

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
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Christian Soldier 49 How Feast Speak To A Christian Soldier

On Sunday morning I closed with this last slide which said that,,,,,,

Most people don't have enough common sense to realize that life is too short to run around having conflicts with people.

"Life is too short running around caring what other people think."

"It is too short to argue with others and to judge them or become angry with them as they take you away from the plan of God."

Forgive quickly.

Love truly.

Laugh uncontrollably.

And never **regret** anything that makes you smile."

ROM 14:22b Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

It's just not worth it!

No one is worth taking you away from occupation with Christ.

If you're going to have a conflict, get out of the way and move on.

You cannot have personality conflict with someone else without being shot down and getting into reversionism very quickly.

Suddenly, you're advancing in the plan of God toward the enemy with other believers and the then all of a sudden you become petty.

Why?

We really don't know **why** but we do know what.

That may seem like a contradiction but it is not according to the apostle Paul and what he said in ROM 7:18.

ROM 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Now, I have decided not to go back to the people testing involved between those two mature female believers, Euodia and Syntyche, because I believe we have covered more than enough principles concerning people testing.

Look at PHI 4:1 Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long {to see}, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

PHI 4:2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.

PHI 4:3 Indeed, true comrade, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in {the cause of} the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

The divine solution is given in PHI 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

The point is:

It could have been between two men.

It could have been between one man and one woman.

Here we had two doctrinal ladies.

Here we have two supergrace ladies who are engaged in a conflict which is about to destroy their spiritual life and their spiritual advance all because they did not pass people testing.

I said they “*did not pass*” people testing, I did not say they “*could not pass*” people testing because they could if they would or desired to says 1CO10:13b.

1CO 10:13b God will provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it.

There is always a divine solution for any problem we would ever face.

And always remember.....

The **divine** solution is the **only** solution to everything, no matter what comes our way.

When it comes to people testing, we also need to remember that sometimes it's the little things that get to us.

SOL 2:15 "Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom."

It is those little petty areas that can spoil the vine or the fruit that the vine produces.

That's why the Lord said in LUK 16:10;

LUK 16:10 "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much."

Remember where we are in our studies because after we conclude the problem-solving devices with PSD #10, Occupation with Christ, we are now ready to pick up where we left off in our study of the Christian Soldier.

Therefore, we need to be reminded that.....

Upon arrival in the third heaven, our Lord was seated at the right hand of God the Father = the doctrine of the Session.

Then He received His third royal title "King of kings, Lord of lords, the Bright Morning Star."

Now, it was at this time that the human race was elevated higher than the entire angelic creation.

You must remember that.....

Originally, man was created higher than the animal creation and lower than the angels.

This is why David wrote in PSA 8:1 O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth, Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens.

PSA 8:2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes Thou hast established strength, Because of Thine adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

PSA 8:3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;

PSA 8:4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him?

PSA 8:5 Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than [not God, **but the gods**, a reference to both the elect and fallen angels], And dost crown him with glory and majesty.

PSA 8:6 Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet,

PSA 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

PSA 8:8 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

PSA 8:9 O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth.

Now, when our Lord arrived in heaven in His hypostatic union, as a member of the human race.....

He was rewarded by God the Father for His strategic victory in the angelic conflict.

And He was given a brand-new title for this strategic victory.

That brand new title He did not possess before He became a member of the human race is the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the bright and morning star.

This was His third royal title.

His first two are the Son of God and the Son of David.

But.....

Because His third royal title had no accompanying royal family, the Church-age was inserted for the dispensation of the calling out [ekklesia] of a royal family.

However, there would be a change made from David's Psalm in the book of Hebrews.

Let's turn to Heb 2.

What would be the change?

The change is found in Heb 2:5-6, which says For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.

HEB 2:6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, "What is man, that Thou rememberest him? Or the son of man, that Thou art concerned about him?"

That's a quotation from PSA 8:4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him?

HEB 2:7 "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, And hast appointed him over the works of Thy hands;

HEB 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.

That's a quotation from.....

PSA 8:5-6, Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet,

However, notice what is added in HEB 2:7, "Thou hast made him for a little while lower than the angels;
Only for a little while.

David never said that?

Why?

Because Old Testament were not elevated higher than angels because they are not in union with Christ like New Testament saints.

HEB 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. "For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

HEB 2:9 But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

HEB 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

So, because of our union with Christ and because of the ascension and session, Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God and you and I are.....

EPH 2:6 Raised up with Him, and seated with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus,

And that's why HEB 1:3 says And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.

When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

HEB 1:4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent title than they.

HEB 1:5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him And He shall be a Son to Me"?

HEB 1:6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."

HEB 1:7 And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels winds, And His ministers a flame of fire."

HEB 1:8 But of the Son He says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom."

HEB 1:9 "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee With the oil of gladness above Thy companions."

HEB 1:10 And, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of Thy hands;

HEB 1:11 They will perish, but Thou remainest; And they all will become old as a garment,

HEB 1:12 And as a mantle Thou wilt roll them up; As a garment they will also be changed. But Thou art the same, And Thy years will not come to an end."

HEB 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies A footstool for Thy feet"?

God the Father never said this to any angel, but only to Jesus Christ.

It is very significant that God the Father said this to the humanity of Christ in a resurrection body.

This means that.....

Although we are now inferior to angels in our human bodies on earth, in the future in resurrection bodies we will be totally superior to angels.

This was established with our Lord's session.

HEB 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Now,.....

All of this is why this doctrine of ascension and session is the missing link between the resurrection of Christ and the Christian way of life.

Something new had to be created to accompany this new third royalty of Jesus Christ, a new royal family.

His new royalty had to be a new spiritual species, as per 2Co 5:17.

2CO 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Therefore, the dispensation of Israel was interrupted seven years short of its completion which is called theologically intercalation.

Intercalation means to halt what is being done and insert or interrupt it with another premise to follow.

Here the dispensation of Israel was halted and a new dispensation called the Church-age was inserted.

Then the omnipotence of the Father and of the Spirit was made available to all believers.

And the Day of Pentecost is the day the royal family began with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was the first day of the Church-age.

So, the Chronology of events was:

1. Resurrection
2. Forty days on the earth
3. Ascension ten days before the Church-age began.
4. Being seated at the right hand of the Father.

Now, all of these have one doctrine that covers all four principles and that is how the Jews learned the plan of God for their lives.

And that subject is coming up so let's begin the subject of the doctrine of Feasts. These feasts were only Legitimate before the Church Age, before the Canon of scripture was completed.

1. The Passover: This speaks of our Lord's death on the cross. 1CO 5:7, Christ died on the last legitimate Passover (24 hours).
2. Unleavened Bread: Spoke of fellowship with the Lord. One week in duration.
3. Firstfruits: Jesus Christ's resurrection and resurrection of all believers. It was a gift offering, LEV 2:12. Jesus Christ rose on Firstfruits.
4. Pentecost: 50 days after Firstfruits. It begins the 5th cycle of discipline and dispersion of Israel. Sunday was when it was held.
5. Trumpets: 2nd Advent. Israel regathered, end of the 5th cycle of discipline.
6. Atonement: Salvation of Israel, result of the baptism of fire. This is Yom Kippur. It speaks of the four unconditional covenants to Israel at the second advent.
7. Tabernacles: Millennial reign of Christ (7 days). Feast of Dedication, Feast of Lights, December 25, 164 BC.

Between #4 and #5 is the Church Age.

4. Pentecost: Church-age began.

5. Trumpets: The Rapture, 2nd Advent. Israel regathered, end of the 5th cycle of discipline.

Between #4 and #5 is the Church Age.

There are seven feasts which all speak of the Lord Jesus Christ and His work upon the altar of the cross.

The feasts are derived from the word “**Chag**” *has* a root meaning to dance, to be joyous.

The feasts were designed to produce happiness and to relate that happiness to Bible doctrine.

They were designed to express the blessing which comes from the study of the Word of God.

They were designed, then, to be related to Bible doctrine, to lead a believer to the soul structure or ECS (edification complex of the soul).

The feasts were also related to the agricultural economy of Israel.

The Passover was held during the time of the latter rains or the barley harvest.

The firstfruits was held at the time of the wheat harvest.
Pentecost was held at the time of the early figs ripening.

The Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles were held during the early rains or the time of sowing.

So, the feasts were definitely related to the schedule of sowing and reaping in the agricultural economy of Israel.

We also have first advent feasts.

We have the Passover which represents the cross, the Unleavened Bread which represents temporal fellowship with God.

We have the firstfruits referring to the resurrection of Christ, and Pentecost which represents the fifth cycle of discipline or the time of Israel's dispersion. There is a big gap between the first four feasts and the last three.

We have four feasts which take us from the Passover to Pentecost in June.

Then we have a big gap and we start again in October.

This gap represents the period of the Church Age, the time of Israel's dispersion under the fifth cycle of discipline.

We have the second advent feasts. The Trumpets depicted the second advent of Christ and emphasized the fifth cycle of discipline.

Israel was regathered under the principle of the trumpets, the trumpets that blew the assembly, the regathering of Israel at the second advent.

Secondly, the feast of Atonement in which we have an emphasis on the fulfilment of the unconditional covenants at the second advent.

The regenerate of Israel is restored to the land and the covenants are fulfilled.

The third is the Tabernacles which emphasizes the Millennial reign of Christ.

These are all second advent feasts.

The second advent begins the Millennium.

Not ordained but found in John 10:22 was the feast of dedication or Hanukkah which is the independent celebration of the Jews.

JOH 10:22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem;

It was first celebrated on the 25th December, 164 BC, when the temple was cleansed as a result of winning independence in the Maccabaen wars.

All of the feasts in Leviticus, then, had a special concept.

Therefore, let's take a look at the different feasts.

God has established an infinitely meaningful and profound prophetic system through His choices of seven Holy Feasts to be held each year by the Chosen People of Israel.

He dictated the dates and proper observances to Moses on Mount Sinai, and His instructions are recorded in detail for us especially in Leviticus 23.

The events of the New Testament and the vital future events involving the Church and the Jews are ingeniously revealed through the nature of timing of these seven annual feasts.

If I were teaching on the doctrine of Feasts, I could show you that presently we are between two feasts, and that it is ultimately important for us to comprehend God's calendar in its essence.

It should be noted that God was very practical in issuing the seven feasts within one brief chapter of instruction as LEV 23.

They are mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but these vital and fundamental requirements of the Old Covenant were gathered together in simplest form lest no one overlook any of them.

If there was one chapter of the entire Old Testament that the faithful Jew would want to remember, it is the one in LEV 23.

The feasts are celebrated today only by the orthodox Jews who are dogmatic about following the Torah who wish to follow the Old Covenant as closely as possible.

However,

Since their major feature was sacrifice, and since sacrifice is impossible without the proper Temple of God in Jerusalem, the original meaning and efficacy of the feasts has been completely lost.

And without a knowledge of the New Testament, even the fulfillments of the feasts and the most far reaching and momentous features of their meanings are lost.

Believers in Christ are not responsible to keep these feasts, of course, but a knowledge of them greatly enhances their faith.

The Lord kept every one of them without fail, even celebrating Passover on His last earthly night.

We will examine each feast individually, giving the appropriate verse from Leviticus 23.

In each case we will see that there is a wonderful fulfillment in the New Testament as indicated by the nature of the feast.

Let's look at them without giving preference to any one of them over another, so here they are,

1. The first one we will note is the Feast of the Passover which is when the new festival year begins for the Jews because their first month of the New Year is our April.

It is called the Passover and it is to be held at the beginning of spring in the month called Nisan.

LEV 23:5 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover.

In our calendar it would be our fourth month of the year, April, but in the Jewish calendar it is the first month of the year, called the month of Nisan.

The Lord gives a single verse to the direction for Passover, since the children of Israel and Moses had, in effect, recently celebrated it.

Exodus 12 and the ensuing chapters tell the monumental story of the national liberation from Egypt, marked by the terrible night of the tenth plague.

God merely assigns Passover its date, but thereby hangs a fascinating concept and that is.....

God's calendar is a lunar calendar based on the phases of the moon rather than the earth's revolutions around the sun.

Each month starts with a new moon, reaching a full moon in the midst of the twenty-eight-day cycle and Passover always falls on a full moon, the first full moon of spring.

Passover is surely the feast of salvation.

On this day, because of the blood of the lamb being male without blemish, EXO 12:5, the Hebrew nation was delivered from bondage.

EXO 12:5 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.'

Clearly, in both Testaments, the blood of the Lamb delivers from slavery—the Jew from Egypt, the Christian from sin and evil. It is no mere coincidence, then, that our Lord Himself was sacrificed on Passover.

At the meal He stated plainly in MAT 26:27-29.

MAT 26:27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave {it} to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you;

MAT 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

And then He said something very interesting and revealing in MAT 26:29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

The Christian celebrates Passover by participating in the sacrifice of the Lord.

Back in Egypt the Jew marked his house with the blood of the lamb.

Today the Christian marks his house which is His physical body, (1Co 6:19-20), known as the house of the Holy Spirit with the blood of Christ representing His work on the cross.

Today the believer does not have to worry about the Angel of Death will pass over each Christian as surely as he passed over each Israelite in Egypt.

We are already living our eternal life.

The remarkable fulfillment of Passover on the exact day illustrates a principle which we will see with each of the feasts.

Our Lord fulfilled each feast on its appropriate day with an appropriate action up to the point we have now reached in His prophetic plan.

We will see that all seven of the feasts have either been fulfilled, or are prophesied to be fulfilled, with reference to their exact meanings.

Passover then represents our salvation.

We do not keep the feast in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, since that was the mere shadow of the greater redemption to come.

The Lord Himself instructed us to "Do this in remembrance of Me." We do take communion, a part of the original Passover feast, in remembrance of the Lord.

The Passover occurred on April 14, 1441 BC. EXO 12:1-14; LEV 23:5. It portrays the work of Jesus Christ on the cross with special emphasis on redemption.

It also portrays one other principle.

It portrays freedom from slavery, the beginning of a nation.

All nations begin at the point they attain their freedom.

Therefore, it recognizes the principle of freedom in life.

But it also recognizes something else.

The Passover is not the only feast and by virtue of the fact there were other feasts it is a reminder that no one enjoys freedom unless he is in God's plan of grace.

One must have capacity for freedom and this comes from Bible doctrine in the soul.

The Passover is the first of the feasts, it has a dual connotation: freedom and the beginning of a nation.

It connotes at the same time the beginning of God's plan. God's plan begins at the cross. Grace always begins at the point of salvation.

2. The second feast is the Feasts of Unleavened Bread which is on the next night: LEV 23:6.

LEV 23:6 '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.'

God told the Jews to eat only the pure unleavened bread during the week following Passover.

Leaven in the Bible symbolized sin and evil.

Unleavened bread, eaten over a period of time (seven days), symbolized a holy walk with the Lord.

The apostle Paul commented beautifully on the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread, with which he was, of course, quite familiar as a Jewish scholar:

Notice what Paul said in 1CO 5:6-8.

1CO 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump {of dough}?

1CO 5:7 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are {in fact} unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

1CO 5:8 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.

The unleavened bread in the New Testament is a reference to the body of our Lord as the Bread of life as He is described; JOH 6:31-35; 47-58.

JOH 6:31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ' He gave them bread out of heaven to eat. '"

JOH 6:32 Jesus therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.

JOH 6:33 "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world."

JOH 6:34 They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

JOH 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

Also we have JOH 6:47-58.

JOH 6:47 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

JOH 6:48 "I am the bread of life.

JOH 6:49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

JOH 6:50 "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

JOH 6:51 "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh."

JOH 6:52 The Jews therefore {began} to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us {His} flesh to eat?"

JOH 6:53 Jesus therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves.

JOH 6:54 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

JOH 6:55 "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.

JOH 6:56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

JOH 6:57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

JOH 6:58 "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate, and died, he who eats this bread shall live forever."

As "the Bread of Life", He was born in Bethlehem which in the Hebrew means "House of Bread."

He utilized bread as an image of Himself as in 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;

God fed the Israelites in the wilderness with manna from heaven, and He feeds the Christians in the world on the Bread of Life.

The very piece of bread used by the Jews during this week of Unleavened Bread is a good picture of our Lord.

Anyone who has seen the Jewish matzah bread sees that it is pierced and it has stripes throughout the bread like He was as our bread of life.

One verse can describe that like.....

ISA 53:5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being {fell} upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

"They shall look upon me whom they've pierced"), and, of course, He was pure, without any leaven, as His body was without any sin.

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,

Look at JOH 19:37 And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

The Passover ceremony of breaking and burying and then resurrecting a piece of this bread (the middle piece, as the Son in the Trinity) very obviously presents the Gospel.

For those of you who have studied the Jewish Passover with me, you ought to be familiar with some of these principles that I taught before.

God performed this exact ceremony with the burial of Jesus, our precious piece of unleavened bread, and more importantly, He performed it on the exact day of the feast.

Once again, the required feast was fulfilled in a remarkable and unmistakable way.

We see from the Gospel that Jesus was buried at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread since....

His body was taken down from the cross at sundown of Passover Day, the beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan, the first month.

Our "kernel of wheat" as the Bread of Life was indeed placed into the ground at the appropriate moment; JOH 12:32.

It was to rise again, of course, and again in accordance with the schedule of the feasts, as we shall see.

One cannot permanently bury a Christian; 2CO 5:8.

Men have speculated just how it was that Jesus died so quickly on the cross.

Crucifixion normally took three days.
That was the point of it.

The victim died by inches as the people passed the cross, morning and night, morning and night.

The Romans utilized this slow and terrible way of death to terrify the population of Israel from breaking the rules.

As citizens or visitors walked into the city of Jerusalem, the first thing they would see would be individuals suffering on the cross for days warning those who are entering the city what happens when you break Roman Law.

We see in the Gospel that....

The centurion was not ready to believe that the young, strong carpenter of Galilee was dead in just six hours; from 9:00 a.m. ("The third hour") and taken down at 3:00 p.m.

The speculation is ended of course, if we simply understand the schedule of the first two feasts.

Our Lord died in time to be buried at sundown that day.

He was placed on the cross at 9:00 a.m., "the third hour," and then taken down at 3:00 p.m., when God the Father finished judging His Son for the sins of the world.

There was then time enough to wrap the body and bury it at sundown.

The answer to why He died in six hours is that His work was finished and so in.....

JOH 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.

Our Lord never omitted a feast.

He said pointedly enough that no one could take His life from Him, "I lay it down and I take it up again."

Two passages emerge here.

The first one is found in JOH 2 beginning in verse 18.

JOH 2:18 The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?"

JOH 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

JOH 2:20 The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

JOH 2:21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

The second passage is even clearer; JOH 10:17-18.

JOH 10:17 "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

JOH 10:18 "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

3. The third feast is held on the Sunday following Unleavened Bread: LEV 23:10-11.

LEV 23:10 "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.

LEV 23:11 '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.

God wanted a special feast during which the Israelites would acknowledge the fertility of the fine land He gave them.

They were to bring the early crops of their spring planting ("First Fruits") to the priest at the Temple to be waved before the Lord on their behalf.

They were not to offer the less of their produce but the best of their produce, the first fruits and not the leftovers.

This was to be done "the day after the Sabbath," or Sunday.

Since the feast of Unleavened Bread was seven days long, one of those days would be a Sunday and that Sunday would be First Fruits each year.

We have come to call this feast Easter, after the Babylonian goddess, Ishtar, the pagan goddess of fertility.

We even continue to worship the objects of fertility—the rabbit, the egg, new outfits, etc., but the celebration was to be over God's replanting of the earth in the spring.

We miss a very important biblical truth by **NOT** using the term "First Fruits" as the name of this feast, because "first" implies a second, a third, and so on, and that is the real meaning of the feast.

We do not merely celebrate the resurrection of the Lord on First Fruits, on which it indeed occurred, but even more so, the resurrection of the entire Church as we will note.

We shall all be resurrected and go to heaven, just as the Lord did, "Every man in his own order." The apostle Paul presented this brilliantly when he wrote 1CO 15:22-23.

1CO 15:22-23, For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.

Paul makes very clear the real point of the feast which is the Doctrine of Resurrection.

The resurrection of the Lord Himself is the great news and worthy of a celebration, but we are not so surprised by it.

After all, the Lord could raise the dead Himself; He walked on water.

He is God's Son.

The real miracle is that each of us as ordinary mortal sinners will experience this resurrection.

We apparently all have a part in the first resurrection because of what the apostle Paul also said in 1CO 15.

1CO 15:12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

1CO 15:13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;

1CO 15:14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

1CO 15:15 Moreover we are even found {to be} false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

1CO 15:16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;

1CO 15:17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

1CO 15:18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

1CO 15:19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

The Resurrection of Christ is the pattern for the First Resurrection.

The first resurrection is pictured as a battalion pass-in-review, and therefore, is divided into four echelons, 1CO 15:20-24.

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

1CO 15:21 For since by a man {came} death, by a man also {came} the resurrection of the dead.

1CO 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.

1CO 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.

1CO 15:24 then {comes} the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.