Psalms - Commentaries by George Christopher Willis

The Seven Feasts of Jehovah: Leviticus 23, Trumpets, The Feast of

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“He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect.”

(Matt. 24:31)

“We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

(1 Cor. 15:51-52)

“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

(1 Thess. 4:16-17)

We have already noticed that the first four feasts come close together at the beginning of the year. Then come almost four months of reaping until the last sheaf was cut, though there was still good grain left standing in the corners of the fields. We will now seek with God's help, to look at the last three feasts. These all come very close together in the seventh month.

In creation God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. In the dispensation of law, men worked six days and rested on the seventh. In the feasts of Jehovah, six months of the year passed by, but when the seventh month comes, on the first day of the seventh month, God says, "Ye shall have a rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. No manner of servile work shall ye do; and ye shall present an offering by fire to Jehovah." (Lev. 23:24-25 New Translation).

We have seen that the four feasts that are passed all have been most exactly fulfilled. We have seen that at the present day we are still in that long space of time left for the harvest, between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets and the two feasts that quickly follow it, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, have not yet been fulfilled. These three feasts point to future events. As the four past feasts have been so exactly fulfilled, we can confidently expect that the three future feasts will be just as exactly fulfilled in a coming day.

In the feasts that have passed, we have seen events on earth only, though indeed these events have included the resurrection and ascension into Heaven of our Lord Jesus, the descent from Heaven of the Holy Spirit. But during this time the heavens and the earth have been divided by sin, but in a coming day the Lord Jesus will judge this world in righteousness, and then take it for Himself. He will not only be King of the Jews, but "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." (Psa. 72:8). "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." (Zech. 14:9).

The same Lord Who is now glorified in Heaven as the Head of the Church, will also reign on earth as King of Israel and Lord of all creation. He will be honored in the heavens above and in the earth below, and men of every nation, people, and tongue, will unite to own Jesus of Nazareth, "Lord of all." For these reasons, we suggest that the remaining feasts have perhaps a double meaning. Their primary meaning is, no doubt, a telling forth of the events coming on this earth, especially in connection with Israel, but as the former feasts also include the events which are of the deepest interest to the church, so it would seem that the remaining feasts also have a secondary application that might foretell events connected with the church in Heaven. For we must never forget that Israel's portion is the earth, but the church's portion is always in the Heavens.

The Feast of Trumpets begins the second series of "Jehovah's set feasts.” In Num. 10:2, God commanded Moses to make two silver trumpets. These trumpets were used for calling together the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. They were to be used when Israel went to war, and God promised that when these trumpets were blown, He would remember His people and save them from their enemies. (Num. 10:9). They were also used in their set feasts and in their new moons. God said, "That they may be to you for a memorial before your God." The silver tells us of redemption, and those notes on the silver trumpets would not only bring to remembrance God's covenant with His earthly people, and His promise to His heavenly people, but they also brought to remembrance the price that was paid on the cross to purchase the redemption of both the heavenly and the earthly people.

This feast was a special time of blowing these trumpets. It was called, "A memorial of blowing of trumpets." (Lev. 23:24). It was truly a feast of remembrance. Does this not tell us of that great trumpet that is to be blown in a coming day? Then "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24:31).

In Isa. 18:3-7 (N.T.), "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, when a banner is lifted up on the mountains, see ye, and when a trumpet is blown, hear ye!.... In that time shall a present be brought unto Jehovah of hosts of a people scattered and ravaged.... to the place of the name of Jehovah of hosts, the Mount Zion." (New Translation). And again in Isa. 27:13 (N.T.), "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were perishing in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." Also compare Zech. 10:8, "I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and they shall multiply as they used to multiply. And I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries.”

There are very many more passages that tell of the gathering of Israel and Judah back to their own land, but these make quite clear that at a certain time, a special call will go forth from God to bring His own people back to their own land. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament speak of this call as a Trumpet, so we believe that the Feast of Trumpets foretells that trumpet blast that will call Israel back to their own land.

But the Feast of Trumpets was also to call to remembrance, and in Num. 10, when God told Moses to make silver trumpets, He told Israel that when they went to war against the enemy that oppressed them, "Then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets, and ye shall be remembered before Jehovah, your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies." (verse 9). And although Israel now seems to be cast off and rejected, the Word of God tells us that this shall not be always so. In Ezek. 16:60 we read, "I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant." And listen to these glorious words spoken to Israel, in reply to Israel's complaint "Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me." It looks like that just now, but is it really so? Listen "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Even these forget, but I will not forget thee. Lo, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." (Isa. 49:16 N.T.).

We might turn to many other passages telling us that God again will remember His people. But in the Feast of Trumpets, is it not God Who blows the trumpet Himself? If God in His grace speaks of remembering again His people, is it not truly God that blows the trumpet to call His people to remember Him? We have already spoken of the verse in Zech. 10:9, where God says, "They shall remember me in far countries." The verses in Ezek. 16 which we have already quoted, continue in this way "I will establish My covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah; that thou mayest remember, and be ashamed." (verses 62-63 N.T.).

Israel forgot their God and forsook Him, and now it appears as though God had forgotten and forsaken and cast away His people. But it is appearance only. Paul asks, "Has God cast away His people?" And the reply is clear and decisive, "Far be the thought God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew." (Rom. 11:1-2). But we believe the day is near when the Trumpet will be blown that shows God again remembers Israel, and His covenant with them, and that Trumpet will call Israel to remember their God, and turn to Him again. What a happy day that will be for Israel! God describes the Feast of Trumpets, saying, "Ye shall have a rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation." (Lev. 23:24 N.T.). And the Spirit of God in the Psalms says of it, "Sing ye joyously unto God our strength, shout aloud unto the God of Jacob; raise a song, and sound the tambor, the pleasant harp with the lute. Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the set time, on our feast day." (Psa. 81:13 N.T.). Poor Israel, how little do they know of rest and joy now, driven from one country to another rest, they have none! But even though we know Israel must first pass through the most terrible judgments, yet their rest and joy is soon to come, indeed may it not be possible that the first notes of that silver trumpet, or their echo from above, are beginning to fall on the ears of Israel? On every hand we see them hearing a call to remember and return to the land of their fathers, and tens of thousands are heeding the call and returning. Is it not apparent to all that Israel is again beginning to come in remembrance before God? It reminds one of the description of another trumpet in a little later day. (Rev. 10:7 N.T.) "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when He is about to sound the trumpet." May this not be a description of the way in which the Trumpet "is about to sound" at the present day with regard to Israel? (Though of course the trumpet of Rev. 10:7 has no reference to the trumpet foretold in Lev. 23.) We sadly fear that Israel has not yet heard that trumpet in a way that makes them remember their God, and turn to Him again. In Isa. 27:13 we saw that Israel was to return to "worship Jehovah in the holy mountain." They can only do this when they accept the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, their Christ. But, alas, they are not now prepared to do this, so we may know that at present those sweet notes of the silver trumpet are not sounding out as they soon will. Perhaps it will be like the trumpet at Mount Sinai that "sounded long, and waxed louder and louder."

But if even the echo of the notes from afar are beginning to sound, telling us that the silver trumpet is "about to sound," let us rejoice and lift up our heads, and listen the more longingly for the note of another trumpet, that would seem to be one short, sharp peal "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." (1 Cor. 15:52).

No, it is not the trumpet that calls Israel back to their land that we, the church, are looking for, but for the Lord Jesus Himself, for "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16-17). And again, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

What a day of joy and gladness and rest will this be for the church! Then we will be forever with the Lord. We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Then, no longer through a glass darkly, but face to face! And the loved ones who have gone before, will be raised first, and we shall be together again to go no more out!

But it was not only a day of joy and gladness and rest, but the Lord specially warns against any "servile work" on that day. How different to the teaching of some that it is only by our own efforts in watching and overcoming that we can even hope to see that day, or hear that trump! Such teachers little know that grace of God, or the value of the redemption told out in those notes of the silver trumpet, nor do they know the worthlessness or hatefulness of their own servile work in making themselves fit for that day. No it is not the fear of being left behind at that day that God sets before us a motive to keep clean down here, but the blessed hope of seeing Him, and being like Him "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3).

The Feast of Trumpets follows the harvest described in verse 22. There is a very interesting passage in Isa. 27:12. "Ye shall be gathered (or, gleaned, see note to New Translation) one by one, ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were perishing in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem." The "gleaning" reminds us of Lev. 23:22, and is immediately followed by "the great trumpet," which tells us of the Feast of Trumpets. We believe it is the harvest that typifies the coming of the Lord for His church, but the silver trumpets of this feast cannot but call to our mind the trumpet that calls the Church to be forever with the Lord, and they are evidently intimately connected with it. The Feast of Trumpets came on the first day of the month, that is the time the moon is blackest and smallest. In China we call it "the Black Moon." Perhaps this reminds us that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." (2 Tim. 3:13). Like the churches in Rev. 2 and 3, they gradually grow worse, until at last Laodicea is spewed out of Christ's mouth. The morning star appears just before dawn, when the night is the darkest. So, brethren, as we see the professing church getting worse, as we see it growing darker and colder, and more and more like

the world, let us look up and watch more earnestly for the Morning Star, and listen more intently for the sound of the trumpet.

The Lord always makes it clear that His coming is imminent. "Yet a very little while and He that comes will come, and will not delay." (Heb. 10:37 N.T.). Let us beware that nothing whatever shall come into our hearts that will ever allow us to say even in the inmost recesses of our thoughts "My Lord delayeth His coming." The Lord's own parting words to His church tell us when He will come back again "Surely I come quickly." In this way may we ever, daily and hourly, be expecting Him, and our hearts ever crying, "Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus."

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

Heb. 10:19, 22

The Seven Feasts of Jehovah: Leviticus 23, Tabernacles, The Feast of

"Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." (Deut. 16:13)

"Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." (Lev. 23:42-43)

"Thy Kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10)

We come now to the last of the "Feasts of Jehovah," "the Feast of Tabernacles." This feast was kept for seven days when the work in the fields was completed. All who were Israelites born then made themselves booths out of the boughs of trees, and dwelt in the booths. It was a time of joy and rejoicing. The labor and cares of this life were forgotten, and their hearts went back to the time when the Lord led them through the wilderness as pilgrims and strangers, without house or home, but only with booths to dwell in. The Lord would never have us forget our wilderness pathway. He says, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart." (Deut. 8:2).

All those weary desert days were now but memories, and if they brought back memories of their failure and unfaithfulness, these memories were overwhelmed by the recollection of God's unfailing care, and His faithfulness.

It was in the wilderness that "He fed them according to the integrity of His heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of His hands." (Psa. 78:72). And now in the land of Canaan, with peace, rest and joy on every hand, they may sit under their booths, and look back with joy and thanksgiving over all the way the Lord had led them, and "praise Him for all that is past."

In Ex. 23:16, we read, "The Feast of Ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field." With this feast we come to "the end" of the year, and as we shall see, this feast carries our thoughts on, not only to the Millennium (the thousand years when Christ shall reign), but "the Eighth Day" (Lev. 23:36), takes us on to the Eternal State.

We have seen God's desire, through these feasts, to gather His people about Him, and now in this last feast we see more than in any before, the joy of the accomplishment of His purposes of grace. "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose: because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice." ("thou shalt be wholly joyful.") (Deut. 16:14-15 New Translation).

We have seen that the two feasts we have just considered, the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement point forward to events which have not yet been fulfilled. The Feast of Tabernacles follows these feasts, so we may clearly understand that it is still further in the future than the feasts of which we have just spoken. The verse quoted at the beginning of this chapter, (Deut. 16:13), tells us just when this feast occurs, "After that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." It began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and lasted seven days, with a special "eighth day," "the great day of the feast," (John 7:37) which closed the feasts of Jehovah for the whole year.

Israel's harvest consisted of two parts, "the corn," and "the wine." Each of these parts has a typical meaning in the Bible, spoken of symbolically in Rev. 14:14-20. First we have "the corn." "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap.... And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." The Lord Jesus told us long before of this great ingathering of "the corn." He said, "Gather the wheat into My barn." (Matt. 13:30). (The wheat and the corn have the same meaning). In telling us the meaning of this parable, the Lord said, "The harvest is the end of the world," (or perhaps a better translation, "the end of the age.") (Matt. 13:39). So we may see that the Lord's teaching in Matthew's Gospel exactly corresponds with the typical teaching of Leviticus, and the symbolic teaching of Revelation. The Lord Jesus told us in John 12:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He Himself was "the corn of wheat" that fell into the ground and died. But in His resurrection He brings with Him a rich harvest, He brings forth "much fruit." The harvest from the "corn of wheat," having the same nature and proceeding from the same stem, is a lovely picture of Christ risen from the dead, with all His Heavenly people.

This is "the corn" that will be gathered into "My barn" at "the end," at "the Feast of Ingathering." We believe that "the corn" tells us of all those who share in "the First Resurrection." (Rev. 20:5). 1 Cor. 15:23 says, "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." We have already considered "the Firstfruits," now we see the harvest. Heb. 11:39-40 would indicate that in this number we find the saints of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. "They," that is the Old Testament saints, "without us," that is the New Testament saints, "should not be made perfect." Rev. 20:4 tells us that this "first resurrection" includes also the martyrs who have laid down their lives for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, in that space of time between the Lord coming for His church and the time when He takes His kingdom and reigns. The Old Testament saints, the Church and the martyrs mentioned above, all will be gathered safe Home to glory in

"the ingathering" of "the corn."

The gathering in of the wine is also referred to in the passage in Rev. 14, from which we have quoted the account of the reaping of the harvest of the earth. We read in verses 17 to 20, "And another angel came out of the temple which is in Heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to Him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in Thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in His sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." We believe that the vintage of the earth, and treading of the winepress of the wrath of God refers to the gathering of Christ's enemies for judgment. We read more of the treading of this winepress in Isa. 63:1-6, It is evidently the Lord Himself who is speaking, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me; and My fury, it upheld Me. And I will tread down the people in Mine anger, and make them drunk in My fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

This clearly shows us that the winepress tells us of the judgment of Christ's enemies. We know when this great ingathering of the Lord's own will take place, and we also know when this fearful judgment of His enemies will occur. Both come just before the time when He takes the Throne, and answers that prayer that has gone up for more than two thousand years, "Thy Kingdom come." Rev. 20:4, to which we have referred above, ends in this way, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

From these Scriptures, I think we may understand clearly the verse in Deut. 16:13, "Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." We believe this is like a finger to point out to us just the time when we may expect the Feast of Tabernacles to have its fulfillment. We believe this feast is a type of the glorious reign of Christ for a thousand years. We generally call this "the millennium," which just means, "the thousand years." There have been, perhaps, about six thousand years since the creation, but none of these can be spoken of as "the thousand years." There have been six thousand years in which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8:22). Sin entered in the third chapter of the Bible, and with sin, came the curse, thorns and thistles, tears, sorrow, pain and death "until now." Not only has man suffered through Adam's sin, but even the animals and the ground have suffered also, so that the Scripture truly says, "The whole creation groaneth."

But in the Feast of Tabernacles we have already seen not only Israel, but even the stranger, is to be "wholly joyful." There has never been one day since sin entered that has been a true fulfillment of such a feast. But, thanks be to God, the time is coming when the Prince of Peace will take the throne, and for a thousand years He will reign, and this feast will have its true fulfillment.

Another has written about this time. "Endeavor then, dear reader, to realize what would be the condition of a kingdom, under the absolute government of a monarch so wise as never to make one single mistake, so equitable as to deal even-handed justice to all, so tender-hearted as to rule with the gentlest sway, so pious and benevolent as to seek no object but the glory of God and the well-being of his subjects, and so powerful as to secure the absolute submission of all within the sphere of his dominions! What a kingdom! But when we think of such a kingdom, as extending over the whole earth, and embracing all nations within its limits; and when we understand that Christ Himself is to be its Head and Lord, and that the risen saints are to be His associates on the throne, all language fails, and the heart can only find relief in adoration too profound to be expressed!" (Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects, W. Trotter)

This is a description of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ on this earth, during the Millennium. This is a description of the time which is typified by the Feast of Tabernacles. What a change from the present day! Sin, wars, violence, injustice all put down with a mighty hand, and goodness and truth displayed on every side.

We have already pointed out that this golden age for which this poor earth has so long waited, follows the ingathering of the corn and wine. "The corn" is gathered to that bright Home in the glory, some by death and resurrection and some without passing through death, so it can be said, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

We have spoken of the judgments told out by the gathering of the vine. The book of Isaiah, which also describes in the most glowing language the glories of the coming kingdom, describes the judgments that must usher in that wonderful age. Let us look very briefly at some of these verses. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.... The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.... Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. (Isa. 24:1-6). "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.... Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isa. 24:19-23). "Behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.... He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isa. 26:21; 27:1-6).

In this last passage we have brought before us three different parts in God's program of establishing His kingdom. First we see the terrible punishment on His enemies. Then we see a special punishment on "that crooked serpent," the devil. We will speak of this more fully in a moment. And lastly we see the rich blessing that is coming to Israel.

The Old Testament, in types, Psalms and prophecies, is full of references to the coming glorious Kingdom: but it is not till we reach Rev. 20, that we learn the duration of that wondrous reign. The "Thousand Years" are mentioned six times in this chapter. We will see that the two outstanding events during this thousand years are: First: "The dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan" is to be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for the whole of this period. Second: Christ is to reign, and His saints are to reign with Him.

No words can tell the difference that these two great events will make to this world. Now Christ is hidden, and Satan is at large. Now Satan is the god of this world, (2 Cor. 4:4), and the prince of this world. (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Now Satan deceives the nations. Then he will "deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." (Rev. 20:3). Now we see Christ by faith alone. Then faith will be changed to sight. Now we have not only our own fallen nature, but Satan to act on that fallen nature. Then Satan is absent.

What a change during that Thousand Years! And not only will Satan be bound, but the One Who reigns as King is our own beloved Savior and Lord, and we will reign with Him. Little wonder that the world will rejoice and that Israel and the stranger are called to be "wholly joyful."

Let us look very briefly at the condition of this world during that glorious reign. In the former feasts we have seen that although the primary application is almost surely earthly, yet we may learn lessons in the heavens from them. In the Feast of Tabernacles we may see that there is a more intimate connection between the heavens and the earth, than in any of the other feasts. This is what we would expect, for the devil is bound, and sin is put down with a strong hand. Our portion, the portion of the Church, is heavenly our place is not on this earth, even in the Millennium, though we will see we have to do with it.

We will quote again from Mr. W Trotter's book "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects." "The connection of the church with the millennial state is portrayed to us in John's vision of 'that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.' It is styled, 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife': and while its relation to Christ is thus expressed, its relation to the millennial earth is indicated by various parts of the description. There is no night in the heavenly city, and yet it is not by candle, or by sun and moon, that it is enlightened, but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its light, while the nations of them which are saved the spared nations of the millennial earth shall walk in the light of it."

"It has no temple, 'the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it' but to it, as a temple, 'the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor.' Nor do the kings alone thus resort to it: 'they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into (or unto) it.'

"The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, flows through the midst of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Such is the relation of the Church to this scene of blessing. Herself the witness and expression of God's perfect grace, and of the perfect love of Christ her Lord and Bridegroom, she is the vessel of that grace, in the ministering light and healing to the nations. With her, in her governmental glory as reigning with Christ are associated the saints of the Old Testament, and those of the Apocalyptic crisis.... All who form 'the first resurrection,' live and reign with Christ throughout the thousand years.

"The earthly seat of dominion and center of blessing is 'the city of the great king' Jerusalem, the twelve tribes restored to the land, and no longer two nations, but one, (see for example Jer. 3:18) will have Christ for their King and Head, and will constitute the most favored and honored portion of the earth's redeemed population. This national pre-eminence of Israel in millennial times.... is demonstrated by almost every reference to the Millennium which the Old Testament contains. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord: and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." (Jer. 3:17). 'The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.' (Mic. 4:8).... 'The Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.' (Isa. 24:23).... 'I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.' (Isa. 60:15).

"'With regard to this point, it is interesting to trace the harmony between the Old Testament and the New, and the striking correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem. The one is 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife' the other is the earthly metropolis of His kingdom...."

"There is much ground for believing, that all who survive of Israel at the commencement of the Millennium will be saved, and that the whole nation also throughout the thousand years will be saved." And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The 'new covenant' is to be made with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, in which God engages to put His law in their inward parts, and to write it in their hearts. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, `Know the Lord': for they shall all know Me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

It does not appear that the same thing can be said of the nations. For example, we read in Psa. 66, evidently speaking of the time when Christ shall reign, (verse 3, New Translation), "Because of the greatness of thy strength, thine enemies come cringing unto thee." The margin of the Authorized Version reads, "Thine enemies yield feigned obedience unto thee." We find the same expression in Psa. 18:44. As we search further into the teaching of the Scriptures regarding this period, we will see that, sad as it is, the fact remains that the heart of many, even in the Millennium remains unchanged, and when the devil is loosed at the end of the Thousand Years, he immediately gets a mighty following.

Let us look a little further at the actual conditions on the earth during this glorious reign. The Scriptures tell us much about it, as though the Holy Spirit delighted to dwell on the joy and blessing that is yet to come to this sad sin-cursed earth.

Idolatry will have entirely ceased. "The idols He shall utterly abolish." (Isa. 2:18). "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." (Isa. 2:20).

The true God will be known and worshipped. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Isa. 11:9). "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 66:23). "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

War will be at an end, and the earth will enjoy universal peace. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:4). See also Mic. 4:3.

Every cause of fear, whether from man or beast, will be removed and men will dwell in delightful confidence, security and peace. "And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods." (Ezek. 34:25). "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (Isa. 32:17-18).

Justice will be impartially administered. "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and the princes shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32:1). This would tell us of those subordinate rulers who act as ministers of Christ in the affairs of this world. "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful." (Isa. 32:5).

The curse being removed, and creation delivered, there will be wonderful fertility and abundance. "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing." (Psa. 65:11-13).

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." (Amos 9:13).

The very habits and instincts of the brute creation shall be changed. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain." (Isa. 11:6-9).

The minds of men, without any pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, shall yet be well instructed.

Crowded cities and slums will be done away with. "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." (Mic. 4:4; see also Zech. 3:10).

The rush and whirl and selfishness of the present-day city streets will be ended.

"There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and ever man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." (Zech. 8:4-5). What a contrast from the present-day street! "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts." (Zech. 14:20-21).

Not alone Israel, but the nations also, will receive blessing. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people." (Zech. 2:11). "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains.... And all nations shall flow unto it." (Isa. 2:2). "Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." (Zech. 8:22).

Joy and rejoicing will mark the earth in those days. "Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." (Lev. 23:40). "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast.... Thou shalt be wholly joyful." (Deut. 16:14-15 N.T.). "There was joy in Israel." (1 Chron. 12:40 the reign of David, a picture with that of Solomon of the Millennium). "O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; show forth his salvation from day to day.... Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth.... Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad." (Psa. 96:1-11). "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." (Psa. 97:1).

But, although the Lord will reign then, and there will on every hand be peace and prosperity, joy and gladness, although the devil will be bound in the bottomless pit, so that he may not tempt man to evil yet in spite of all, sin will not entirely be done away. And so we read in Psa. 99, "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble.... The King's strength also loveth judgment." And Psa. 101 gives us further details of His ways in judgment. We will quote from the New Translation, "Whoso secretly slandereth his neighbor, him will I destroy; him that hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer.... He that practiseth deceit shall not dwell within My house; he that speaketh falsehoods shall not subsist in my sight. Every morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land: to cut off all workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah.”

It would seem from this last sentence that the Lord will "hold court," so to speak, every morning, and destroy the wicked of the land. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isa. 65:20). It is evident from this that people will live to a very great age in that coming glorious day, for one who dies at a hundred years, will be considered only a child.

Perhaps the brightest days that this poor world has ever known were during the reign of King Solomon. Then "the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycamore trees that are in the low plains in abundance." (2 Chron. 9:27). Solomon was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ when He will reign as King with all enemies put under His feet.

But oh, what a vast difference between even the brightest days this earth has ever witnessed, and the days we have just been describing. Read the book of Ecclesiastes and note the "vanity and vexation of spirit." "That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." (Eccl. 1:15). "I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the places of righteousness, that iniquity was there." (Eccl. 3:16). "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad." (Eccl. 7:7). "Folly is set in great dignity." (Eccl. 10:6). But when "He comes Whose right it is," and takes the throne of this earth, the groans of Ecclesiastes will change to songs of praise.

Before we turn from meditating on the coming Kingdom, let us look briefly at one sample of it in the New Testament. Please read the story of the transfiguration of Christ, as we see it in Matt. 16:28 17:6; Mark 9:1-9; Luke 9:27-36. The Lord says, "I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God." Then follows the scene of the transfiguration, when the Lord Jesus was transfigured before them. "The fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering." Peter speaks of this scene as "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," (2 Peter 1:16), and says, "we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.”

In "the excellent glory" high above all, on His throne, was God, Whose voice was heard "on the holy mount." On "a high mountain apart by themselves" was the Lord Jesus Christ, transfigured to suit the heavenly glory: and with Him, were Moses and Elias. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem wondrous subject, of which the saints in glory will never weary. Moses is a picture of those saints who have died and been raised again. Elias, you will remember, went to Heaven without dying, and is a picture of those saints who will be taken to be with Christ without passing through death. (1 Cor. 15:51). This part of the picture tells us of the heavenly side of the Kingdom. And

what a picture it is! Does not the lovely intimacy of those Heavenly saints with their glorious Lord, tell forth as words must fail to do, the character of our Home above?

But we also see Peter, James and John, still in mortal bodies not resurrection bodies like the heavenly saints but within sight and hearing of the heavenly scene. This shows us the place of Israel when they are restored in that coming day. The earthly Jerusalem shall be "lifted up, and inhabited in her peace," (Zech. 14:10), and shall bask in the light and glory of the heavenly city. (Isa. 60:1; Rev. 21:23-24). It is not strange that Peter, in the midst of such a scene, said, "It is good for us to be here." He wanted to erect three tabernacles (booths) on this holy place. But the time of the Kingdom had not yet come. In the day of the Kingdom we shall see they will keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and dwell in booths, (Zech. 14:16), but that time was then still far distant, and the King must first go to the cross. And in that day, as in this day, the Lord Jesus must ever have the pre-eminence. God cannot permit His Beloved Son to be put on the same level even as Moses and Elias. So we see a cloud "over-shadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son: hear Him.' And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves." (Mark 9:7-8). They came back to the days before the Kingdom, the days in which we live. Thank God, though the glory and the power, though Moses and Elias passed from their view, they had with them "JESUS ONLY," and He is enough. We have Him with us today. True, we do not see Him by our natural eye: but by faith we do see Him in our midst, and we see Him in the glory above, ever living for us; and He is enough. Yes, thank God, though our yearning hearts may cry, and rightly cry, "Thy Kingdom come!" Though we have as yet seen none of its glories, nor tasted of its pleasures, yet "Jesus only" is enough.

We have been tempted to linger over the coming Kingdom, and yet we have not lingered nearly as long as we would wish. May we not ask our readers to take their Bibles and ponder alone with their Lord, some of these lovely scenes that we have barely touched upon? Will you not read, and re-read for yourself, Psa. 72, and drink deeply of the joys of those coming days when Christ will reign. Let them enter your very heart and soul, and you will find them to be a wonderful antidote for the discouragement that seeks to enwrap us like a thick fog, in these dark days when Satan is prince of this world.

“Give the King Thy judgments, O Thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth...." Read it all, and like the Psalmist we must cry "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen." (Psa. 72:1, 8, 18, 19).

“He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.”

Let us now turn back to Lev. 23, and in the light of what we have gleaned from other Scriptures, seek to find what the Holy Spirit would tell us in this portion of the Word of God, of those bright days to come. The most casual reader must observe that the account of the Feast of Tabernacles takes more space in our chapter than any of the other feasts: parts seem to be repeated twice. It would seem that the Spirit of God delights to linger over this closing scene; when Christ shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.

The harvest is all gathered in. The labors in the fields are ended. There is an abundance on every hand. Now comes rest and rejoicing. Twice over do we get the words, "Ye shall do no servile work therein." On the first day, and on the eighth day, there must be no servile work whatever. The first day would tell us of the entry into that feast, this speaks of the Kingdom. The eighth day, as we shall see later on, speaks of a new beginning, and reaches on to the eternal state. The words for both are alike. Whether it be the entry into the Kingdom, or whether it be our part in eternity, "servile works" have no place whatever. Our right of entry into both are the same, it is only by the precious blood of Christ, only by the mighty Sacrifice of which the sacrifices offered throughout this feast speak. Whether it be the Kingdom, or whether it be eternity, our entry there is absolutely not by virtue of our own work. Our servile works can never fit us for either. Our working, our watching, our overcoming, all our servile works put together, have nothing whatever to do with our privilege of entry into that glorious Kingdom, or into the eternal rest beyond it.

Our position in the Kingdom does appear to be determined by our walk down here. We read of those who have authority over ten cities, and others who have authority over five cities. (Luke 19:17, 19). This is a matter of reward. But our entry into the Kingdom has nothing to do with works.

Lev. 23:42 of our chapter makes this even more clear. "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days, all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths." The right to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the appointed way depends on birth, not on works. There is no suggestion, even in the Feast of the Passover, that only those who were Israelites born might put the blood on the door, and we know that a "mixed multitude" went up out of Egypt. (Ex. 12:38). Provision is even made for the stranger who wished to keep the Feast of the Passover. (Ex. 12:48). But the Feast of Tabernacles depends on birth, "All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths." And the right to enter the heavenly kingdom also depends on birth. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). The new birth alone, without our servile works, gives the right of entry there.

The booths in which these Israelites dwelt were made of "the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook." (verse 40). The branches of palm trees would tell of the victories won down here, and the willows of the book would tell of the sorrows, and perhaps the failures and defeats, of the wilderness pathway. (Compare Rev. 7:9 and Psa. 137:2). But it was not the palm branches that gave the right to enter the Kingdom, nor did the willows hinder the pilgrim having his part in that glorious day. We suppose that everyone in that heavenly company will know what it is to weave together the palms and the willows, as they look back over this wilderness journey. (See verse 43). We will find then, that truly all things do work together for good to them that love God. (Rom. 8:28). We will find then, that truly all things were for our sakes. (2 Cor. 4:15). And we will find that in that day every man shall have praise of God. (1 Cor. 4:5). We believe that there will not be one booth in that Heavenly Feast without some palm branches in it, even though we do seem to make such a failure of things now down here. Where we see only defeat it may be that the Captain of our Salvation sees victory. Blessed thought, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," (1 John 5:4), not our works.

The description of the boughs of the trees used in the Feast of Tabernacles in Nehemiah's day (of which we hope to speak later) is very remarkable. Read the New Translation, "Go forth to the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and wild olive-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths." (Neh. 8:15). You will note the willow-branches are omitted. I suppose it's because earlier in the chapter Nehemiah and Ezra had stilled the people's weeping, saying, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." There are times when the Lord dries our tears, and would give us unmixed joy. I suppose that Rom. 11 interprets the olive-branches and wild olive-branches, as Israel and the Gentiles. Here we find them woven together to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, as we shall presently see they will do.

There were to be special sacrifices each day of the feast. "Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord." (Lev. 23:26). In Num. 29:12-40, we get a detailed account of these sacrifices. The Burnt Offering included bullocks, telling perhaps of the value and worth of our great Sacrifice: rams telling of His devotedness even unto death: and lambs, telling of His gentleness, and of the special way in which He came as the Lamb of God. All the sacrifices must be without blemish, all told forth His spotless purity and all were a sweet savor unto Jehovah. The Sin Offering is specially mentioned for each of the seven days, and is specially noted for the eighth day. (Num. 29:38). Also in Ezek. 45:25, we see that the sin offering, burnt offering and meat offering, are to be included in the sacrifices to be offered at the Feast of Tabernacles in Millennial days.

We get some most remarkable instruction concerning the sacrifices of the bullocks during the seven days of the feast. On the first day of the feast, the sacrifice consisted of thirteen young bullocks, two rams and fourteen lambs of the first year. (Num. 29:13). On the second day, there were but twelve bullocks offered. On the third day, eleven. The fourth day, ten: till on the seventh day, we find but seven bullocks were offered unto the Lord. Does this tell us of a decreasing sense of value of the worth of the Sacrifice that won for them this glorious Kingdom? In the earthly side of the Kingdom this would seem to be the case. The awful suffering, war and carnage of the judgments that ushered in the thousand years of peace, seem to have made some of the nations offer "feigned obedience," as we have already seen.

As the years pass by, their gratitude to the One to Whom they owe all grows less and less, and by the time the thousand years are finished, and the devil is loosed from his prison in the bottomless pit, we find the nations in the four quarters of the earth, the number of which is as the sand of the sea, (a great contrast to the condition of the earth at the beginning of the Millennium, when there were "few men in it"), these nations are ready to follow Satan to battle against the King of kings, Who has held such just and gracious rule for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:7-8).

This may well be a very solemn lesson to us; let us watch our love, lest, like the church in Ephesus, it grow cold. (Rev. 2:4). Let us watch lest our sacrifice of praise, day by day, grows less. It is only as our eyes and our hearts are engaged with that Blessed One Who has done all for us, that the last day will find the same sacrifice as on the first day. May it be so with each one of us.

The fact that there were thirteen, not fourteen, (twice seven), bullocks offered on the first day, might indicate that in the Millennium we are still a little short of that perfect time when sin will be done away. But even though this is true, how sweet to read of that first day of the feast, (Lev. 23:39 New Translation), "On the first day there shall be rest, and on the eighth day there shall be rest." The Lord offers rest, even now, to all who come to Him, and to all who take His yoke, (Matt. 11:28-30), but in the days to come there is to be a further rest, when the curse shall largely be done away, and the Prince of Peace shall reign. What a prospect for this poor war-torn earth rest, peace, and joy! Lord haste that day! Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven!

Before we leave the subject of the Feast of Tabernacles, we must notice with sorrow how little value Israel placed upon it. In Neh. 8:17, we read, "And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness." Even in the glorious days of David and Solomon, days that in type looked on to the coming Kingdom, they did not keep this feast in the appointed way, (though it had been kept. See 2 Chron. 7:8-10; 8:13; 1 Kings 8:2 and it was at this feast that the ark had been brought into the newly built temple.). But it remained for a little feeble remnant, returned from captivity, to keep this feast as it should be kept. What a cheer and encouragement to our hearts in these dark and difficult days, when there is such feebleness and failure. The hope of the Lord's coming, and the hope of the coming Kingdom, may shine more brightly in our hearts, than ever has been the case before. May it truly be so!

It was during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles that Haggai uttered his heart-stirring message. (Hag. 2:19). "Be strong.... and work." "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." While we still wait for that promised peace, may we each be found heeding that first message, "Be strong.... and work."

It was in the Feast of Tabernacles that our Lord Himself "went up into the temple." (John 7:2-14). The feast is now no longer called, "the Feast of Jehovah," but "the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles." The King had come unto His own and His own had received Him not. (John 1:11). He had offered them the Kingdom and they had refused it, and now the Lord refuses their feast.

But "in the last day, that great day of the feast," (the eighth day, of which we must speak before we close), "Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

With the King despised and rejected of men, the Kingdom that which the Feast of Tabernacles told forth must be postponed. And now Judah has been waiting nearly 2000 years for the rest and joy and peace she refused so long ago. But we see in the Scripture just quoted, that instead of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Lord gives to His own, the Holy Spirit, and even now down here we have rest, and peace and joy. Now if any man thirst, the Lord calls to him to come to Himself, and drink. Whoever believes on Him, out of his belly (from the bottom of his heart, as we say, out of his inmost affections), shall flow streams of refreshment to others. The poor vessel is so full that it overflows.

When the Lord comes we will have the harvest and the vintage, and then the full blessing: but until that blessing comes, we have the Holy Ghost instead of it, and our place is to wait for Christ from Heaven.

But the day is coming when not only Israel, but even the nations of the world will celebrate it in exactly the same way as Israel, but we cannot refrain from quoting the remarkable passage from Zech. 14, beginning from the 16th verse. "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is

left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts, and to keep the Feasts of Tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plaque, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

We must notice three things in these verses. First, the nations will come up every year to worship the King, Jehovah of Hosts. This King will be the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that at that time He is reigning —reigning in Jerusalem. Second, we see the nations must come up to worship Him. Now, the Lord does not compel anyone to worship Him. There are many in this world with great material prosperity who refuse to worship the Lord. Now, He sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matt. 5:45). In the time that is coming, if the nations do not obey, and go up to worship the King, and keep the Feast of Tabernacles, they will get no rain. How remarkable it is, that they are not called upon to keep the Feast of the Passover or Pentecost, but only the Feast of Tabernacles. The Passover and Pentecost specially have to do with the Church. The Feast of Tabernacles has to do with the Kingdom.

The Feast of Tabernacles closed with "the great day of the feast"), the eighth day. The eighth day speaks of a new beginning. The seven days of the feast tell of the Thousand Years that Christ will reign: "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The eighth day tells us of this long Sabbath of Eternity. We see in Lev. 23:39. "The eighth day shall be a sabbath" or rest. In Gen. 2:2-3 we read, "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." Alas, sin soon broke in on God's rest, so that the Son of God must say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17). And through nearly six thousand years the Father and the Son have been working for poor, wretched, sinful man. But, "There remaineth a rest (or sabbath-keeping) to the people of God." (Heb. 4:9). Sin has spoiled the rest of the seventh day, but there yet remains the rest of the eighth day.

In Num. 29:35-38, we see the special sacrifices that were to be offered on the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles. "Ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord: one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish: their meat offering and their drink offerings for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, shall be according to their number, after the manner: and one goat for a sin offering; beside the continual burnt offering, and his meat offering, and his drink offering.

Throughout the long rest of eternity, there will ever and always be going up that sweet savor of the burnt offering unto Jehovah. Throughout eternity there will be no change in the value and worth and fragrance of that offering. Nor will those who have the privilege of sharing in that eternal bliss grow weary of that theme, nor will their sense of the value of that mighty sacrifice ever grow less, as was the case during the seven days of the Feast.

Not only will the Burnt Offering ever send forth its sweet savor, but the Meat Offering will to all eternity tell of the pathway down here of the Man of Sorrows, on His way to the cross. And the Sin Offering will not be forgotten either. The sins are long since gone, to be remembered no more, but forever and forever will we remember that He made His soul an offering for sin, and that "He did it for me."

We have sought to trace in a little measure God's ways as shown forth in the Feasts of Jehovah from Eternity to Eternity, and as we gaze with enraptured eyes on the entrancing scene before us, as it reaches on and on through the countless ages of eternity, we can but even now fall down and worship, as we cry:

"Blessing ... honour ... glory ... power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

Rev. 5:13

The Seven Feasts of Jehovah: Leviticus 23, Redeemed of the Lord, The

"Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Deut. 33:29)

"The children of Israel, a people near unto Him." (Psa. 148:14)

Perhaps it will help us to understand "the Feasts of Jehovah" better, if we look first at the people of Jehovah —those people whom He commanded to keep the feasts. The book of Leviticus, where we read the account of these feasts, is the third book of the Old Testament. In the first book of the Old Testament, Genesis, we read of the way God made man, put him in a beautiful garden, and came down in the cool of the day to walk in the garden with the man whom He had made. Here we find the wonderful fact that God was seeking the companionship of man. I suppose we all know how man sinned, and so spoiled this communion with God. In the very brief history of man before the flood, God pauses to speak of one man who "walked with God for three hundred years." God lets us see His joy in this man, with whom He could have companionship.

Then we read of the general apostasy, and of the flood. After the flood things were no better, we read of the Tower of Babel, and of the way man again turned from God. Then God chose one man, Abraham; he was the "friend of God." We see again God's joy in one man with whom He could have companionship. We read of this same joy in Prov. 8:31, where the Lord Jesus Christ, typified by "Wisdom" says, "My delights were with the sons of men."

God chose Abraham to be the father of a special nation. This nation was to be God's own people— "a people near unto Him." I expect that most of my readers know the story of Abraham and his descendents. You know the way they became slaves in Egypt, and when the second

book of the Old Testament, (Exodus), opens, we see Abraham's descendents, a great and mighty nation, in Egypt, but helpless slaves there under the cruel dominion of the great king Pharaoh. But not only were they slaves, they had also forgotten the God Who had chosen them, and made them His Own. They were idolaters in Egypt, (see Josh. 24:14). When God was about to send Moses to deliver them, we see in Ex. 3:13-14, that when God told Moses to say to the people, "The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you," Moses asked God, "They shall say to me, What is His name? What shall I say?" God's people had so far forgotten their God, that they had even forgotten His great Name.

There were no "Feasts of Jehovah" in Egypt. There were no "holy convocations." There were no times of rejoicing. Pharaoh tried to make Israel keep the feast in Egypt, but that was impossible. (Ex. 5:1, 8-22) They were slaves and idolaters there. This shows us a picture of man, every man, in his natural state, He has departed from God. He is a slave of Satan, the prince of this world. Anything and everything has a place in his heart, but "God is not in all his thoughts." (Psa. 10:4)

Did God forsake His people because they were in this terrible condition? No, He did not. With mighty power He brought His people out of Egypt. He delivered them from under the cruel hand of Pharaoh. He separated them from the people and the idols of Egypt, to become the chosen people of Jehovah, according to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Afterward He could say to them, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself." (Ex. 19:4)

The wicked ways of these people in Egypt demanded death and God brought them out of Egypt by the means of death, as we shall see. But it was the death of another: not of Israel, who deserved to die. They were redeemed from Egypt and slavery by blood.

They were redeemed, they were separated, to be Jehovah's "peculiar treasure," "A people near unto Him" (Psa. 148:14); with Jehovah in the midst of them, shielding, protecting, and ruling over them. Jehovah again was devising a way whereby He might dwell amongst men.

But please consider what wonderful grace for God to take up such poor rebel slaves, and to redeem them, to save them from their cruel master, to bring them so near to Himself, and to fill their mouth with singing. Truly we do not wonder that Moses could say, when he was taking leave of them, in Deut. 33:29, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?”

But, although the grace that brought Israel into such a place was very wonderful: although the blessings that Israel received were far beyond the thought of man: yet all this was only a shadow of the greater grace that brings poor, lost sinners today, into a still higher and better place. Please listen to these words, "Blessed be the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3)

Much less than this would have satisfied us. We would have been quite satisfied to be delivered from hell and judgment. That was all we desired when we discovered that we were lost. But less than these wonderful blessings could not satisfy God, or fulfill the desires of His heart. He was seeking worshippers, (John 4:23). It does not say He was seeking "worship," but "worshippers." His purpose was to have a people near unto Himself, made like His own dear Son, "holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:4)

These feasts would have been no use to Israel in Egypt. Other things filled their minds there. Their lives were bitter with hard bondage. Their days were filled with making brick and mortar. Their backs were sore from the whips of the task-masters. They had no heart for "the feasts of Jehovah." But now that Jehovah had delivered them, and brought them out of Egypt, and through the Red Sea, into the wilderness, where they could be alone with Himself, then they were ready to hear Jehovah's gracious invitation to come to His feasts. Then Jehovah was able to tell them what was in His heart, and to invite them to share with Him the great things which had been in His thoughts from eternity. Once again, Jehovah could have His heart's desire, to have His people with Himself, and be in their company. Listen to His own words, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." (Ex. 29:45-46).

Jehovah was the host at these feasts, and His people Israel were His guests. He ordained these feasts, as celebrations of His own joy, His own delight, in the great events to which they pointed. Truly they were but shadows of those great events which were to come, but Jehovah could see the real images themselves. And though His people could not understand the fullness and depth of meaning, as we can now; it was their joy and privilege to share with Jehovah His joy, and to be His guests.

As we read and meditate on these feasts, we will see that the things which have occupied the heart of God from all eternity, were those things which will still last to all eternity. The songs of Heaven will never grow old. How different to the joys and the songs of earth, which so soon pass away! May the Lord give us eyes to see, and a heart to share, those things which fill the heart of God with joy.

Do you remember in the parable of the Sower, that some of the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it, and the Lord told us that thorns were a picture of the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and that they sprang up and choked the Word, so it became unfruitful? How sad, if the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, make it impossible for us to care about these things that are a joy to the heart of the Lord. How sad if we are too busy with other things, perhaps business, or study, or even the Lord's work to take time to hear from the Lord these things in which He has delighted for so long, and which He has taken the trouble to tell to us.

Every individual saint is called to have fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3), and the whole church, (meaning "the called-out ones") is called to the fellowship of God's Son "Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:9). Do you remember those gracious words of the Lord Jesus in John 14? "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." Compare also John 14:3 and Rev. 21:3; 22:3.

The Lord desires the fellowship of His people now, and He desired it in the days of old also. He desired it so much that He thought of the difficulties that might arise when His people came together to meet Himself, and He provided for these difficulties. We all know that it would be impossible for us to rejoice before the Lord if we were worrying about our cares at home. When all the men left their homes to go up to meet the Lord, who would protect the homes from the enemy? What about the Philistines who were always ready to come down on the Lord's people? Would it be safe or right to leave their wives and children unprotected to go up to meet the Lord, as He desired? The Lord knew all these dangers and difficulties, and so He gave the special promise, "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." (Ex. 34:24) The God Who could think of these things and take special care of His people in those days, will not forget them now. He tells us now not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, (Heb. 10:25) and will He not take care that those who hear and obey His Word, will not lose by it? Is not this a special word for us in China, where all around us we see our neighbors

making no difference for the Lord's Day, but going on with their own affairs in business and pleasure, as if the day were their own? May we not be tempted to follow their example? But when we know the deep desire of the Lord's heart to have us with Himself and around Himself may we let nothing hinder us, and we will surely find in eternity that we have not lost by it. The Lord's promise still stands true, "Them that honor Me, I will honor," (1 Sam. 2:30) and "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness;" (that is, put God's things first,) "And all these things shall be added unto you."(Matt. 6:33)

But before we begin to consider the "feasts of Jehovah" in detail, there is one more matter connected with them that we should notice. If we turn over in our Bibles to the Gospel of John, we read in Chapter 2:13 of the Passover, the first of "the feasts of Jehovah." But here it is not called "the feast of Jehovah," but "the Jews' Passover." In chapter 7:2 we read, "The Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand." "The feasts of Jehovah" have become the "feasts of the Jews." The outward form was there, but the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, had been rejected, and what joy could God have in empty forms?

Speaking of them in an earlier day, (Isa. 1:14), the Lord had said, "Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them." Why was this? Was it not because of this formal, empty way in which the people kept the feasts, while they themselves were defiled with sin, and going on with evil? Do you not think that you and I can learn a very valuable lesson from this for ourselves today? Do you think that the Lord likes any better a correct form, and fine outward worship, if the heart is away from God, and the hands are defiled with sin, and the feet not walking in the truth? The Lord says plainly, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15:22). How much we see about us, that has the form of worship, but if we examine it, we find that it is not in accordance with the Word of God, and not in obedience to His expressed command. We hear men say, "You worship in your way, and I worship in mine; we all have a right to our own opinions." This is exactly what we have not. And if you or I worship in our way, we may be quite certain that this worship is not acceptable to God.

Remember in Rev. 3:14-22, the church of Laodicea had very great outward show. They were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing, (in their own eyes). But what is the Lord's judgment? They were ready to be spewed out of His mouth, they were so loathsome to Him. He could bear them no longer. May you and I, dear brethren, beware lest we also follow in this pathway. And let us not forget that the beginning of the downfall, as seen in the church of Ephesus, Rev. 2:4-5, was not in any way outwardly apparent, but was in the heart, "Thou hast left thy first love." May the Lord keep our hearts may He keep our love bright and fresh, with Himself alone as the object and we will find our joy in being with Him, even as He finds His joy in having us with Him, also. How well if our hearts can say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." (Sol. 2:16), but it is a deeper lesson when we can say, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." (Sol. 7:10). What great grace!

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