

The West Meadow  
By Pastor Wes Higgins

In Leviticus 23 there is a list of Festivals that God calls His Holy convocations (Verse 2). Sadly, much of Christianity today has little or no knowledge of them, even though God says his people are to proclaim them (Verse 4). They start in the Spring of the year with Passover and end in the Fall with the Feast of Tabernacles. Each one has special meaning to Christians, as Paul says, their substance lies in Christ (Colossians 2:16-17).

They generally are viewed as Old Testament, thus Old Covenant. The reality is Jesus Christ and all the apostles, including Paul, observed them. The Gospel of John uses the Festivals as reference points in the ministry of Christ. Luke in writing the Book of Acts uses them to calendar the events and travels of Paul. Paul calls “Christ our Passover” and commanded the Gentile Christians to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (1Corinthians 5:6-8, NKJV). The Festivals of God laid out in Leviticus 23 are not just some archaic rituals, they describe prophetically the salvational acts of Jesus Christ. Passover, the death and resurrection of Christ, being the first festival of the year pictures the starting point of our salvation, not the finish. It is through Christ's sacrifice – His death on the cross – that our sins are forgiven and we are reconciled to God. “...while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8, NKJV) and “your iniquities (sins) have separated you from your God” (Isaiah 59:2, NKJV). But it is through the ongoing process of that reconciliation with God through Christ that we are “saved by His life” (Romans 5:8-10).

Prophetically, Christ has only fulfilled two of the festivals so far. “Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7, NKJV) and the wave sheaf offering by ascending that very day to the Father to be accepted on our behalf as the firstfruits from the dead. Compare Leviticus 23:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23. Which John records Christ as fulfilling in John 20:17. “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (KJV).

There are still ahead the prophetic fulfillment of the Summer and Fall Festivals, picturing God's salvational acts through Jesus Christ. They include the Feast of Weeks, representing the calling of God's people throughout time, leading up to the first resurrection. Pentecost – the final harvest of the firstfruits (Revelation 14:4). The Feast of Trumpets, picturing the return of Jesus Christ as “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”. The Day of Atonement, the world being reconciled to God. And the Feast of Tabernacles, picturing Christ's thousand year reign on Earth, culminating in the 8<sup>th</sup> Day of the Feast, a Holy Convocation (Leviticus 23:36), the fulfillment of which is pictured in Revelation 21 and 22, the New Heavens and New Earth.

“These are the Feasts of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times” (Leviticus 23:4, NKJV). Are you proclaiming them?