

Review of Spring Feasts:

We have participated in the feasts of God this year as a church family. We are desiring to encounter Jesus in these feasts and position ourselves to have our eyes opened in a greater way to the Hebraic perspective of the scriptures.

1. **Passover** – Celebration of deliverance from bondage and slavery through the blood of a spotless lamb. (Ex. 12, Lev. 23:5-8, 1 Cor. 5:7)
2. **Unleavened Bread** – Feast of consecration to the Lord and a removal of anything in our hearts or minds that hinders relationship with God. (Ex. 12:15, Lev. 23:6-7)
3. **First Fruits** – Feast celebrating the harvest of eternal life through the offering of Jesus as the first fruits of the resurrection and glorification of the dead. (Lev. 23:9-14, 1 Cor. 15:20-23)
4. **Pentecost** - The fourth appointed feast of God was the spring feast of “Pentecost” or the “Feast of Weeks”. This feast took place 50 days (Penta) after the feast of first fruits and was first understood as an agricultural feast of the wheat harvest. The Hebrew word for this feast is Shavuot.

I. Traditional Understanding (Lev. 23:15-20)

- A. This final spring feast was to follow 50 days (counting Omer) after the Feast of First Fruits. At that time, you were to offer the first fruits of the wheat harvest (Latter First Fruits). Two loaves of leavened wheat made from the finest flour were offered along with multiple animal sacrifices. This was one of the three times per year that all the men of Israel were to gather in Jerusalem (Deut. 16:16). Pentecost was designated as time of great thanksgiving for the early harvest in hopes for an abundant fall harvest.
- B. Tradition also holds that the Israelites came to Mount Sinai in the 3rd month after the first Passover and exodus from Egypt. Therefore, indicating that Moses was given the Law (10 Commandments) by the Lord at the feast of Pentecost.
 1. Pentecost is celebrated by decorating the synagogue with greenery, flowers, and baskets of fruit to symbolize the harvest. (Exodus 19-20) is generally read along with (Ez. 1) and the book of (Ruth). A celebratory family meal is served emphasizing dairy products representing the milk of the word.

II. Events on the Feast Day

- A. Giving of the Law (Ex. 19-31) – The event of the giving of the Torah spans 13 chapters giving great detail of Gods desire to encounter His people with the principles of His righteous kingdom.
1. 50 days after the crossing of red sea. (First Fruits) (Ex. 14:13-31)
 2. The people commanded to gather and consecrated through Moses the intercessor. (Ex. 19:10-11)
 3. The sign of the Lords presence was Mt. Sinai covered in fire, smoke, thunder lightning, and the mountain shook. (Ex. 19:16,18)
 4. The trumpet of God (Shofar) was sounded from heaven calling the people to gather closer to the mountain. (Ex. 19:16-17,19)
 5. The Lord wrote His righteous ways (law) on tablets of stone that men would understand his righteousness. (Ex. 31:18)
 6. God revealed His desire to dwell with His people forever. (Ex. 25:8, 29:45-46)
 7. The Lord instructed a replication of His temple in Heaven be made on the Earth. (Ex. 25:9, 25:40, 26:30)
 8. God set apart for Himself a priesthood whose primary role would be perpetual intercession and worship resulting in continual abiding presence of Gods Glory. (Ex. 27:40, 28:29-30, 29:38)
 9. The people made a golden calf and worshiped it resulting in 3000 dying at the hands of the faithful priests. (Ex. 32)
- B. Giving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-47) – The event of the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Church was not random in its timing or purpose. It was foreshadowed and planned from the beginning through Gods interactions and instructions to Israel. As the faithful gathered in Jerusalem and celebrated Pentecost God poured out His Spirit.
1. 50 Days after the resurrection of Jesus. (First Fruits) (1 Cor. 15:12-28)
 2. Jesus the ultimate intercessor commanded His disciples to gather and wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit and consecrated them by His word and blood. (Acts. 1:1-5)
 3. The Lord gave the Holy Spirit with the sign of a sound from heaven, wind, fire, and shaking. (Acts. 2:2-4, 4:31)
 4. The sound of the mighty rushing wind gathered the people to the apostles. (Acts 2:5-6)
 5. The Lord wrote His law on the hearts and minds of His people through the Holy Spirit. (Ezk. 36:25-27, 2 Cor. 3)

6. God dwells in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:9-11)
7. We are a temple for the Holy Spirit. (2 Cor. 6:16)
8. Through the Holy Spirit we have become a royal priest hood of perpetual worship and intercession. (1 Pet. 2:5-9)
9. 3000 Souls were saved that day through the faithful apostles. (Acts. 2:41)

III. Prophetic Indications

- A. It is good to consider the progression of the spring feasts and their spiritual meaning to see the plan of redemption.
 1. **Passover** – The pure and spotless sacrificial lamb that causes the judgment of God to Passover the individual when they apply the blood of the lamb.
 2. **Unleavened Bread** – The individual sets their heart on a pilgrimage to eliminate anything that hinders love for God from their lives.
 3. **First Fruits** – The individual is connected to the resurrection of Jesus causing them to have a sure hope in the resurrection from the dead giving them full assurance and ability to lay down their lives for God.
 4. **Pentecost** – The individual is filled with the Holy Spirit and is given ability to overcome sin and through love infused obeisance and power fulfill their calling to fill the earth with the realities of the kingdom of God.
- B. Celebration of early Wheat Harvest – You could say that Passover and First Fruits were the feasts that Jesus sowed into the harvest and Pentecost was the day He reaped the First Fruits of the wheat into the kingdom. The First Fruits of the wheat harvest were brought into the temple so too the Lord brought in the First Fruits of wheat harvest, and consecrated the entire harvest to the Lord. (Mat. 3:12, Mat. 13:24-30, 36-43, Acts. 2:37-41)
- C. The offering of the two loaves of wheat and what they represent is highly debated and there is not clear understanding within the body of Christ yet on what it means. The fact that they were leavened loaves is interesting and I believe that in this case the leaven is representative of the potency of the word and Spirit operating together to leaven each the earth with the kingdom of God. (Mat. 13:33)
- D. As the feast of Pentecost is a celebratory harvest festival of the greater harvest of wheat. The First Fruits of the wheat offered to the Lord on Pentecost I believe has many spiritual prophetic implications as we look at the events of (Acts 2). (Jam. 1:18)
 1. The First Fruits of the New Covenant believers.
 2. The First Fruits of the Spirit being poured out.
 3. The First Fruits of the Church of Jesus.
 4. The First Fruits of all Israel being saved.

5. The First Fruits of Gentiles being saved.

Conclusion: God is a story teller, He is a creator, He is a poet. We see time and time again that He has been writing a story to bring His people back into communion with Him, FOREVER. He encountered His people through feasts, sabbath, prophets, and other ways to establish hope. The main takeaway is this: **God has a master plan.** The Old Testament feasts were a legal and cultural dress rehearsal for what Jesus and the Holy Spirit would accomplish in the New Testament. By studying the feasts, we believe we can better understand the depth, timing, and power of our faith, and to store up the oil of intimacy by knowing our Great Father!

LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS:

1. **God's Perfect Timing:** Look at how perfectly Jesus' death, resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit lined up with the ancient Spring Feasts. How does this deep level of detail change or strengthen your view of God's control over history?
2. **Rules vs. Relationship:** At Mt. Sinai, the Law was written on stone and 3,000 died. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was written on hearts and 3,000 were saved. In your daily life, where do you still struggle with trying to follow God out of rules and duty instead of relying on the power of the Holy Spirit?
3. **Joining the Harvest:** If Pentecost represents Jesus reaping the "latter spring harvest" of believers, how can we as a LifeGroup practically help bring more people into God's Kingdom this week?