

The Feast of Pentecost

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[0 : 00] So we're covering the Feast of the Lord, and today we are covering the Feast of Pentecost. You will notice that, I did that too soon, sorry.

You may remember this slide from the first talk on the feasts. And it maps them out for us. And we've done the first three. We didn't do them quite in order, but we've done the Feast of Firstfruits, we've done the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Passover.

And you may recall that Passover, there was a typology of Jesus in the Passover lamb, and it was the feast that spoke of the coming Lamb of God, who when he came would take away the sins of the world.

And in that particular feast, the sins were symbolically born because of the shedding of the blood of a lamb, lamb, like a bear lamb.

But it spoke of a time to come when Jesus would present himself as the Lamb of God, who would permanently take away the sins of the world, so there wouldn't be a need for these annual repetitions of these sacrifices.

[1 : 09] The Feast of Unleavened Bread, if you remember, which is what we did last time, spoke of the journey, and it was based upon the historical event of the passing through the Red Sea.

And as they left Egypt, they had this journey to the Red Sea, about 200 miles where God protected them, and took them through the Red Sea on dry land.

And the sea eventually came in and claimed the lives of the whole Egyptian army that was trying to kill them. Now that feast happened, I'm just going to...

Passover was on the 14th of Nisan. Unleavened Bread started on the 15th of Nisan. And so this Feast of Unleavened Bread is linked with the burial of Jesus.

So in the mind of the Jews, he would have been buried on the 15th of Nisan, or perhaps the 6th...

No, he would have been buried on the 15th, risen again on the 16th.

[2 : 12] So what we had there was a picture of God brought them through the Red Sea and brought them life, whereas all those who were in Egypt died.

So we have a picture of the forthcoming Messiah's death bringing life to the people that believe. We're now going to move on to this Feast of Weeks.

Let's go back to that. Feast of Weeks or Pentecost, because the first fruits we've already covered, that dealt with the resurrection. And now we're moving on to Pentecost.

And the point I'm trying to make, and making a right fumble of it, is these four feasts are historically consecutive. We have the death of Jesus, the burial of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and then later on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

And those three events are spoken of in these feasts that were inaugurated around about 1600 years before Jesus came to the earth.

[3 : 18] And yes, we've got the later feasts to come, but the main scriptures that deal with these feasts are in Leviticus 23, verses 15 to 22, and Deuteronomy 16, verse 10.

And we'll read those together before I get any more confused with my technology. So Leviticus 23 is where we'll start.

Third book of the Bible, Leviticus. Leviticus 23. And we'll start reading at verse 15.

And this gives an account of the feasts from the point of view of the nation and the priests. So this is a national celebration, and it tells how the nation celebrated it.

You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering, there shall be seven complete Sabbaths.

[4 : 18] You shall count 50 days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a

wave offering, made of two tenths of an ephah.

They shall be of fine flour, baked with leaven, as the firstfruits to the Lord. Along with the bread you shall present seven one-year-old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd, and two rams that are to be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord.

You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs, one year old, for a sacrifice of peace offering. The priest shall then wave them, the loaves, with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering, with two lambs.

Now, how you wave a lamb, I'm not sure, but anyway. A wave offering with two lambs before the Lord. They are to be holy to the Lord for the priest.

On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well. You are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.

[5 : 45] When you reap the harvest of the land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor gather the gleaning of your harvest. You are to leave them for the needy and the alien.

I am the Lord your God. Again, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first month, you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing trumpets.

And I've gone on to the next feast. So we should have stopped at verse 22. I am the Lord your God. And then we need to turn to Deuteronomy 16.

Deuteronomy being the last book of the Torah, the fifth book of the Bible. And the key verse is verse 10, but we'll start with verse 9.

You shall count seven weeks for yourself. You should begin to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. So this is from the feast of firstfruits.

[6 : 49] Then you shall celebrate the feast of weeks to the Lord your God with a tribute of a freewill offering. I often wonder what our Calvinist brothers do with this, because they tell us we haven't got any freewill.

Anyway, an aside, we'll leave it there. A freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the Lord your God blesses you.

So the reason I've read out both, because on the face of it, they both say the same thing. But the Leviticus one speaks of government. It speaks of the leaders of Israel leading Israel into a feast. And it says what the religious leaders do with the collection of and waving of these loaves and lambs and so on. And all those animals that are slaughtered, which would be far beyond the means of most households to do.

There aren't many households that could bring seven lambs of their own, plus bulls, plus goats. This is something governmental. In Deuteronomy, what you have is what it should be on the heart of the individual.

[7 : 54] Don't come empty handed. Come with an offering as to whatever you can afford. Bring an offering to the Lord, however big or small it may be, depending on your wealth.

It's a personal offering. So it's a combination of a religious festival conducted by the Jews and an individual celebration. It includes and it has to include individuals, not just sitting on the periphery, but every single person that attends is in some way involved with giving to the Lord an offering so that the Lord can accept that offering.

So. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this.

Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this. Bear with me again while I play with this.

meaning and it speaks of something yet to come so if you go 50 days from the feast of unleavened bread the beginning of the feast of unleavened bread where do we finish up and the answer is we go to the sixth of sivan which is a oh what happened there it probably was now you're getting technical with me um sorry yes what what you have um the 16th is the beginning of unleavened bread and if you count your 50 days along you finish up at the 6th of the month of sivan and so the the festival begins on the very next day so it'll be the 7th of sivan that the festival actually begins but

you're supposed to count these 49 days now 49 days is seven weeks seven seven to 49 um purely as a matter of interest not mentioned in the scripture but the jews traditionally had particular topics that they would cover and expect to meditate upon and pray about for each week so one week would be devoted to one topic and another to another topic and i haven't listed the topic because i've only got 45 minutes to cover what we're doing this morning but um interestingly the first week they would meditate upon pray upon talk about the subject of joe's favorite topic chesed that was the and of course chesed is loving kindness although that is an inadequate word to describe chesed which was you know kind of loving kindness squared i suppose it was masses of loving kindness but everything else is based on loving kindness so that's where it all started that was the foundation um and then we get to this i've written it's written in red shavuot shavuot means seven so it refers to weeks and we'll see in a minute sometimes it's not just weeks of days sometimes it's weeks of years but for it for this example today it's shavuot is the feast of the weeks it's what you do at the end of all the weeks you've got 49 weeks to consider and it's the culmination of all of those weeks um let's go back to in the feast what we've just read is you were required to take two loaves but up to now all the bread we've dealt with has been unleavened bread a representation of bread without sin because leaven was a symbolic of sin or some would say of sinful influence the leaven was sometimes just referred to as an example of sin and sometimes referred to as just the kind of influence you sit under in any event the bread up to now has got to have been unleavened and suddenly we have this feast where it says you want you've got to take two loaves and this time leavened loaves ordinary bread complete with yeast now that kind of makes us ask why why two loaves and why leavened um because the unleavened always spoke of no sin but leavened speaks of still got sin so why why two loaves and why leavened loaves um and there are lots of conjectures about why two loaves uh the two main ones there are others but the two main ones are that the loaves represented the jews and

[13:23] the gentiles another one is that they represented the two houses of israel personally i think the matter answers itself when you get to the new testament feast of pentecost because it's an outpouring of god's holy spirit on the jews and the gentiles and i think that answers the question for us but we'll look at that when we get to it um so why leavened though um and the leavened loaves represent people that belong to god despite still carrying their old sin nature so whether jew or gentile they represent people who have put themselves before god and agreed to go god's way now in new testament language we would say this means people who are saved but in the language of the day was people who had decided to come under this conditional covenant that god made with his people which was what i'm going to call an if then covenant if you do x then i will do y and so there was a condition on this covenant under the old testament the condition was you had to keep the law and of course we know that they couldn't and we'll go into a bit more about that in a minute but however hard they tried they couldn't keep the law in fact what we read in the new testament is the law was given to them to expose their sin and their inability to live righteously on their own so the get out for them is always a sacrifice that dies instead of them but but the aim is to live unto god to obey god's law and god built into it a little ways out when they failed to follow god's law sacrificial lambs everybody making a sin offering for their own family and so on and so on it's i'm not going to go into detail about all of that but a way out was created because nobody could live up to the standard that god set um and so there's an extent to which we see jesus in the loaves themselves in that waving the loaves represents the people giving thanks to god for his provision of life sustaining food for them now if you think of us as sinners what is going to sustain our life there's only one bread that will sustain our lives and that's the bread of life uh in john 6 35 where jesus is called the bread of life i'm the bread of life so in the waved loaves we see an expression of the bread of life which is acceptable to god despite the sin now jesus took our sins so we are presented as if we have no sin yet we do we are very much still leavened loaves not unleavened loaves and there will be a day when that changes um now to to kind of you you may be about to realize my confusion as i studied all this the jews believed always that the law was given at shadow shavuot so they received the ten commandments plus the law on the same day as was later designated as this feast the feast of shavuot and in terms of its celebration over the centuries in egypt it was very much just an agricultural festival but in the back of their mind they knew that the law had been given on that date and the attitude of the jews to the celebration of this feast only really changed in about 2 bc that it was it was a thanksgiving for the harvest and for most jews nothing more than that but they also looked upon this feast as the conclusion of the passover season the passover season started with the feast of passover and went right through to the feast of weeks shavuot or what

later became called pentecost so in the mind of the jews thanksgiving for the wheat harvest this time the first harvest was the barley harvest that was what was celebrated at first fruits this was the celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest which was the latter harvest of the year the later harvest of the year and the wheat harvest always spoke of evangelism it spoke of souls getting saved lots and lots of analogies in the bible about the p you know the fields of white unto harvest but the laborers a few there are lots of analogies with uh the wheat and the people who needed to be saved um so all of the previous three feasts were seen as feasts of liberation from something right the the angel of death goes over the land and kills all the firstborn of egypt they're released they're liberated they're chased up to the red sea and then they go through the red sea and they're liberated because the chasing army gets drowned it's all about liberation the feast of first fruits is a sign that we are liberated from death itself but this feast the difference is it's not liberated from something but it's liberated into something new and so when they're waving their loaves and considering that the law had been given on the same date they'd been liberated from all the slavery in egypt into the law of the lord um now some would say that's not really a liberation because the law is pretty harsh but then god did provide a system of sacrifices so that we could live under the law and learn the thing was though they were all given a knowledge of what they needed to do to please god right they were released into a closeness with god that they had previously not had and yet there is still a barrier to closeness because they've still got the veil in the temple or the tabernacle they've still they still can't approach close to god but they can come close enough to learn what pleases him and to have the opportunity to live by it um of course there's an obvious parallel for christians in this in that when we accept jesus as our savior and lord we are liberated from the law of sin and death and freed to follow the law of god turn to romans chapter 7 and the the whole chapter is pertinent um or do you not know brethren for i am speaking to those who know the law that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives for the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living but if her husband dies she is released from the law concerning her husband so then if while her husband is living she is joined to another man she shall be called an adulteress but if her husband dies she is free from the law and she cannot sorry she's free from the law so that she is not an adulteress although she is joined to another man therefore my brethren you also were made to die to the law through the body of christ so that you might be joined to another to him who was raised from the dead in order that we might bear fruit for god so speaking of the law the analogy is between the law and a married relationship once the married relationship dies and becomes obsolete you're free to marry again and with the law you are bound by the law while you live under the law but when christ comes you're liberated from the old law and you live under a new law verse 5 for while we were in the flesh the sinful passions which were aroused by our law were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death interesting but now we have been released from the law having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter what should we say then is the law sin may it never be on the contrary i would not have come to know sin except through the law for i would not have known about coveting if the law had not said thou shalt not covet but sin taking the opportunity through the commandment produced in me coveting of every kind for apart from the law sin is dead i was once alive apart from the law but when the commandment came sin became alive and i died and this commandment which was to result in life proved to result in death for me for sin taking an opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it killed me so then the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good so we're dealing with a time when god gave the law to the jews and yet what we're now reading is only death came from the law life didn't come from the law only death came from the law because as soon as you give somebody a law the sin nature in them goes out and breaks that law and immediately puts them at odds with god now the jews were learning this lesson the hard way by being placed under law which happened at shavuot and it's uh it's paradoxical because god gave them the opportunity for salvation and at the same time none of them could do it you have every opportunity but you can't do it so some would say well that's not really an opportunity at all well he covered that didn't he with the sacrificial system reading on um verse 13 therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me may it never be rather it was sin in order that it might be shown to be sin by affecting my death through through that which is good so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful in other words we needed the law to understand how sinful sin was for we know that the law is spiritual but i'm of the flesh sold into bondage to sin now these people have escaped israel in the recent uh escaped egypt in the

recent past so they understand about slavery they understand about bondage for what i'm doing i do not understand for i am not practicing what i would like to do but i'm doing the very thing that i hate but if i do the very thing i do not want to do i agree with the law confessing that the law is good yeah if you don't want to do it and you know it's wrong then you know the law that prohibits it is good so now no longer am i the one doing it but sin which dwells in me and that's a wonderful separation from me the heart of me as against the sin which indwells me to which i sometimes succumb for i know that nothing good dwells in me that this is in my flesh for the willing is present in me but the doing of the good is not for the good that i want to do i do not but i practice every evil that i do not want but if i'm doing the very thing i do not want i'm no longer the one doing it but sin which dwells in me i find then the principle that evil is present in me the one who wants to do good for i joyfully concur with the law of god in the inner man now this is an important distinction i concur with the law of god in the inner man the jews who received the law were responding to it with the outer man and being judged for the way they responded to it with the outer man more of that in a moment um 23 but i see a different law in the members of my body waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members wretched man that i am who will set me free from the body of this death the answer to all questions in services is jesus thanks be to god through jesus christ our lord so then on the one hand i myself with my mind i'm serving the law of god but on the other with my flesh the law of sin so we see these two laws and this tussle that's going on in humanity and for for christians when we accept jesus as our savior in law uh savior and lord we're liberated from this law that otherwise would be oppressive to us um so the law was given and we the law was given well just just turn to galatians 3 and verse 24 in fact we'll start with verse 23 but before faith came we were kept in custody under the law being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed therefore the law has become our tutor some of your versions will say schoolmaster to lead us to christ so that we may be justified by faith the law was only put there for us to recognize what sinful people we were and cry out to god and be drawn to him so we turn back to leuiticus 23 and what we learn if we look at verses 18 and 19 is along with the bread you shall present seven one-year-old male lambs without defect and a bull of the herd and two rams they are to be a burnt offering to the lord with their grain offering and their drink offering an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the lord you shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings so along with this celebration of thank you god for an amazing harvest and this representation in the loaves of all of humanity jew or gentile that's my view there are some who would argue with that but i i think it sorts itself out as you go through um the other thing you do at that time is you sacrifice animals a burnt offering which is always an offering for sin a sin offering and a peace offering which is an offering made by someone who knows they need to make peace with god so we've got this really weird combination of thank you god for this amazing harvest and oh by the way i'm a right sinner and i need to make this sacrifice to pay for my sins so it's two things juxtaposed and you just think i'm not sure i get this um but we've got this we've got this uh contrast going on um their celebration was for what they had been released into the land of milk and honey god's provision utterly amazing and also god's provision of the righteousness of the law which was there for them to grasp um and we have concealed in this because this happens on the 50th week and concealed in this is the principle of the jubilee and i haven't got time to go into it this morning but if you in your own time look at leuiticus 25 you'll find that the that the jubilee year was a whole year of sabbath and actually even that's not quite true it was actually 18 months of sabbath because it started before the end of the 49th year and it carried on to halfway through the first year of the next cycle and so you actually had 18 months of sabbath time where the land would just not be farmed where the the jews would depend on god for 18 months um and so this principle of the jubilee is seen there in expressed in years but we're looking at it expressed in days during this period of shavuot um but it's worth a read leuiticus 25 because you everything was restored and returned whatever pickle you got yourself into in the previous 48 and a half years as you come up to the end of the 49th year jubilee starts and carries you through a year from then right through uh oh i'll probably need to turn it back on in a minute um but the during that jubilee year if you had done bad deals and finished up in debt your status was restored your property was returned to you your debts were wiped clean it was a time of freedom in the lord because everything however big a mess you'd made of your life you were restored back to where you were 50 years ago um so all of the things in shavuot if you think of the giving of the law and if you think of the giving of the harvest um they all

confirmed god's covenant with his people and at this point it is a conditional covenant uh if you turn to exodus 19 something else that was stated by the lord at the time of the giving of the law so it's exodus 19 and verse 6 god says to his people um start with verse 5 now then if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples for all the earth is mine and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation these are the words you shall speak to the sons of israel so god's intention in giving the law was actually to make it possible for his people to be a kingdom of priests is that 45 goodness me um so this kingdom of priests they didn't make a great fist of it because they were trying to do it in their own strength now if you quickly flip across to exodus 32 verses 25 to 28 now when moses saw that the people were out of control for aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies then moses stood at the gate of the camp and said whoever is for the lord come to me and all the sons of levi gathered together to him and he said to them thus says the lord the god of israel every man you every man of you put forth his sword on his thigh and go back and forth from the gate to gate in the camp and kill every man his brother and every man his friend and every man his neighbor so the sons of levi did as moses instructed and about three thousand men of the people fell that day they had they had ignored the law they disobeyed the law and the upshot was that three thousand died um so what was needed to change that was a brand new covenant and the brand new covenant that was instituted to take the responsibility for living up to the covenant values away from men operating in their own strength and put it in the hands of men who were operating in supernatural strength is found in the book of jeremiah 31 and if you quickly turn there jeremiah 31 and verse 31 behold days are coming declares the lord when i will make a new covenant with the house of israel and with the house of judah not like the covenant which i made with

[33 : 48] their fathers in the day i took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of egypt my covenant which they broke although i was a husband to them declares the lord but this is the covenant which i will make with the house of israel after those days declares the lord i will put my law within them and on their hearts i will write it and i will be their god and they shall be my people they will not teach again each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying know the lord for they will all know me from the least to the greatest of them declares the lord for i will forget their iniquity and their sin i will remember no more a covenant was needed that would allow people to operate in god's strength and that meant that god had to get into their hearts and change their hearts now i'm going to truncate what i was going to share because of time and maybe i'll revisit it on a future occasion so let's move through to pentecost now because in acts 2 turn there acts chapter 2 beginning in verse 1 so remember pentecost is a name for shavuot is a name for the feast of weeks when the day of pentecost had come they were all together in one place and suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind and it filled the whole house where they were sitting and there appeared to them tongues as a fire distributing themselves and they rested on each one of them and they were all filled with the holy spirit that sounds to me like a heart transforming thing god coming inside people and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit was giving them utterance and it goes on and talks about all the numbers of people that heard the language heard the gospel in their own languages so on this day of pentecost um on both the first and the last because that should have been the last time that pentecost was ever celebrated because jesus fulfilled it and so there was no need to celebrate it anymore but what you had in both cases you had lots of supernatural noise the noise was deafening um you had fire in both cases symbolizing both judgment and holiness tongues of fire rested on them um and in both feasts you had the presence of all nations the two loaves jew and gentile and all the nations that were present on the day of pentecost now what happened on that day instead of three thousand dying three thousand got saved so you had life given to three thousand in peter's first sermon um i'm gonna i'm gonna truncate what i was gonna say and i will return to it if people need me to until this event some things were unheard of one was for god's spirit to be given to people en masse right you had odd examples like elijah and elisha and people like that who were upon whom the spirit of god was bestowed but for god to pour out his spirit on all flesh you remember peter said this is fulfilling the prophecy of the prophet joel when god said he would pour out his spirit upon all flesh um although it was a partial fulfillment of that prophecy nevertheless that's what happened on that day the holy spirit became available to all not as an out there thing but as an in here thing in the heart um the other thing that was unheard of was for each individual to be endowed with the holy spirit rather than it you know you didn't have to be any special quality you didn't have to wear priestly garments you didn't have to go through washings or any of that stuff every individual rather than selecting

individual had the potential to be filled with the holy spirit of god it was unheard of and it was a big arguing point in acts chapter 10 for the spirit of god to be poured out on the gentiles the other loaf and the the last thing i'm going to talk about today is the word for the word of god to be heard in multiple languages there was a prophecy

which i'll leave you to read on your own in uh isaiah 28 that talked about the rebellious cut the rebellious nation of israel hearing god's word in different languages and uh that too was fulfilled at pentecost after israel had rejected their messiah i am sorry that i didn't get on with it more quickly but father thank you so much for this word and we will return and finish this when we next come to do feasts lord thank you that you poured out your spirit on all flesh as a fulfillment of that first shavuot when you gave us the law you gave us the law in the first instance and you enabled us to live by it in the second lord i thank you for the outpouring of your holy spirit and i pray that if anyone here has not experienced that touch of your holy spirit that life-changing touch that father they would seek prayer afterwards father i i just bless your name i thank you so much for your word amen you