



July 26, 2024

These all are the Feasts of the Lord

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

I just finished preparing my messages for the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles that we will observe in Orange Beach, Alabama in just a little over 11 weeks. With our upcoming pastoral visit, and possible surgeries, I wanted to get them finished.

In preparing them, researching, studying, and prayerfully seeking God's help, what struck me is how important these fall Feasts of the Lord are.

Why is it that many who believe in worshipping God on His weekly Sabbath reject worshipping God on His Feasts and annual Sabbaths?

Such arguments that the feasts and holy days were for the Jews or for those under the Old Covenant administration and not for New Covenant believers is presented as a reason.

Does it really make sense to separate the weekly Sabbath from the annual Sabbaths?

Scripture does not make a distinction in the observance of these special days. We have often noticed that statement in Leviticus 23, "*Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.'*" (Lev. 23:2) The list begins in verse 3 by listing the Sabbath as one of His feasts. So the inclusion of the weekly Sabbath is critically important, and then note they are termed "*the feasts of the LORD*" - NOT

the feasts of the Jews. They are given as a “package” to be observed, not singled out.

When Ezra returned from Babylon to reestablish the temple of God and the worship of God at Jerusalem, the altar of burnt offerings was first set up. The people gathered together during the seventh month of the year and then observed the Feast of Tabernacles and the regular burnt offering were offered.

Notice the statement made in the account in Ezra 3. "*Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the LORD.*" (Ezra 3:5) The "appointed feasts of the LORD" would have to include the weekly Sabbath *and* the annual Sabbaths which are found under that designation in Leviticus 23.

The LORD explains several times in the book of Ezekiel the reasons that the house of Israel was sent into captivity. Let's look at just one of them. "*because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols.*" (Ezekiel 20:16)

In V.13 the phrase "*they greatly defiled My Sabbaths*" is used. I realize that this term may not be amplified to specify both the weekly and annual Sabbaths, but there seems to be implication with using the plural word "*Sabbaths*."

In several chapters the celebration of "the Sabbaths and the New Moons and the set feasts" are grouped together (1 Chron. 23:31; 2 Chron. 2:4; 2 Chron. 8:13; 2 Chron. 31:3; Nehemiah 10:33; Ezekiel 45:17). The New Moons are not listed in Leviticus 23 as "holy convocations". Sacrifices were offered on the New Moons. We take note however of them as being important in determining the dates for celebrating the feasts and annual Sabbaths.

Let's examine next a Scripture that is used to reject the observance of the Sabbath and Holy Days, but in reality is actually proof that they were being observed by even the Gentiles in the church. "*Let no man therefore judge you in*

meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ." (AV Colossians 2:16-17) I have left out the italicized words which imply an inaccurate understanding. The word "Sabbath" is in the singular in the Greek. Ascetics were criticizing the members for enjoying food and drink when celebrating the days mentioned. Paul says that the members are to look to the duly constituted teachers in the church to make a judgment about how to celebrate the days. The obvious inference is that the days, (including the Sabbath and the Holy days), were being observed by the members of the church at Colossae. Paul says that they still "are" a shadow of things "to come" which implies a *continued celebration and anticipating a future fulfillment*.

As we know, Paul made a clear but often ignored statement regarding the Feast of Unleavened Bread, "*Therefore let us keep the feast*" (1 Corinthians 5:8). The record of the practices of the apostles and early church is that they celebrated the Sabbath, feasts, and holy days. Yes, all of them.

We'll soon begin another fall cycle of celebration of these important days - feasts of the LORD - that the LORD has given to us to be a blessing and a reminder of God's wonderful plan of salvation and the role that Jesus Christ plays in it.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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