them so near to Himself, and to fill their mouth with singing. Truly we do not wonder that Moses could say, when he was taking leave of them, in Deut. 33-29, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?"

But, although the grace that brought Israel into such a place was very wonderful: although the blessings that Israel received were far beyond the thought of man: yet all this was only a shadow of the greater grace that brings poor, lost sinners today, into a still higher and better place. Please listen to these words, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1-3)

Much less than this would have satisfied us. We would have been quite satisfied to be delivered from hell and judgment. That was all we desired when we discovered that we were lost. But less than these wonderful blessings could not satisfy God, or fulfil the desires of His heart. He was seeking worshippers,

(John 4-23). It does not say He was seeking "worship," but "worshippers," His purpose was to have a people near unto Himself, made like His Own dear Son, "holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1-4).

These feasts would have been no use to Israel in Egypt. Other things filled their minds there. Their lives were bitter with hard bondage. Their days were filled with making brick and mortar. Their backs were sore with the whips of the task-masters. They had no heart for "the feasts of Jehovah." But now that Jehovah had delivered them, and brought them out of Egypt, and through the Red Sea, into the wilderness, where they could be alone with Himself, then they were ready to hear Jehovah's gracious invitation to come to His feasts. Then Jehovah was able to tell them what was in His heart, and to invite them to share with Him the great things which had been in His thoughts from eternity. Once again, Jehovah could have His heart's desire, to have His people with Himself, and be in their company. Listen to His own words, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." Ex. 29, 45-46.

Jehovah was the host at these feasts, and His people Israel were His guests. He ordained these feasts, as celebrations of His own joy, His Own delight, in the great events to which they pointed. Truly they were but shadows of those great events which were to come, but Jehovah could see the real images themselves. And though His people could not understand the fulness and depth of meaning, as we can now; it was their joy and privilege to share with Jehovah His joy, and to be His guests.

As we read and meditate on these feasts, we will

see that the things which have occupied the heart of God from all eternity, were those things which will still last to all eternity. The songs of Heaven will never grow old. How different to the joys and the songs of earth, which so soon pass away! May the Lord give us eyes to see, and a heart to share, those things which fill the heart of God with joy.

Do you remember in the parable of the Sower, that some of the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it, and the Lord told us that thorns were a picture of the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and that they sprang up and choked the Word, so it became unfruitful? How sad, if the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, make it impossible for us to care about these things that are a joy to the heart of the Lord. How sad if we are too busy with other things, perhaps business, or study, or even the Lord's work—to take time to hear from the Lord these things in which He has delighted for so long, and which He has taken the trouble to tell to us.

Every individual saint is called to have fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 John, 1-3), and the whole church, (meaning "the called-out ones.") is called to the fellowship of God's Son—"Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1-9). Do you remember those gracious words of the Lord Jesus in John 14? "If a man love Me, he will keep my words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Compare also John 14-3 and Rev. 21.3; 22.3.

The Lord desires the fellowship of His people now, and He desired it in the days of old also. He desired it so much that He thought of the difficulties that might arise when His people came together to meet Himself, and He provided for these difficulties. We all know that it would be impossible for us to rejoice before the Lord if we were worrying about our cares

at home. When all the men left their homes to go up to meet the Lord, who would protect the homes from the enemy? What about the Philistines who were always ready to come down on the Lord's people? Would it be safe or right to leave their wives and children unprotected to go up to meet the Lord, as He desired? The Lord knew all these dangers and difficulties, and so He gave the special promise, "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." (Ex. 34-24) The God Who could think of these things and take special care of His people in those days, will not forget them now. He tells us now not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, (Heb. 10-25) and will He not take care that those who hear and obey His Word, will not lose by it? Is not this a special word for us in China, where all around us we see our neighbours making no difference for the Lord's Day, but going on with their own affairs in business and pleasure, as if the day were their own? May we not be tempted to follow their example? But when we know the deep desire of the Lord's heart to have us with Himself and around Himself may we let nothing hinder us, and we will surely find in Eternity that we have not lost by it. The Lord's promise still stands true, "Them that honour Me, I will honour," (1 Sam. 2.30) and "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness;" (that is, Put God's things first,) "And all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6.33)

But before we begin to consider the "Feasts of Jehovah" in detail, there is one more matter connected with them that we should notice. If we turn over our Bibles to the Gospel of John, we read in chapter 2-13 of the Passover, the first of "the feasts of Jehovah." But here it is not called the "Feast of Jehovah," but "the Jews' passover." In chapter 7-2 we read, "The Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand." "The Feasts

of Jehovah" have become the "Feasts of the Jews." The outward form was there, but the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, had been rejected, and what joy could God have in empty forms?

Speaking of them in an earlier day, (Isaiah 1-14), the Lord had said, "*Your* new moons and *your* appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them." Why was this? Was it not because of the formal, empty way in which the people kept the feasts, while they themselves were defiled with sin, and going on with evil? Do you not think that you and I can learn a very valuable lesson from this for ourselves today? Do you think that the Lord likes any better a correct form, and fine outward worship, if the heart is away from God, and the hands are defiled with sin, and the feet not walking in the truth? The Lord says plainly, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15-22). How much we see about us, that has the form of worship, but if we examine it, we find that it is not in accordance with the Word of God, and not in obedience to His expressed command. We hear men say, "You worship in your way, and I worship in mine; we all have a right to our own opinions." This is exactly what we have not. And if you or I worship in *our way*, we may be quite certain that this worship is not acceptable to God.

Remember in Rev. 3.14-22, the church of Laodicea had very great outward show. They were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing, (in their own eyes.) But what is the Lord's judgment? They were ready to be spued out of His mouth, they were so loathsome to Him. He could bear them no longer. May you and I, dear brethren, beware lest we also follow in this pathway. And let us not forget that the beginning of the downfall, as seen in the church of Ephesus, Rev. 2-4, 5, was not in any way outwardly apparent, but was in the heart, "Thou hast left thy

first love." May the Lord keep our hearts,—may He keep our love bright and fresh, with Himself alone as the object,—and we will find *our joy* in being *with Him*, even as He finds *His joy* in having us *with Him*, also. How well if our hearts can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." (Song of Sol. 2-16), but it is a deeper lesson when we can say, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." (Song of Sol. 7-10). What Great Grace!

HE is altogether lovely;
I was black as I could be,
But He says that I am comely:
His desire is toward me.

Oh, how great my Saviour's goodness
And His beauty: all may see.
But on me He lays His beauty;
His desire is toward me.

He is fairest of ten thousand,
Worthy of their praise is He;
But He loved me all unlovely,
His desire is toward me.

Ask they, Who is thy Beloved?
Son of God, made man, is He.
For my sake He left the glory,
His desire is toward me.

He, the rich One, came from Heaven,
For my sins died on the tree,
Died that He might make me worthy:
His desire is toward me.

Chapter 3

THE SEVEN FEASTS

"These are the set feasts of Jehovah"
(Lev. 23-4, N.T.)

"Which are a shadow of things to come"
(Col. 2-17, N.T.)

Before we consider the Feasts of Jehovah separately, in detail, let us look at them all together.

There were seven feasts, or if we include the Sabbath there were eight feasts.

(If we look at the diagram at the end of the book we will understand them better.)

The Sabbath was different from the other feasts in several ways.

It is described in a separate section of Leviticus to the other feasts. You will note the subject of this feast begins, "Concerning the set *feasts* of Jehovah,... these are my set feasts." (Lev. 23-2, N.T.) After speaking of the Sabbath, we get almost the same words for an introduction to the other seven feasts, "These are the set feasts of Jehovah". (verse 4, N.T.) No other feast has this special introduction.

Also the Sabbath was observed weekly, all the other feasts were yearly.

The Sabbath was observed at the people's own home, but the other feasts must be observed at "the place" which Jehovah should choose to place His Name there. (Deut. 12-14, 16-6)

The Sabbath has never been completely fulfilled and will not be completely fulfilled until Eternity, but

the other seven feasts are all fulfilled inside a certain time.

The seven feasts may be divided into two parts, four in the first part and three in the second part.

The Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of First-fruits, and Pentecost, were the first four. These all came close together. Then there was an interval of about four months, during which there was no "Feast of Jehovah" and no "holy convocation" of the people at Jerusalem. It was a long pause between the Feast of Pentecost and the next feast, the Feast of Blowing of Trumpets, during which no fresh call from Jehovah to His people was heard. Surely the Lord had a purpose in this, and a lesson for us to learn. The meaning is perhaps that the truths pictured in the first four feasts have already been fulfilled, whereas that which is pictured in the last three feasts have not yet been fulfilled. The long space between the Feast of Pentecost and the next feast perhaps pictures the long space of more than 1900 years since the day of Pentecost to the day in which we now live.

The first four feasts seem to be connected with the Lord's heavenly people, the Church,—while the last three seem to be especially connected with His earthly people Israel, though perhaps the heavenly people are also pictured in these three feasts.

We will see that the first four feasts have been exactly fulfilled, and this makes us expect that the last three feasts will also be exactly fulfilled in God's Own Time. The failure of man and all man's wickedness can never change the purposes of God.

How this chapter should strengthen our faith in the entire truth of every word of the Bible! Those who tell us that it is false, are too blind to see the wonderful accuracy and truth and beauty in a chapter like this, or they could never again doubt God's Word. The more closely we look at the works of man the

worse they appear, but the more closely we examine the works of God, the more beautiful do they appear.

God commanded all the males in Israel to appear before Him three times every year, at the Feast of the Passover, at the Feast of Pentecost and at the Feast of Tabernacles. (Ex. 23, 14-17).

They had to come to the place the Lord had chosen to place His Name there. (Deut. 16-16) And they must not come with "empty hands." Deut. 16-16. (Chinese) Ex. 29.24; Lev. 16.12; Deut. 26.2.

How happy the men of Israel must have been as they all gathered from every part of the country to the same centre, all with one heart and one object, to meet the Lord and out of the fulness of blessing He had given them, to give back to Him His portion! "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath given thee." (Deut. 16-17). Men believe that the little group of Psalms (120-134) called the "Songs of Degrees", were sung by these happy crowds as they journeyed to the city of the Great King, Jerusalem.

While the Lord's people were right in their hearts, they rejoiced in these Feasts of Jehovah, and were glad as they said to one another, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." (Ps. 122-1)

But, alas, when their hearts turned away from the Lord, they found His feasts wearisome and soon neglected them, so that in the last chapter of Judges when telling of the place which the Lord had chosen for His feasts, (Judges 21-19), it was necessary to give the most careful directions as to how to find it. But if every male went to that place three times a year as God had commanded, every man of Israel would know the way perfectly.

In the book of Malachi (1-10, N.T.) the Lord asks, "Who is there among you that would even shut the doors? and ye would not kindle fire on mine altar for nothing", and for the offerings to Jehovah they

brought "the lame, and the sick." (Mal. 1-13) saying of the Lord's things, "what a weariness." Indeed, things had grown so bad in the days of Malachi that God spoke of "the dung of your solemn feasts." (2.3).

Are we any better in our day? How often do we turn from the Lord's things to seek our own things. Even in the days of the Apostle Paul, he must write "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." And again he must say, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me."

May the Lord Jesus so fill our hearts that all things else lose their attractiveness, and we may truly say,

> "Naught that I have my own I call,
> I hold it for the Giver,
> My heart, My strength, My life, My all.
> Are His, and His forever."

We have seen that in the Gospel of John the Feasts of Jehovah had become the "Feasts of the Jews."

When we come to the Epistles, we find that the Christians have but one feast, not yearly, but on the first day of every week, the Lord Himself as Host calls us to *His table* to eat *His Supper,* in remembrance of Himself, and He Himself is present with us.

The passover looked forward to the death of Christ. The feast of Unleavened Bread spoke of the communion of saints in holiness and love, the feast of the First-Fruits told of the resurrection of Christ, the Feast of Pentecost looked forward to the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the harvest, (Verse 22), we may see the return of Christ.

Are not all these included in the Lord's supper, as week by week we gather to remember Himself?

We look back to the death of Christ, we enjoy the communion of saints, we remember that Christ is not dead, but risen, the power to enjoy all this, and to worship, is only by the Holy Spirit, and we "do this" "Till He Come".

Truly of that cross we may sing,

"O mystery of mysteries!
Of life, and death the tree;
Centre of two eternities
Which look with rapt, adoring eyes,
Onward and back to Thee—
O cross of Christ, where all His pain
And death is our eternal gain."

Chapter 4

THE SABBATH

"And He (God) rested on the Seventh day from all His work which He had made." (Gen. 2-2)

"Keep the sabbath day to hallow it, as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee . . . And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and that Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence with a powerful hand and with a stretched-out arm; therefore Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee to observe the Sabbath day." (Deut. 5-12, 15, N.T.) "Remember the Sabbath day to hallow it . . . For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the Seventh day." (Ex. 20-8, 11, N.T.)

"There remaineth therefore a Sabbath (rest) for the people of God." (Heb. 4-9 R.V.)

"That rest secure from ill,
No cloud or grief ere stains,
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,
And love eternal reigns".

The Sabbath is the first feast of Jehovah given to us in this wonderful chapter. Because it comes first, it calls us to consider it in a special way, and we may understand that it is very important.

"Sabbath" means "rest", and we should understand clearly that in the Bible, whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, having a share in God's rest is what marks God's people. This is their special privilege. As God says, "Verily my Sabbath (rest) ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you." The form of the rest may change, as we shall see, but a share in God's rest is always the sign between God and His people.

God established this rest in the beginning at creation. God rested, and He called man to share in His rest. It is true that sin came in and spoiled God's rest, so that the Lord Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."

Later in Deut. 5, 12-15 we see that the Sabbath was given as a memorial of the deliverance out of Egypt.

It was again included in the law at Mount Sinai, not as a moral command, but as a sign of God's rest *at the beginning*.

In Ezek. 20-12, we find that the Sabbath was given as a sign, "I also gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah that hallow them."

Thus we see that the Sabbath was a sign of God's covenant.

It is very important for us to understand this. The Sabbath given to Israel was the sign of God's covenant with Israel.

In Hebrews 8 we see this old covenant has passed away, and "place" has "been sought for the second", which is "a better covenant, which was established on better promises." It is most important for us to clearly understand that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is entirely set aside for us, and that the sign of this covenant, (resting on the 7th day), does not belong to us. If we clearly understand this important teaching of the Scripture, it will deliver us

from the snare of the teaching of Seventh Day Adventists, and all others who seek to put the Lord's people under the law.

But there is more. Our rest is *not* in this world. The Sabbath was the sign of rest in this world, and the Lord Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath. The Spirit of God has been careful to show in the four Gospels how often He worked on the Sabbath. The Lord made no mention of the Sabbath in the Sermon on the Mount, (Matt. 5, 6, 7), where He gave such a precious summary of the fundamental principles suited to the Kingdom. The Lord Jesus passed the Sabbath in the grave, a sign of the position of the old covenant now.

Many people try to show that the Sabbath day is now the Lord's Day. But the Sabbath day was the Seventh Day,—a rest at the end of the Week, after the labour is finished. The Lord's Day is called in Scripture the First Day of the week, for us it is the day above all days. It is the resurrection day. It shows we find our rest in resurrection. We find our rest at the beginning of our spiritual life, instead of finding it at the end of our labours. "Come unto me," Christ said, "And I will give you rest". Our rest is in the New Creation. Some Christians think that the Lord's day is like other days, because they understand our rest is not down in this world. But they do not understand that the Scripture clearly makes a difference between this day and the following six days of the week. The Lord Himself has chosen even the name of this day. He calls it "The Lord's Day" (Rev. 1-10). Some people tell us this means "the day of the Lord", of which we read much in both the Old and the New Testaments. But the Greek says quite another thing, and is quite a different word. This word is only used twice in the New Testament. "The Lord's Supper" and "the Lord's Day".

So we should understand clearly the nature of the Sabbath, it was God's appointed sign of seeking

rest as the result of labour under the law. The more we understand this, and understand that the Lord Jesus who is "Lord of the Sabbath", has disannulled the first covenant, the more clearly will we understand that any person who now seeks to maintain the authority of the Jewish Sabbath is in danger of denying the authority, the dignity, and the rights of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Let us take care on the other hand, because we are not under law, but under grace, not to forget the thought of man's rest and also of God's rest. As we pointed out before, rest is the special mark of God's Own people. When we come to Christ, He *gives* us rest, and when we take His yoke upon us, we *find* rest to our souls. To the servant of the Lord who is wearied in the service of His Master, (not wearied *of* His service,) we read of another rest, "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," and there, alone in the presence of His Master, far from the rush and toil, he finds rest and refreshing, and comes forth freshly girded for His work.

And to those saints who have left us and are "with Christ," "they rest from their labours," they are at Home with their Lord in Paradise. (See 2 Cor. 5-8 and Luke 23-43)

The Millenium will be a further stage of this rest that God gives, when Christ will reign for a thousand years and Satan will be bound, then will be fulfilled the prophecy. "The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing." (Isa. 14-7) The noise of war is gone. The cry of the oppressed will cease, and "the Sun of Righteousness" will bring peace and plenty to this weary earth. It will keep its Sabbath. But even this is not the final *rest*. The final rest is from spiritual labours in the midst of this evil, not only from sin. During the Millenium sin will remain in this world. Satan though bound, will be loosed again. Eternal rest,—this unending Sabbath

of God,—we shall enjoy with the Lord Himself in a coming day, though now we have the privilege of working for Him who has said "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."

Chapter 5

THE PASSOVER

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover." (Lev. 23-5)

"Thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt." (Deut. 16-6)

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. 5-7)

Why did the Paschal Lamb,
Of old for Israel bleed?
To be their safeguard and their feast.
To sprinkle and to feed.

Dwell not, my searching soul,
On ritual shadows now;
Christ is the Lamb all pure and whole,
The ransomed first-born thou.

Now get thy house within
Slay, eat, anoint thy door;
The dread avenger comes not in
To smite, but passeth o'er.

He looks and calls from high,
"Art thou to die or live?"
He hears the posts and lintel cry,
"Forgive, forgive, forgive."

I hear the accuser roar
Of ills that I have done;
I know them well, and thousands more;
Jehovah findeth none.

Sin, Satan, Death, press near,
To harass and appal;
Let but my bleeding Lord appear,
Backward they go, and fall.

We have already noticed the difference between the Sabbath, and the other feats of Jehovah.

The Passover was the first of the yearly feasts to Jehovah. It was observed on the fourteenth day of the first month,—the month of Abib. (Deut. 16-1). The Passover brought to remembrance every year the Redemption and deliverance from Egypt. Christ our Passover, is sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. 5-7). The passover Lamb was a type of Christ. Each time it was sacrificed, it pointed onward to Him who was to come,—the Lamb of God, "in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1-14)

When the Passover was first given to Israel, they were slaves to Pharoah, the king of Egypt, a type of Satan, and they were serving idols in Egypt. We may see that the Israelites themselves, like the Egyptians, deserved to receive the righteous judgment of God against sins; there was no difference. God warned the people in Egypt,—the Egyptians as well as the Israelites,—He told them clearly, "About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die." (Ex. 11.4, 5)

But God also provided a way of escape from this judgment. Any person who believed and obeyed God's word about the way of escape, would surely be saved.

And what was the way of escape? On the tenth day of the first month they were to take a lamb, and keep it until the fourteenth day of the month at even, a lamb for an house. If the household was too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it. Please notice there was no question that the lamb might be too little for the house. The Lamb of God is enough for all,—even for the worst sinner. On the fourteenth day of the first month at even, they killed the lamb, they put the blood in a bason and with a bunch of hyssop they struck the lintel and two side posts of the door of their house with the blood in the bason, and none of the people might go out of that house until morning.

The blood was on the outside of the house. The people inside could not see it. The blood was for the eye of God alone. In the darkness of midnight His eye could tell whether there was blood on the door or not, and He said "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you." Ex. 12-13)

Please notice, the living lamb could not save them. Notice also the dead lamb with the blood in the bason did not save them. They must take that blood and put it on their own door, if salvation was to come to that house. The blood was applied with hyssop, and hyssop is a bitter herb, and tells us of the bitterness of soul in repentance, as I realize that *my* sins have caused the death of the Lamb of God to save *me.* Dear Reader, please let me ask, have you applied the blood to your door, or is it still in the bason? God has provided the Lamb,—Christ; the Lamb of God has died, His blood is available for you. It is, so to speak, in the bason. Will you not take the hyssop and apply it for *yourself,* or otherwise it is of no avail for *you?*

Yes, God in mercy "passed over" those sinners who trusted in the blood of the lamb. The judgment of death fell on the spotless Lamb instead. The blood

on the lintel and two side posts protected all inside that house from the destruction of death as the Lord passed through Egypt that night in Judgment.

God's Own Word was, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." (Ex. 12-13) The blood of the lamb made them safe. The word of God made them know with certainty they were safe. The lamb died that they might live. The blood appropriated for themselves, put on their own door, by faith in the Word of the Lord, gave them Certainty and Joy. The blood of the lamb was the foundation of their new position with Jehovah, as His redeemed people. Redemption by blood was their title to all the blessings which they afterwards received from God, because they were *His* people. The blood was the foundation of everything. The Passover, the first of the feasts, was the foundation of all the other feasts.

But there is another lesson for us in this feast. This month was not formerly the first month. God changed their calendar. The former months of the year were blotted out, and the month in which the Passover came was the first month of the year.

How true this is for the sinner! His past life is blotted out by that precious blood. He begins a new life when he takes shelter under the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Lamb. He is born again, and time begins afresh for him. It is truly the first month of the year, —an entirely new beginning, "old things are passed away." He has a new birthday.

This shows us how redemption and the new birth are linked together. To trust the precious blood of Christ, is to be "born again."

Dispensationally this may point to the period of the trial of man from Adam to the death of Christ. All was failure, and must pass away. At the Cross there was a new beginning. As you know most countries of the world reckon their years from the time of Christ. Truly the Cross is a new beginning,

"the first month of the year."

For the individual Christian, it clearly shows that when he believes in Christ, he is born again. He no longer is reckoned a child of Adam, a fallen sinner. He stands in Christ now a new creation. He begins to live a new life. His former self is crucified and buried.

He is bought *for* God
He is born *of* God
He goes forth to live *for* God,
And no more to serve sin, the world and Satan.

The Church came into existence after the Cross. Its foundation, also, is the Blood of the Lamb, but we will consider it more fully later on.

Truly through the Cross, of which the Passover speaks, all things become new. Well may it be said, "It is the first month of the year to you."

Apart from the death of Christ, and faith in Him who died, apart from the Person and work of Christ, there can be no real Christianity on earth, and no title to heaven hereafter. Redemption by blood is the foundation of everything. The Cross is the starting point for the throne. The blood of the Lamb is the only title to the glory of God. And hence Jehovah commanded that the great redemption feast should be kept from year to year, (Ex. 13.10), throughout their generations.

Immediately they had entered the New Year, they were to celebrate the Passover Feast. And this was to be continued even after they reached the land of Canaan, and were settled in their inheritance beyond Jordan. This memorial feast was still to be kept (Josh. 5 and Deut. 16), and when generations to come should ask its meaning they were to tell the story of their redemption. (Ex. 12.24 to 27)

But after they had applied the blood to the lintel and two side posts and gone inside the house, sheltered

beneath the blood, what then did the family do? Then they took that dead lamb, whose blood had saved their lives. They roasted it, and with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staff in their hand, they were gathered together around that roast lamb, to feed upon it. The blood made them safe, the flesh gave them food. But it was to be roast with fire, they might not eat of it raw, or sodden at all with water. The fierce judgment and wrath of God was born by the Lamb of God, with nothing to come between Himself and the fire of judgment. Who can ever tell the depths of all His suffering during those hours of darkness, bearing our sins in His Own body on the tree? How can we ever know the depths of anguish, which called forth that cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This tells us something of the fire borne by that spotless Lamb of God. And it was to be eaten with "bitter herbs". That tells me of the realization in my own soul that "He did it for me!" It was *my* sins that nailed Him to that cross. How bitter to the soul of one who loves Him, is such a thought! But how precious, also!

But let us look for a moment at that lamb, and as we do so, may the Lord help us to see more beauty in the Lamb of God.

The Lamb was to be without blemish. (Ex. 12.5). There has not been one of the children of Adam, who could claim to be "without blemish." Christ, the Son of God, and Son of man, the Lamb of God,—He only is "without blemish."

"A male of the first year," (Ex. 12-5), tells us of the strength and energy of our blessed Lamb. The chosen lamb was not to be old and worn out. And our Lord suffered death with all his life, (humanly speaking), before Him. He was about 33 years old. He could say in the Psalms, "He weakened My strength in the way; He shortened My days. I said, O My God, take Me not away in the midst of My days." (Ps.

102.23, 24). He still had the dew of His youth. (Ps. 110.3).

"In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb . . . . and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." (Ex. 12-3, 6) How wonderfully the Lord fulfilled all this. On the tenth day of the first month we see him coming to Jerusalem. He stayed there, (though sleeping outside the city), until the fourteenth day, and the even of that day He died.

Our Lord eat the last supper with His disciples in the early hours of the 14th day for the Jewish day was reckoned from sunset to sunset. It was night when Judas left the room. Later that night they went to the Garden of Gethsemane, and while still night Judas led the band of men to take the Lord. He was crucified at the third hour, (Mark 15.25), or nine o'clock our time. There was darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour: twelve o'clock to three o'clock our time, and about the ninth hour the Lamb of God died: still on the fourteenth day of the First month. The Passover Lamb was to be killed "between the two evenings", (Ex. 12.6; Margin). They tell us this means between 3 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon. So the Lamb of God died at exactly the hour when they began to kill the Passover lambs.

There is one more remarkable connection between the type and its fulfilment. In the Septuagint, (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), in Ex. 12.13, the word used for "pass over" means to "protect, defend." But in Ex. 12.23 the word used for "pass over" means to "pass by", or "pass over." Our Lord uses this very word in Matt. 26.39, when He prays in Gethsemane, "Let this cup pass over (or pass by) Me." As God passed by the houses on the night of death in Egypt, so He prayed, might this cup pass by Him. But how precious the end of that prayer: "nevertheless

not as I will, but as Thou wilt!"

Again, of the Passover Lamb it was written "neither shall ye break a bone thereof"—Ex 12-46. The Jewish mode of death was by stoning, which would break the bones. But God had so arranged that the Lamb of God should be crucified. And though the legs of the two thieves, crucified with the Lord Jesus, were broken, the Spirit of God by John tells us clearly that the soldiers "brake not His legs, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of Him shall not be broken. (John 19.32-36).

If at the passover feast, amidst the peace and plenty of the land of Canaan, the children of Israel delighted to look back to that dark night of judgment in Egypt, when amidst the cries of death and woe all about them, they were saved,—How much more do we delight to look back and gaze upon the Lamb of God who was so worthy of the highest place in Heaven, but took the lowest place on earth, even death, the death of the Cross. How precious to our hearts are all these details in the picture which the Spirit of God has drawn for us so perfectly.

But please consider further, the Feast of the Passover was "the Feast of Jehovah". It was a picture of His Own Joy in the great event of which it was the shadow, and His redeemed people were gathered around Him to share His joy in His presence. What a wonderful thought is this! Jehovah keeps a feast in anticipation of the death of Christ! This passes all our thoughts! We cannot understand it. No saint and no angel can ever know all the value of the death of the Lamb of God, or what that death meant to the heart of God. That Lamb dying on the Cross was the only begotten Son of God. What depths of meaning

are in the words. "Take now thy Son, thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest," (Gen. 22-2); and again, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," (John 3-16); and again, "He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," (Rom. 8.32); and again "Having yet therefore one Son, His well beloved, He sent Him also." (Mark 12-6), and again "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4-9, 10)

That Lamb of God, God's "dear Son" (Col. 1-13) "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." That perfect obedience unto death; that complete surrender; that unswerving devotion, was a "sweet savour" unto God. The Cross was a feast to Jehovah. It gave Him back more than sin had robbed Him of.

The Passover looked forward to the Cross. The Lord's Supper looks back to the Cross, and we may learn precious lessons about that supper from the Passover.

Where was it to be eaten? "Thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto the Lord Thy God . . . in the place which the Lord shall choose." (Deut. 16-6, 7)

Three times in this account of the feast does the Lord repeat those words "in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose." Surely this tells of the great importance in the eyes of God of this matter.

Alas, today, we find many people eating the Lord's supper in the place which man has chosen. We find companies of men called by the names of men, or countries, or forms of government. These are places that men have made, and men have chosen, and assuredly they are not each one the place which the Lord has chosen to place His name there, or we would

not see such confusion, and so many places, each claiming to be the place where we may eat the Lord's Supper.

If we turn from all this confusion, do we find any light to guide us in the Word of God, as to the place which He has chosen in these days to place His Name there? Assuredly we do.

We read, "where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18.20, New Trans.) "Two or three" would not suggest large numbers, or any personal strength or authority. But "unto My Name", tells us of the power and authority of Him Whose Name it is.

A British subject in some far and distant foreign land may go to the British Embassy for help and protection, because of the *Name* which that embassy represents: even the Sovereign of Britain. The power and authority of the embassy may be nothing at all: but because of the Name it represents there is both power and authority. But that power and authority must be used according to the will and desires of the Sovereign. It would be unthinkable that the ambassador should act according to his own wishes, without regard to the will of his Sovereign who had placed him there, and whose Name he represents. So if we are gathered to His Name, it is clear that all must be according to the will of God, and instructions given us in His Word. If we compare with the Word, those different companies of people who eat the Lord's Supper, then we may tell whether they are acting *according to their own will, or according to the Word* of God.

We shall notice clearly that no special building or no special place is mentioned. It is no longer a particular spot down here but the place where Christ is in the midst. It is a PERSON, not a *place*, unto whom we are gathered now. We never read in the Epistles of "sacred buildings", more holy than

others. We read of "the church in thy house" (Philemon 2): evidently the disciples met in Philemon's house to eat the Lord's supper. (Compare also Rom. 16.5; i Cor. 16.19; Col. 4.15). We read nothing of a minister or clergyman. How could one man assume control if the Lord is truly in the midst? It would be unthinkable.

So we may see that it is not necessary to have a Gospel Hall, or a Meeting Room, or a "preacher", or "minister", or "evangelist", or "clergyman", in order to eat the Lord's supper. Two or three, only, if gathered unto the Lord's Name, may eat it in a private house. Christ in the midst is what matters, not holy buildings, or persons ordained by men.

But the Passover also tells us clearly, *Who are to eat of this feast.* In Ex. 12-43, 44, 45, we read "There shall no stranger eat thereof; but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof." In Eph. 2-19, we read, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Truly it is clear that only those who are children of God "made nigh by the blood of Christ," (Eph. 2-13) may eat of this supper; How sad to see unconverted people eating, in order that they may obtain blessing! This is the opposite to the Word of God.

The rite of circumcision was cutting off a part of the flesh of every male. God's law for Israel was that every male must be circumcised; that is, every male must have this part of his flesh cut off. The spiritual meaning of this for Christians is that we must "cut off" the flesh. In the New Testament God speaks of "the flesh", as that evil nature in us which is ever prone to do evil things. The Christian must not allow this: but must cut it off, or, keep it in the place of death: but actually, the flesh is always with us till the

Lord takes us Home; but we need not let it act.

The rite of circumcision was open to those who wished to become part of the people of God, and then they also might eat of the passover. Now by faith in Christ, we become children of God, members of the household of God, and with the flesh cut off, in the place of death, we may eat of that supper.

We may also see, *How this feast was to be eaten.* In Ex. 12-11, we read, "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." They were to eat it, just ready to leave the land of their sorrow and bondage. And although we have been delivered from that land by the mercy of God, yet we eat of that supper, ready to leave this world of sorrow and death. The Word of God says, "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till He come." (1 Cor. 11-26). We eat and drink of that supper looking for the Lord to come.

We may also note that the exact time of keeping the Passover was specified, and if we look in the New Testament, we may see, *When we are to eat the Lord's Supper.*

It is true that the Scriptures give great liberty in this matter. The word says *"As often* as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." (1 Cor. 11.26) This would seem to give us liberty to "eat this bread, and drink this cup", at any time and it appears in the earliest days they broke bread daily (Acts 2-46).

But the the Scriptures clearly point out the practice of the early church in the days of the Apostles, and we may well take heed to this. In Acts 20-7 we read "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to bread bread." In 1 Cor. 16-2 speaking of the collection for the saints, we read, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you

lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." In Heb. 13-15, 16 this "sacrifice" of giving is connected with the death of Jesus.

So that we learn that the early church came together on the first day of the week. It was then they made their collection, their sacrifice of doing good and communicating, and it was then they came together to break bread. There is no suggestion in the Scriptures of breaking bread only once a month, or once in three months, or once a year,—as men have arranged. The first day of the week is evidently the time when the Lord would have us break bread in remembrance of Himself. What a suited day this is for the purpose! The Resurrection day! We shew forth the Lord's death on the day He rose.

And we do well to remember that it was at the "going down of the sun," the Passover was eaten. The remembrance of the Lord is called "The Lord's *supper*." We do not eat our supper in the morning. When the disciples came together to break bread in Troas, it would seem to have been in the evening, for Paul preached unto them until midnight: Acts 20.7.

It is a remarkable fact that a special Greek word is used for the first day of the week, "The Lord's day" (Rev. 1-10) and "The Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11-20) "kuriakos." It is not used in any other place in the Bible. It means "Belonging to the Lord." The First Day belongs to Him. How very suitable it is that we eat the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day.

Let us just sum up what we have learned from this feast regarding the Lord's Supper.

Where do we eat it?

We eat it "Where two or three are gathered together" unto the Name of the Lord Jesus.

Who may eat it?

Those who are truly born again alone may eat it.

How do we eat it?

As not of the world, but ready to leave it, and

depart for another place.

When do we eat it?

On the first day of the week.

As we meditate on this great foundation Feast of Jehovah, and turn to the One Who has so completely fulfilled every detail of it, we may cry with all our hearts:—

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5-12)

Chapter 6

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

"Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction." (Deut. 16-3)

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. 5:7 & 8.)

"Then within His home He led me,
Brought me where the feast is spread,
Made me eat with Him my Father,
I, who begged for bondsman's bread.
Not a suppliant at His gateway,
But a son within His home—
To the love, the joy, the singing,
To the glory, I am come."

The feast of unleavened bread began on the day after the Passover, and lasted for seven days. Seven days has the meaning of a perfect period of time. The lamb was slain on the fourteenth day at sunset; the feast of unleavened bread began immediately after the fifteenth day began which was just after sunset, so there was no time left between the feast of the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread. There was no interval of time between the death of the lamb, the sprinking of the blood, and the keeping of the feast.

The seven days feast of unleavened bread is a

picture of the whole life of the believer, and so we may understand that as soon as a person trusts in the precious blood of Christ, then his life as a believer begins,—he starts to keep the feast of unleavened bread.

The killing of the lamb was a single act and the Passover was reckoned as a one-day feast. So also was the Feast of First-fruits, the feast of Pentecost, and the Day of Atonement. These feasts of one day only all point to certain great acts of the Lord's hand, each of which was perfect and complete in itself. But those feasts of seven or eight days point to the result of these great acts of God.

As the Passover is a picture of the death of Christ, the seven-day feast of unleavened bread speaks of the believer's life on earth from the day he trusts in Christ until he leaves this earth. It speaks of communion with God, based upon redemption in holiness and truth. The blood of Christ is the foundation of all true fellowship with God. The only way to continue in this communion is to feed on the slain lamb,—on Christ who died for us. The only way to enjoy the slain lamb is putting away leaven (evil) which makes for holiness in the believer's walk down here.

The Holy Spirit tells us the meaning of this type. He says "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor. 5-7, 8)

The blood on the door posts and lintel was the foundation of all,—not only of security but of peace. As long as I am seeking to examine the blood, I will not have true peace,—but when I learn that it is God's thought of the blood, not mine, that makes me safe,—then I can have true peace. The blood was for the eye of God, those inside the house could not see it, but by

faith they had perfect peace when sheltered by it.

Also we must remember it was not a question of whether the people in the house were good or bad. It was not a question of whether they were happy or sad,—peaceful or frightened,—what made them safe was the blood on the door for God's eye.

When I learn this, and trust only to the blood, and to the Word of God, there is knowledge of salvation and true peace with God.

Only with this true peace in our hearts, can we feed with joy on the roast lamb. All the redeemed gathered around that table with one heart keeping the feast.

What a feast it is for the redeemed sinner! That roast lamb is the Lord Jesus Himself having borne the wrath and judgment of God against my sins. To feed on Him is strength. Girded loins, Shoes on our feet, Staff in our hand, all tell us we are pilgrims. They stood in Egypt, but they were not of it,—they were ready to leave it at any moment. So the Saints of God are only pilgrims down here, the world is not our home. We are in it, but not of it. The Cross has cut the links which bound us to this world.

The cords that bound my heart to earth
Were loosed by Jesus' hand:
Before His Cross I found myself—
A stranger in the land.

No matter whether the feast of unleavened bread was kept in Egypt, in the wilderness, or in the land of Canaan, these marks were always the same. No matter whether the Christian is looked at as a "stranger" in the world, Ex. 12-11; or a "Pilgrim" in the wilderness, Num: 9-3; or "possessors" of the land of promise, Josh. 5-10, the feast is exactly the same. So we learn that the saint's communion is based on redemption, sustained by feeding on Christ, and kept safe in holiness and separation from evil. These are

principles that never change, they are like the character of God Himself.

In our last chapter we noticed that the Israelites feeding on the roast lamb, may be compared to the saints partaking of the Lord's supper today. The true mark of that supper is worship. As we feed on the One who died for us and remember His death, our hearts bow before Him in worship, overflowing in praise and adoration to Himself. None of that roast lamb was to remain until the morning, Ex. 12-10 tells us that true worship cannot be known separated from the death of Christ. True worship cannot ever be *stale:* it must always be fresh.

The feast was to be kept with "unleavened bread," and no leaven, or leavened bread was to be seen in their houses. Please notice how careful the commands of the Lord were about this matter.

(1.) No leaven bread was to be eaten.
(2.) No leaven was to be seen.
(3.) No leaven was to be allowed in their houses. (Ex. 13-7)

What is leaven? It is the material we now generally call "yeast." We put it into flour to make bread. The small holes that we see in bread are caused by the leaven in it. A very small piece of leaven will soon affect a large quantity of flour. We may see it puffing up the dough, and making it appear large. If we leave it to go on working in the dough, soon the dough will be sour, and in a short time it will be rotten and we must throw it away. A small piece of this leavened dough put into fresh clean unleavened dough will soon leaven, or make sour, the whole lump of dough that was unleavened before. In this way we see the leaven increases very rapidly.

The people were required to search diligently that all leaven was put away, or else "a little leaven" left behind would soon leaven "the whole lump."

Leaven is a figure of evil,—only evil,—always evil, and of such evil as carries corruption with it wherever it works. There must be none of this allowed where communion with God is sought. In our nature there will always be sin, but sin must not be allowed to work and to come into our lives, either in secret or in the open,—or else communion with God is impossible.

"Put off all these, anger, wrath, malice etc." (Col. 3.8)
"Laying aside all malice." (1 Peter 2.1)
"Lay apart all filthiness." (Jas. 1.21)
are words which show what God means by the putting away of leaven, by those who would like to have communion with God.

Perhaps old leaven refers to old habits, old sins we have grown to love, old associations which we continued in, and enjoyed before we were converted. These old sins are able to lead the believer into captivity again if he is not watchful, and does not daily seek communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Although it humbles us, it is a very good thing for us to remember that the roots of every sin man ever committed remain in the flesh of every child of God,—and were it not for the grace of God which keeps us by the power of the Holy Spirit, these sins would yield their fruit. Those who tell us that the roots of sin no longer remain in their flesh, only deceive themselves, and do very great damage to the saints of God and bring dishonour on the Name of Christ. (1 John, 1-8). The Lord would not tell the saints in the New Testament to put away these sins, if the root of them were gone out of their hearts, and there was no danger of falling into them.

If "old leaven" represents those old sins committed before conversion, perhaps we may consider "new leaven" also, perhaps that would represent other sins to which the unbeliever is not tempted. These sins, alas, we may often see in the Lord's people now.

Some of these sins are spiritual pride, jealousy, boasting, a sectarian spirit, a desire to have preeminence, evil doctrine, doubt and criticism of the Word of God, and many other sins which you may have found in yourself.

These sins, if unjudged, and if we are not watchful, will spoil our communion just as truly as the sins which appear to man to be worse. Satan often uses these sins to spoil our communion with the Lord and with each other. Therefore, dear brethren, let us watch and be sober, let us put away the leaven out of our lives, and seek grace from God to judge it as soon as it appears.

It is well for us to remember that the feast of unleavened bread, when the people of God gathered together around that roast lamb, with the unleavened bread on the table before them represented not only communion with the Lord, but communion in separation from evil, with the person of Christ for the centre. Man's method of unity and communion is to make light of evil,—to cover it over, and to pass it by,—we may see this constantly in the unions and councils, which often bear the title of Christian, but in reality are far from these fundamental principles which God has so clearly laid down for us in His Word.

A great man of the world once said of a Christian man—"I know of no man in all England with greater ability than John—, but he bows to that old Book like a fool." May you and I, dear brethren, ever seek to bow to "that old Book," even though the world, even the religious world, may count us fools. Evil must be judged and put away if communion with God is to be enjoyed, no matter whether in our own individual lives, or in the assembly of the saints.

Unleavened bread was to be eaten seven days. "The unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," is what the Spirit of God tells us this part of the type means. To put away leaven is one side of this truth,

to eat unleavened bread is the other side of this truth.

We get these two sides brought out very clearly in Jas. 1-21, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness," (This tells of putting away the leaven,) "and receive with meekness the engrafted word," this tells of feeding on the unleavened bread. We get the same thought in 1 Peter 2-1 and 2, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." It is always dangerous to only see one side of any truth. What does "sincerity" mean? In Phil. 1-10, we get the word "sincere", and there it means "pure when viewed in the sunlight."* You may hold a glass, or a drop of water up to the sun, and find it quite pure. It is "sincere" in this meaning. So "sincerity" means letting the clear sunshine of God's light in His Word shine on to our walk and ways, and then judging whatever I find contrary to it. But who is there who lets this clear sunshine of God's light shine into his ways, and finds nothing but what is pure? Only One, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "Bread that came down from Heaven." He is "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Another has translated the word for "sincerity" as "a transparent character." As the roast lamb presents Him as the spotless Lamb of God bearing God's wrath and judgment against my sin, so the unleavened bread presents Him as the holy, pure, spotless Man come down from Heaven. What a feast is spread for me here! Surely it will cause me to let the pure sunshine of the light of God's Word shine on my walk and ways also. No doubt this will often show in our lives that which is not "pure" in the sunlight, and humble us, and cause us to bow down

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* Some authorities question this meaning: but it seems to be well-founded.

in confession and shame before our Lord. But this is His way, and it is the way of holiness and health to our souls. In this way only can we enjoy the feast; it is a bitter path for the flesh, and the Lord knew this for He commanded "with bitter herbs they shall eat it." (Ex. 12-8). Never does the soul so enjoy Christ, as when self-judged. The bitter herbs give us to more enjoy the roast lamb and the unleavened bread.

Being "in the sunlight" before God always leads us to the Cross and to the Person of Christ. "The bread of affliction" (Deut. 16-3) and the bitter herbs, always formed part of the feast. In i Cor. 5.8, we find it was not only "unleavened bread of sincerity," but "unleavened bread of sincerity *and truth.*" This also is part of the feast. Christ said, "I am the truth." It is all Christ. He is our food. The truth of God must have its place. "All the counsel of God" (Acts 20.27) must be remembered, nothing kept back,—no part neglected—no part exalted above measure. In this way "communion of saints" first with their God, and then with each other, will be kept unbroken through all the "seven days" of the feast,—through all our earthly life, "till He come," and then in that bright resurrection morning the living and the sleeping saints will all be gathered to the Father's house, to the bright Home where leaven can never enter, and where all that has broken and marred communion down here is passed forever, and with one heart and one voice we will gather round the Lamb that was slain,—He our only object—and His praise our only theme.

LORD, HASTE THAT DAY!

O happy morn! the Lord shall come
And take His waiting people home
Beyond the reach of care!
Where guilt and sin are all unknown:

The Lord will come and claim His Own,
And place them with Him on His throne,
The Glory bright to share.

The resurrection morn will break,
And every sleeping saint awake,
Brought forth in light again!
O morn, too bright for mortal eyes!
When all the ransom'd church shall rise
And wing their way to yonder skies—
Called up with Christ to reign.

O Lord! our pilgrim spirits long
To sing the everlasting song
Of glory, honour, power;
Till then when Thou all power shalt wield
Blest Saviour Thou wilt be our Shield,
For Thou hast to our souls revealed
Thyself—our strength and tower.

Chapter 7

THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

(Lev. 23.9 to 14)

"The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." (Ex. 23-19)

"When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." (Lev. 23-10, 11)

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15-20)

The third of the Feasts of Jehovah followed the Feast of the Passover very closely, and was kept at the same time as the Feast of Unleavened bread. This was the Feast of Firstfruits. It was kept on the morrow after the Sabbath. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread had first been observed in Egypt and afterwards in the wilderness. But the Feast of Firstfruits could only be kept in the land of Promise.

The wilderness was not the place that God had chosen for Israel. The land of Canaan was their own

proper home. It speaks of that heavenly land which is our proper home. Even now "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3-20, Literal); and even now God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1-3); and in Him "we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1-11). So that although our pathway still lies through this wilderness world, our hearts are already at home in heaven, and so we also may keep the Feast of Firstfruits.

In that "good land," the land of Canaan, "a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates" (Deut. 8-7 to 9) they lacked nothing. But in that good land, before they touched any of that rich harvest themselves, they must bring this sheaf of firstfruits to be accepted,—"The first of their firstfruits." "Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God." (Lev. 23-14) That offering was a sheaf reaped from the ripe fields of grain in the land of Canaan, and carried to the priest, to be waved before the Lord to be accepted for them, followed by the burnt offering, meat offering and drink offerings; but please notice there was no sin offering. This First Sheaf, was a sample of the great harvest that was to follow. The Spirit of God has been careful to tell us the meaning of this feast also, as we read in 1 Cor. 15.20, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept:" and again "Every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." (1 Cor. 15-23).

Alas, Israel did not understand that Christ was the Passover Lamb, nor did they understand that Christ was the Sheaf of firstfruits.

Please consider once again that Passover Lamb slain more than 1900 years ago. His body was taken down from the tree and in the evening before the Sabbath was laid in the grave. All through the

verse 16, "a new meat offering unto the Lord". This may tell us that this offering speaks of a new kind of testimony, something that no man had seen on earth before. We know that God gave "the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8.23) at Pentecost. The Spirit never dwelt in this world until that time. This tells us that the Church is an entirely new testimony, but a weak testimony, to the Lord, down here on this earth. And we have seen that it began on the First Day of a new week. All telling us that the church is an entirely new order of things, and cannot be mixed up with that which has passed away. It is for this reason a Christian keeps the first day of the week, not the Jewish Sabbath.

The first fruits pointed to the Risen Christ, accepted for His people within the Heavens. The loaves of Pentecost are also called "first fruits unto the Lord" (Lev. 23.17). This shows they are one with "the Sheaf of Firstfruits." *It* was "the first of the firstfruits", they are "the firstfruits". The loaves were made of flour from the wheat out of the same fields as the Sheaf of Firstfruits. But in all things the Wave Sheaf was pre-eminent. So it is with Christ and His people. He is "the Firstfruits" (I Cor. 15.20) and of His saints it is written, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (Jas. 1.18).

He is "the Firstborn" they His "brethren" (Rom. 8.29) "all of one" (Heb. 2.11) "the Church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12.23). What a glorious truth this is! "As He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4.17). Let us receive it into our hearts with all its warm sunshine and blessing. It sounds too good to be true, and the heart of man is always seeking to find some way to turn aside its beauty and power. But let us believe it. Let us receive it. It is the truth of God. We are truly "one with Christ," we stand before God in Christ accepted in Him, "complete in Him." We are no more

in fallen Adam of the earth, but we are in the Second Man, the last Adam,—Christ risen, and ascended to Heaven. This is the place of every believer.

God has given this blessing to all His people. How few believe it! And how little do most of us enjoy it! Yet it is the truth of God, given us by God to be believed and enjoyed every day. How are we to enjoy it? By the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us, given to every believer. When do believers receive the Holy Spirit?—God answers, "in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. 1.13). And "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Romans 8.9). Alas, many Christians do not believe these plain words of God, and pray and do many unscriptural things hoping to receive the Holy Spirit. They open their minds to spiritual things and often evil spirits enter in and make them behave in a shameful manner. Do not be deceived, dear brethren, by these things. When you believe in Christ, He gives you His Holy Spirit. You may grieve Him, but He will not leave you. David could pray 'take not Thy Holy Spirit from me," but this is not a prayer for us to pray, for since David's day, the Holy Spirit has been sent into this world, and we are sealed by Him "until the redemption of the purchased possession". He has truly redeemed us now —purchased us now—the price has been paid, but our bodies as well as our souls have been bought, and they are still down here. We are sealed until that day that the Lord takes to Himself all that He has bought. But the Scripture also speaks of being "filled with the Spirit." To be filled with the Spirit is not the same as to be sealed with the Spirit. The Scripture says: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5.18). When a man is drunk with wine he comes under the power of wine, and his own will is subject to the wine. This is bad; we believers must never let this happen, but on the

contrary we are to let the Holy Spirit fill us, so that He has His way with us, and our wills are subject to Him. But whether we let Him fill us or not, remember He ever dwells in the believers.

Many believers are puzzled to know whether they have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, or not. Can we look up to God, and from our hearts say, "Father! Abba, Father!" If we can speak like this to God, then we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, for it is only by the Holy Spirit we can say to God, "Father!" See Romans 8.15.

"The firstfruits of the Spirit," (Rom. 8.23), given to all believers is the seal of their oneness with Christ, the earnest and pledge of their resurrection and association with Christ in glory and the power for enjoying this great truth now. If Christ had not been glorified at God's right hand, the Spirit would not have come down to dwell in believers. (John 7.39). The presence of the Holy Spirit on earth is the witness that Christ is glorified at God's right hand. (John 15.26)

The presence of the Holy Spirit on earth, and the union of the believers with the risen Christ at God's right hand by the Spirit, are the two great marks of the present age.

The two wave-loaves were baked "with leaven". We have already pointed out that leaven is everywhere and always a picture of evil. There was no leaven in the meat offering (Lev. 2.11) because that offering is a type of Christ as the perfect man. He was Himself entirely pure and holy in all His character and ways.

But, alas, His people are not like this. Even after conversion, and with the Spirit dwelling in them, believers are not free from evil, either individually or as the Church. The flesh still dwells in them. The presence of the Holy Spirit does not drive it out, kill it, or change it, although by the grace of God, its power need no longer rule in our lives. The loaves, and the leaven, were baked. It is restrained but not

"eradicated". Therefore the believer is not sinless. He is not as the Lord was, fit to be placed on the altar for acceptance by God. With the two wave-loaves, it was needful to offer a sin offering, and also the sweet savour offerings were offered.

Let us give an illustration. I have a house that is rented to a very bad tenant. Alas, I have no way to turn him out of my house, but I call a new tenant to live in my house. I clearly warn him of the old tenant and of his bad character. I exhort him to keep the old tenant always locked in a room in the house. All goes well for a time. The new tenant believes me, and the old tenant is kept in subjection. But after a time the old tenant seeks to make friends with the new one. He feels perhaps the old one is not so bad as I told him, and after a time gives the old one a bit of liberty. Soon, to his sorrow, he finds the old tenant is taking command of the house, and unless he turns to someone outside for help, he is in a bad way indeed.

The two loaves were thus presented to Jehovah, with *leaven in them*, but loaves and leaven baked, and under the shelter, and covered with the preciousness, of these offerings. So it is that believers individually, and the Church, stand before God, as a new meat offering, accepted in all the value of Christ's person and His atoning work.

As soon as any Christian, or company of Christians, think that personal devotion, or service, or obedience to the Word, or watching for Christ's coming, or any other work of their own, gives any title before God, they will find out sooner or later that they have been deceived by Satan. This is true whether it be a title to Heaven or a title to be caught up when the Lord comes, or a title to part in the Kingdom. All our title is through the peerless person and atoning work of Christ.

And again let me beseech you to notice that this scripture clearly teaches that evil remains in the

individual, and in the church, and is met, not by my work, but by Christ's work.

Although the early church was so fresh and beautiful, it soon became evident that there was leaven in it, even at Jesusalem (Acts 5.1), leaven in doctrine (Galatians 5.9), or in morals (1 Corinthians 5.9 and 13). How much more in these days on every hand do we see the leaven appearing, when doctrines of demons may be heard, and when evil men and seducers wax worse and worse.

This appearance of leaven need not surprise us, though it surely should humble us, and it should cause us to turn again to seek our rest and strength on the only foundation on which either an individual Christian, or the Church of God, can rest—Christ Himself. He is the Rock on which His church is built, and in spite of all hatred of men and devils, let us remember that nothing can ever prevail against it.

There is one more remarkable expression in connection with the Feast of Weeks. We read in Deut. 16.10, (New Translation), "Thou shalt hold the feast of weeks to Jehovah thy God with a tribute of a voluntary-offering of thy hand, which thou shalt give, according as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee."

How strikingly this reminds us of I Cor. 16.2. "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Long ago in Israel on the first day of the week, at that Feast which pointed most plainly to the Church, we have this wonderful sight, an Israelite comes before the Lord with those sacrifices, their blood shed, with those two loaves of bread *and with a voluntary offering,* according as Jehovah his God had blessed him. Could we get a more perfect picture of ourselves in this dispensation as we come together in the Lord's presence to remember His death? We have the bread and wine on the table, and the privilege of giving to the Lord our "voluntary offering" as "God

hath prospered" us.

And, note further, the giving of that voluntary offering is immediately followed by this word: "And thou shalt rejoice." Read the whole verse yourself, Deut. 16.10, 11. Joy was the mark of that feast and how suited, that joy and praise should mark our Feast when we remember our Lord Jesus, God's "unspeakable gift," even though it is true that, "With joy and sorrow mingling we thus remember Thee".

It is very striking the way the Spirit of God links our *giving* with our *joy*. Compare ii Cor. 8.1 to 4, where we read of the bounty of the dear Macedonian brethren, who had sent so often to the Apostle: "once and again" to him in Thessalonica: Phil. 4.16; to him in Corinth: ii Cor. 11.9; and again to him in Rome: Phil. 4.10. The Apostle writes to the wealthy saints in Corinth, (from whom he would accept nothing: ii Cor. 11), "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia how that a great trial of affliction the *abundance of their joy* and their deep poverty abounded unto the *riches of their liberalty*. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints."

But one word more about the "voluntary offering." Do we not, dear brethren, often fail just here? As we give to the Lord, on the Lord's Day at that "feast", is our gift always the overflow in gratitude of a thankful heart? Does our gift really represent the measure in which God has prospered us?

Do we give "according as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee"? We have to confess with shame that very often we do not. Sometimes we give as little as we can and still be respectable. Sometimes it is merely a matter of habit. We always give a certain definite amount without a thought of how God has prospered

us, or the Lord has blessed us. Does this not explain the lack of "prosperity" (true prosperity) in many of our lives? We pray for the Lord's blessing but when He blesses us, we quite forget to offer to Him in recognition, and in the measure, of that blessing.

Far be the thought that it is a matter of law now with us. Never in the New Testament as far as we are aware is there any suggestion that we must give one tenth of our income. No, it is essentially a "voluntary offering", given entirely of our own free will, given at the time when we are remembering how the Lord gave Himself, gave *all,* for us, and *my gift* is the mark of my appreciation of *His gift*, and is the overflow of my heart in thanksgiving to Him. Mr. J. G. Bellett remarks: "The world will give what it can spare, the Lord gives what cost Him everything. John 14.27." Our giving is in reality just as true worship as our hymns of praise or thanksgiving. Indeed we get them connected in Heb. 13.15, 16, "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise . . . . But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Then the scriptures connect our joy with our giving. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" Our God is a giving God, and now He gives us the privilege and the joy of giving to Him. Though truly every one of us must say with David of old, "Of Thine Own have we given Thee" (I Chron. 29.14) "Ye are not your own . . . ye are bought with a price" (I Cor. 6.19, 20.) All, all that we have to offer is really His already. His by creation, and His by Redemption, but He delights to give us the joy of giving of it back to Himself. Is it possible that such matchless Grace shall merely provide an excuse for these wretched hearts of ours to give less to the Lord than the law demanded, and to spend more on ourselves than Israel was permitted to do?

May we rather copy those dear Macedonian saints of whom Paul writes in II Corinthians 8.5. They presented their "voluntary offering," but says Paul, "not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord." Let us give in the same way.

You will recall that even our very Chinese character for "Joy" (Fuh 福) is an altar, a sacrifice on the altar, and beside it, (indicating of what the sacrifice consists,) "one mouth," (myself); and "fields," (all I possess). This tells us that true joy is found as I present my body, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is my reasonable service (Rom. 12.1). And with myself give, not one tenth, but all I possess to the LORD. Let us, dear Reader, truly do this.

Were the whole realm of nature ours,
That were an offering far too small;
Love that transcends our highest powers,
Demands our soul, our life our all!

Chapter 9

THE PRESENT INTERVAL

"God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name." (Acts 15.14)

"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11.25)

"His chosen Bride, ordained with Him,
To reign o'er all the earth,
Must first be formed, ere Israel know
Her Saviour's matchless worth."

You will remember that the Feasts of the Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits, all come within one week. They began on the fourteenth day of the first month, and lasted seven days. Fifty days after the Feast of First Fruits, came the Feast of Pentecost early in the third month.

After the Feast of Pentecost there was a long interval of time in which there was no feast. From about the beginning of the third month till the beginning of the seventh month, for nearly four months, there was no new call from God to come to Him.

What were the people doing during this long period? They were reaping their fields, gathering together their sheaves.

This long interval of time tells us of the present day. What is the Lord doing during the present time? He is reaping His fields, gathering His grain from this

world to take it to Himself. You remember the Lord Jesus said "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. (John 12-24).

The Lord Jesus was this corn of wheat. He has died, and risen again, the Firstfruits, and now He brings forth much fruit. So we may see that those four months without a feast correspond to the present time when the Lord is gathering in His harvest, those He has redeemed, from out of the world. We never read in the Bible that all the world will be converted, but instead, we read that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" (2nd Tim. 3.13).

The church is composed of those who are called out of this wicked world.

But right in the midst of the Feasts of Jehovah, between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets, we get what seems to be an interruption, a parenthesis,—In Lev. 23.22, we read, "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord, your God." And so when the Israelite farmer had cut the last grain in his harvest fields, what do we see? We see sheaves waiting to be gathered to the barn, but we see also, standing in the corners of the fields, good grain, and lying on the ground we see handfuls of grain that have been dropped, but not gathered up.

The Lord Jesus, Himself, tells us that "the field is the world" (Mat. 13.38), and although spoken of in a parable, we believe it is also true of this type. "The corners of the fields" tell of the distant parts,—"The uttermost part of the earth," (Acts 1.8), to which the Lord had sent His servants just before He returned to Heaven, but alas most of those "corners of the fields" are still in the darkness of heathenism. Do not

think for one moment that this gives you or me an excuse not to go to these "uttermost parts" where the Lord has sent us. Simple obedience requires us to go. Was this good grain in the field to be wasted? No, surely the Lord would not allow this to be lost—He, who said, "gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost", (John 6.12), would not lose this good grain. This remnant was left for the poor and for the stranger. And does not this little remnant of good grain left in the fields from which the sheaves have been cut tell us of another remnant? We believe it does.

The word "remnant" means "that which remains." In our daily conversation we use it of many different things. In the Bible, the Spirit of God uses it very often to describe the faithful godly portion of a people, more especially of the Jewish people, or of the nation of Israel, after the greater part of the nation had turned away from God. The prophets in the Bible make it perfectly clear that there will be such a remnant. Isaiah says (Isaiah 1.9) "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small *remnant,* we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." In Isaiah 10.21, 22, we again read of the *remnant*, and in these verses, it is evidently the remnant of a future day. "The *remnant* shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a *remnant* of them shall return." The reader may also compare the following scriptures: Isaiah 11.11, Joel 2.32, and 3.1, 2, Micah 4.7. See also Romans 11. We believe these scriptures tell us of a remnant of Israel who will be saved on this earth after the church has been called away to be with Christ.

The scriptures also speak of the remnant of other nations as Syria, Ashdod, the Philistines, etc., but in nearly every case *"the remnant"* refers to Israel, and very often of Israel in a future day.

It is very important for the Christian who wishes to understand the Bible, to clearly understand this truth of "the remnant." For those who are interested we commend to them the book by W. Trotter "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects." In papers 16 and 17 they will find this subject taken up most fully.

We believe this remnant of good grain left in the fields for the poor after the sheaves had been gathered in, tells us in type, of this remnant of Israel. Poor and despised in the eyes of man, but precious in the eyes of God. Notice how often in the Psalms God speaks of the "poor". Often they refer to the remnant of Israel.

But this little remnant of good grain was left not only for the *poor,* but also for *the stranger.* Who would "the stranger" tell us of? We believe the stranger tells us of a remnant of Gentiles who also are to be saved, after the Church has been taken to be with Christ. We believe this remnant is referred to in Rev. 7.9, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

We believe this Gentile remnant is seen again in Matt 25.31 to 46. There we see several different persons, or companies, we see the King, the King's "brethren", "all nations", which He separates "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," You will note that what decides the fate of the nations, is the way they have treated the King's "brethren." We believe these to be the godly remnant of the Jews. The Bible tells us that "the sheep" are from all nations,—that is the Gentiles. So in this parable we see the remnant of Jews and Gentiles, of which we have been speaking.

Please do not think that this means that the scripture teaches that any man may be saved who goes

on in his sins, rejecting Christ, and His offer of salvation through the Cross. The Bible is quite clear about this. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16.16). "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." (2 Thess. 1.7 to 10)

No, the Bible is perfectly clear. There is full, free salvation now to the worst sinner, Jew or Gentile, who accepts God's offer of mercy through Christ. But there is damnation, and eternal punishment, for those who despise or refuse this offer now. Indeed it is not necessary to even despise or refuse it,—by any outward mark. You may admire it and fully intend one day to accept it,—but it is the word of God which asks that solemn question—"How shall we escape, if we *neglect* so great salvation?"

Do not let teachers of this present day deceive you into hell. Do not believe them when they tell you there is a second chance after death, or although you may be left behind at the Lord's coming, that you may then turn and escape. No, then "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they *all might be damned* who belived not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess 2.11-12).

We know that the devil has his servants who preach "the gospel of the second chance." But be warned, this is the devil's gospel, not the Gospel of God. God says, "Behold, *NOW* is the accepted time; Behold, *NOW* is the day of salvation." (ii Cor. 6.2). How terrible for many who will cry—"The harvest is

past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." (Jer. 8.20).

Please be quite clear. Because the grace of God tells us of a remnant of both Jews and Gentiles, spared and saved, (though many suffer death), after the Church is taken away, this is no reason for you, or any man, to put off accepting Christ and His Great Salvation one moment longer.

We will now leave that grain standing in the corners of the fields of Israel, and turn our eyes to the sheaves, cut and ready to be gathered into the barns.

We have suggested that the long period of about four months from the Feast of Weeks to the Feast of Trumpets tells of the present long period, more than 1900 years, while the Lord has been gathering His Own from every tribe and nation to form the church. The day will come when He gathers the sheaves home to the barn. (Matt. 13.30). We call that day the "Harvest Home." It is a day of joy, when the precious fruits of the earth, for which we have worked and waited through weary months, are at last brought Home. And that great Harvest day is coming, coming quickly, when the Lord of the Harvest Himself is coming to get His precious grain. "The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4.16, 17).

This is the time of the Harvest, when the Lord gathers His Own to Himself, to take them to His Father's House. True, there is more grain in the corners of the fields and left on the ground to be gleaned which doubtless will form a further part of the harvest, but this grand ingathering when the Lord takes the Church, dead and living, to Himself, this is the great beginning of His Harvest.

Note that a definite time is given for all the Feasts of Jehovah, but for this ingathering of the sheaves, no definite date is given at all. As far as this chapter reads, it might have taken place at any time after the Feast of Pentecost. And so in the New Testament, the saints were always expected to be waiting and watching for the Lord from Heaven. No definite time was set for His return, but the Thessalonians "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from Heaven." (I. Thess. 1.9, 10)

Paul could speak of himself and say "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." Paul did not look for death, He looked for the Lord from Heaven.

"We may not die, but rise and meet the Lord,
Oh, the bright glory these few words afford,
Changed instantly, the twinkling of an eye,
And see Thee face to face, our Lord, for aye.
Some *shall not* die, but rise and meet their Lord,
Oh, precious promise, faithful, true and good,
Although we do not know the day or hour,
We know that He Himself shall come in power."

There are men who tell us that many things must happen before the Lord comes back, but the Bible does not tell us this. The clear and simple teaching of the Scripture is that we may expect the Lord to come for us at any moment.

We have wondered whether our Lord's words in John 4.35, referred to these four months. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." His eye looked down the centuries to the great day of Harvest Home, when all His Own would be caught up to be forever with Himself, but meanwhile as he looked around on the fields He saw the grain ripe, and over-ripe, waiting to be reaped or lost.

Beloved fellow-Christian, have you lifted up your eyes in answer to His Own command? Are the fields less "white" than in His day? As we await, just expecting the shout to call us Home to Himself, may the Lord of the harvest stir our hearts to seek and reap some of that whitened grain, e'er it be lost.

Hark to the trump! behold it breaks,
The sleep of ages now,
And lo! the light of glory shines,
On many an aching brow.

Changed in a moment,—raised to life,
The quick, the dead arise,
Responsive to the angel's voice,
That calls us to the skies.

Ascending through the crowded air,
On eagle's wings we soar,
To dwell in the full joy of love,
And sorrow there no more.

Undazzled by the glorious light,
Of that beloved brow,
We see without a single cloud,
We see the Saviour now!

O Lord the bright and blessed hope
That cheered us through the past
Of full eternal rest in Thee,
Is all fulfilled at last.

The cry of sorrow here is hushed,
The voice of prayer is o'er
'Tis needless now—for, Lord we crave,
Thy gracious help no more.

Praise, endless praise, alone becomes
This bright and blessed place,
Where every eye beholds unveil'd
The mysteries of Thy grace.

Past conflict here, O Lord 'tis ours,
Through everlasting days,
To sing our song of victory now,
And only live to praise

The Harvest is great. Luke 10.2.
The fields are white to Harvest. John 4.35.
The Harvest of the earth is dried. Rev. 14.15, New Trans.
The harvest is past. Jeremiah 8.20.

Chapter 10

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

"He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect." (Matt. 24.31).

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet should sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (i Cor. 15.51, 52.)

"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

We have already noticed that the first four feasts come close together at the beginning of the year. Then come almost four months of reaping until the last sheaf was cut, though there was still good grain left standing in the corners of the fields.

We will now seek with God's help, to look at the last three feasts. These all come very close together in the seventh month.

In creation God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. In the dispensation of law, men worked six days and rested on the seventh. In the feasts of Jehovah, six months of the year passed by, but when the seventh month comes, on the *first day* of the seventh month, God says, "Ye shall have a rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy

convocation. No manner of servile work shall ye do; and ye shall present an offering by fire to Jehovah" (Lev. 23.24, 25, New Translation)

We have seen that the four feasts that are passed all have been most exactly fulfilled. We have seen that at the present day we are still in that long space of time left for the harvest, between the feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets.

The Feast of Trumpets and the two feasts that quickly follow it, the day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, have not yet been fulfilled. These three feasts point to future events. As the four past feasts have been so exactly fulfilled, we can confidently expect that the three future feasts will be just as exactly fulfilled in a coming day.

In the feasts that have passed, we have seen events on earth only, though indeed these events have included the resurrection and ascension into Heaven of our Lord Jesus, the descent from Heaven of the Holy Spirit. But during this time the heavens and the earth have been *divided by sin*, but in a coming day the Lord Jesus will judge this world in righteousness, and then take it for Himself. He will not only be King of the Jews, but "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." (Ps. 72.8). "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." Zech. 14.9.

The same Lord who is now glorified in Heaven as the Head of the church, will also reign on earth as King of Israel and Lord of all creation. He will be "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He will be honoured in the Heavens above and in the earth below, and men of every nation, people, and tongue, will unite to own Jesus of Nazareth, "Lord of all." For these reasons, we suggest that the remaining feasts have perhaps a double meaning. Their primary meaning is, no doubt, a telling forth of the events coming on this earth, especially in connection with Israel, but as the

former feasts also include the events which are of deepest interest to the church, so it would seem that the remaining feasts also have a secondary application that might foretell events connected with the church in Heaven. For we must never forget that Israel's portion is the earth, but the church's portion is always in the Heavens.

The Feast of Trumpets begins the second series of "Jehovah's set feasts".

In Numbers 10.2, God commanded Moses to make two silver trumpets. These trumpets were used for calling together the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. They were to be used when Israel went to war, and God promised that when these trumpets were blown, He would remember His people and save them from their enemies. (Num. 10.9). They were also used in their set feasts and in their new moons. God said, "that they may be to you for a memorial before your God." The silver tells us of redemption, and those notes on the silver trumpets would not only bring to remembrance God's covenant with His earthly people, and His promise to His Heavenly people, but they also brought to remembrance the price that was paid on the cross to purchase the redemption of both the Heavenly and the earthly people.

This feast was a special time of blowing these trumpets. It was called "A memorial of blowing of trumpets." (Lev. 23.24). It was truly a feast of remembrance. Does this not tell us of that great trumpet that is to be blown in a coming day? Then "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other." (Matt. 24.31).

In Isaiah 18.3 to 7, N.T. "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, when a banner is lifted up on the mountains, see ye, and *when a trumpet is blown*, hear ye! . . . In that time shall a present be

brought unto Jehovah of hosts of a people scattered and ravaged,..... to the place of the name of Jehovah of hosts, the Mount Zion." (New Translation). And again in Isaiah 27.13, N.T. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were perishing in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." Also compare Zech. 10.8. "I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and they shall multiply as they used to multiply. And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries."

There are very many more passages that tell of the gathering of Israel and Judah back to their own land, but these make quite clear that at a certain time, a special call will go forth from God to bring His own people back to their own land. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament speak of this call as a *Trumpet,* so we believe that the Feast of Trumpets foretells that trumpet blast that will call Israel back to their own land.

But the Feast of Trumpets was also to call to remembrance, and in Numbers 10, when God told Moses to make silver trumpets, He told Israel that when they went to war against the enemy that oppressed them, "then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets, and ye shall be remembered before Jehovah, your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." (Verse 9.) And although Israel now seems to be cast off and rejected, the Word of God tells us that this shall not be always so. In Ezek. 16.60 we read, "I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant." And listen to these glorious words spoken to Israel, in reply to Israel's complaint,—"Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me." It looks like that just now, but is it really

so? Listen,—"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Even these forget, but I will not forget thee. Lo, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." (Isaiah 49.16, N.T.)

We might turn to many other passages telling us that God again will remember His people. But in the Feast of Trumpets, is it not God who blows the trumpet Himself? If God in His grace speaks of remembering again His people, is it not truly God that blows the trumpet to call His people to remember Him? We have already spoken of the verse in Zech. 10.9, where God says, "They shall remember me in far countries." The verses in Ezek. 16 which we have already quoted, continue in this way,—"I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; that thou mayest remember, and be ashamed." (verses 62, 63, N.T.)

Israel forgot their God and forsook Him, and now it appears as though God had forgotten and forsaken and cast away His people Israel. But it is *appearance* only. Paul asks, "Has God cast away His people?" And the reply is clear and decisive, "Far be the thought—God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew." (Rom. 11.1, 2): but we believe the day is near when the Trumpet will be blown that shows God again remembers Israel, and His covenant with them, and that Trumpet will call Israel to remember their God, and turn to Him again. What a happy day that will be for Israel! God describes the Feast of Trumpets, saying, "Ye shall have a rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation." (Lev. 23, 24, N.T.) And the Spirit of God in the Psalms says of it, "Sing ye joyously unto God our strength, shout aloud unto the God of Jacob; raise a song, and sound the tambour, the pleasant harp with the lute. Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the set time, on our feast day." (Psalm 81.1 to 3, N.T.). Poor Israel,

how little do they know of rest and joy now, driven from one country to another,—*rest*, they have none! But even though we know Israel must first pass through the most terrible judgments, yet their rest and joy is soon to come, indeed may it not be possible that the first notes of that silver trumpet, or their echo from above, are beginning to fall on the ears of Israel? On every hand we see them hearing a call to remember and return to the land of their fathers, and tens of thousands are heeding the call and returning. Is it not apparent to all that Israel is again beginning to come in remembrance before God? It reminds one of the description of another trumpet in a little later day, (Rev. 10.7, N.T.). *"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when He is about to sound the trumpet."* May this not be a description of the way in which the Trumpet "is about to sound" at the present day with regard to Israel? (Though of course the trumpet of Rev. 10.7 has no reference to the trumpet foretold in Lev. 23.) We sadly fear that Israel has not yet heard that trumpet in a way that makes them remember their God, and turn to Him again. In Isaiah 27.13 we saw that Israel was to return to "worship Jehovah in the holy mountain." They can only do this when they accept the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, their Christ. But, alas, they are not now prepared to do this, so we may know that at present those sweet notes of the silver trumpet are not sounding out as they soon will. Perhaps it will be like the trumpet at Mount Sinai that "sounded long, and waxed louder and louder."

But if even the echo of the notes from afar are beginning to sound, telling us that the silver trumpet is "about to sound," let us rejoice and lift up our heads, and listen the more longingly for the note of another trumpet, that would seem to be one short, sharp peal, —"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump:" (i Cor. 15.52).

No, it is not the trumpet that calls Israel back to

their land that we, the church, are looking for, but for the Lord Jesus Himself, for "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (i Thess. 4.16, 17.) And again, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (i Cor. 15.51-52.)

What a day of joy and gladness and rest will this be for the church! Then we will be forever with the Lord. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Then, no longer through a glass darkly, but face to face! And the loved ones who have gone before, will be raised first, and we shall be together again to go no more out!

But it was not only a day of joy and gladness and rest, but the Lord specially warns against any "servile work" on that day. How different to the teaching of some that it is only by our own efforts in watching and overcoming that we can even hope to see that day, or hear that trump! Such teachers little know the grace of God, or the value of the redemption told out in those notes of the silver trumpet, nor do they know the worthlessness or hatefulness of their own servile work in making themselves fit for that day. No, it is not the fear of being left behind at that day that God sets before us as a motive to keep clean down here, but the blessed hope of seeing Him, and being like Him,—"every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (i John 3.3).

The Feast of Trumpets follows the harvest described in verse 22. There is a very interesting passage in Isaiah 27.12. "Ye shall be gathered (or,

gleaned, See Note to New Translation) one by one, ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were perishing in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." The "gleaning" reminds us of Lev. 23.22, and is immediately followed by "the great trumpet," which tells us of the Feast of Trumpets. We believe it is the harvest that typifies the coming of the Lord for His church, but the silver trumpets of this feast cannot but call to our mind the Trumpet that calls the church to be forever with the Lord, and they are evidently intimately connected with it. The Feast of Trumpets came on the first day of the month, that is the time the moon is blackest and smallest. In China we call it "the Black Moon." Perhaps this reminds us that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." (ii Tim. 3.13). Like the churches in Revelation 2 and 3, they gradually grow worse, until at last Laodicea is spued out of Christ's mouth. The morning star appears just before dawn, when the night is the darkest. So, brethren, as we see the professing church getting worse, as we see it growing darker and colder, and more and more like the world, let us look up and watch more earnestly for the Morning Star, and listen more intently for the sound of the Trumpet.

The Lord always makes it clear that His coming is imminent. "Yet a very little while and He that comes will come, and will not delay." (Heb. 10.37, N.T.) Let us beware that nothing whatever shall come into our hearts that will ever allow us to say—even in the inmost recesses of our thoughts—"My Lord delayeth His coming." The Lord's own parting words to His church tell us when He will come back again—"Surely I come quickly." In this way may we ever, daily and hourly, be expecting Him, and our hearts ever crying, "Amen, even so, Come Lord Jesus."

"Till He Come!" then look above,
All who His appearing love.
Hear His last sweet words of cheer
To His saints now left down here—
"Surely I will quickly come!"
Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Amen!

Chapter 11

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

"On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." (Lev. 16.30)

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9.28.)

"There in righteousness transcendent,
Lo, He doth in Heaven appear;
Shows the blood of His atonement,
As thy title to be there."

Jehovah set apart the tenth day of the seventh month in each year, as the Day of Atonement. On that day the sins of the nation were atoned for—or covered, for "atonement" means "covering". It was only in this way that Jehovah could dwell amongst Israel.

You will remember that when Israel came out of Egypt, the seventh month was changed to the first month. So on the tenth day of the first month a lamb was chosen, and on the fourteenth day it was killed and its blood put on the door posts. The death of this lamb saved the firstborn from death and judgment. Now on the tenth day of the seventh month a lamb is chosen again, and is slain. This lamb was not now to save Israel from judgment, but the blood

of this lamb is carried inside the veil and put on the mercy seat.

The Passover Lamb typifies Christ, the Lamb of God, who bears our sins to save us poor sinners from the wrath of God. The blood of the Lamb on the Day of Atonement tells also of the precious blood of Christ, that is presented to God, but shows how His throne is established in righteousness, so that He may dwell in the midst of His people.

In the 16th of Leviticus, Jehovah tells us fully about the sacrifices on this day, but in the chapter we are considering, we see the Feast from God's side.

Before we consider the verses in Leviticus 23, we will look very briefly at Leviticus 16. In verses 1 and 2 we read, "And the Lord spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord, and died; And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat." (Lev. 16.1, 2.)

This plainly teaches us that the way into the holiest of all was not open, even for the High Priest, to enter at all times. Nor was there any way by which they might remain there at all times. The veil shut God in from man, and shut man out from God. The blood of bulls and of goats could not open that way into the holiest. You remember that when the Lord Jesus died, then the veil was rent, rent from the top to the bottom, and now the way into the holiest of all is opened wide for all whose sins are cleansed by that precious blood. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

(Heb. 10.19-22.)

But until the cross this way was closed. Once only in the year, one man, alone, could pass that veil into the holiest of all. "Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a *sin offering*, and a ram for a *burnt offering*," (Lev. 16.3.) These two offerings typify the two great things which the work of Christ accomplished. The sin offering perfectly met man's need, and the burnt offering perfectly maintains God's glory. There is no mention on this day of the Peace Offering or the Meat Offering. The one great subject is *atonement* from God's side and from man's side.

Aaron was to wash his flesh in water and put on his holy linen garments. There was no need for Christ to cleanse Himself. He was absolutely pure in every way. What Aaron wore and what he did are but small shadows of what our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, truly *is* Himself.

Now we read, "He shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering, And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house." (Lev. 16.5, 6.) Aaron and his house represent the church, not as the "one body" as in Ephesians and Colossians, but as in i Peter we read, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (i Peter 2.5.) Also in Hebrews 3.6, "But Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Jehovah commanded the high priest to "take the two goats, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for

the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness." (Lev. 16.7-10.)

The two goats in these pictures tell of the two ways in which we may look at the atonement. The Lord's lot fell upon one goat, and the people's lot fell upon the other goat.

The goat on which the Lord's lot fell does not bear the special sins of any particular people. These sins are very important, but they are not considered in this goat. This goat typifies Christ dying to glorify God, with respect to sin, not special sins, but *sin* that entered into this world and brought a curse even on the ground.

God has a special portion in the death of Christ, so that apart from any sinner obtaining salvation, the death of Christ glorified God. He has atoned for sin. He was made a curse, and so redeemed this world from the curse. He conquered Satan, and "bound the Strong Man," and in a coming day will justly put Satan in the bottomless pit. On the ground of this sacrifice God may offer us mercy, instead of putting us all in the Lake of Fire. On the ground of this sacrifice God still bears with man. It is on the ground of this sacrifice that we have food, air, and sunshine; instead of being in the pains of hell. The air that an infidel breathes, the food that a blasphemer eats, all that they enjoy, they owe it to the sacrifice of Christ, to the very One they hate and mock. If it were not for the atonement of Christ, as we see it in "Jehovah's lot", these wicked men would be in the torments of hell, instead of blaspheming on the earth.

Please understand clearly that this sacrifice does not speak of the forgiveness or salvation of any person.

This is quite another matter, and as we know is received when we confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead. (Romans 10.9.) This truly is because of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, but please understand clearly that there is a great difference between God forgiving a sinner, and God bearing in patience with wicked men, and giving them breath and food and clothing and sunshine. Both are on account of the work of Christ on the cross, but we see there are two different ways of looking at that wonderful work.

Some people think these differences are not important, but it is because people do not understand these differences that they make such terrible mistakes. There are people who teach that one of these goats is a picture of Satan, and they make Satan their Saviour, to bear away their sins. This is a terrible doctrine, and we hope that all our readers may be delivered from it.

If we look at a few verses in the Bible perhaps we will understand this matter better. For instance: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the *sin* of the world." (John 1.29.) Compare this with i John 2.2, in which the Lord Jesus is called "The propitiation . . . for the whole world." In these verses we see that the sacrifice of Christ is for the sin of the whole world. This does not mean that everyone in the world will be saved, because we know from many other Scriptures that only those who truly believe will be saved, but in these Scriptures, we see the Lord Jesus as the One who fulfilled the type of the goat on which Jehovah's lot fell. It is in the very broadest way we can think of, and brings mercy and blessing to the whole world. If we think of certain definite people, and the forgiveness of their sins in these Scriptures, we will certainly be in confusion. There are many other Scriptures which speak of the whole world, or of all men. These are on

account of the sacrifice of Christ, as we see it in this special way, the goat on which "Jehovah's lot fell."

But before Aaron killed this goat of which we have been speaking, on which the Lord's lot fell, to be a sin-offering for the people, he must first kill the bullock which was to be a sin-offering for himself and for his house. "And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself; and he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the the vail: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not; and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times" (Lev. 16.11-14.)

As already pointed out, when the Scripture speaks of "Aaron and his house," it is a picture of the church, not as "the one body," but as a priestly house.

The Lord Jesus Christ had no need of a sacrifice to make Him acceptable to God. God could always say of Him, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." But when we are identified with Christ, then we are accepted as he is accepted. That cloud of sweet incense that covered the Mercy Seat, tells us of the sweetness and preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The High Priest enters the Holy of Holies, completely covered with that cloud of sweet incense. The fire to burn that incense came from "the altar before the Lord," and tells us that the death of Christ is the foundation of our acceptance.

Then the priest sprinkled of the blood of the bullock that was for himself and his house, on the mercy

seat and before the mercy seat seven times. In this way Aaron made an atonement for himself and for his house. Atonement means *covering*. The blood makes an atonement, (a covering), for the soul. Lev. 17.11. In the book of Leviticus we get the word *atonement* forty-nine times, seven times seven. This would tell us of absolutely complete divine perfection. The *blood* covered the mercy seat, as also the *cloud of incense* covered the mercy seat. Here we see the *work* of the Lord Jesus, and the *worth,* (or value or preciousness), of His Own Person. The believer is accepted in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: we are "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1.6.)

What a wonderful thing to think that we are accepted in Christ! As He is accepted so are we accepted! We may say with joy, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because *as He is, so are we in this world."* (i John 4.17.) Dear fellow-believer, Stop and think of those words, "As He is, so are we in this world!" Is He accepted before God? So are we! May He enter the very presence of God? So may we! Is He brought near to God? So are we!

When I was a child we used to sing that beautiful hymn:

A mind at "perfect peace" with God:
Oh, what a word is this!
A sinner reconciled through blood;
This, this indeed is peace!

By nature and by practice far,
How very far from God!
Yet now by grace brought nigh to Him,
Through faith in Jesus' blood.

So nigh, so very nigh to God,
I cannot nearer be;
For in the Person of His Son,
I am as near as He.

So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;
The love wherewith He loves the Son,
Such is His love to me.

I used to sing the first two verses, but when we came to the third and fourth verses that said we were as near and as dear to God as Christ Himself, I stopped singing, because I did not believe it. It seemed too wonderful to be true, but later I found that it was true, even though it is so wonderful! For, "as He is, so are we in this world."

Seven is the perfect number, and when we see the blood sprinkled seven times before the mercy seat, we learn that when the blood is sprinkled for the atonement, then in God's sight, all is perfect.

After the blood of the bullock is brought into the Holiest of all, "then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat; and he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness." (Lev. 16.15, 16.)

Se we see it is the *blood* that makes sure the salvation of the Church, the "house" of the true Aaron. It is the *blood* that makes sure the "congregation" of Israel. It is the *blood* that makes sure the blessing to the whole creation at the last day. All rests on *the blood of His cross.* It is the *blood* which speaks peace to our heart and to our conscience. That blood has been sprinkled on God's Throne, and seven times before God's Throne. The more near we get to God, the more we see the value and the preciousness of the

blood of the Lord Jesus.

We see the blood on the brazen altar, on the vail; but in no place do we read so much about the blood as in the Holy of Holies, inside the vail, before and on the throne of God.

The holy God could not have remained one moment in the midst of the congregation except for the blood. It was the blood which made it possible for God to dwell and to work and to rule in the midst of an unclean and sinful people.

But now ponder for a moment the 17th verse of Lev. 16. "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel." We are truly on holy ground here. Let us bow our heads as we think of the depth of meaning of these words. Surely they tell us of those hours of darkness on the cross when the Lord Jesus alone, quite alone, was making atonement for our sins. We read that "all the disciples forsook Him and fled." (Matt. 26.56.) We read in the Psalms, of the depth of His sufferings, and how He felt this loneliness, "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none," (Ps. 69.20.) But that most bitter cry of all was, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Ps. 22.1, Matt. 27.46.) Never can any heart conceive of the depth of His sorrow and suffering during those awful hours of darkness, while He hung on the cross as the Sin-bearer, making atonement for your sins and mine, and bearing the judgment of a holy, holy, holy God against sin. And He bore it *alone.* "There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement."

Not only, as we have said, did the Lord Jesus bear our sins on the cross, but then He fully met the whole question of sin as it had affected the whole universe.

It is this aspect of the death of Christ that we see here.

Then Aaron "shall bring the live goat: and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." Lev. 16.21, 22.)

Here we see the actual sins we have committed borne away, and so we see the whole question of sin entirely met forever.

If we turn now to the 23rd chapter of Leviticus, where we get the Day of Atonement brought before us from the Lord's point of view, we see first that it is on the tenth day of the seventh month. The number *ten* in Scripture speaks of responsibility towards man and towards God. There were ten commandments. All the failure to meet these responsibilities is now to be considered, and to be met, and all this failure is to be covered. It is called "a holy convocation." Three times do we read, they are to afflict their souls. (Verses 27, 29, 32.) Three times do we read, "ye shall do no work." (verses 28, 30, 31.) Three times do we read the word "atonement", or *covering*. And in verse 32 we read, "It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest."

What a story this tells us! As Aaron with both his hands on the head of the scapegoat, confesses the sins of the congregation, how they must bow their heads in shame, as they think of all the awful failures and sins of the past year. Truly they might well afflict their souls as all passed in solemn review.

How was this long list of sins to be dealt with? "Whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people." "Ye shall do no manner of work." What then is to be done with all the sin and the defilement?

All is covered by the blood! Atonement means *covering*. "There shall be a Day of Atonement" or "a Day of Covering." "It is a Day of Atonement" (or covering) "to make an atonement" (or covering) "for you before the Lord."

Thanks be to God that "He doth devise means, that His banished be not expelled from Him." (ii Sam. 14.14.)

And what does all this tell us of the future? We have seen that the Feast of Trumpets, when Israel is gathered back to their own land, has not yet been fulfilled, and the Day of Atonement follows closely after the Feast of Trumpets. It comes before the Feast of Tabernacles which tells forth the joys of the thousand years of Peace, when Christ shall reign.

What, then, does the Day of Atonement picture? For the earthly people of Israel we believe it tells of the bitter sorrow when their eyes are opened to the fact that their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, has already come to them, and they have not received Him, but have murdered Him. Then they will receive Him, but they will ask, "What are these wounds in Thine hands?" Then shall He answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends!" (Zech. 13.6).

Then they will understand that they have killed the Prince of Life, and have desired a murderer in His place. Then the Lord says, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the

family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; . . . . all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." (Zech. 12.10-14).

This tells us in the clearest possible language of the way the remnant of Israel will "afflict their soul." We get more of the same affliction of soul in Isaiah 53. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." Oh, the bitterness of soul! to think that the Messiah of Israel has come, and has been treated in this terrible manner! Well may the Spirit in John's Gospel exclaim, "He came unto His Own, and His Own received Him not."

Not only will there be the affliction of soul and confession of sin that is so clearly pointed out in Leviticus, and these passages in Zech. 12 which we have quoted above, telling of the mourning of Israel as they "look upon Me whom they have pierced:" But, immediately, we read these blessed words, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. 13.1).

Although guilty of the awful crime of the murder of their own Messiah, the Son of God, yet the moment they own it in bitterness of soul, that moment they discover the fountain opened for sin, the precious blood of atonement to cover all their guilt, then they can continue in the language of Isaiah 53, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Can we not read in these precious words the depth

of anguish with which the remnant of Israel will afflict their souls, when their eyes are opened at last to see their Messiah, the despised and rejected Jesus! But can we not also read at the same time, the wondrous truths of the Day of Atonement, or the Day of Covering.

We see also that it is not by works. It is not the anguish of their soul that covers their guilt, but the precious blood of the Lamb of God,—slain by themselves,—that covers all their wickedness, even that crowning sin, the rejection and murder of their Messiah.

But there is one more event that takes place on the Day of Atonement. We read of this in Lev. 25:9. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land."

What was "the trumpet of the jubilee"? It was different to the Feast of Trumpets which had passed ten days before. God says of it: "Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound." (Lev. 25:8). Seven times seven years surely speaks of the fulness of God's time. Then the trumpet of the jubilee is blown and what happens? The captive slave is set free. The lost land is returned. They were to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family". (Lev. 25:10).

The trumpet had sounded on the first day of the seventh month to call them back to their land, but it was not till the Day of Atonement was completed, all their sins judged and covered, not till then could the trumpet of the jubilee sound, and liberty be proclaimed

"throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof".

And how sweet is the ending of that day! Rest! It began with affliction of soul, it continued with every sin covered and gone forever, not by works; then came liberty, and finally rest! What a prospect for poor, down-trodden Israel. And it will surely come to pass.

This, we believe, is to what the Day of Atonement points forward, as regards its primary application to the earthly people of God, Israel. But, we believe there is perhaps also an application to the heavenly people, the church. It would seem to us that this tells something of the Judgment Seat of Christ.

In 2 Cor. 5:10, we read "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Dear fellow-believer, let us ponder this scripture. First, let us be clear that this is an entirely different time and place to "the great white throne", that we read of in Rev. 20:11. The judgment seat of Christ is before the thousand years when Christ shall reign. The great white throne is after that time. (Rev. 20:7). At the judgment seat of Christ, "we" all must stand. Who are the "we" in this verse? "We" are the Christians. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians is addressed to "the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia." (2 Cor. 1:1). Paul wrote the epistle, and he included Timothy in the greeting to the church at Corinth. Paul and Timothy and all the church at Corinth and all the saints in all Achaia are included in this word "we" who must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There are no unbelievers in this word "we" only true Christians, and it also means you and me, if we are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But at the great white throne there are no believers. In John 5:24, the Lord says, "Verily, verily,

I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death into life." (The word "condemnation" in our English Bible should be "judgment." See the New Translation, etc.) No true Christian comes into the judgment before the great white throne. Every true Christian has been raised from among the dead a thousand years before "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). But the rest of the dead (those whose names were not written in the book of life and whose sins have never been washed away by the precious blood of Christ), lived not again until the thousand years were finished. (Rev. 20.5).

At the great white throne they were judged according to their works, (Rev. 20:13) and the result with every one who stands for judgment according to his works must be the lake of fire. There are no blood stains on the great white throne, as there were on and before the throne of God inside the veil, on the day of atonement. But all is dazzling whiteness and purity—every work of man will appear vile and filthy in that dazzling whiteness. At the judgment seat of Christ, it is not a question whether we go to heaven or to hell, but it is a question of rewards or suffering loss.

Many people think that at the end of the world, there is to be a great judgment day when everybody will appear before God, and their good works will be put in one side of a weighing scale and their bad works will be put in the other side, and which ever is heavier will decide where we are to go for eternity, whether to heaven or to hell. The Bible never, in any place, teaches any such doctrine as this. This is only the opinion of men, and not the Word of God. Clearly does the Bible teach two resurrections. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have

done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," John 5, 28, 29. And as we have seen, these two resurrections are a thousand years apart.

Let us then consider that time when we Christians must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. It is at a time after we have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and we know we are to "ever be with the Lord." It is before the time of Christ's reign on earth. When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, "then every one will receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:10). Be clear, it is not a question of being saved or lost. All of us who stand there are the children of God, and now we come there in order that our life as children,—our path as servants,—may be reviewed. There will be that in each of us which the Lord can praise and alas, there will be that in each which the Lord must blame. It is like prize-day in a school, when the children's work of the past year will all pass in review. Some will win prizes, others will be ashamed. The work of one is acceptable, another's is not acceptable, so the Apostle Paul says,—"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Cor. 5:9, 10.

In 1 Cor. 4, 5, we read that the Lord "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Dear fellow-Christian, can you or I review all our pathway down here? Can we have every thought and counsel of our heart manifested? I ask, Can we have the searching light of heaven turned on all these secret things, and not afflict our souls? What a sad story for most of us it will be! Pride, selfishness, foolish and even impure thoughts, idle words,—oh how much we now like to keep these things hidden from our fellow-

Christians. Then all will come out to the eye of Christ and myself. All will be made manifest. It will not, thank God, be manifested to condemn me to hell forever, as surely it must if works are to be considered. No, all will be weighed in the balances of the Sanctuary, and we will truly "afflict our souls." Then we will see clearly the opportunities for bearing shame for Christ's sake that we have lost. Then we will see how He would have had us serve Him, but we turned aside from it. Every failure will be brought to light. But every desire of our hearts after Christ will also be remembered, and wonder of wonders, when the Lord brings to light the hidden things of darkness, when He makes manifest the counsels of the hearts, then,—listen to the words—"*then* shall every man have praise of God." Yes, dear fellow-believer, the grace of God will find that, in you and me, which He knows has been done for His sake, and "every man" shall "have praise of God". (i Cor. 4.5).

Although every man shall have praise of God, yet we know from 1 Cor. 3.11-15, that "the fire shall try every man's work," If any man build . . . gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The gold, silver, precious stones, do not make nearly as great a show as wood, or hay, or stubble. What a great pile of hay we may perhaps gather, and boast of the amount we have done,—but what anguish of heart when the fire tries it and it is all burnt up.

But, thank God, the Day of Atonement was a day of covering, and after we have reviewed all the sorrowful past, then it will all be covered, carried away to a

land not inhabited. (Lev. 16.22). Never again will these things be raised against us. They are covered by that precious blood. They are blotted out, they are gone forever.

But do not let us think that it is on account of our own good works that all this past failure is blotted out. The same precious blood by which we were redeemed and brought near to God, that alone is what blots out all the past failure in our walk down here. "Whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people." This tells us God's estimate of our work in this connection. All is of grace, and all must be of grace. Perhaps never before in all our lives will we have known the riches of His grace, as we will know it when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

And as the day of atonement for Israel closed with rest, will this not be the same for us? Everything out, all made manifest, rest will follow. Even here and now we know something of the rest that follows confession. How much more full will that rest be when all is manifested, all is covered, all is gone forever!

And would we like to miss the judgment seat of Christ? I think not. How glad we will be to see the problems of this sad pathway all cleared up in the light of heaven. How good to have the roots of bitterness that perhaps we have allowed to grow up for years, all shrivelled up and gone. And what grace! *Every man shall have praise of God!*

> "Deeds of merit as *we* thought them,
> He will show us were but sin;
> Little acts we had forgotten,
> He will own were done for Him."

Then that cup of cold water given in His Name, but long since forgotten by us, will receive its reward. Then we will find that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10)

May the Lord give us grace to live now more in the light of "That Day!"

Chapter 12

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine. Deut. 16.13.

Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. Lev. 23.42, 43.

Thy Kingdom Come. Matt. 6.10.

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed!
Great David's greater Son:
When to the time appointed,
The rolling years shall run,
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

We come now to the last of the "Feasts of Jehovah", "The Feast of Tabernacles." This feast was kept for seven days when the work in the fields was completed. All who were Israelites born then made themselves booths out of the boughs of trees, and dwelt in the booths. It was a time of joy and rejoicing. The labour and cares of this life were

forgotten, and their hearts went back to the time when the Lord led them through the wilderness as pilgrims and strangers, without house or home, but only with booths to dwell in. The Lord would never have us forget our wilderness pathway. He says, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart." (Deut. 8.2).

All those weary desert days were now but memories, and if they brought back memories of their failure and unfaithfulness, these memories were overwhelmed by the recollection of God's unfailing care, and His faithfulness.

"In the desert God will teach thee,
What the God that thou hast found,
Patient, gracious, powerful, holy,
All His grace shall there abound."

It was in the wilderness that "He fed them according to the integrity of His heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of His hands." (Ps. 78.72). And now in the land of Canaan, with peace, rest and joy on every hand, they may sit under their booths, and look back with joy and thanksgiving over all the way the Lord had led them, and "Praise Him for all that is past."

In Exodus 23.16 we read, "The Feast of Ingathering, which is in *the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.*" With this feast we come to "the end" of the year, and as we shall see, this feast carries our thoughts on, not only to the Millenium, (the Thousand Years when Christ shall reign), but "The Eighth Day" (Lev. 23.36), takes us on to the Eternal State.

We have seen God's desire, through these feasts, to gather His people about Him, and now in this last feast we see more than in any before, the joy of the

accomplishment of His purposes of grace. "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose: because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore *thou shalt surely rejoice." ("thou shalt be wholly joyful,"* New Translation). Deut. 16.14, 15.

We have seen that the two feasts we have just considered, The Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement, point forward to events which have not yet been fulfilled. The Feast of Tabernacles follows these feasts, so we may clearly understand that it is still further in the future than the Feasts of which we have just spoken, The verse quoted at the top of this chapter, (Deut. 16.13), tells us just when this feast occurs, *"After that* thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." It began on the fifteenth day of the Seventh month, and lasted seven days, with a special "Eighth Day", "the great day of the feast," (John 7.37) which closed the Feasts of Jehovah for the whole year.

Israel's harvest consisted of two parts, "the corn," and "the wine." Each of these parts has a typical meaning in the Bible, spoken of symbolically in Rev. 14.14-20. First we have "the corn." "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap. . . . And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." The Lord Jesus told us long before of this great ingathering of "the corn." He said, "Gather the wheat into

My barn." (Matt. 13.30). (The *wheat* and the *corn* have the same meaning). In telling us the meaning of this parable, the Lord said, "The harvest is the end of the world" (or perhaps a better translation, "the end of the age.") Matt. 13.39. So we may see that the Lord's teaching in Matthew's Gospel exactly corresponds with the typical teaching of Leviticus, and the symbolic teaching of Revelation. The Lord Jesus told us in John 12.24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He Himself was "the corn of wheat" that fell into the ground and died. But in His resurrection He brings with Him a rich harvest, He brings forth "much fruit." The harvest from the "corn of wheat," having the same nature and proceeding from the same stem, is a lovely picture of Christ risen from the dead, with all His Heavenly people.

This is "the corn" that will be gathered into "My barn" at "the end," at "the Feast of Ingathering." We believe that "the corn" tells us of all those who share in "The First Resurrection." (Rev. 20:5). i Cor. 15.23 says, "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." We have already considered "The Firstfruits", now we see the harvest. Hebrews 11.39, 40 would indicate that in this number we find the saints of both the Old Testament and The New Testament. "They", that is the Old Testament saints, "without us", that is the New Testament saints, "should not be made perfect." Revelation 20.4 tells us that this "first resurrection" includes also the martyrs who have laid down their lives for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, in that space of time between the Lord coming for His church and the time when He takes His kingdom and reigns. The Old Testament saints, The Church, and the Martyrs mentioned above, all will be gathered safe Home to glory in "the ingathering" of "the corn."

The gathering in of the wine is also referred to in the passage in Rev. 14, from which we have quoted the account of the reaping of the harvest of the earth. We read in verses 17 to 20, "And another angel came out of the temple which is in Heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to Him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in Thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in His sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." We believe that the vintage of the earth, and treading of the winepress of the wrath of God refers to the gathering of Christ's enemies for judgment. We read more of the treading of this winepress in Isaiah 63.1 to 6. It is evidently the Lord Himself who is speaking, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me; and My fury, it upheld Me. And I will tread down the people in Mine anger, and make them drunk in My fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

This clearly shows us that the winepress tells us of the judgment of Christ's enemies. We know when this great ingathering of the Lord's own will take place, and we also know when this fearful judgment of His enemies will occur. Both come just before the

time when He takes the Throne, and answers that prayer that has gone up for more than nineteen hundred years, "Thy Kingdom Come." Revelation 20.4, to which we have referred above, ends in this way: "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

From these Scriptures, I think we may understand clearly the verse in Deut. 16.13, "Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." We believe this is like a finger to point out to us just the time when we may expect the Feast of Tabernacles to have its fulfilment. We believe this Feast is a type of the glorious reign of Christ for a thousand years. We generally call this "The millenium," which just means, "The Thousand Years." There have been, perhaps, about six thousand years since the creation, but none of these can be spoken of as "*The* Thousand Years." They have been six thousand years in which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8.22). Sin entered in the third chapter of the Bible, and with Sin, came the curse, thorns and thistles, tears, sorrow, pain, and death "until now." Not only has man suffered through Adam's sin, but even the animals and the ground have suffered also, so that the Scripture truly says, *"The whole creation groaneth."*

But in the Feast of Tabernacles we have already seen not only Israel, but even the stranger, is to be "wholly joyful." There has never been one day since sin entered that has been a true fulfilment of such a feast. But, Thanks be to God, the time is coming when the Prince of Peace will take the throne, and for a thousand years He will reign, and this feast will have its true fulfilment.

Another has written about this time. "Endeavour then, dear reader, to realize what would be the condition of a kingdom, under the absolute government of

a monarch so wise as never to make one single mistake, so equitable as to deal even-handed justice to all, so tender-hearted as to rule with the gentlest sway, so pious and benevolent as to seek no object but the glory of God and the well-being of his subjects, and so powerful as to secure the absolute submission of all within the sphere of his dominions! What a kingdom! But when we think of such a kingdom, as extending over the whole earth, and embracing all nations within its limits; and when we understand that Christ Himself is to be its Head and Lord, and that the risen saints are to be His associates on the throne, all language fails, and the heart can only find relief in adoration too profound to be expressed!" (Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects, W. Trotter).

This is a description of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ on this earth, during the Millenium. This is a description of the time which is typified by The Feast of Tabernacles. What a change from the present day! Sin, wars, violence, injustice all put down with a mighty hand, and Goodness and Truth displayed on every side.

We have already pointed out that this Golden Age for which this poor earth has so long waited, follows the ingathering of the corn and wine. "The corn" is gathered to that bright Home in the glory, some by death and resurrection and some without passing through death, so it can be said, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (i Cor. 15.51, 52).

We have spoken of the judgments told out by the gathering of the vine. The Book of Isaiah, which also describes in the most glowing language the glories of the coming kingdom, describes the judgments that must usher in that wonderful age. Let us look very

briefly at some of these verses. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof . . . The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish . . . Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." (Isaiah 24.1-6). "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth . . . Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isaiah 24.19-23) "Behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea . . . He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isaiah 26.21 and 27.1-6).

In this last passage we have brought before us three different parts in God's program of establishing His kingdom. First we see the terrible punishment on His enemies. Then we see a special punishment on "that crooked serpent", the devil. We will speak of this more fully in a moment. And lastly we see the rich blessing that is coming to Israel.

The Old Testament, in Types, Psalms, and Prophecies, is full of references to the coming glorious Kingdom: but it is not till we reach Revelation 20, that we learn the duration of that wondrous reign. The "Thousand Years" are mentioned six times in this chapter. We will see that the two outstanding events during this thousand years are,—First: "The dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan" is to be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for the whole of this period.

Second: Christ is to reign, and His saints are to reign with Him.

No words can tell the difference that these two great events will make to this world. *Now* Christ is hidden, and Satan is at large. *Now* Satan is the god of this world, (2 Cor. 4.4), and the prince of this world. (John 12.31, 14.30, 16.11) *Now* Satan deceives the nations. *Then* he will "deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." (Rev. 20.3). *Now* we see Christ by faith alone. *Then* faith will be changed to sight. *Now* we have not only our own fallen nature, but Satan to act on that fallen nature. *Then* Satan is absent.

What a change during that Thousand Years! And not only will Satan be bound, but the One Who reigns as King is our own beloved Saviour and Lord, and we will reign with Him. Little wonder that the world will rejoice and that Israel and the stranger are called to be "wholly joyful."

Let us look very briefly at the condition of this world during that glorious reign. In the former feasts we have seen that although the primary application is almost surely earthly, yet we may learn lessons in the Heavens from them. In the Feast of Tabernacles we may see that there is a more intimate connection between the Heavens and the earth, than in any of the other Feasts. This is what we would expect, for the devil is bound, and sin is put down with a

strong hand. Our portion, the portion of the Church, is Heavenly,—Our place is not on this earth, even in the Millenium, though we will see we have to do with it.

We will quote again from Mr. W. Trotter's book "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects": "The connection of the church with the millenial state is portrayed to us in John's vision of 'that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.' It is styled, 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife': and while its relation to Christ is thus expressed, its relation to the millenial earth is indicated by various parts of the description. There is no night in the heavenly city, and yet it is not by candle, or by sun and moon, that it is enlightened, but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its light, while the nations of them which are saved—the spared nations of the millenial earth—shall walk in the light of it.' "

"It has no temple, 'the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it'—but to it, as a temple, 'the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour.' Nor do the kings alone thus resort to it: 'they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into (or unto) it.'

"The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, flows through the midst of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Such is the relation of the Church to this scene of blessing. Herself the witness and expression of God's perfect grace, and of the perfect love of Christ her Lord and Bridegroom, She is the vessel of that grace, in ministering light and healing to the nations. With her, in her governmental glory as reigning with Christ are associated the saints of the old Testament, and those of the Apocalyptic crisis, . . . All who form 'the first resurrection,' live and reign with Christ through-

out the thousand years.

"The earthly seat of dominion and centre of blessing is 'the city of the great king'—Jerusalem, the twelve tribes restored to the land, and no longer two nations, but one, (See, For example, Jer. 3.18) will have Christ for their King and Head, and will constitute the most favoured and honoured portion of the earth's redeemed population. This national pre-eminence of Israel in millenial times . . . is demonstrated by almost every reference to the Millenium which the Old Testament contains. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord: and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." (Jer. 3.17). 'The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.' (Micah 4.8). . . . 'The Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.' (Isaiah 24.23). . . . . 'I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.' (Isaiah 60.15).

"With regard to this point, it is interesting to trace the harmony between the Old Testament and the New, and the striking correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem. The one is 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife'—the other is the earthly metropolis of His kingdom. . . . ."

"There is much ground for believing, that all who survive of Israel at the commencement of the Millenium will be saved, and that the whole nation also throughout the thousand years will be saved. "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The 'new covenant' is to be made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, in which God engages to put His law in their inward parts, and to write it in their hearts. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto

the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

It does not appear that the same thing can be said of the nations. For example, we read in Psalm 66, evidently speaking of the time when Christ shall reign, (verse 3, New Trans.) "Because of the greatness of thy strength, thine enemies come cringing unto thee." The margin of the Authorized Version reads, "Thine enemies yield feigned obedience unto thee." We find the same expression in Psalm 18.44. As we search further into the teaching of the Scriptures regarding this period, we will see that, sad as it is, the fact remains that the heart of many, even in the Millenium, remain unchanged, and when the devil is loosed at the end of the Thousand Years, he immediately gets a mighty following.

Let us look a little further at the actual conditions on the earth during this glorious reign. The Scriptures tell us much about it, as though the Holy Spirit delighted to dwell on the joy and blessing that is yet to come to this sad sin-cursed earth.

Idolatry will have entirely ceased. "The idols He shall utterly abolish." (Is. 2.18). "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." (Is. 2:20).

The True God will be known and worshipped. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Is. 11.9). "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." (Isaiah 66.23). "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

War will be at an end, and the earth will enjoy universal peace. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither

shall they learn war any more." (Is. 2.4) See also Micah. 4.3.

Every cause of fear, whether from man or beast, will be removed, men will dwell in delightful confidence, security and peace. "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods." (Ezek. 34.25). "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (Isaiah 32.17, 18)

Justice will be impartially administered. Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." (Is. 32.1). This would tell us of those subordinate rulers who act as ministers of Christ in the affairs of this world. "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful." (Is. 32.5).

The curse being removed, and creation delivered, there will be wonderful fertility and abundance. "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are cothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." (Ps. 65.11-13).

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." (Amos 9.13).

The very habits and instincts of the brute creation shall be changed. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and

the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain." (Isaiah 11.6-9).

The minds of men, without any vain pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, shall yet be well instructed.

Crowded Cities and Slums will be done away with. "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." (Micah 4.4, See also Zech. 3.10).

The rush and whirl and selfishness of the present-day city streets will be ended.

"There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." (Zech. 8.4, 5). What a contrast from the present-day city street! "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." (Zech. 14.20, 21).

Not alone Israel, but the nations also, will receive blessing. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people." (Zech. 2.11) "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, . . . and all nations shall flow unto it." (Isaiah 2.2). "Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." (Zech. 8.22).

Joy and Rejoicing will mark the earth in those days.

"Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." (Lev. 23.40). "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast . . . Thou shalt be wholly joyful" (Deut. 16.14, 15, N.T.). "There was joy in Israel" (i Chron. 12.40, The reign of David, a picture with that of Solomon of the Millenium). "O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; shew forth his salvation from day to day . . . . . Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: . . . . . Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad." (Ps. 96.1-11). "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." (Ps. 97.1).

But, although the Lord will reign then, and there will on every hand be peace and prosperity, joy and gladness, although the devil will be bound in the bottomless pit, so that he may not tempt man to evil,—yet in spite of all, sin will not entirely be done away. And so we read in Psalm 99, "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble. . . . . The King's strength also loveth judgment." And Psalm 101 gives us further details of His ways in judgment. We will quote from the new Transation, "Whoso secretly slandereth his neighbour, him will I destroy; him that hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer. . . . He that practiseth deceit shall not dwell within My house; he that speaketh falsehoods shall not subsist in my sight. *Every morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land: to cut off all workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah."*

It would seem from this last sentence that the Lord will "hold court", so to speak, every morning, and destroy the wicked of the land. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred

years old shall be accursed." (Isaiah 65.20) It is evident from this that people will live to a very great age in that coming glorious day, for one who dies at a hundred years, will be considered only a child.

Perhaps the brightest days that this poor world has ever known were during the reign of King Solomon. Then "the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the low plains in abundance. (2 Chron. 9:27.)

Solomon was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ when He will reign as King with all enemies put under His feet.

But oh, what a vast difference between even the brightest days this earth has ever witnessed, and the days we have just been describing. Read the Book of Ecclesiastes and note the "vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." (Ecc. 1:15.) "I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the places of righteousness, that iniquity was there." (3:16) "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad." (7.7) "Folly is set in great dignity." (10:6)

But when "He comes Whose right it is" and takes the throne of this earth, the groans of Ecclesiastes will change to songs of praise.

Before we turn from meditating on the Coming Kingdom, let us look briefly at one sample of it in the New Testament. Please read the story of the Transfiguration of Christ, as we see it in Matt. 16.28 to Matt. 17.6: Mark 9.1 to 9, and Luke 9.27 to 36. The Lord says, "I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God." Then follows the scene of the transfiguration, when the Lord Jesus was transfigured before them. "The fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white

and glistering." Peter speaks of this scene as "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," (ii Peter 1.16), and says "we were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

In "the excellent glory" high above all, on His throne, was God, Whose voice was heard "on the holy mount." On "a high mountain apart by themselves" was the Lord Jesus Christ, transfigured to suit the heavenly glory: and with Him, were Moses and Elias. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem,—wondrous subject, of which the saints in glory will never weary. Moses is a picture of those saints who have died and been raised again. Elias, you will remember, went to Heaven without dying, and is a picture of those saints who will be taken to be with Christ without passing through death. (i Cor. 15.51). This part of the picture tells us of the Heavenly side of the Kingdom. And what a picture it is! Does not the lovely intimacy of those Heavenly saints with their glorious Lord, tell forth as words must fail to do, the character of our Home above?

But we also see Peter, James, and John, still in mortal bodies,—not resurrection bodies like the heavenly saints,—but within sight and hearing of the heavenly scene. This shows us the place of Israel when they are restored in that coming day. The earthly Jerusalem shall be "lifted up, and inhabited in her place" (Zech. 14.10), and shall bask in the light and glory of the heavenly city. (Is. 60.1: Rev. 21.23, 24). It is not strange that Peter, in the midst of such a scene, said, "It is good for us to be here." He wanted to erect three tabernacles (booths) on this holy place. But the time of the Kingdom had not yet come. In the day of the Kingdom we shall see they will keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and dwell in booths, (Zech. 14.16), but that time was then still far distant, and the King must first go to the cross. And in that day, as in this day, the Lord Jesus must ever have the pre-

eminence. God cannot permit His Beloved Son to be put on the same level even as Moses and Elias. So we see a cloud "over-shadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son: hear Him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves." (Mark 9.7, 8). They came back to the days before the Kingdom, the days in which we live. Thank God, though the glory and the power, though Moses and Elias passed from their view, they had with them "JESUS ONLY", and He is enough. We have Him with us today. True, we do not see him by our natural eye: but by faith we do see Him in our midst, and we see Him in the glory above, ever living for us; and He is enough. Yes, Thank God, though our yearning hearts may cry, and rightly cry, "Thy Kingdom Come!" Though we have as yet seen none of its glories, nor tasted of its pleasures, yet "JESUS ONLY" is enough.

Jesus, Thou art enough
The mind and heart to fill,
Thy patient life to calm the soul,
Thy love, its fear dispel.

We have been tempted to linger over the coming Kingdom, and yet we have not lingered nearly as long as we would wish. May we not ask our readers to take their Bibles and ponder alone with their Lord, some of these lovely scenes that we have barely touched upon? Will you not read, and re-read for yourself, Psalm 72, and drink deeply of the joys of those coming days when Christ will reign. Let them enter your very heart and soul, and you will find them to be a wonderful antidote for the discouragement that seeks to enwrap us like a thick fog, in these dark days when Satan is prince of this world.

"Give the King Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness, unto the King's Son. He shall judge

Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that *water the earth. In His days shall the righteous* flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. . . ." Read it all, and like the Psalmist we must cry,—

"Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen."

Psalm 72.1, 8 and 18, 19

"He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

Let us now turn back to Leviticus 23, and in the light of what we have gleaned from other Scriptures, seek to find what the Holy Spirit would tell us in this portion of the Word of God, of those bright days to come.

The most casual reader must observe that the account of the Feast of Tabernacles takes more space in our chapter than any of the other feasts: parts seem to be repeated twice. It would seem that the Spirit of God delights to linger over this closing scene; when Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

The harvest is all gathered in. The labours in the fields are ended. There is an abundance on every hand. Now come rest and rejoicing. Twice over do we get

the words, "Ye shall do no servile work therein." On the *first day,* and on the *eighth day,* there must no servile work whatever. *The first day* would tell us of the entry into that feast, this speaks of the Kingdom. The *eighth day,* as we shall see later on, speaks of a new beginning, and reaches on to the eternal state. The words for both are alike. Whether it be the entry into the Kingdom, or whether it be our part in Eternity, "servile works" have no place whatever. Our right of entry into both are the same, it is only by the precious blood of Christ, only by the mighty Sacrifice of which the sacrifices offered throughout this feast speak. Whether it be the Kingdom, or whether it be eternity, our entry there is absolutely *not* by virtue of our own work. Our servile works can never fit us for either. Our working, our watching, our overcoming, all our servile works put together, have nothing whatever to do with our privilege of entry into that glorious Kingdom, or into the Eternal Rest beyond it.

Our *position in the Kingdom* does appear to be determined by our walk down here. We read of those who have authority over ten cities, and others who have authority over five cities. (Luke 19.17, 19). This is a matter of reward. But our *entry* into the Kingdom has nothing to do with our works.

Verse 42 of our chapter makes this even more clear. "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days, *all that are Israelites born* shall dwell in booths." The right to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the appointed way depends on *birth, not on works.* There is no suggestion, even in the Feast of the Passover, that only those who were Israelites born might put the blood on the door, and we know that a "mixed multitude" went up out of Egypt. (Ex. 12.38.) Provision is even made for the stranger who wished to keep the Feast of the Passover. (Ex. 12.48). But the Feast of Tabernacles depends on birth: "All that are Israelites born shall

dwell in booths." And the right to enter the Heavenly Kingdom also depends on birth. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3.3.) The new birth alone, without our servile works, gives the right of entry there.

The booths in which these Israelites dwelt were made of "the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook." (Verse 40). The branches of palm trees would tell of the victories won down here, and the willows of the book would tell of the sorrows, and perhaps the failures and defeats, of the wilderness pathway. (Compare Rev. 7.9, & Psalm 137.2). But it was not the palm branches that gave the right to enter the Kingdom, nor did the willows hinder the pilgrim having his part in that glorious day. We suppose that every one in that heavenly company will know what it is to weave together the palms and the willows, as they look back over this wilderness journey. (See verse 43). We will find then, that truly all things *do* work together for good to them that love God. (Rom. 8.28.) We will find then, that truly all things were for our sakes. (2 Cor. 4.15). And we will find that in that day every man shall have praise of God. (i Cor. 4.5). We believe that there will not be one booth in that Heavenly Feast without some palm branches in it, even though we do seem to make such a failure of things now down here. Where we see only defeat it may be that the Captain of our Salvation sees Victory. Blessed thought, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (i John 5.4), not our works.

The description of the boughs of the trees used in the Feast of Tabernacles in Nehemiah's day (of which we hope to speak later) is very remarkable. Read the New Translation: "Go forth to the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and wild olive-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of

thick trees, to make booths." (Neh. 8.15). You will note the willow-branches are omitted: I suppose because earlier in the chapter Nehemiah and Ezra had stilled the people's weeping, saying "The joy of the Lord is your strength." There are times when the Lord dries our tears, and would give us unmixed joy. I suppose that Romans 11 interprets the olive-branches and wild olive-branches, as Israel and the Gentiles: Here we find them woven together to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, as we shall presently see they will do.

There were to be special sacrifices each day of the feast. "Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord." (Lev. 23.36). In Numbers 29.12 to 40, we get a detailed account of these sacrifices. The Burnt Offering included *bullocks,* telling perhaps of the value and worth of our great Sacrifice: *rams* telling of His devotedness even unto death: and *lambs,* telling of His gentleness, and of the special way in which He came as the Lamb of God. All the sacrifices must be without blemish, all told forth His spotless purity and all were a sweet savour unto Jehovah. The Sin Offering is specially mentioned for each of the seven days, and is specially noted for the eigth day, (Num. 29.38.) Also in Ezekiel 45.25 we see that the sin offering, burnt offering, and meat offering, are to be included in the sacrifices to be offered at the Feast of Tabernacles in Millenial days.

We get some most remarkable instruction concerning the sacrifices of the bullocks during the *seven days* of the Feast. On the First Day of the feast, the sacrifice consisted of thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year. (Num. 29.13). On the Second Day, there were but twelve bullocks offered. On the Third Day, eleven. The Fourth Day, ten: till on the Seventh Day we find but seven bullocks were offered unto the Lord. Does this tell us of a decreasing sense of value of the worth of the Sacrifice that won for them this glorious Kingdom?

In the earthly side of the Kingdom this would seem to be the case. The awful suffering, war and carnage of the judgments that ushered in the Thousand Years of peace, seem to have made some of the nations offer "feigned obedience", as we have already seen.

As the years pass by, their gratitude to the One to Whom they owe all grows less and less, and by the time the Thousand Years are finished, and the devil is loosed from his prison in the bottomless pit, we find the nations in the four quarters of the earth, the number of which is as the sand of the sea, (a great contrast to the condition of the earth at the beginning of the Millenium, when there were "few men in it".) These nations are ready to follow Satan to battle against the King of kings, Who has held such just and gracious rule for a thousand years. (Revelation 20.7, 8).

This may well be a very solemn lesson to us; let, us watch our love, lest, like the Church in Ephesus, it grow cold. (Rev. 2.4). Let us watch lest our sacrifice of praise, day by day, grows less. It is only as our eyes and our hearts are engaged with that Blessed One Who has done all for us, that the last day will find the same sacrifice as on the first day. May it be so with each one of us.

The fact that there were *thirteen,* not fourteen, (twice seven), bullocks offered on the first day, might indicate that in the Millenium we are still a little short of that perfect time when sin will be done away. But even though this is true, how sweet to read of that first day of the feast, (New Translation, Lev. 23.39), "On the first day there shall be rest, and on the eighth day there shall be rest." The Lord offers rest, even now, to all who come to Him, and to all who take His yoke, (Matt. 11.28-30), but in the days to come there is to be a further rest, when the curse shall largely be done away, and the Prince of Peace shall reign. What a prospect for this poor war-torn earth, Rest, Peace,

and Joy! Lord haste that day! Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven!

Before we leave the subject of the Feast of Tabernacles, we must notice with sorrow how little value Israel placed upon it. In Nehemiah 8.17, we read, "And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness." Even in the glorious days of David and Solomon, days that in type looked on to the coming Kingdom, they did not keep this feast in the appointed way, (though it had been kept, See ii Chron. 7.8-10; 8.13; i Kings 8.2, and it was at this feast that the ark had been brought into the newly built temple), but it remained for a little feeble remnant, returned from captivity, to keep this feast as it should be kept. What a cheer and encouragement to our hearts in these dark and difficult days, when there is such feebleness and failure. The hope of the Lord's coming, and the hope of the coming Kingdom, may shine more brightly in our hearts, than ever has been the case before. May it truly be so!

It was during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles that Haggai uttered his heart-stirring message, (Haggai 2.1-9). "Be strong . . . . and work." "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." While we still wait for that promised peace, may we each be found heeding that first message, "Be strong . . . . and work."

It was in the Feast of Tabernacles that our Lord Himself "went up into the temple," (John 7.2, 14). The Feast is now no longer called "The Feast of Jehovah," but "the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles." The King had come unto His Own and His Own had received Him not. (John 1.11). He had offered them

the Kingdom and they had refused it, and now the Lord refuses their feast.

But "in the last day, that great day of the feast" (the eighth day, of which we must speak before we close,) "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

With the King despised and rejected of men, the Kingdom——that which the Feast of Tabernacles told forth,——must be postponed. And now Judah has been waiting nearly 2000 years for the rest and joy and peace she refused so long ago. But we see in the Scripture just quoted, that instead of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Lord gives to His Own the Holy Spirit, and even now down here we have rest, and peace, and joy. Now if any man thirst, the Lord calls to him to come to Himself, and drink. Whoever believes on Him, out of his belly, (from the bottom of his heart, as we say, out of his inmost affections,) shall flow streams of refreshment to others. The poor vessel is so full that it overflows.

When the Lord comes we will have the harvest and the vintage, and then the full blessing: but *until* that blessing comes, we have the Holy Ghost instead of it, and our place is to wait for Christ from Heaven.

But the day is coming when not only Israel, but even the nations of the world will celebrate it in exactly the same way as Israel, but we cannot refrain from quoting the following remarkable passage from Zech. 14, beginning from the 16th verse. "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, and *to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.* And it

shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."

We must notice three things in these verses. First, the nations will come up every year to worship the King, Jehovah of hosts. This King will be the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that at that time He is reigning,—and reigning in Jerusalem. Second, we see the nations *must* come up to worship. *Now,* the Lord does not compel anyone to worship Him. There are many in this world with great material prosperity who refuse to worship the Lord. *Now,* He sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matt. 5.45). In the time that is coming, if the nations do not obey, and go up to worship the King, and keep the Feast of Tabernacles, they will get no rain. How remarkable it is, that they are not called upon to keep the Feast of the Passover or Pentecost, but only the Feast of Tabernacles. The Passover and Pentecost specially have to do with the Church. The Feast of Tabernacles has to do with the Kingdom.

The Feast of Tabernacles closed with "the great day of the Feast," the Eighth Day. The Eighth Day speaks of a new beginning. The seven days of the Feast tell of the Thousand Years that Christ shall reign: "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under

His feet. But when He saith, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (i Cor. 15.24-28).

The Eighth Day tells us of this long Sabbath of Eternity. We see in Leviticus 23.39. "The eighth day shall be a sabbath" or rest. In Genesis 2.2, 3 we read, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Alas, Sin soon broke in on God's rest, so that the Son of God must say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5.17). And through nearly six thousand years the Father and the Son have been working for poor, wretched, sinful man. But "There remaineth a rest (or sabbath-keeping) to the people of God." (Heb. 4.9). Sin has spoiled the rest of the *seventh day,* but there yet remains the rest of the *eighth day.*

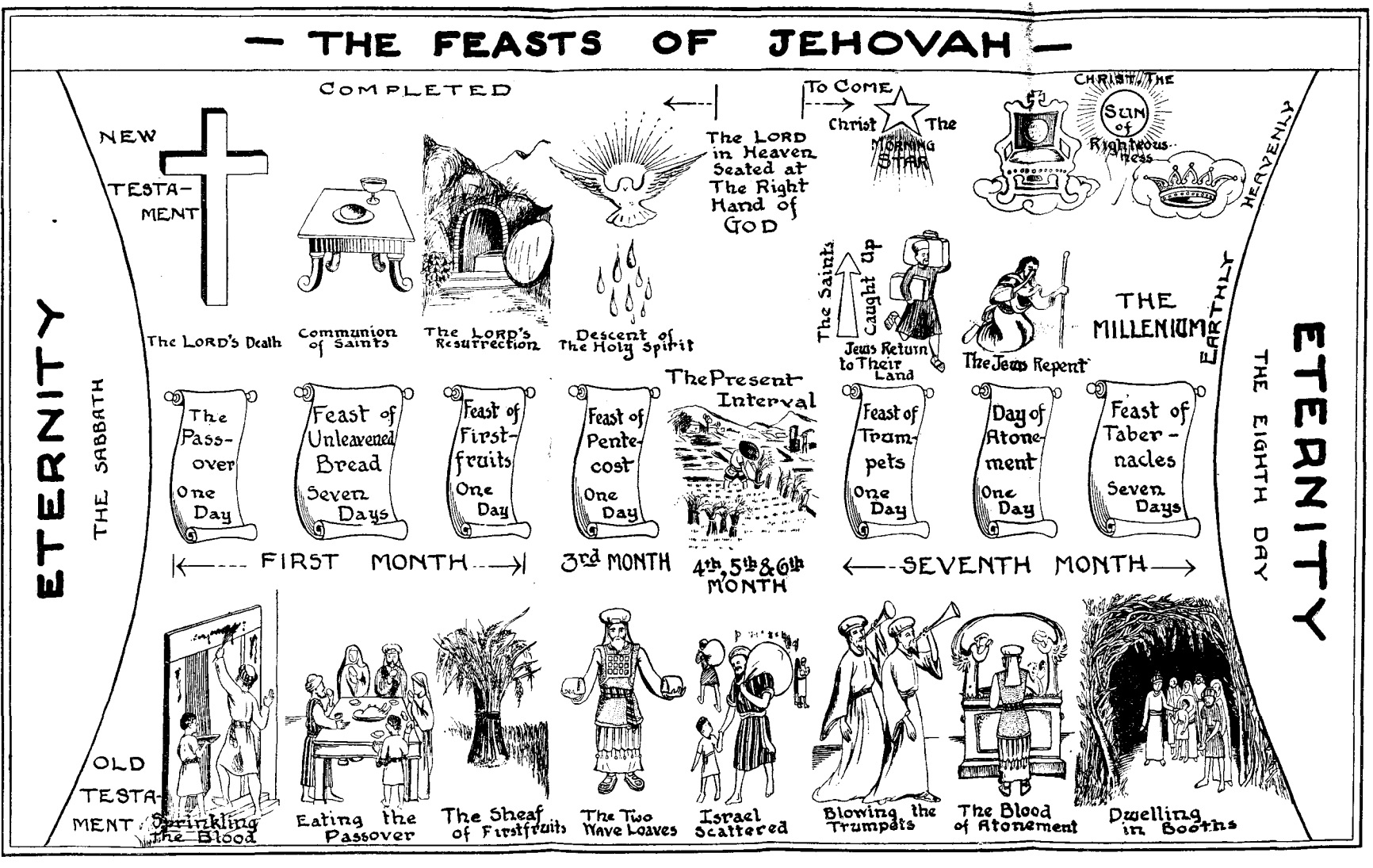
In Numbers 29.35-38, we see the special sacrifices that were to be offered on the Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles "Ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord: one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish: their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner: and one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering."

Throughout the long rest of eternity, there will ever and always be going up that sweet savour of the burnt offering unto Jehovah. Throughout eternity there will be no change in the value and worth and

fragrance of that offering. Nor will those who have the privilege of sharing in that eternal bliss grow weary of that theme, nor will their sense of the value of that mighty sacrifice ever grow less, as was the case during the seven days of the Feast.

Not only will the Burnt Offering ever send forth its sweet savour, but the Meat Offering will to all eternity tell of the pathway down here of the Man of Sorrows, on His way to the cross. And the Sin Offering will not be forgotten either. The sins are long since gone, to be remembered no more, but forever and forever will we remember that He made His soul an offering for sin, and that "He did it for me."

We have sought to trace in a little measure God's ways as shown forth in the Feasts of Jehovah from Eternity to Eternity, and as we gaze with enraptured eyes on the entrancing scene before us, as it reaches on and on through the countless ages of eternity, we can but even now fall down and worship, as we cry.

"Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. 5.13)

— THE FEASTS OF JEHOVAH —