

Chapter 12 - Parallel Temple Services

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If he [Jesus] were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.

– Hebrews 8:4,5 (insertion mine)

Shortly after the Exodus, God commanded Israel to observe six religious services each year that are parallels of six processes within the Plan of Salvation. After the time of King David, males were required to attend three of these religious services in Jerusalem.

These three feasts were associated with three crop harvests. (Exodus 23:14-17) God designed these earthly events so that participants would consider the real events that would take place in Heaven.

The six services were:

1. The Feast of Passover*
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread
3. The Feast of Weeks or “Pentecost”*
4. The Feast of Trumpets
5. The Day of Atonement
6. The Feast of Ingathering or “Tabernacles”*

(Means attendance was required in Jerusalem.*

The first three services took place in the spring and the last three took place in the fall. The timing of these services was very specific.

End Time Parallels

As we examine these six services, we will focus on how they shadow key events that transpire within the Plan of Salvation. When God implemented these six services, He already knew how He was going to bring the drama of sin to an end.

So, the story of Israel’s miraculous deliverance from slavery in Egypt contains several important parallels about the saints being delivered from the bondage of sin. Think about this. God knows the end from the beginning. He did marvelous things long ago that prove to be awesome parallels of coming events! With this thought in mind, let us consider the story of the night the Lord passed over Egypt.

The Lord said to Moses, **“Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire – head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord’s Passover. On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn – both men and animals – and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.”** (Exodus 12:3-13)

The Rest of the Story

“The Israelites did just what the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron. At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead. During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, ‘Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Lord as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me.’ The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. ‘For otherwise,’ they said, ‘we will all die!’ ” (Exodus 12:28-33)

The Passover described in Exodus 12 occurred in 1437 B.C. For centuries the Jews have observed the Feast of Passover to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt. However, the Feast of Passover is more inclusive than that. It is a parallel of what God plans to do at the end of time. Consider these seven parallels:

1. First Passover – God’s people were miraculously delivered from slavery.

End-time Parallel (ETP) – God’s people will be sealed and then physically delivered from the bondage of mortality.

2. First Passover – Everyone in Egypt was notified that the firstborn (man and beast) had been placed under the curse of death. This announcement produced two groups of people: believers

and unbelievers. Believers put blood on their doorposts.

ETP – The inhabitants of the world will be notified they are under the curse of death. There will be two groups of people: believers and unbelievers. The believers accept Christ's atonement and will obey the message which the 144,000 will proclaim.

3. First Passover – God kept His covenant with Abraham and took Abraham's descendants to the "Promised Land."

ETP – Jesus will keep His promise and return to Earth at the appointed time. He will take the saints to the "Promised Land," that is, the Earth made new.

4. First Passover – There was a Sabbath rest test in Egypt and persecution before the Exodus.

ETP – There will be a Sabbath rest test and persecution for the inhabitants of Earth before the great Exodus of the saints at the Second Coming.

5. First Passover – God "passed over" every house in Egypt and He checked the door posts of every house to see who believed His word.

ETP – God will "pass over" every human being and save each person who believes His word.

6. First Passover – God sent ten plagues upon a defiant Egypt.

ETP – God will send 14 plagues upon a defiant Earth during the Great Tribulation (seven first plagues called seven trumpets and seven last plagues called seven bowls).

7. First Passover – God destroyed Pharaoh and his army with water.

ETP – God will destroy the Antichrist and his armies with fire.

The Passover is a end-time parallel of God's judgment of man. The judgment of mankind is a topic of utmost importance and yet, few people know anything about it. The Bible says, "**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**"

(2 Corinthians 5:10)

For now, simply remember that the observance of a Passover feast was far more significant than merely celebrating an escape from Pharaoh and Egypt. God not only sees the past, but also knows where He is going and wants His children to know His plans!

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

"Celebrate the Feast 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. 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. For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.” (Exodus 12:17-20)

The observance of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are inseparably joined. The Passover was celebrated on the 15th day of the first month and the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the same day. The term “feast” may be misleading since God required Israel to search their homes for yeast and then dispose of it. They were to eat yeast-free bread for seven days. The Hebrews understood that yeast produces fermentation. Consequently, a little bit of yeast will “infect” the batter. (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

On the other hand, unleavened bread has no yeast. God aligned the Feast of Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread because He wanted Israel to see the connection between deliverance and purity of heart. God’s goodness and grace do not lessen His demands for a pure heart. (Revelation 21:27; 22:15)

This is why sinners need the sealing so badly! The Hebrews were to thoroughly search their homes for yeast and remove any trace of it before Passover began. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was to remind them that they needed to be constantly on guard against the yeast of sin in their homes and lives.

We still need to guard against the yeast of sin, especially as we wait for the final “pass over” and appearing of our Lord. We must search our heart often and remove any known sin. The devil is a master at gradualism. Sin creeps in slowly, but steadily. Sin will overtake an individual, as well as a whole nation, if it is not firmly resisted. The history of Israel (indeed, all nations) confirms this point.

In the Scriptures, the figurative use of yeast represents the fermenting process of sin and is demonstrated to be vain, foolish, even intoxicating ideas of man. (Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; Revelation 18:3) Men and women may try to excuse sin, justify sin, defend sin, rename sin, promote sin, exalt sin or extol the benefits of sin, but make no mistake – sin is deadly!

God hates sin and He forbade the Jews from presenting any offerings to Him that contained yeast! (Exodus 23:18) Jesus warned His disciples, “. . . **But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**” (Matthew 16:11-12)

These words are certainly applicable today. There are seven religious systems in the world today. Each one is full of yeast. The doctrines of the world’s religious systems have fermented and are unacceptable to God. In the last days, the servants of God, the 144,000, will present the unleavened bread of Life to the world and every person on Earth will have an opportunity to choose life or reject the truth.

Revelation's story indicates that many, if not the majority of people, will reject the bread of Heaven because they prefer soft bread; doctrines fermented with the yeast of sin.

Three Presentations of First-fruits

Passover always occurs in the spring, between April 3 and May 2. On the Sunday following Passover, the high priest presented the "firstfruits" of the winter harvest before the Lord. (Leviticus 23:11) This presentation of firstfruits (wheat, barley, oil and wine) was a shadow of a resurrected Jesus presenting Himself before the Father.

Jesus is the Firstborn of the dead, the preeminent One risen from the tomb. (Revelation 1:5) Because the firstfruits at Passover were always presented on Sunday, so Jesus presented Himself to the Father on Sunday morning as the Firstfruits of the dead. (John 20:17)

Consider the elements of the Passover feast: The Passover Lamb represents Jesus, the Lamb of God. The yeast-free bread eaten at Passover represents a sinless Jesus, the unleavened Bread of Life that came down from Heaven. (John 6:35) The life and teachings of Jesus have no impurity or fermentation in them.

The unfermented wine used at Passover represents the pure blood of Jesus that was shed for our sins. (Luke 22:20) Jesus could not be a perfect substitute for us if there had been any sin in His life.

The first harvest of the year occurred at the time of Passover. As a winter harvest, it was also the smallest harvest. This harvest foreshadows the ascension of Jesus with a small, but triumphant group of people who were resurrected from the cold winter of death.

This group of people includes the 24 elders mentioned in Revelation. (Matthew 27:52,53; Ephesians 4:8; Revelation 4:4; 1 Corinthians 15:20) The 24 elders, two witnesses from each of the twelve tribes, are representatives of the human race. These 24 elders were taken to Heaven in A.D. 30. to serve as human observers in Heaven's court.

They will testify to all the saints in days to come about the courtroom process when Jesus "passed-over" the records of every person to determine their eternal destiny.

The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)

"Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the Lord. From wherever you live, bring two loaves made of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as a wave offering of firstfruits to the Lord." (Leviticus 23:16,17)

The Feast of Weeks was celebrated at the time of the spring harvest. The spring harvest was larger than the winter harvest at Passover. This one-day feast occurred in late spring or early summer (June/July). In Christ's day, this feast was called "Pentecost" because the Greek word

for Pentecost means “fiftieth day.”

The count of fifty days began with the waving of firstfruits on Sunday after Passover. The count of fifty days included seven seventh day Sabbaths (or seven full weeks). Then, on the 50th day (always on a Sunday), the Feast of [seven] Weeks was celebrated with a presentation of firstfruits from the spring harvest.

Farmers understand that when there is zero rainfall there is zero harvest. This feast illustrates the essential work of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit is to soften and influence the human heart toward spiritual matters. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Unless a person is born of the Spirit, he or she cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)

This feast demonstrates that God is able to bring life, even a bountiful harvest, from the cold soil of a carnal heart if individuals will open up and receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God wanted the Jews to understand that men may work the soil of the heart and plant seeds of truth, but it is only through the power of the Spirit of God that spiritual life occurs.

The beauty of the shadow of this feast is that even though the human heart may be cold or even dead to spiritual things, God can produce a wonderful transformation through the power of the Spirit!

Acts 2 records a wonderful event that illustrates the shadow of this feast. Ten days after Jesus ascended, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples at Pentecost and 3,000 people became baptized believers in Christ that day! (Acts 2:41) This harvest of souls came from the toil of Christ Himself.

He had traveled from village to village, healing the sick, lame and blind. He had preached freedom to people ensnared by twisted religion and superstition and He removed the yeast of foolish dogma with pure words of life. The disciples and these 3,000 baptized believers were the firstfruits from the gospel of Christ. (Matthew 7:28,29)

Their conversion was the result of the work of the Holy Spirit!

God’s timing is always perfect and the event described in Acts 2 was no exception! Attendance at Pentecost was required so Jewish males came to Jerusalem from many nations. (Acts 2:9-11) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was verified by signs and wonders and Peter boldly took advantage of the occasion.

What a tremendous opportunity to tell of a risen Jesus to those Jews who had gathered from every corner of the world! As a result of *that* Pentecostal event, Israel was widely and powerfully informed about the appearing of Messiah, their corporate guilt for rejecting and killing Him, and the ascension of the risen Savior!

Through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, 3,000 Jews became convinced that Jesus was the Messianic fulfillment of Scripture! (Acts 2:22; Acts 13:48) I also suspect that the testimony of those resurrected with Jesus 50 days earlier gave immutable proof that Jesus was indeed

risen from the dead. (Matthew 27:52,53)

Passover, Pentecost and Ingathering

Consider the three presentations of firstfruits. The presentation of firstfruits at Passover represents a risen Jesus. He is the firstborn (the preeminent of men) among those who have died. (Revelation 1:5) The small winter harvest at Passover represents a small group of people that Jesus took to Heaven at the time of His ascension including the 24 elders.

The second presentation of firstfruits occurred at Pentecost and these firstfruits from the spring harvest foreshadowed the disciples and the 3,000 people that were baptized at Pentecost in Acts 2. These were the first Christians. The Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2, is the only Pentecost that stands out in the history of Israel since the initial Exodus.

It is widely known because the Holy Spirit *rained* on those gathered in Jerusalem in A.D. 30 to celebrate this Pentecost. The outpouring of Holy Spirit power changed hearts and produced “born again” people. (Romans 8:5; 1 Peter 4:3-6) Since that day, the gospel of Christ has not stopped.

The gospel continues to spread throughout the world (Colossians 1:6) and the reverberations of that Pentecost continue! The gospel of the kingdom is still alive and the early rain of the Holy Spirit is still producing a harvest. The time has almost come for Earth’s final harvest represented by the Feast of Ingathering. There is going to be a powerful out pouring of Holy Spirit power upon the whole world. (Joel 2:27,28) The fall harvest is the largest harvest and the book of Revelation says the 144,000 servants of God will be the firstfruits of the final harvest. (Revelation 14:4)

John also says that the final harvest will be so great that no one can count the number of those who come out of the Great Tribulation! (Revelation 7:9-14) God designed these feasts thousands of years ago because He wants us to understand His plan to save us!

The Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets was the first of three convocations held in the seventh month of the year. According to Jewish history, the seventh new moon of the year (or Tishri 1) was marked by a very noisy feast. Priests were arranged in groups and these groups took turns throughout the day sounding their trumpets! Even after the feast was over, trumpet blasts could be heard evening and morning for eight more days. The Bible simply says, “**On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets.**” (Numbers 29:1)

The Old Testament does not provide much detail about the Feast of Trumpets. However, we can easily determine the purpose for the Feast of Trumpets with a little investigation. The sounding of trumpets in ancient times was the equivalent of sounding a siren. (Joel 2:1)

The trumpet was used in ancient war much like the bugle was used in the Civil War that happened in the United States in the 1860's. The sounding of the trumpets was designed as a warning to every man, woman and child that the ultra-serious Day of Atonement was about to arrive. *God's love for humanity moves Him to notify people when the time of judgment arrives.*

The ancient Day of Atonement was regarded as an extremely solemn event because that day marked the end of mercy. God required all known sins be transferred to the sanctuary *before* sundown on the tenth day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 16; 23:27-32)

Remember, in ancient Israel a new day began at evening, so the evening of the tenth day is followed by the morning of the tenth day.

To show the children of Israel just how serious He was about the end of mercy, God told Moses that if any household was found guilty of unconfessed sin on the Day of Atonement, that household was to be cut off from the camp. In other words, the heritage of each Jewish family was at stake on the Day of Atonement.

So, the Feast of Trumpets served as an impressive announcement that something very serious was about to take place. According to Jewish literature, the priests warned Israel of the approaching Day of Atonement for nine days as they sounded their trumpets throughout the nation.

Although no work was allowed on the Day of Atonement, it was unlike the other annual feasts because it was truly a day of fasting and supplication.

The Feast of Trumpets notified the nation of Israel that only a few days remained to make sure everyone was fully reconciled with each other as well as with God. The first nine days of Tishri were dedicated to soul searching and reflection.

Each person within the household was to be sure their sins had been *transferred* to the Altar of Burnt Offering. According to Jewish rabbis, the phrase, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" was often spoken during the first nine days of the seventh month. Meeting with God was not a casual matter.

The Hebrews understood that God's displeasure could be aroused and fire from God could consume thousands in a matter of seconds. (Numbers 16, Psalm 78:21) They also knew, however, that God was a God of love who does not want one person to be destroyed. (Deuteronomy 7:9; Isaiah 55:6-7; Matthew 18:14)

End-Time Trumpet Parallel

The parallel between the Feast of Trumpets and the Seven Trumpets described in Revelation is obvious and important. The sounding of trumpets at the Feast of Trumpets is a shadow of the sounding of seven trumpets in Heaven during the Great Tribulation.

Consider this parallel for a moment: In ancient Israel, God terminated the offer of salvation at sundown on the 10th day of the seventh month (the Day of Atonement). In our time, God will terminate the offer of salvation when the seventh trumpet sounds. (Revelation 10:7; 11:15-19)

God's love for humanity moves Him to notify people when the time of judgment arrives. Consequently, when the seven trumpets begin to sound in Heaven, there will be corresponding events on Earth. (Remember the Heaven-Earth-Linkage-Law?) As the trumpet judgments fall on Earth, 144,000 servants of God will proclaim to the world, **"Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water."** (Revelation 14:7)

When the seventh trumpet sounds, God's generous offer of salvation to mankind will be finished. Everyone will have made a decision for or against the gospel by the time the seventh trumpet sounds. Everyone who refuses to accept the generous offer of salvation and the perfect atonement which is offered through faith in Christ will be "cut off" from eternal life.

The seven trumpets of Revelation are linked with seven terrible judgments that will fall on Earth. These judgments cause the Great Tribulation. The Bible predicts four global earthquakes, meteoric showers of burning hail which burn up large portions of Earth, two asteroid impacts, great darkness covering one-third of the Earth – caused perhaps by a large number of volcano eruptions and more.

Jesus said, **"For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened."** (Matthew 24:21,22)

Terrible events and overwhelming suffering will cause everyone to consider or reconsider reconciling with their neighbors and with God. People who love God and His truth will repent of wrong doing. They will accept the terms and conditions for salvation which the 144,000 will proclaim.

The seventh day Sabbath will become, as in the days just before the Exodus, a great test of faith. People with hearts like Pharaoh will take their stand on the side of rebellion against God.

Even though God's mercy is great and His salvation is free, there is a limit to His patience with rebellion and sinners. God's willingness to forgive sinners is beyond comprehension, however, His patience with sinners does not last forever. (See Genesis 6:5-7; Romans 2:5-8; Revelation 14:9-10; and Revelation 18:4-5.)

Those who love the Lord will come to see that His holy law declares the seventh day of the week to be holy and will obediently submit to the requirements of the Almighty. Just as standing for God's Sabbath was seen as an act of rebellion against the authority of Pharaoh, so in like manner the saints will be tested.

All who pass the test of faith will be sealed and delivered from sin's destruction. God has

promised to do this! The duration of the seven trumpets and the time allocated for sealing the saints will be 1,260 days. The 144,000 are sealed first (Revelation 7:1-4) and others will be sealed as time passes. (Revelation 10:7)

The Day of Atonement / Reconciliation

The Day of Atonement occurred on the 10th day of the 7th month. This service was the most solemn of the six annual services. The Day of Atonement service involves three vital issues: The reconciliation of man with man, the reconciliation of man with God and the removal of sin *from the temple*.

The Day of Atonement indicates there is a terminus, a point in time when God's offer of mercy is terminated. The Hebrew word for atonement, *kaphar* (Strong's H3722) means to placate, cancel, reconcile, pacify, etc. Atonement is sometimes described as a state of *at-one-ment*. The basic idea behind the word *atonement* is reconciliation, being restored to a state of oneness.

Notice the requirements for reconciliation: **“The Lord said to Moses: ‘If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the Lord by deceiving his neighbor about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him, or if he finds lost property and lies about it, or if he swears falsely, or if he commits any such sin that people may do – when he thus sins and becomes guilty, he must return what he has stolen or taken by extortion, or what was entrusted to him, or the lost property he found, or whatever it was he swore falsely about. He must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day he presents his guilt offering. And as a penalty he must bring to the priest, that is, to the Lord, his guilt offering, a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value. In this way the priest will make atonement for him before the Lord, and he will be forgiven for any of these things he did that made him guilty.’ ”** (Leviticus 6:1-7)

If a person sinned against his neighbor, God required atonement between the two parties *before* He would allow the guilt of that sin to be transferred to the temple. Jesus underscored the necessity for atonement with a brother when He said, **“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”** (Matthew 5:23,24)

Even though the topic of judicial equilibrium has been introduced, a few comments about this topic are necessary at this point. Atonement for sin is required in God's universe because the presence of sin is not justifiable. If sin could be justified, then God should be held responsible for sin!

Since God has done nothing that would make Him responsible for sin, the presence of sin cannot be justified. Therefore, God requires atonement or appeasement for the presence of sin.

God maintains a state of judicial equilibrium throughout His vast kingdom. God is the Guardian,

the Executor and the Supreme Court of the universe and He insures that judicial equilibrium is ever present. There is no separation of powers in God's government. Instead, there is a separation of entities, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

These three are united in purpose, plan and action. Together, They uphold and honor a rule of law based upon judicial equilibrium. Judicial equilibrium is defined as the perfect balance between the demands of God's law and His offer of grace. (Remember the Ark of the Covenant represents the balance between justice and mercy.)

Judicial equilibrium does not lessen the demands of God's law nor does judicial equilibrium elevate the provisions of grace above the demands of law. The justice side of judicial equilibrium is illustrated by an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a bruise for bruise and most of all, a life for a life. (Exodus 21)

The golden rule spoken from the justice perspective is this: "It will be done to you as you did to others." (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 7:12)

The other side of judicial equilibrium is called mercy. Mercy is extended through a process called reconciliation or atonement. The first step toward atonement for wrong doing is restitution. God requires human beings to make restitution for any sin committed against another (Matthew 5:23,24), and He also requires that we accept atonement for any sin committed against us.

This requirement is summed up in the Lord's prayer, "**Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**" (Matthew 6:12) We noticed earlier in Leviticus 6 that God requires two atonements for sin committed against our neighbor.

First, God expects us to voluntarily make atonement with our offended neighbor by offering suitable restitution, then God required atonement at the Altar of Burnt offering by offering an acceptable sacrifice. As far as the sinner was concerned, this was the end of the matter.

Still, a wrong had been committed and even though atonement had been made, the guilt of sin remained upon the horns of the altar. This guilt was removed from the temple on the Day of Atonement and placed on the head of a scapegoat.

God Has Set a Day to Judge the World

If sins were not transferred to the tabernacle *before* the Day of Atonement began, those sins could not be forgiven. It was forever too late for any subsequent atonement. The Day of Atonement service illustrates the fact that God has set a day when there will be no further atonement for sin. (During the Great Tribulation, the offer of mercy ends with the seventh trumpet.)

If a person neglected to transfer his sins to the altar, the sinner received the penalty of his sins upon his own head. But, all who transferred their sins to the temple prior to the Day of

Atonement were set free of sin's penalty. With these thoughts in mind, consider the Day of Atonement service.

The Day of Atonement Process

Early in the morning on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement service began with a close investigation of the life of the high priest. Before the high priest could officiate on behalf of the nation of Israel, God examined him to determine if he was worthy to conduct the service.

Imagine how sobering it must have been for the high priest to realize that he must stand in God's presence and be examined before he was allowed to officiate for the children of Israel as their intercessor. The examination of the life of the high priest foreshadowed the investigation which Jesus underwent before He could serve as man's judge. (See Daniel 7:9,10,13,14; Revelation 4 and 5.)

To illustrate how serious the worthiness issue was, the high priest had to slaughter a ram as a sin offering for his family and a bull for himself (remember, the high priest is considered a corporate officer, a representative of Jesus).

Then, with a censer and some of the atonement blood from the bull in his hands, the trembling high priest went behind the veil to stand in the brilliant glory of Almighty God. There, surrounded by smoke and the sweet fragrance of incense, the high priest sprinkled some of the blood on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant. Then, he communed with God.

If God considered the high priest's life and his offering acceptable, the high priest would be allowed to continue with the higher service, the cleansing of the temple. As the high priest left the Most Holy Place, he set the bull's blood aside for a short period of time. (See Leviticus 16, 21 and 22.)

The Cleansing of the Temple

The second phase, the cleansing of the temple from the guilt of sin, involved several steps. First, two perfect goats were presented to the high priest in the courtyard. Lots were cast to determine which goat would die for the *penalty* of sin. Then, the high priest killed the **Lord's goat** on the Altar of Burnt Offering.

With a censer and some of the goat's blood in a cup, the high priest entered behind the veil a second time to stand in God's presence. He then sprinkled the goat's blood on the atonement cover of the Ark and again communed with God. If God was pleased with the sincerity and faithfulness of the people, the high priest was permitted to continue with the final phase of cleansing the temple.

After leaving the Most Holy Place, the high priest retrieved the bull's blood from his personal sacrifice and mixed it with the blood from the Lord's goat and put some of the mixed blood on

the Altar of Incense. This action removed the defilement of the Altar of Incense.

Then, he went out of the temple into the courtyard to the Altar of Burnt Offering and cleansed that altar by sprinkling mixed blood on it. After this was done, the high priest approached the remaining goat (the scapegoat) and placed his hands on the head of the scapegoat.

This final action of placing his hands on the head of the scapegoat transferred all of Israel's guilt which had accumulated in the temple to the scapegoat. Then, a very capable man ("a fit man," [KJV]) led the scapegoat far out into the desert so that the goat would die of starvation.

The scapegoat's lengthy starvation shadows the necessity in God's government for full and complete restitution for sin itself. Even though the penalty for sin is death by execution (Lord's goat), sin is never forgiven or justified. Someone must make atonement for the *presence* of sin.

Since the creator of sin is Lucifer, Lucifer must bear the responsibility for sin upon his own head. As the father and perpetrator of sin upon angels and the human race, Lucifer has to make restitution for his actions. God's vengeance demands it.

The scapegoat received all of the guilt that had been stored in the temple because the scapegoat foreshadows the one who is responsible for the presence of sin in the universe. Death for Lucifer, as represented by the scapegoat, will be slow and painful.

Notice how judicial equilibrium functions.

Justice demands the following: The father of sin must bear the penalty for creating sin. Further, the creator of sin must also bear the guilt of sin which was transferred away from sinners to the temple.

Grace offers the following: Sinners under the penalty for sin can have their sins transferred to the temple by presenting a perfect substitute. Here we see the perfect balance between justice and mercy. The Lord's goat represents the mercy that God has extended to sinners: Jesus, the Lamb of God. The scapegoat represents the justice that God demands of sinners: restitution and death.

Confirmations of Truth

The Day of Atonement ceremony confirms several important truths that harmoniously coexist within the Plan of Salvation. The Old Testament tabernacle service confirms that the demands of God's law do not eclipse the offer of God's grace nor does the operation of God's grace make the law void.

Clearly, law and grace work together harmoniously within the tabernacle parallels. The law condemns a sinner to death, but grace provides a way for the guilt of the sinner to be transferred so that the sinner may go free. Jesus had to die to save man because God's law could not be changed.

God did not have the option of just “forgetting” that Adam and Eve had sinned. Once Adam and Eve committed sin, a series of immutable events began. For example, man became carnal by nature. Also, death came upon all men through Adam. Therefore, Jesus was required to live a perfect life before He could die as our perfect substitute.

The guilt of our sins could only be transferred to the altar through One who was above condemnation.

This may begin to sound like a broken record, but it is a critical point. The tabernacle service confirms that sin is neither forgiven nor forgotten until the scapegoat is led away to die. The tabernacle service also confirms that Jesus does not bear the responsibility for sin.

Sin cannot be justified. Rather, Jesus is our reconciliation with God and through His perfect blood, our guilt can be transferred to the Altar of Burnt Offering. We have also learned that the temple is cleansed of guilt at an appointed time and the *consequence* of sin is transferred to the one responsible for sin.

The suffering of the scapegoat provides restitution. Bottom line: The life of every sinner will be examined. Solomon wrote, **“For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”** (Ecclesiastes 12:14)

If our sins are transferred to the altar through Christ’s blood, we are not under condemnation! (Romans 8:1-10) If our sins are not transferred to the altar, then God’s vengeance requires the wicked to provide restitution for their sins and suffer the penalty for sin.

Two Goats

Some Christians think that both goats used on the Day of Atonement represent Jesus since both goats are used for the purpose of atonement. Notice this text about the scapegoat: **“But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat.”** (Leviticus 16:10)

The scapegoat is presented before the Lord while it is *alive*, whereas the Lord’s goat was *slain* on that day. Although both goats were used to provide atonement, the atonement they provide is not identical. If the atonement they offer was identical, one goat would have sufficed.

The Lord’s goat provides atonement with its blood because the *penalty* for sin is death by execution, the other goat provides atonement through starvation and dehydration because *restitution* for sin must be made. Even though the Bible does not explicitly say the scapegoat dies after it is taken into the desert, the implication is that the scapegoat disappears forever and it is never seen or heard from again.

This suggests that once sin is removed from God’s temple in Heaven, it will never occur again because the creator of sin will be no more!

The Saints Review the Wicked

The scapegoat does not die on the Day of Atonement, so the atonement it offers does not occur that day. The end-time parallel reveals that Lucifer is not destroyed until the end of the 1,000 years. (Revelation 20) In fact, the scapegoat does not provide atonement through its death, it provides atonement (as in restitution) through its suffering.

The restitution for sin will be suffering. *Suffering will be inflicted upon the wicked before the penalty for sin is executed.* During the 1,000 years, the saints will reign with Jesus and judge the wicked. **“I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”** (Revelation 20:4)

During the 1,000 years the saints will review the records of the wicked and determine the appropriate amount of suffering that will be necessary for restitution. Judicial equilibrium requires full restitution. For example, Hitler not only deserves to die for his sins and outrageous conduct, but he also owes restitution to millions of people for the suffering he inflicted on them.

After a lengthy period of indescribable suffering by fire, Hitler will eventually be burned up in the fire sent from God because the penalty for sin is death by execution. The saints, complying with the requirements of God’s law, will determine the amount of suffering that Hitler must endure – proportional to the suffering he caused.

If more people understood God’s requirement for restitution, the world would be a much different place in which to live! Paul wrote, **“It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”** (Hebrews 10:31)

Notice the golden rule at work: “As you do unto others, it will be done unto you – eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, bruise for a bruise, etc.”

Paul says the saints will judge the wicked saying, **“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge [the evil] angels? How much more the things of this life!”** (1 Corinthians 6:2,3, insertion mine.)

Keep in mind that the saints do not determine whether a person receives eternal life or eternal death. Jesus alone is Creator and Judge of mankind, and by the time of the Second Coming, He will have made an eternal decision about every person.

However, the judgment which the saints conduct concerns the issue of restitution. The saints (in many cases the victims of the wicked) will review the actions of the wicked and they will sentence the wicked to a law-full amount of suffering – full restitution will be extracted from the wicked for the suffering they caused.

God ensures this process and He calls it His vengeance. **“The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The Lord takes vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his enemies. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power; the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.”** (Nahum 1:2,3)

Paul wrote, **“Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.”** (Romans 12:19)

The Scapegoat is a “Fall Guy”

Most people have heard or used the term “scapegoat” when pinning responsibility on someone for something that went dreadfully wrong. In sanctuary terms, the same is true. The scapegoat represents the one responsible for sin!

In other words, the scapegoat represents Lucifer because he is responsible for sin. As the responsible party for sin on Earth, Lucifer’s guilt cannot be atoned for. He is the father of sin and he must suffer the torment he has caused the saints. (The wicked will suffer for their own sins, but Lucifer must suffer restitution for the sins of the saved.)

A protracted death through starvation and dehydration is a form of restitution just like a life sentence is a form of restitution in our penal code today. Remember, the scapegoat does not bear the consequences of sin for the wicked. The guilt of the wicked will be on their own heads.

Some readers may wonder why the scapegoat provides restitution for the sins of the righteous when the saints are required to make restitution for their sins *before* they go to the altar. When full restitution for sin is made between people, the guilt for sin remains to be dealt with.

However, many sins go beyond the possibility of restitution. For example, what restitution can be made for malicious slander, adultery, rape, sexual abuse, breaking up a marriage, or driving under the influence of alcohol and killing twenty children?

If a person commits an evil deed and makes a gallant effort to restore whatever he or she can, truly repenting of the sin and seeking God’s mercy, God will make Lucifer, the originator of sin, provide the restitution for the wrong that goes beyond what man can offer.

Why Two Goats?

It may be that God used two goats on the Day of Atonement instead of two lambs because goats differ from lambs in many ways. Perhaps the most obvious difference is a goat’s independence. Every shepherd knows that sheep are followers and goats are leaders. This point illuminates some interesting thoughts.

First, Michael (Christ) and Lucifer were once the closest of friends. Lucifer was the first angel that Jesus created. In form, Lucifer looked very similar to Michael. Both were angels, but

Michael was the Archangel. Michael was God in the form of an angel. Lucifer, on the other hand, was the highest of *created* beings.

Michael and Lucifer held the highest offices in Heaven and had a great deal of latitude in which to exercise their prerogatives. Over time, Lucifer became filled with envy and jealousy and eventually coveted Michael's position. When the Father rebuffed him, he chose to rebel against God. He became the self-appointed leader of sympathetic angels who also came to believe that God was unfair.

When open rebellion broke out in Heaven, these two angels became great foes. Perhaps God used two goats on the Day of Atonement because a wild goat can lead an entire herd of sheep astray. Casting lots to determine which goat was the Lord's goat on the Day of Atonement suggests that Michael was the Chosen One to lead the angelic host.

The Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles)

The last feast of the religious year was the Feast of Ingathering. The feast began on the 15th day of the seventh month and it lasted for seven days. The Jews presented their last and largest collection of firstfruits to the high priest five days after the Day of Atonement service had passed.

This feast took place at the end of the summer harvest and as the name reflects, it was a time for rejoicing over the bountiful harvest that had been "gathered in." This feast was also called the Feast of Tabernacles because every Jewish male was required to go to Jerusalem and participate in the feast.

Because there was a shortage of housing in Jerusalem, the Jews erected temporary tents (or tabernacles) for this joyous occasion.

The Feast of Tabernacles parallels a very interesting process that takes place *at the end* of the world. The 144,000 are taken to Heaven before the Second Coming, about the time of the seventh trumpet. (Revelation 11:12) At the Second Coming, Jesus will approach Earth with all His angels and the 144,000 attending, and He will call the righteous dead to life.

The righteous living will join with the resurrected dead to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17) A triumphant Jesus with all His saints will return to the holy city, New Jerusalem. There will be a great feast as Jesus celebrates and drinks the pure wine of the grape with the redeemed. (Matthew 26:29)

The saints will remain in the city for 1,000 years as a temporary residence. At the end of the 1,000 years, the holy city will descend from Heaven. (Revelation 21:2) The wicked will be resurrected and notified of their sentence. Jesus will call fire down out of Heaven and purify the Earth.

Then, He will create a new Heaven and a new Earth, which will become the primary home of the

saints.

Consider some of the Feast of Ingathering parallels:

1. Feast: The Feast of Ingathering was the last and largest harvest of the year. It began five days after the Day of Atonement had passed.

ETP: (End-time parallel): The last and largest ingathering of saints will occur at the end of the world. The harvest of souls will be numberless. Just as the Feast of Ingathering took place after the Day of Atonement, so the Second Coming occurs after the close of mercy.

2. Feast: All Jewish males were required to go to Jerusalem for this feast.

ETP: All of the redeemed will be taken to New Jerusalem for the wedding banquet.

3. Feast: The feast and the time spent in Jerusalem was temporary (seven days).

ETP: The saints will temporarily live in the New Jerusalem during the Sabbatical Millennium.

4. Feast: The firstfruits of this harvest were presented to the high priest before thank offerings from the harvest were presented to the Lord.

ETP: The 144,000 are the firstfruits of the final harvest. The 144,000 are taken to Heaven and presented to Jesus a few days before the Second Coming. Then, at the Second Coming, the great harvest of souls are gathered in.

The firstfruits of the last great harvest foreshadow the 144,000 prophets of God who are selected for a special mission just before the Great Tribulation begins. (Revelation 14:4; 7:1-4) Of course, without rain there is no harvest or firstfruits. In the land of Canaan, there are two essential rains each year.

They are called the early rain and the latter rain. These terms, "early and latter" are used with respect to the crops. For crops that mature in late summer, the latter rain brings them to maturity. For crops that mature in early spring, the term "latter rain" refers to rains that bring these crops to maturity. The latter rain finishes the maturing process that began with the early rain!

In a spiritual sense, there are also two rains. Both rains are shadows representing the work of the Holy Spirit. The first work of the Holy Spirit is to lead us to acknowledge our need for a Savior. This spiritual awakening is caused by "the early rain" work of the Holy Spirit.

The Feast of Tabernacles shadows the concluding work of the Holy Spirit on behalf of mankind (a latter rain illustration). A great outpouring of Holy Spirit empowerment will occur just before Jesus comes and this latter rain will bring souls to perfect maturity! (Joel 2:28-32; James 5:7; Revelation 11:3)

The concluding work of the Holy Spirit's ministry will be highly visible and God's truth will be presented in the clearest terms to every person in the world. (Revelation 14:6-12; Zechariah 4:6) *Everyone* will hear the terms and conditions of salvation. Everyone will have an informed opportunity to know God's will and make a decision about salvation.

People who follow the Spirit now will rejoice to hear greater truth. (John 16:13) Many people who are currently indifferent, negligent or perhaps not willing to listen to the Holy Spirit will have a change of heart when they see the display of God's wrath and thoughtfully consider the curse that rests upon their heads. Unfortunately, many people who are in rebellion against God right now will remain in rebellion. They will be deceived and led to their destruction when the Antichrist appears. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10)

Individuals who love God's ways and truth will have their *faith* severely tested. By remaining faithful to God, they will receive the most wonderful gift that God can give to His people while still on Earth. He will give His children the "gift" of a sinless nature – a nature that will have no propensity or attraction to sin and is in complete harmony with His laws. (Hebrews 8:10-13; Romans 1:17; 1 John 3:2)

The gift of the Holy Spirit demonstrates God's great compassion for the human race and His deep desire to save every person that is willing to be redeemed. Man's need for a Savior does not become a reality until the Holy Spirit impresses us with the condemnation and fate that faces every sinner.

When an individual responds to the Spirit's prompting, he or she will recognize a desperate need for Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God. When we are "born again," we are happy to submit to the gospel of Christ. There is an inner joy when we walk with the Lord. (John 14:15; 1 John 2:5)

At the present time, when a person surrenders his or her will to do God's will, that person is reckoned as righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, even though the sealing has not occurred. (Romans 8:1) During the time period of the Great Tribulation, circumstances will force everyone to respond to the gospel.

If a person submits to the laws of Babylon, his or her choice will be considered an act of rebellion against God. If a person submits to the law of God, his or her choice will be considered an act of rebellion against the authority of the world's governments. Either way, the consequences will be deadly. The firmness of each person's decision will be tested.

If a person passes his test of faith, the righteousness of Christ will be *imparted* to him or her! This is the sealing. (Colossians 1:27; Revelation 7:1-4; 10:7) When God finishes sealing His people, the need for an intercessor or mediator in Heaven will be over. Only then will God's children have a righteous character "sealed" within them.

Jesus marks the end of salvation's offer in Heaven by declaring, "**Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.**" (Revelation 22:11)

144,000 Will Belong to Jesus

When Passover and Pentecost (the earlier harvests of the year) arrived, the firstfruits were presented to the high priest and they became his personal property. The parallel is true of the final harvest. The firstfruits of the final harvest will be 144,000 men and women who will be servants of God; special prophets during the Great Tribulation. (Revelation 7:1-4; 14:4)

Since the firstfruits of the harvests become the exclusive property of the high priest (Numbers 18), the 144,000 “firstfruits” will belong to our High Priest, Jesus Christ. As a reward for their dedication and suffering for the cause of Christ, the 144,000 will become special administrative assistants who accompany Jesus throughout eternity and serve Him wherever He goes.

The 144,000 will be the first to experience God’s gift of a new nature. They will receive the imparted “gift” of a sinless nature *first* because they are sealed first. (Revelation 7:1 -4) The 144,000 will have the Spirit of prophecy resting upon them. They will prophesy just like the prophets of old. Those who heed their message and chose to *live by faith* will be sealed in the same way the 144,000 are sealed.

The Bible indicates the 144,000 will wear the name of the Father and Jesus on their foreheads. (Revelation 14:1; 22:4) This will be a beautiful sign revealing their rank and position in God’s government. I am not sure how this will be done, but we can be certain it will be beautiful and glorious.

The names of the Father and Jesus upon the foreheads of the 144,000 stand in stark contrast to the tattoo that Satan puts on the foreheads of his servants. (Revelation 13:16)

Conclusion

We have a friend in Jesus. Not only does He understand our needs, but He also understands our limitations, weaknesses and foolishness. He is willing to be our High Priest and to present us before God without a blemish. He is willing to save us and grant us power to overcome the ravages of sin.

He is willing to release us from anxiety, doubts and bad habits. He has the power to do all of this and so much more! He is willing – are you? Why not surrender your life to Him right now? Why not say, “Lord, I am willing to go, be and do all that you ask.” If you are willing to say this to Him, He will enable you to succeed in all that He wants you to do!

The good news is that you and I have a friend in Heaven’s temple who loves us so much that He was willing to die the second death for us. We cannot easily comprehend such love. That is why we sometimes find it difficult to call on Him to help us with our problems.

But be sure of this: He is qualified to deal with any problem we face. We may not like His answers on every occasion, but what child loves every answer from his parents? Jesus knows what is best for us and He responds accordingly. So, go ahead, ask Him to help you. He is

ready.

Give Him your life and He will deliver you from your worries and fill you with a peace that passes understanding! He is the Alpha and the Omega!

Jesus is righteous in everything He does. **“He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he”**
(Deuteronomy 32:4)

The earthly and heavenly temples confirm so many wonderful truths about Jesus. His actions are open, upright and just. His works are perfect and His righteousness is illustrated in the services of His temple.