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Grace Bible Church The Seven feasts of the Lord.

In giving the Law for His people, God set several appointed “**feasts of the Lord**” for Israel to observe at specific times during the year, according to Lev 23. These feasts were to be celebrated from the time in the wilderness when God gave the law and would carry on into the future.

The first Holy day God set aside is the Sabbath day, which is to be observed every week.

The seven feasts in Lev 23 were to be celebrated annually: Passover, Unleavened Bread; First Fruits; Pentecost; Trumpets, Atonement, and then Tabernacles.

Each one of these feasts actually pointed to a specific coming event. Looking back from the vantage point of our history, we discover specific prophesied events were fulfilled on the exact feast days that God instituted to commemorate the events.

The Feast of Passover commemorated the deliverance of the Hebrew people from the destroyer that passed over their blood-sprinkled homes as he visited the homes of the Egyptians, taking the lives of the firstborn of every family. The blood that the people were told to put on their doorposts was from a sacrificial lamb. The event that was a foreshadowing of course, of the messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ Who in Joh 1:29 is **the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**

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Now, it's interesting because these feasts point to a literal time on earth when they would be fulfilled by God Himself. The apostle Paul spoke of the importance of these special days in his epistle to the Church at Colossi. In Col 2:16 he said, **Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.**

Here, Paul was admonishing the Church to free itself of legalism. However, he also clearly revealed that the festivals or the feasts were intended by the Lord as prophetic signs of future events. They were **shadows of what is to come.**

As we study the sovereignty of God in this precise alignment of feast days and the significant events in Israel's history and future, we should feel awed by the accuracy of these prophecies being totally fulfilled. God is in charge! He knows the end from the beginning, and He desires for us to seek to understand His will as He unfolds His plan in human history.

The first four of the feasts: Feast of Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of First-Fruits, and Feast of Pentecost were fulfilled at the first advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. The final three feasts, the Feast of Trumpets, the Feast of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled at the Second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's begin with the Passover Supper and look at the accuracy of fulfillment found throughout Israel's history.

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Lev 23:4-5, These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover.

Passover always falls on a full moon, the first full moon of Spring. All Jewish males were required by God to go to Jerusalem three times each year to commemorate these feasts: Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. Passover was the first of these feasts. And notice in verse 5 that this was to begin at twilight. The biblical calendar reckons the beginning of a new day from sunset as God did at creation,

Gen 1:5, And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

So the Passover begins at sunset (twilight or around 6:00 P.M.). Lev 23:5, **In the first month [Nisan, our April], on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight [6:00 PM] is the Lord's Passover.**

The Haggadah, the Jewish liturgy, says that at the Passover, **“In every generation, each person should feel as though she or he were personally redeemed from Egypt.”**

So, in the sacred cycle of festivals, the Passover Supper on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, allows all Jews in all generations since the Exodus to participate personally in the miracle of God's redemption from the slavery of Egypt. However, the Passover holds forth the promise of that final redemption when the Messiah will redeem all

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those who look to Him for salvation.

For almost thirty-five hundred years, Jewish families have gathered to commemorate what God did for them when He delivered them from hundreds of years of slavery in Egypt. At least four times in their history on this day, the fourteenth day of Nisan, the evening the Passover Supper is celebrated, marks some great spiritual and national events in the life of Israel.

It was on that exact day that God made a Covenant with Abraham regarding the Promised Land, Gen 15:18, **On that day** [this is the same day the Passover is celebrated] **the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:** Abraham, the father of the Jewish race was removed from his home and led to a strange land which God promised He would “deed “ to Abraham’s descendants forever. Aside from the obvious obstacle of the strong nations occupying this territory, an even greater obstacle seemed to stand in the way of God’s promise of giving a land to Abraham’s descendants. Abraham and his wife were long past the normal age for childbearing. But, as the Lord later told Abraham in Gen 18:14, **“Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”** The Lord confirmed His covenant with Abraham on the first **Passover**.

God had instructed Abraham to bring a heifer, a goat, a ram, a dove and a young pigeon and cut them in half (except for the birds). When

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Abraham had obeyed, he fell into a deep sleep. Although there are several verses in Genesis which indicate that this crucial event took place on Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan, God has confirmed this fact by His account in Exo 12:41 which clearly states that the Passover Exodus, on the fourteenth of Nisan, occurs on the exact anniversary of the giving of the Abrahamic Covenant, four hundred and thirty years earlier. **Exo 12:41, And it came about at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.**

-The Exodus Passover Supper. On this night God completed the last and most terrible of the ten plagues against Egypt with the destroyer killing the firstborn of Egypt. The Jews had Divine protection during this plague due to their sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the application of its blood to their door posts. The next morning, exactly 430 years from the day when God made His Covenant with Abraham, the Lord brought the children of Israel out of their slavery in Egypt.

- The finding of the book of the Law that Moses wrote. This book had been lost, it was found and celebrated on the Passover Supper, 2Ch 34:14-15, 35:1. 2Ch 35:1, **Then Josiah celebrated the Passover to the Lord in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover animals on the fourteenth day of the first month.**

- The Passover actually portrayed the work of Christ on the Cross with emphasis on redemption. It is no mere coincidence that our Lord was sacrificed on Passover. The remarkable fulfillment of Passover on the **exact day** illustrates a principle which we will see with each one of the

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feasts. Our Lord fulfilled each feast on its appropriate day with the appropriate action.

The next Feast takes place on the 15th Day of Nisan, the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Lev 23:6-8, Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.

Although the Feast of Unleavened Bread is quite distinct from the Passover Feast, it occurs at the same time and lasts seven days from the fifteenth day of Nisan through the twenty-first. During these seven days, Israel was to eat bread without leaven (leaven symbolized sin) in remembrance of their baking unleavened bread in their haste to escape Egypt. However, the week that our Lord died it was only a three day feast and it pointed to the burial of the Lord Jesus Christ and His person.

Unleavened bread portrayed the Hypostatic Union of Christ, for Jesus Christ is called the Bread of Life. He was also born in Bethlehem which in the Hebrew means the House of Bread.

Unleavened bread emphasizes the impeccability of the humanity of

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Christ and therefore His qualification to be our sin offering. During the celebration of Passover, the father takes three loaves of the unleavened bread and places them in a special white linen envelope which has three compartments. In a special ceremony, the father removes the middle loaf from its compartment, breaks it, and then wraps it in a separate piece of white linen and hides it away or buries it. The unleavened bread was to be buried just like our Lord Jesus Christ was the unleavened bread of life buried into the ground. Joh 12:24, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”**

The Passover ceremony of breaking and burying the bread, the middle piece representing the Son of God, very obviously presents the impeccable person of Christ even after He was judged for our sins. God performed this exact ceremony with the burial of Jesus and more importantly, He performed it on the exact day of the Jewish feast. Once again a required Jewish feast was totally fulfilled by the greatest Jew of all, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The unleavened bread that is eaten reminds Israel of that terrible but hopeful night when the Jews ate the sacrificial lamb and unleavened bread in obedience to God’s command. After 430 years they were faced with either imminent disaster or salvation from the slavery and bondage of Egypt. The unleavened bread symbolized the purging out of the sins of pagan Egypt.

The Apostle Paul was thinking of this same principle when he said in 1Co 5:7, **Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump,**

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just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

During Passover, while the Lord sent the destroyer to slay all the first born of Egypt, the children of Israel prepared to leave Egypt in a hurry. There was no time for the leaven to cause the dough to rise, so they were forced to carry unleavened bread as their only food. This became a symbol of their slavery that was transformed into their freedom by the miraculous redemptive act of God, known forever as the Exodus.

So there have been two major events on this day, the fifteenth day of Nisan. First of course, there was the Exodus from Egypt (Exo 12:41). On this day, Nisan 15, God brought the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt on the exact day their father Abraham had prophesied it would happen some 430 years earlier. After the conclusion of the ten plagues, the Egyptian Pharaoh finally let the people go. This is why in Deu 16:3 the bread eaten during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called “the bread of affliction.” This unpleasant tasting bread symbolized all the burden and affliction in Egypt. Once Israel was free, this bread reminded them that they had left behind them the leaven and sinfulness of pagan Egypt, so it now represented freedom.

The second great event which took place was the Crucifixion of Christ, our Passover Lamb who was buried on the Feast of Unleavened Bread,

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the fifteenth day of Nisan.

The third feast that God gave Israel was on the seventeenth Day of Nisan, the Feast of Firstfruits. This was the time for the harvesting of the early crops of spring. God wanted Israel to acknowledge that they owed Him not only the firstfruits, but that all that they had was from God, and that it was a daily gift from His gracious hand.

Exo 23:19, “You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord your God.”

First Fruits occurred on the first Sunday after the Passover. It fell on the third day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Lev 23:9-14. Lev 23:9-11, **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.”**

In our Lord’s day, this feast came on a Sunday and portrayed the resurrection of our Lord who is the first fruits. God wanted a special feast during which the Israelites would acknowledge the fertility of the fine land He gave them.

There are historically important events which have happened on the Feast of Firstfruits, the seventeenth day of Nisan.

- Noah’s Ark Rested on Mount Ararat (Gen 8:4), After the flood

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destroyed all of humanity except for Noah and his family, the ark floated above the waters until, by God's mercy, it finally came to rest, on the seventeenth day of Nisan, on Mount Ararat in Turkey. For a year Noah and his family had floated upon the waters wondering if they would ever see land again. The book of Genesis records this date precisely as the seventeenth day of Nisan (Gen 8:4) and you can easily imagine the descendants of Noah celebrating for generations on this day, the firstfruits of their ultimate safe landing on the hills of the earth.

Most ancient nations, including Israel, began their calendar year in the fall, around Sept or Oct. However, God changed Israel's calendar so that, from the time of the Exodus, their New Year's Day began in the Spring on the first day of the month of Nisan, around March or April. That's why Gen 8:4 calls it **“In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.”**

When Gen 8:4 describes Noah's ark resting on Mount Ararat on the seventeenth day of the ancient calendar's seventh month, it is the same day exactly as the seventeenth day of the new calendar's first month which ultimately became the Feast of Firstfruits for Israel.

Exo 12:1-2, Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.”

- A second great event which happened on the Feast of Firstfruits, the

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seventeenth day of Nisan, is Israel miraculously crossed over the Red Sea. On the night of Passover, when the Pharaoh of Egypt was finally forced by God to let Israel leave Egypt, hundreds of thousands of Jews started out toward freedom. When they arrived at the Red Sea, after camping in the desert, they looked back and saw the approaching Egyptian army. That's when they began the first of many complaints to Moses:

Exo 14:11-12, Then they said to Moses, “Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

Their situation appeared utterly hopeless with the enemy behind them and the seemingly impossible barrier of the Red Sea before them. To the east was the impassable Red Sea; to the west was the enormous Egyptian army; and surrounding was a frightened multitude. Moses turned to the only sure help that exists for any of us.

Exo 14:13-14, But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.”

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Then, before their eyes, God parted the waters of the Red Sea and the Israelites crossed over into a new life as a resurrected nation on the Feast of Firstfruits, the seventeenth of Nisan, to become the firstfruits of a nation reborn from the bondage of Egypt.

- Another great event which happened on the Feast of Firstfruits, the seventeenth day of Nisan was the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As Jesus hung on the Cross in death, the Romans and the Pharisees, who called for His death, and even His followers looked at Him and saw only defeat and death. However, as He said Himself, **Joh 12:24**, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”**

When it falls to the ground and takes root it is soon transformed into new life. It was essential for Jesus to die in order to triumph over death, sin and Satan. The most significant event that took place on the seventeenth day of Nisan is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the firstfruits of all future resurrections into eternal life.

1Co 15:20, But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

Our Lord celebrated this feast by first conquering death Himself, then by offering the Firstfruits to all future resurrections.

In 1Co 1:22, For indeed Jews ask for signs,

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Did our Lord give them any signs that He had been resurrected?

Mat 27:52-53, and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

Apparently these individuals had just recently died because for them to appear to many as a miraculous event, the many would have had to know that they died! This passage tells us the time when all believers who had died were transferred from Paradise in Hades to the third heaven or new Paradise. And to show this transfer was occurring, some were permitted to come out of their tombs, take their former bodies in resuscitation, and announced it in the city. Christ proved that His power over death was not limited to Himself by resurrecting many of the Old Testament saints on this Feast of Firstfruits and offering these saints to God.

The next feast that they would celebrate would be a one-day feast in the first week in June known as the sixth day of Sivan, the Feast of Pentecost. This feast occurred exactly fifty days after the Passover, according to Lev 23:15-21. So it occurred sometime during the first week in June.

Lev 23:15-19, “You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath [a Sunday], from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete Sabbaths [7 x 7 or 49 days]. You shall count fifty days to the day

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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 a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits 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; they are to be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their libations, 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.

God gave very specific directions for counting the proper number of days until the Feast of Harvest which we refer to as Pentecost. It actually marked the summer harvest in which many crops were available. Pentecost then occurred on a Sunday, exactly 50 days after the First Fruits or the resurrection of our Lord. This was another feast totally fulfilled by the Lord.

So the fourth of the seven feasts of Israel took place exactly fifty days after the Feast of the Firstfruits, therefore, the name Pentecost, *penta* meaning *fifty*. The Feast of Pentecost is the second of the three great feasts that all male Jews were required to celebrate at the Temple in Jerusalem every year. And two major events took place on the sixth day of Sivan or the day of Pentecost; and each one introduced a special time of spiritual stewardship to a specific revelation of God.

- The Giving of the Ten Commandments. After leaving Egypt, the

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Jews completed fifty days of journeying into the wilderness of Sinai; and on the third day of the third month, Sivan, the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai.

Israel now waited for three days at the base of Mount Sinai for Moses to return from conversing with God.

Exo 19:10-11, The Lord also said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

Although God had chosen Israel by His grace through Abraham, He now confirmed this covenant, four hundred and thirty years later, by the presentation of His Law on the Feast of Pentecost, the sixth of Sivan, according to Exo 19:1. This entire era, from the giving of the Law on Pentecost until Christ, is known as the Dispensation of the Law. It began a new period of spiritual stewardship and a further revelation of the will of God.

The Jewish teachings also confirm that it was on the sixth day of Sivan that Moses received the Ten Commandments. Also, The Jewish Almanac records that historically, it (the sixth day of Sivan--Pentecost) commemorates the revelation on Mount Sinai when God gave the Torah to the children of Israel. The book, The Jewish Holidays --A Guide and Commentary, describes this Feast of Pentecost as follows: “Shavuot (Pentecost--Feast of Weeks) occurs on the sixth day of Sivan. It celebrates the giving of the Torah, God’s gift to the Jewish

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people.”

In fact, an old Jewish tradition claims that King David was born and also died on the Feast of Pentecost.

The second great event which happened on the sixth day of Sivan; or the day of Pentecost was the giving of the Holy Spirit.

You remember that the Lord rejoined His disciples after His resurrection and taught them for forty days, Act 1:3.

Act 1:3-4, To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised [the Holy Spirit], Which, He said, you heard of from Me;

And the Holy Spirit did come exactly on the day of the feast.

Act 2:1-4, And 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 of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

It must have been a major argument of the disciples following

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Pentecost, as they witnessed to the Jews, that the feasts had been totally fulfilled in a remarkable fashion by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Of the seven Feasts of the Lord mentioned in Lev 23, it is fascinating to note that four of them have had a prophetic fulfillment in the major significant events in the life of Jesus Christ. These are:

1. The fourteenth of Nisan, the Passover Supper-the Last Supper.
2. The fifteenth of Nisan, the Feast of Unleavened Bread - the Crucifixion.
3. The seventeenth of Nisan, the Feast of Firstfruits - the Resurrection.
4. The sixth of Sivan, the Feast of Pentecost - the Giving of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever the Jews had previously thought about the Lord Jesus Christ, they certainly had to admit that it seemed more than coincidental that He was crucified on the Passover, buried on Unleavened Bread, raised on First Fruits, and had sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Four coincidences are hard to explain away, especially when each one is so completely appropriate to its purpose. And there are actually three more Feasts left.

So, precisely fifty days after the Feast of Firstfruits, the day the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, 120 disciples were gathered together in one place to await the promise of Christ. He prophesied that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and on the sixth day of Sivan the Holy Spirit manifested Himself and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with tongues. It is no coincidence that,

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on the same day of Pentecost in which God appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai and revealed to man a new relationship based upon His sacred Law that He again revealed to man a new relationship based on the Holy Spirit.

The next feast to come is the Feast of Trumpets.

The gap between Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets is about 5 months. This time gap represents the mystery age of the Church during which the royal family is being called out.

The Feast of Trumpets could have a double meaning, it could bring in the Rapture and it represents the termination of the fifth cycle of discipline to Israel and the re-gathering of Israel at the Second Advent.

Lev 23:23-24, Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, “In the seventh month on the first of the month [this would be mid-September on our calendar], you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.”

This occurs in the fall or in September. Now, the blowing of the trumpet can refer to two things:

First: The Rapture.

1Th 4:16-17, For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the

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Lord.

1Co 15:51-52, Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

Secondly: The trumpet was a signal for the field workers in Israel to come to the Temple, and the Jews will begin their journey back to the Temple right after the Church is Raptured. Some scholars believe that the final three festivals: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled at the climactic Battle of Armageddon and the ushering in of the Millennium. The Feast of Trumpets begins on the first day of Tishri in the fall (September-October).

As soon as the new moon was sighted in eastern Israel, the watchers would trumpet the signal from hill to hill until the signal finally reached the Temple. On this day the synagogue lesson came from Isaiah, chapters 60 and 61, teaching of that long-awaited day when the Lord is revealed as King and He will be accepted as the ruler of the world. This could possibly be the day for the Battle of Armageddon.

The prophet Joel seems to connect the great Day of the Lord - the Battle of Armageddon - with this day, the Feast of Trumpets. Consider the prophecy of Joel:

Joe 2:1-2, Blow a trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm on My

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holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the Lord is coming; Surely it is near, day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, {So} there is a great and mighty people; There has never been {anything} like it, Nor will there be again after it To the years of many generations.

The prophet Jeremiah may also be referring to Armageddon and the Feast of Trumpets when he says, **Jer 4:5-6, “Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say, ‘Blow the trumpet in the land; Cry aloud and say, ‘Assemble yourselves, and let us go Into the fortified cities. Lift up a standard toward Zion! Seek refuge, do not stand {still,} For I am bringing evil from the north, And great destruction.’”**

Time alone will prove whether this interpretation is correct and whether or not the Battle of Armageddon will begin on Rosh Ha'Shanah, known as the Feast of Trumpets. However, one additional fact supports this interpretation. Both Daniel (9:27) and the book of Revelation (12:6) confirm that the period of the Great Tribulation. It commences with the Antichrist profaning the rebuilt Temple and concludes exactly 1260 days later. That is when the destruction of Antichrist at the Battle of Armageddon by the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

In his attempt to deceive Israel about his Messiahship, it is possible that the Antichrist will enter the Temple, appear to be killed and raised from the dead by Satan on Passover to try and fulfill the prophecies

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and prove his claims (Rev 13:2-8,14). It is remarkable that it is exactly 1260 days from Passover until the Feast of Trumpets, three and a half years later. Two more appointed feasts are yet to be fulfilled: The Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

The sixth Feast is the Day of Atonement which was a day of confession, and it will represent the Jews confessing that Jesus Christ is their Messiah and therefore it represents the Second Advent or the Second coming of Jesus Christ.

Lev 23:27-32, “On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the Lord. Neither shall you do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the Lord your God. If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. As for any person who does any work on this same day [tries to earn salvation through works], that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath”

The Day of Atonement will be fulfilled in a wonderful way when the Lord returns at His second coming. Zechariah’s marvelous passages pictures the reaction of Israel during this time.

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Zec 12:10, “And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.

Zec 13:1, “In that day a fountain will be opened [they will see that their sins have been atoned for] for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

How sorrowful Israel will feel indeed, in the presence of their King.

Zec 13:6, “And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ Then he will say, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’”

The Day of Atonement is the tenth day of Tishri, (Sept-Oct). The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur is the Holiest day in the Jewish calendar. It is the day when all Israel mourns for their sins. On this day, the tenth day of Tishri, and only on this day (Heb 9:7), the High Priest would enter the Most Holy of Holies in the Temple, the place where the Shekinah glory dwelt. He was to wear special clothing, a sacred linen tunic, and enter the Holy of Holies with the blood from the sacrificial animals, and sprinkle the blood before the mercy seat. And for twenty-four hours the people were to do no work but were to spend the entire time confessing their sins that they had committed during the past year.

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The writer of the book of Hebrews describes Christ as our great High Priest who neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Heb 9:11-14, But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The Day of Atonement was to be observed every year. Every fiftieth year they had what was known as the Year of Jubilee. Leviticus 25 describes this celebration: **Lev 25:9-10, “You shall then sound a ram’s horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land. You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.”**

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In this Year of the Jubilee, on the Day of Atonement, all debts were cancelled, slaves were set free, and family lands that had been sold would be returned to their original owners. This was a year of celebration and renewal. Modern Jews refer to the Day of Atonement as Yom Kippur. The word Kippur comes from the Hebrew word *Kapper*, which means *to cover over*. God covers over the sins of His people through the blood of the sacrifice. When Christ was crucified, His blood covered over our sins so that when God looks at a repentant sinner, He no longer sees the sin, rather, He sees the blood of His righteous Son.

The blood sprinkled in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement was a prophecy of that ultimate sacrifice, God's only begotten Son that had to be paid to atone for sins forever. Two historically important events have already occurred on the tenth day of Tishri, and one future event will possibly transpire on this date.

1. Aaron, the High Priest, made Atonement for Israel for the First Time in the Wilderness, Lev 16:1-28. On the tenth day of Tishri, Aaron in the wilderness sacrificed for the sins of his people. This of course, was the first time God commanded it should be done. This first Day of Atonement is recorded during the Exodus in Lev 16:1-28.

2. Israel Saved from Annihilation in 1973, Yom Kippur War. On Yom Kippur, the tenth day of Tishri, the holiest day of the Jewish Year the Arab armies attacked Israel without warning. More than one hundred thousand Egyptian soldiers invaded Sinai against some three thousand Jewish defenders. In a miracle as great as any in Bible times, the

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enemies of Israel paused to regroup at a point when they could easily have overrun the Jewish state. And once again God intervened in this war of Yom Kippur and Israel turned the tide of battle to win against Syria and Egypt.

3. The third great event which will happen and is future is that Israel will Mourn when they see their Messiah whom they Pierced. The prophet Zechariah, after describing the Battle of Armageddon, goes on to describe a supernatural out-flowing of grace to the Jewish remnant several days after their Messiah defends them at the Battle of Armageddon.

Zec 12:10, “And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.”

Rev 1:7, Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.

On this day, Israel’s rejected Messiah will finally be accepted by the nation He chose. The prophet Ezekiel tells of a great day of restoration for Israel:

Eze 36:26, “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your

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flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

Eze 36:33, “Thus says the Lord God, On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places will be rebuilt.”

Paul prophesied of Israel’s greatest Day of Atonement when he declared, **Rom 9:26, “And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, you are not My people, There they shall be called sons of the living God.”**

The seventh and final feast is the Feast of Tabernacles which lasted seven days and represents the perfect environment of the Millennial rule of Christ, Lev 23:33-43; Zec 14:9,16. The Feast of Tabernacles was the third of the three Annual feasts which all Jewish men were required to attend in Jerusalem each year. It begins on the fifteenth day of Tishri, five days after the solemn Day of Atonement.

During this feast of seven days, the people were to live in booths—temporary dwellings made of branches—to commemorate their dwelling in tents for forty years in the wilderness. It is interesting that, on each of the seven days, they were to offer fourteen lambs without blemish (Num 29:15, 32). There is an interesting parallel in the Gospel of Matthew where he lists the genealogy of Jesus, the Lamb of God. The generations from Abraham to David are fourteen, from David to the Babylonian captivity are fourteen, and from the captivity to Christ are fourteen.

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Although there is no clear, scriptural proof of the exact date of the birth of Christ, John's Gospel is very suggestive that the day was in fact the Feast of Tabernacles when he uses the unusual word tabernacled to describe the birth of Christ. Christ's age of thirty-three and a half years at His death on the Feast of Passover, as evidenced by the historical information we have available would correspond precisely to this birth date of the fifteenth day of Tishri, the Feast of Tabernacles. Considering the phenomenon that over forty major events in Israel's spiritual history have occurred on the anniversary dates of Biblical feast or fast days, it is more than probable that the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ also followed this pattern and occurred on the anniversary of the Feast of Tabernacles.

If this supposition is correct, then each major event in the life of our Lord followed one of the three main Feast Days which required all male Jews to come up to the Jerusalem Temple to worship the Lord. He would have been born on the Feast of Tabernacles (the fifteenth of Tishri): crucified on the Feast of Passover (the fifteenth of Nisan) and His promised Comforter, the Holy Spirit, baptized His church with power on the Feast of Pentecost (the sixth of Sivan).

There are two notable historical anniversary events connected with the Feast of Tabernacles and one possible future fulfillment.

1. The Dedication of Solomon's Temple was on the Feast of Tabernacles. The dedication took place on the fifteenth day of Tishri, the Feast of Tabernacles, 1005 B.C., 2Ch 5:2-3.
2. The Possible Birthday of Jesus Christ. The evidence from Joh 1:14

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and tradition indicates that Jesus was born on the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of the year, rather than the traditional date of December 25th.

3. The Beginning of the Kingdom Age, the Millennium. It is possible that this great Feast of Tabernacles will see its prophetic fulfillment in that glorious day when the Lord will usher in the long-awaited Millennium of peace.

Zec 14:9, And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be {the only} one, and His name {the only} one.

Zec 14:16, Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of tabernacles.

On the Feast of Tabernacles, leaders in Jewish synagogues throughout the world read this passage in Zec 14:1-21 which promises in detail their final Messianic deliverance from their persecutors and the beginning of the prophesied Kingdom. At the feast of Tabernacles, Satan and his demons are gone, Rev 20. Optimum spirituality will exist, Isa 65:24; Joe 2:28-29. Israel is restored as a nation and the four unconditional covenants are fulfilled. This pictures the Lord establishing His Tabernacle in Jerusalem during the Millennial reign, Eze 37:26-27.

Eze 37:26-27, “And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them

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and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

So we have the 7 Feasts of the Lord:

1. Passover = Cross
2. Unleavened Bread = Burial
3. First Fruits = Resurrection
4. Pentecost = Giving of the Holy Spirit
5. Trumpets = Rapture-Recall
6. Day of Atonement = Second Advent
- 7 Tabernacles = Millennial Reign

The Feasts Related to the First Advent.

Passover. 1441 B.C.; Ex 12:1-14; Lev 23:5.

This feast portrayed the work of Christ on the Cross with emphasis on redemption. 1 Co 5:7, “Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.”

It also portrayed freedom from slavery and the establishment of a new client nation. People who have capacity are the only people who are ready for freedom and can enjoy freedom. The Passover emphasized redemption, the Cross, and the road to glory in the supergrace life.

The Passover connoted the beginning of God’s plan, Eph 2:8-9.

Unleavened Bread.

This feast lasted for seven days, and it occurred immediately after the Passover. Unleavened bread represents fellowship with God. This feast taught that all Israel is not Israel. To be true Israel, you had to believe in Jesus Christ, Lev 23:6-7. It portrayed phase two or living grace, which is everything God provides to keep you alive in Satan’s world, 1

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Co 5:8. It also portrayed the Hypostatic Union of Christ, for Jesus Christ is called the Bread of Life. So unleavened bread also emphasizes the impeccability of the humanity of Christ and therefore His qualification to be our sin offering.

First Fruits occurred on the first Sunday after the Passover. It fell on the third day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Lev 23:9-14. In our Lord's day, this feast came on a Sunday. This feast portrayed the resurrection of our Lord who is the first fruits. This feast indicated that only those who were regenerate in Israel would live in the future to receive the unconditional covenants, 1 Co 15:20-23.

Pentecost was a one-day feast in the first week in June. This feast occurred exactly fifty days after the Passover, Lev 23:15-21. Hence, it occurred sometime during the first week in June. It represented the beginning of the fifth cycle of discipline for the Jews and their dispersion. It represented the beginning of the Church-age and the times of the Gentiles. Our Lord was resurrected forty days after the Passover. Ten days later the Church-age began on the Day of Pentecost, signified by the baptism of the Spirit which forms the royal family of God.

The Elapse of Time between Feasts for the Church Age.

The gap between Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets is five months. This time gap represented the mystery age of the Church, during which the royal family is being called out. Intercalation means insertion. It is called the intercalation when the Church Age is inserted into the Jewish Age. A new dispensation, the Church Age, was inserted into

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history. The Church-age is the intensified stage of the angelic conflict. The Church-age as an intercalated dispensation was unknown to any Old Testament writer, Rom 16:25-26; Eph 3:1-6; Col 1:25-26. Doctrines pertaining to the Church-age are not found in the Old Testament. No Church-age doctrine was ever revealed prior to the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, except for some principles taught by Christ, as in the Upper Room Discourse.

Doctrine pertinent to the Church-age is intercalated by the New Testament epistles. The Old Testament reveals prophetic doctrine that covered the time until the session of Christ, then it skips the Church-age, and resumes with revelation about the Tribulation, Second Advent, and Millennium. All during the time of the Old Testament, there were no feasts during this period (except in apostasy when some holidays were added).

The Second Advent Feasts.

The Feast of Trumpets, Lev 23:23-25. This feast represented the termination of the fifth cycle of discipline to Israel. It represented the re-gathering of Israel. It represented the establishment of Israel as a nation, Isa 5:26-30, 10:19-23, 11:11-16, 14:1-3, 60:4-6; Joe 2:16ff; Zec 10:6-12.

Since Israel was dispersed during the Church-age, our Lord first re-gathers Israel at the Second Advent. Then He judges the unbelievers, resurrects the Old Testament believers and Tribulational martyrs, and brings them with Him into the Millennium. So this was the assembly

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feast.

The Feast of Atonement, Lev 23:26-32. This feast represented the fulfillment of the four unconditional covenants to Israel: the Abrahamic, Davidic, Palestinian, and New Covenants. These covenants are fulfilled to born-again Jews only, not simply to racial Jews. This means that believers of the Old Testament are resurrected at the Second Advent to go into the Millennium, in order that they might realize the fulfillment of the unconditional covenants. Tribulational believers alive at the Second Advent live into the Millennium to repopulate the earth. While all Israel is not Israel, the born-again Jew is eternally saved through faith in Christ, and he will have the land and the covenants forever. God must keep His Word, especially in an unconditional covenant. Unconditional means these covenants require nothing from man to be fulfilled and executed. The New Testament commentary on this feast (known today as Yom Kippur is found in Rom 3:23-26 and Heb 9:24-28.

The Feast of Tabernacles.

This feast lasted seven days and represented the perfect environment of the millennial rule of Christ, Lev 23:33-43; Zech 14:9,16. Satan and his demons are gone, Rev 20. Optimum spirituality will exist, Isa 65:24; Joel 2:28-29. Israel is restored as a nation and the four unconditional covenants are fulfilled. There will be perfect objectivity in the administration of justice. At the end of the Millennium, there is a revolt of unbelievers who have no capacity for life or freedom, Rev 20.

Hanukkah.

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The Jewish fourth of July held on December twenty-fifth is a holiday that continues until January 1, called Hanukkah. When the temple was cleansed of the pigs' blood from Antiochus Epiphanes and his evil dictatorship over Israel, the nation celebrated their freedom on 25 December 164 B.C. This celebration was a feast of lighted candles, paraded and displayed as a memorial to the restoration of the freedom of spiritual life to the nation.

The Relationship of Feasts to the Agricultural Economy of the Ancient World.

The Passover was held during the time of the latter rains or the barley harvest. This was a reminder of the importance of free enterprise. The Feast of the First Fruits was held during the wheat harvest. It was a reminder that God has provided through free enterprise the only basis for sustaining a nation. Pentecost was the time when early figs ripened. This was a reminder to the Jews that, always under free enterprise, there is opportunity for new business. During the five month lapse, there was the grape, olive, fig, and date harvest. This depicted the principle that even the delicacies of life all come from free enterprise.

The Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles were observed during the early rains and the time of sowing. This was a reminder that as a nation sows against divine institutions, they destroy themselves; but as they sow in the utilization of divine institutions, they become great. In other words, feasts were related to the practical, every-day living of the Jews. Bible doctrine has practical and temporal applications as well as spiritual blessing. Bible doctrine produces common sense.

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The Sabbath Month as a Feast.

The Sabbath month is called Tishri, the seventh month, Sept to Oct. It is related to every blessing concept of grace. The Jews had a thirty-day month and a twelve-month year. Their leap year added a month.

The month of TISHRI had seven feasts.

- The first day of the month was the Feast of Trumpets and the new moon.
- The third day of the month was a special commemoration for the murder of Gedaliah.
- The seventh day of the month was a fast for the golden calf incident.
- The tenth day was the Feast of Atonement.
- On days 15-21 was the Feast of Tabernacles.
- The twenty-second day was the solemn assembly and the prayer for rain.
- On the twenty-third day, the Jews celebrated the dedication of the first temple.

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The 7 Feasts of Israel are certainly among the best of the all Bible studies. This is because it explains so much about prophecy and it really supports the idea of its 3,500 year old declaration of Holy convocation days must be the word of God. It is a one of a kind set up with so many future events that can't be coincidence.