

Lesson 36

- We have studied the reasons why the Law was given to the people of Israel in God's plan, and one of the reasons was to reveal Jesus Christ as the Messiah and His work. The entire Law is imbued with the saving work of Jesus. The book of Leviticus shows the sin offerings, and each of them typified an aspect of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary; the crushed bread, the burnt offering, the guilt offering, all spoke of Jesus and that through His sacrifice God would forgive all our sins.
- We have also seen and recognized that there is a revelatory aspect to the Law that is eternal and useful for our teaching and knowledge of God.

⇒ **Romans 10:4;** 'Christ is the end of the law'.

⇒ **Matthew 5:17;** Jesus says: 'I did not come to destroy but to fulfill'.

When we look at these passages, we may have doubts about how to use the Law today. When Jesus came, He said: '*I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it*'. The law was all broken and people didn't die as the law said because there were substitutes, animals. But before God, the law was broken. Jesus comes, fulfills the law in its entirety, fulfills it in every point, and when Jesus went up on the cross, He died in the place of the transgressors of the law. So, the law could be removed so that God could begin a new phase in His plan. But can the revelatory aspect of the Law, e.g., the aspect that reveals the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, the work of Jesus on the cross, the perfection of God, the whole revelatory aspect of the Law, pass away? No, because the Law is a portrait of God; and how could we leave that portrait out? I still see God in the Law; I still see my sin in the Law. So, what the Law reveals is eternal.

- But there is also the controlling aspect of the law, the do or die aspect, which Jesus took away. Jesus fulfilled and suffered all that the Law required; every transgression of the Law was laid on Jesus, every curse that the Law required was taken away by God in Jesus' sacrifice.

⇒ **Isaiah 53;** 'Jesus was wounded for our transgressions'.

⇒ **Galatians 3:10~13;** 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law'.

Then, when the Law was reconciled to God, fully vindicated by Jesus on the cross of Calvary, the controlling aspect was removed. Today, we don't consult the Law about what we should or shouldn't do; the essence of the Law is all revealed in the N.T. Not a single point of the Ten Commandments, which are the essence of the Law, has been removed; we fulfill them today without feeling them.

The Feasts of the Lord in Israel

⇒ Leviticus 23

- We have seen that one of the aspects of the Law was to provide the people of Israel, the redeemed people, with the worship of God, and that this was done through the Seven Feasts as described in ⇒ **Leviticus 23**. We also talked about how these Seven Feasts prophesied the program of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. These Feasts are fundamental to understanding God's plan.

➤ **1st The Feast of Passover**, was the commemoration of the people's departure from Egypt. Each year the people repeated what God had instituted on the night they came out of Egypt; they slaughtered the lamb, sprinkled the blood, and ate the meat, all as a memorial, a remembrance of their departure from the yoke of slavery in Egypt. Today we do the same thing when we participate in the Lord's Supper, which was instituted on the night Jesus was sacrificed; it is a memorial, a remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice that brought about our escape from the yoke of slavery to sin.

⇒ **I Corinthians 5:7**; Jesus is our Passover.

The prophecy to which this feast refers has already been fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

➤ **2nd The Feast of Unleavened Bread**; on the evening of Passover, only unleavened bread could be eaten.

⇒ **I Corinthians 5:8**

Because the Lamb, Jesus, was slain, we can be unleavened today. Leaven in the Bible speaks of sin. Because the Lamb was slain, I can be sinless, I can be unleavened bread.

➤ **3rd The Feast of Firstfruits**; On the third day after Passover came the Feast of Firstfruits, when the first fruits of the land were offered in the tabernacle and then in the temple. The people separated the first fruits that the land produced, whether it was grain, fruit, or anything else, and offered and 'moved' them to the Lord, the priest shall wave them to the Lord. The Feast of Firstfruits is the first fruits produced of the land. What happened on the third day after the death of Jesus, the Passover Lamb? Jesus rose from the dead. After His death, Jesus was buried, the seed was planted, and after three days, the earth produced its first fruit, the Firstfruits.

⇒ **John 12:23~24**; Jesus speaking of his death; the wheat was sown.

⇒ **John 6:35**; Jesus is the bread of life, the fruit of the wheat that was killed.

⇒ **I Corinthians 15:20~23**; Jesus the Firstfruits.

Firstfruits speaks of the resurrection of our bodies. Jesus is the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep; he was the first to be resurrected so that he could no longer die. Jesus comes out from under the earth and is resurrected like the fruit that the earth produced and gave to God at the Feast of Firstfruits. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, ascended to heaven, and offered His blood to God the Father in order to provide salvation for all mankind.

⇒ **John 20:16~17**; After His resurrection, Jesus went to God to offer the sacrifice, the blood that He had shed on the cross.

Only those who believe receive this salvation. '*Easter Sunday should be Firstfruits Sunday*'; Easter is the death of the Lamb and Firstfruits is the resurrection, the fruit of the earth.

➤ **4th The Feast of Weeks**: 50 days after the sheaf of the wave offering, the fruits of the land, comes Pentecost, a word that means 50. At Pentecost, two loaves of bread, now leavened with yeast, were offered to the Lord. After his resurrection, Jesus stayed on earth for 40 days, and before going to heaven, he said:

⇒ **Acts 1:4~5;** ‘stay here in Jerusalem, to wait for the Promise of the Father for in a few days the Holy Spirit will come upon you.’

⇒ **Acts 1:8;** ‘you will receive power to be witnesses’

50 days after the Firstfruits, on the day of Pentecost, the apostles and other disciples were gathered together, and the Holy Spirit of God descended upon them. Tongues of fire came upon them, and they spoke in other tongues praising God, and all the people were amazed. ⇒ **Acts 2:1~13**

Then Peter stood up and said: ‘I’m going to explain what’s happening; it’s the fulfillment of prophecy. At Pentecost, two loaves of bread, still leavened, were offered to the Lord; and what happened at Pentecost, what was established that day? The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ was founded on that day, in the place where the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and disciples. Jews and Gentiles form one body, still with sin, because we are still with our old nature. That’s why those two loaves had leaven in them, two loaves symbolizing that Jews and Gentiles now form the Body of Christ, the Church. This is the meaning of Pentecost, which was also fulfilled as a prophecy.

⇒ **Ephesians 2:11~22;** Jesus made both peoples one.

- These four feasts were celebrated in two months, more or less, one feast after another; we still see Jews celebrating them today. Then there would be a break of about four months, and then the cycle of feasts would begin again, now with three more, thus completing the annual cycle. The prophetic cycle of the first four feasts has already been fulfilled, and for the fulfillment of the last three, we are in the interval, which for us has already lasted 2,000 years. When the final cycle of feasts begins to be fulfilled, there will also be a short interval, one feast after another will be fulfilled.

➤ **5th The Feast of Trumpets;** what will be the sign of the rapture?

⇒ **I Corinthians 15:50~58;** at the sound of the last trumpet.

⇒ **I Thessalonians 4:13~18;** at the sound of God’s trumpet.

We will hear the sound of the trumpet, hallelujah!

➤ **6th The Day of Atonement;** After seven years from the rapture, seven years called the Tribulation period, Jesus Christ will return to earth to fulfill His covenant with Israel, to set up His Kingdom, at first only for Israel. On the very day that Israel receives its Messiah, the atonement of the people of Israel will take place, the recognition of Jesus as the promised Messiah. The prophet Zechariah says that the people of Israel will weep as never before; they will weep bitterly for their firstborn. They will see whom they have pierced, and they will weep in repentance. That will be the day of atonement, when the feast of atonement will be fulfilled.

⇒ **Zechariah 12:10**

➤ **7th The Feast of Tabernacles;** ⇒ **Zechariah 14:9**

Jesus comes and dwells on earth for a thousand years, that is the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. ⇒ **John 1:14**

‘The Word became flesh and dwelt among us’; the correct word is ‘tabernacled’ among us. The Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled when Jesus comes to be with His people forever.

- This is the program of Israel's annual feasts of worship to God; it was the prophecy of the program of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, hallelujah! Glory be to the Lord Jesus, for more than half of it has been fulfilled, and the rest will surely be fulfilled very soon.
- A question arises: Did or does Israel know about this program? Do they know about the rapture, the trumpets, etc.? No, they don't, it's just a party for them. But if someone from Israel is converted today, they know and believe, just like we do; but they celebrated the feasts and didn't know what they meant. When Israel celebrated, the feasts already pointed to Jesus Christ, but they weren't aware that: '*I'm celebrating a prophecy*', they weren't aware that the feast was a prophecy that would be fulfilled in Jesus. The prophecies were fulfilled, and now everyone who believes understands and sees that this is really God's program.
- Today Israel has a serious problem with these feasts; for example, at Passover a lamb had to be slaughtered in the tabernacle and later in the temple. But is there a temple today? No. So how does Israel keep these feasts? Do you see the confusion? They could only atone for their sins by sacrificing animals, and they were only allowed to sacrifice in the tabernacle or in the temple.
- When the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., the ability to deal with sin in the form of the Old Testament ended. That was one of the reasons the Law was given, to deal with sin, to provide for the people to be reunited with God. The people couldn't keep the law, it was obvious that they were transgressors before God, but God said: '*For every law transgressed, bring an animal, lay your hand on it, identify yourself with it, and kill it in its place. I, God, accept the death of this animal, I accept its blood, so that you will not be killed*'. Because in the law it was like this: the soul that sins, it shall die.

⇒ **Ezekiel 18:20.**

- Think of all the sins! The temple, the tabernacle, was open all day; there were two sacrifices, one in the morning and one in the evening. The temple was open so that the people of Israel could make their lives right with God by bringing their animal. The Israelite would take the animal and walk around the city, it was a public confession of sin, it wasn't easy. Once a year there was also a sacrifice for the nation, on the day of '*Yon Kippur*'. When the high priest finished this sacrifice, it meant that for one year the nation was covered; the transgressions of the nation were covered before God. The word '*Yon Kippur*' means atonement and covering.

⇒ **Hebrews 10:4**

- If the blood of bulls and goats does not take away sin, how was Israel? The key is in the word '*Kippur*'. There is a big difference between covering sins and taking away sins.

⇒ **I John 1:7;** '*the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*', hallelujah!

The blood of goats and bulls doesn't take away sins, but the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness. So, what happened? It covered, is Kippur. The Israelite who sinned would take an animal, lay his hand on it, identifying himself with the animal, and kill the animal in its place. The animal took the place of the sinful man; instead of the sinner dying as the Law commanded, the soul that sins shall die, he killed the animal in its place.

But that blood didn't take away his sin, it didn't wash it away, it didn't remove his sin, but it covered it. And when God looked at that man, his sin was covered. It's like in a restaurant where the waiter puts a clean tablecloth over a dirty tablecloth, it looks great, you have your meal, but under the towel everything is dirty. That towel has to be taken off and washed to make it clean. That's what the Old Testament sacrifices did, they covered, that's why it's '*Kippur*', covering.

- So, when an Israelite went to make atonement for his sin and did all this ceremony, it had a deeper meaning, he did it all by faith. He killed the animal, the blood was put on the altar, the altar was covered with the blood, it was all by faith. It was the same kind of faith we have to have today to believe that Jesus was crucified and that my sin was passed on to Him. Faith that Jesus was buried, resurrected without sin, and that God has put me in Him and therefore I am holy; we need faith to believe. So, it was the same level of faith to believe that by laying my hand on an animal, my sins would be transferred to it and when I killed it, God would look, and I would be covered with that blood; you need faith. That's why salvation is always by faith; faith in what? In God's provision, and that's what the Old Testament was all about.

