

# GOD'S PROGRAM FOR HIS PEOPLE PREDICTED IN ISRAEL'S FEASTS

## IV. The Feast Of Pentecost: God's Institution Of The Church

(Leviticus 23:15-22)

### I. Introduction

- A. The Leviticus 23:1-44 feasts for Israel typologically predict God's program for His people in history (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 208), what is valuable for us to study today in view of unsettling current events.
- B. The fourth feast is the Feast of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-22), and it broadly typifies God's institution of the Church and its ministry in our current era of Church History.
- C. We thus view Scripture to understand the truths of this feast in God's program for His people (as follows):

### II. The Feast Of Pentecost: God's Institution Of The Church, Leviticus 23:15-22.

- A. The Feast of Pentecost is connected to Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Firstfruits, for it was to be observed "seven weeks plus 1 day (50 days) after the wave offering of the barley sheaf during the Feast of Unleavened Bread," Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 206. The "Sabbath" of Leviticus 23:15 is the first Sabbath of Unleavened Bread, which is the first day of that feast that actually began at sunset when the Passover lamb was being consumed by the people of Israel, Leviticus 23:4-7, 11, 15 with Exodus 12:6-8, 18.
- B. Significantly, "only the Feast of Weeks [Pentecost] is not identified in the Old Testament with some prior occasion in Israel's history that it commemorates," Ibid. However, we have learned that Passover occurred when Christ died, typifying His death, the Feast of Firstfruits occurred when Christ rose from the dead, typifying His resurrection, and the Church began on the Day of Pentecost after Christ's death and resurrection (Acts 2:1-4, 47), so the Feast of Pentecost typifies God's institution of the Church *as distinct from Israel*.
- C. So, the organization and ministry of the Church as a body distinct from Israel is typified in Leviticus 23:15-22:
  - 1. On the Day of Pentecost, Israel was to present a grain offering of new grain to the Lord, an offering of wheat since the barley harvest was then past and wheat harvest was in progress, Leviticus 23:16b; Ibid.
  - 2. This offering would be in the form of **two loaves** of *unusually LEAVENED* bread as a holy wave offering of firstfruits to the Lord, Leviticus 23:17. Leaven signifies sinful imperfection, the opposite of what the Feast of Unleavened Bread promoted, but since the Church was formed of people who were **positionally spiritually perfected** in Christ (Hebrews 10:14) *while still being experientially imperfect due to the presence of sin natures in unglorified bodies* (1 John 1:8-10), the leaven typified God's *gracious acceptance* of believers positioned as perfect in Christ regardless of their experiential imperfection.
  - 3. The use of **two** loaves typifies the human distinction between Jew and Gentile in the imperfect experiential state, what became a great challenge to the Early Church when God sanctified Gentiles as He had sanctified Jews in the body of the Church, cf. Ephesians 2:11-22 with Acts 15:1-35.
  - 4. Along with these two leavened loaves, Israel was to offer seven lambs, each a year old without blemish, a young bull and two rams as a grand burnt offering to the Lord, complete with their grain and drink offerings as a pleasing aroma to God, Leviticus 23:18. Believers in the Church, Jews or Gentiles, were thus to live in complete consecration to the Lord, enjoying His fellowship in Jesus Christ with great joy.
  - 5. Along with these offerings, a male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs a year old as peace offerings were to be sacrificed, typifying how the cross of Christ dealt with sin in Jewish and Gentile believers, so making peace between them in the spiritual Body of Christ, Leviticus 23:19-20 with Ephesians 2:13-19.
  - 6. Pentecost was also to be a Sabbath day observance (Leviticus 23:21), signifying the rest believers in the Church were to have from their own self-help works in living for Christ, cf. Hebrews 4:4-10; Gal. 2:20.
  - 7. Pentecost was also connected to the first Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:15-16a), so believers in the Church era are likewise to walk in holiness and righteousness, cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7b-8.
  - 8. Moses added what initially appears to be a misplaced stipulation that Israel's harvesters were to leave the corners of their harvest fields uncut so that the poor and foreigners might harvest that grain for their livelihoods, Leviticus 23:22. However, this stipulation is actually very fitting, for it illustrates the main ministry of the Church to pray that the Lord of harvest might send forth reapers into His harvest field of needy people worldwide to disciple them for Christ, Matthew 9:36-38 with Matthew 28:19-20.

Lesson: *The Feast of Pentecost typified God's gracious institution of the Church and its ministries in our era.*

Application: *(1) May we rejoice by the antiquity of God's plan for the Church that it is a genuine part of the true Old Testament Creator God's plan. (1) May we also be involved in God's work of discipling the nations!*