

## Sermon: Deuteronomy 16:1-17 Feasts and the Christian Life

### 1. Biblical Basics

#### a. Two Testaments or Covenants

i. Summarized “The New is in the Old concealed, and the Old is in the New revealed” - St. Augustine

1. Said another way the OT is full of promises and the NT is full of fulfillment

a. **Heb 10:1 For the law having a shadow of the good things to come**, not the very image of the things;

b. Colossians 2:16-17 Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a festival day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths, **Which are a shadow of things to come**, but the body is of Christ

2. Sometimes the Prophecies and fulfillment are straight forward

a. Micah Prophecies 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

b. And in Matthew 2:1 we read that Jesus was indeed born in Bethlehem

3. Other times what the OT is pointing to is less obvious but no less important. It's more the shadow than the substance

### 2. 3 feasts in Deuteronomy 16 and what they point to

#### a. Passover

i. Jewish “new year” Month of Abib (Nisan) (Rosh Hashanah is the start of the Jewish “civil” year but is in the seventh month of the ecclesiastical year which begins with Passover)

1. In a time of new life and Birth it was also the birth of the Jewish nation at the Exodus from Egypt

2. Passover was the means through which God spared His people the death of their firstborn and caused Pharaoh to consent to the release of the Hebrews whom he had enslaved (Exodus 12)

3. Matthew 26 we see Jesus participating and then telling us that He was the Passover lamb

a. In verses **26** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the

disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."

27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the<sup>c</sup> covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

- b. Hebrews 7:27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

b. Weeks (shavuot or pentecost)

- i. 7 weeks after the first harvest of wheat which ends up being seven weeks after Passover. (this became known as "pentecost" which means "fifty" so seven weeks is 49 days after the start of harvest and so on the 50th day the holiday begins)
- ii. This was really part one of a two part celebration - like appetizers before the main course
- iii. This was a time of celebrating God's provision and rejoicing in the first fruits of the harvest.
- iv. "Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit." (Romans 8:23) Present possession is declared. At this present moment we have the first fruits of the Spirit. We have repentance, that gem of the first water; faith, that priceless pearl; hope, the heavenly emerald; and love, the glorious ruby. We are already made "new creatures in Christ Jesus," by the effectual working of God the Holy Ghost. This is called the firstfruit because it comes first. As the wave-sheaf was the first of the harvest, so the spiritual life, and all the graces which adorn that life, are the first operations of the Spirit of God in our souls. The firstfruits were the pledge of the harvest. As soon as the Israelite had plucked the first handful of ripe ears, he looked forward with glad anticipation to the time when the wain should creak beneath the sheaves. So, brethren, when God gives us things which are pure, lovely, and of good report, as the work of the Holy Spirit, these are to us the prognostics of the coming glory. The firstfruits were always holy to the Lord, and our new nature, with all its powers, is a consecrated thing. The new life is not ours that we should ascribe its excellence to our own merit; it is Christ's image and creation, and is ordained for his glory. But the firstfruits were not the harvest, and the works of the Spirit in us at this

moment are not the consummation—the perfection is yet to come. We must not boast that we have attained, and so reckon the wave-sheaf to be all the produce of the year: we must hunger and thirst after righteousness, and pant for the day of full redemption. Dear reader, this evening open your mouth wide, and God will fill it. Let the boon in present possession excite in you a sacred avarice for more grace. Groan within yourself for higher degrees of consecration, and your Lord will grant them to you, for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or even think.

- v. 2 Cor 1:20-22<sup>20</sup>For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. <sup>21</sup>And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, <sup>22</sup>and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.<sup>d</sup>

c. Booths (Sukkot or “tents/tabernacles”)

- i. This feast was after the completion of harvest - not just after the crops were in but after all the processing was complete- the wine had been pressed and preserved in skins or kasks, and the grain had been threshed and stored away.
- ii. It was the great feast lasting 7 days and the emphasis was on the completion or culmination of God’s provision and it came at the point in the year when the land really was flowing with milk and honey
  - 1. So they would set up booths or temporary dwellings as a reminder that they had lived in tents in the wilderness and now God had given them rest in the land at the end of their labors.
- iii. In the book of revelation we read of a feast that is a culmination of the harvest. A feast that celebrates the coming of the bridegroom who has paid the bride’s price - which he paid with his life, his very blood- has come to claim what is his and to invite his bride the church to sit down to a feast with him
  - 1. <sup>6</sup>Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. <sup>7</sup>Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; <sup>8</sup>it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. <sup>9</sup>And the angel

said<sup>a</sup> to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

- iv. So what has started as a covenant in blood, is validated through first fruits and culminates in eternal unity with God our father and Jesus our Savior through the Holy spirit of God that is now in us.
  - 1. 2 cor 5:2 For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling

d. These things

### 3. Application

a. Reasons you may not be feasting

i. Over emphasis on one or the other of these truths.

- 1. Over emphasis on the passover -Grace- leaves us lacking the power of the spirit to overcome sin and looking at ourselves rather than looking to heaven and our place at the table there
- 2. An over emphasis on the First Fruits- The Holy Spirit- leaves us looking for the signs and wonder and experiences that he brings and and forgetting that the greatest wonder that the Holy Spirit performs is the resurrection of those dead in sin to new life in Christ which will be culminated at the end of the age
- 3. An over emphasis on that final feast - of benign in heaven with christ- can cause us to overlook the passover of conversion that is happening around us and the miracle of Spirit Power to overcome sin in our lives and the lives of others - as one preacher put it "we can be so heavenly minded that we are of no earthly good."

4. These feast must be held in balance

ii. A return to the slop of the pig pen

- 1. Sin that cripples us

iii. You have not eaten the passover

- 1. If you have not eaten the passover you are till in egypt and there is no first fruit and there is no end of harvest