**Exodus IX**

**Party Time!**

Last week:

The Golden Calf. Exodus 32-34 We saw three things:

The golden calf is the story of the ever-present threat of apostasy. Of losing our salvation and dying in the desert, either by turning back to Egypt or by turning aside to idols.

Before Moses even came back from receiving the 10 commandments, the Jews were already reveling in idolatry.

What would the bull be for you? A relationship? A job? A momentary pleasure?

The golden calf is the story of Moses as intercessor for God’s people.

Moses offered to be cut off from God for the sake of his people.

This is EXACTLY what Jesus did. Moses offered. Jesus went through with it for our sake.

So, the golden calf story is about the ever-present threat of apostasy, but also of Moses as mediator and as one who would sacrifice himself so that we could be saved.

The golden calf is the story of God’s amazing mercy and patience with his people, despite their stubborn sin and desire to return to Egypt.

Today we will finish Exodus.

Exodus 35-40 is the account of the Jews doing what God had commanded. They built the tabernacle “exactly like the pattern I will tell you (Exodus 25:9)

Why? Hebrews 8:5-6 Because it is a scale model (hupodeigma) and a shadow (skia) of the true, heavenly tabernacle in heaven.

Exodus 40 The Glory of the Lord in the Tabernacle!!!! Hebrew *shekina*

Remember: There were two reasons God had them build the Tabernacle (and later the temple in Jerusalem)

1. Because it was a scale model of the true Tabernacle in heaven.

Altar of sacrifice.

Laver

Shew bread

Menorah

Altar of incense

Curtain (cherubim)

Ark, mercy seat, cherubim where God dwelt in his glory.

2. So God could dwell among his people in the wilderness. Exodus 40:36-38

Exodus 40:34-38 God is dwelling with his people!!! John 1:14 Jesus tabernacled among us! Imagine the spectacle!

The *shekinah* glory or presence of God

Imagine how cool it would have been, every morning to see the pillar of cloud, and every evening to see the pillar of fire, right there in the middle of the camp!!! God—YHWH—is literally dwelling with his people.

But surely that is true, in still greater measure, as the Holy Spirit dwells in us.

The Tabernacle in the Desert tells us two things:

God wants to dwell in an intimate relationship with his people.

Outside of Christ, our access to God was VERY limited. In Christ we have full access. That is why Christ came!

What a great moment for Israel. God is dwelling, literally, among his people.

3 tribes (Reuben, Simeon and Gad) on south, 3 (Dan, Asher and Naphtali) on north, 3 (Juday, Issachar and Zebulun) on east, 3 (Ephraim, Menassah, Benjamin) on west.

But… Speaking of the Tabernacle, we will take one rather long side-trip to look at the Jewish festivals (one of which commemorates being camped around the Tabernacle in the wilderness), initially described in Exodus 23:14-19 AND Exodus 34:18-24

We will learn two things from these Jewish festivals:

1. God wants us to party—to take time to stop working, and to enjoy the simple pleasures of having a relationship with him!

2. Beautiful symbolism. Amazing Bible-inspiration-proving prefigures and foreshadows in these festivals of New Testament realities.

Exodus 23:14-19

Two seven-day festivals for which the Jews were later to travel to Jerusalem to celebrate:

1. v. 15 Unleavened Bread Barley harvest time late March of early April.

2. v. 16 Festival of Harvest, also called the Festival of weeks in Exodus 34:22 Feast of Weeks. We call it the Feast of Pentecost. May. Wheat harvest.

Why? It comes 49 days after the Feast of Firstfruits and 50 days after the Passover.

3. Festival of Ingathering, which we call the Feast of Tabernacles, at time of the Fall fruit (especially grape) harvest in late August or early September.

Let’s back up and look at all of the Jewish festivals.

The Jews had a lot of festivals:

1. Rest every Sabbath.

2. Sabbath years Leviticus 25:4 But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to the Lord. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines…

3. Jubilee years Leviticus 25:8f. Every seven Sabbath years they had a Jubilee year of rest.

There were seven principle festivals/feasts in the Jewish Calendar. God was really into his people celebrating their life in him!!!! Let us take a hint and begin celebrating our relationship with God more!!!

Two categories:

One-day Festivals. Purpose: to celebrate and to remember a specific event in our relationship with God.

Passover, Feast of First Fruits, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), Feast of Trumpets, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

Seven-day Festivals. Purpose: to celebrate aspects of our relationship with God. Unleavened Bread Tabernacles/Booths

The point of all this: Sometimes, we need to STOP WORKING.

Sometimes we need to simply enjoy what we have in Jesus Christ.

My decision: I refuse no not enjoy being a Christian.

God is like a parent. His greatest joy is for us to experience the joy of our salvation, of our relationship with God and of our relationships with one another.

Is there hard work for those in the Kingdom? Yes!

**A. The Passover. Pesach. Exodus 12:25-27**

The final plague. God sent the destroying angel to kill all the firstborn in Egypt.

The people are under a death sentence. We, too, were under a death sentence (because the wages of sin are death).

God: Kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood on the wooden beam above the door of your houses.

Jesus was killed the eve of the Passover!!!! Is this coincidence??

The event is a foreshadow of the death of Jesus on the Cross.

The blood of the Passover lamb saved the first born of Israel from physical death.

The blood of Jesus, shed on Passover saves us from spiritual death.

The Passover freed Israel from physical bondage to physical slavery.

The death of Jesus freed spiritual Israel from spiritual bondage to sin.

The Passover required an unblemished lamb.

Jesus was an unblemished lamb. Jn 1:29 Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. 1 Cor 5:7-8 Jesus is our Passover lamb. Rev 13:8 The lamb “slain from the foundation of the world.”

**We should celebrate our freedom from slavery to sin in Christ!**

**B. The Feast of Firstfruits.** Leviticus 23:9-14. This was a harvest feast. They brought the very first green heads of the wheat crop as a confident statement that God will bring in the harvest.

An anticipation-of-the-harvest festival.

What is this a foreshadow of? The Resurrection of Jesus!!!

Feast of Firstfruits is celebrated “The day after the Sabbath (Leviticus 23:11) What Sabbath? The Passover Sabbath. In other words, two days after the Passover meal. Passover Meal (14th of Nisan), Sabbath (15th of Nisan), Feast of Firstfruits (16th of Nisan).

Guess what! Jesus rose from the dead on the day of Firstfruits.

Not a coincidence. Jesus: the whole OT is about me.

Jesus is the firstfruits of those who will be harvested for eternal life.

God told us in Leviticus!!!!!

1 Corinthians 15:20,21 The resurrection of Jesus, like the feast of Firstfruits is a promise of a future harvest!

**We should celebrate our present and future resurrection in Christ!!!**

**C Feast of Unleavened Bread.** A 7-day feast.

Exodus 12:17-19

For seven days no yeast is to be found in your house. Most Jews think of this as part of the Passover.

Feast of Unleavened Bread = Celebrating a life lived free of sin.

**17**“Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. **18**In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. **19**For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And anyone, whether foreigner or native-born, who eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel. **20**Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.”

**For us: Every single day is a feast of unleavened bread. We need to celebrate our freedom in Christ!**

**D Feast of Weeks/Pentecost.** 50 days after the Passover Sabbath (Pentecost) and seven weeks after Firstfruits (Weeks)(Leviticus 23:15-17)

The Feast of Weeks was a harvest festival. It celebrated the first of the wheat harvest in late May. Jews were to bring the first fruits of their harvest to offer in Jerusalem

Purpose for the Jews: To remind them where their blessings come from. To acknowledge that even though they do the work, God produces the crop.

Foreshadow for us: Pentecost was a foreshadow of the beginning of the harvest of souls for eternity.

Pentecost was a foreshadow of the day of Pentecost when the Church began.

Acts 2:38 The first gospel message preached. The birthday of the church.

The physical harvest festival was a foreshadow of the spiritual harvest

Let us never forget the message of the Feast of Weeks: (1 Cor 3:5-9)

“I planted, Apollos watered but God gave the increase.

**Let us celebrate the harvest of souls for eternity!**

**E. The Feast of Trumpets** (rosh hashannah, yom teruah)

The Jewish New Year.

On the day of the New Moon, the ram’s horn was blown. (Lev 23:23-25)

Jewish tradition: Rosh Hashannah was symbolic of God’s judgement.

Rabbis: Pull an all nighter because you “do not know the day or the hour.” (Matthew 24:36)

It was a day devoted to reflection and repentance

Foreshadow: The Feast of Trumpets is a foreshadow of the day Jesus comes again, bringing in the final Judgement.

The Feast of Trumpets is a foreshadow of Jesus!!!

The feast of Trumpets: be ready! You know not the day or the hour of God’s coming.

Matthew 24:30,31 a loud trumpet call…

1 Cor 15:51-53 The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised.

**The point: We need to take time out to consider whether we are ready for the coming of Jesus.**

F. **THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (*yom kippur*)**

The most significant feast in the Jewish calendar.

This was the day God provided for forgiveness of his people.

Tremendous symbolism.

1. High priest washes his entire body with water from the laver and puts on a sacred linen garment.

2. High Priest sacrifices a bull and a lamb and sprinkles the blood at the altar and around the Holy Place. The Priest had to have his sins forgiven before he could enter the Most Holy Place to make atonement for the people.

3. Two goats selected. One is killed. His blood for the people. The body burned outside the camp.

4. Lay hands on the other goat, symbolically passing all the sin of the people for the entire year onto him. Send this goat out of the camp into the wilderness.

5. Put two handfuls of incense into a censer, surreptitiously placing it behind the curtain. When the Holy of Holies is totally filled with smoke (making it safe to enter)

6. High Priest enters Most Holy Place, scattering blood of a bull and of the goat on the Mercy seat, making atonement for all the people for that year.

7. Scape goat Azazel chased into the wilderness and bodies of the goat and bull burned outside the camp. All this is a foreshadow, or course, of the work of Jesus. Heb 9:23-24

1. Jesus does not need a bull or a ram to forgive his sins. He can walk right into the Holy of Holies.

2. Jesus enters the heavenly Holy of Holies, once and for all… No further need for daily, weekly, monthly or yearly sacrifice. The work of atonement is done.

3. Jesus was sacrificed outside the camp, representing the putting of the sin of the people outside the camp. God removes our sin from his presence. Heb 13:11-14

**The Day of Atonement is a foreshadow of the day you, personally, are forgiven of all your sins.**

**Hebrews 9:11-15. Amen!**

**G. Booths/Tabernacles/Sukkot (also called the Feast of Ingathering)**

The seven day Feast of Tabernacles or *sukkoth* (literally, tabernacle) as it is known in Hebrew. It is one of the three feasts commanded by the Lord that all males

should annually attend (Ex. 23:17; 34:23) and what Josephus calls the “most holy and most eminent” of the three feasts of the Hebrews.

To the Jews (and in the gospels) it is simply known as “the feast.” (like us who say “the holidays” and we know which one we are talking about)

1. Harvest Festival (Fall Harvest) In Exodus it is called The Ingathering.

2. A remembrance of wilderness wandering—of living in intimate fellowship with God.

Details in Leviticus 23:33-43 note v. 41-43. A camp-out trip with God.

Message: We need to spend time to celebrate being in a relationship with God.

In NT 2 Cor 5:1-5

Jesus’ point: I am tabernacling with my people (John 1:14 The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us)

**Summary on Tabernacles: We need to celebrate life in fellowship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit**