

Sunday April 11th 2010
Looking to Pentecost

1). Ex 19:1 ¶ *In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. 2 For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain. 3 And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." 7 So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." [Lit. 'We agree to do even before we have listened'] So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.10 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. 11 "And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.*

a). In our scripture here from Exodus we see that it is in the third month after leaving Egypt that Israel is camped at Mount Sinai and in v4-6 we see God making conditional promises to the nation – promises conditioned on their faithful obedience.

b). What we are seeing here then is the precursor to the giving of the Law to Israel.

c). Now although there is obviously no reference to Pentecost in this scripture, Pentecost for the Jew is also called the season of the giving of the Torah as this is the literal day that God revealed Himself to the children of Israel as they stood at the base of the mountain. This would place this event exactly 50 days after crossing the Red Sea – on the 6th day of the 3rd month, the month of Sivan.

d). And it will of course be on the 3rd Day, after 2 days of preparation in the wilderness that God will again reveal Himself to the nation and v4-6 will find their final fulfillment.

2). Now if we back track a little bit we will see in the events of Exodus the foundational pattern for the Spring Feasts given to Israel, a series of four feasts finding their culmination at Pentecost.

a). The pattern begins, as it must, with the appropriation of eternal deliverance from the bondage of Egypt - Ex 12:5 *'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

b). The lamb must be slain for a household and the blood appropriated. Once this was done Israel was then instructed - Ex 12:15 *'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.*

c). Israel, God's adopted firstborn son, having died on the night of Passover is then to remove the leaven, the sin in their lives, and leave it in the place of death. This figuratively, immediately following Passover, is where they would find themselves.

d). It is then three days out of Egypt when the event symbolizing Israel's burial and resurrection takes place - Ex 14:26 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." 27 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28 Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. 29 But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

e). It is of course the Red Sea crossing when Israel is symbolically resurrected to newness of life, free from the bondage of Egypt, on the eastern shore. This now brings us to the Feast of Firstfruits where the first of the Spring harvest, the barley harvest, is brought before the Lord. Now as Israel's mandate as the recipients of the promises given to Abraham was to bring God's blessing to all the nations of the earth it would not be difficult to see them as the firstfruits of the salvation of God to be brought by them to the Gentile nations - Ge 12:2 *I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

f). 50 days on from here we then come to Pentecost -And in our foundational pattern this brings us to where we started, Israel at Sinai.

3). Now let's remind ourselves that God's purpose in delivering Israel from Egypt was to bring them into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for the purpose of rulership and we will also remember from our foundation in the first two chapters of Genesis that rulership over the earth can only take place with a Man and a Woman in a marriage relationship. And so marriage must be an integral part of God's purpose for Israel.

a). Now the first stage in the marriage relationship as given in scripture is that of betrothal, where a contract is made between the two parties to be married in which the responsibilities and obligations for each party are set out. During betrothal, you are legally married, but do not physically live with your spouse. Betrothal is so legally binding that you cannot get out of it without a divorce. This is exactly the situation that we find with Mary and Joseph before the Lord's birth – Lu 1:26 ¶ *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*

Mt 1:19 *Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away [divorce her] secretly.*

b). And the giving of a betrothal contract between God and Israel is exactly what we find taking place at Sinai where the terms of the marriage contract are verbalized - Ex 20:1 ¶ *And God spoke all these words, saying: 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 "You shall have no other gods before Me....."*

c). And we will remember that before God speaks Israel has already made the commitment, 'We agree to do even before we have listened'.

d). What we are witnessing then in this event at Sinai is God's betrothal to Israel - Jer 2:1 ¶ *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I remember you, The kindness of your youth, The love of your betrothal, When you went after Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown. 3 Israel was holiness to the LORD, The firstfruits of His increase.*

4). Ex 19:16 ¶ *Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19 And when the blast of the*

trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.

a). Beyond the betrothal there then comes the consummation of the marriage where a written contract is signed by two witnesses who are called the friends of the bridegroom, one of whom is assigned to the bride and the other to the groom, and this takes place beneath a wedding canopy, or ‘chupah’ as it is called in Hebrew.

b). So let’s note some things from our scripture here. It is Moses who brings Israel to the foot of the mountain and we would see in this his role as the friend of the Bridegroom assigned to the bride.

c). Israel comes to the foot of the mountain. Now the word translated ‘foot’ here comes from the Hebrew word – ‘tachath’ which has the sense of being underneath. The picture then is of Israel being underneath the mountain, beneath the wedding canopy, the ‘chupah’.

d). We will also note that there is much loud noise and the Lord descended in fire.

e). On Mount Sinai God gave the Torah, the Law to Israel, in Exodus Chapter 20, the beginning of which we saw earlier. Moses wrote this down as ‘the book of the covenant’ before he went to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone.

f). Not only did this Book of the Covenant spell out the mutual obligations for God and Israel, but also revealed the character and nature of God to Israel in a way they had never experienced before - *Ex 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. 6 And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient."*

g). The written contract, called a ‘ketubah’ in Hebrew, had to be signed by both witnesses in order for the marriage to be consummated.

5). *Ex 24:12 ¶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them." 13 So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. 14 And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them." 15 Then Moses went up*

into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. 16 Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. 17 The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. 18 So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

a). It is while on the mountain of course that God writes on the tablets of stone. This would be the ‘Ketubah’, the written contract, signed by God on the mountain and requiring the signature of Moses upon his return to the camp of Israel - Ex 31:18 *And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

b). We know the story though. Moses returns to find the celebrations surrounding the golden calf - Ex 32:16 *Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. 17 And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp." 18 But he said: "It is not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, But the sound of singing I hear." 19 So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.*

c). The written contract is broken before it is signed and judgment comes - Ex 32:27 *And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" 28 So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.*

d). It is only after judgment and repentance that God again brings Moses to the mountain top to give him the tablets of the covenant once again. Now this second visit to the mountain may picture for us the giving of a new covenant to Israel following the events of the Tribulation, the old covenant having been broken. And it is also interesting to note that it is on this second visit to the mountain top to receive the tablets of stone that Moses face shines with the glory of the Lord, something that is not recorded before - Ex 34:29 *Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses' hand when he came down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.*

6). So let's review for a moment.

a). Israel is delivered from Egypt having slain the Passover lambs, an event that would become the Feast of Passover.

b). Next, although somewhat concurrent with this comes the removal of leaven for a period of seven days, which would become the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

c). Having been buried in the Red Sea and then raised to newness of life three days out from Egypt, Israel becomes the firstfruits of God's increase – Jer 2:3 *Israel was holiness to the LORD, The firstfruits of His increase.* This would become the Feast of Firstfruits.

d). 50 days later Israel is at Sinai entering into a betrothal contract with God having committed themselves to faithful obedience for the purpose of rulership within the Theocratic Kingdom. This day would become known as the Feast of Pentecost, a feast that is also known as the Feast of Weeks because of the counting of days from the Feast of Firstfruits - Ex 34:22 *"And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.*

e). All of this is of course foundational, setting the pattern in place. Having set the pattern these are now the instructions that the Lord gives for the observance of the Feast of Weeks - Le 23:15 ¶ *'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. 17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.21 'And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.*

f). Here then is the content of the Feast of Pentecost that is to be a statute forever – it is a new grain offering consisting of two loaves of two tenths of an ephah of fine flour that are baked with leaven and waved before the Lord, and these two loaves are the firstfruits to the Lord. All of which presents to us a type that points the way to a future fulfillment, building upon the foundation of Israel at Sinai.

7). Ac 2:1 ¶ *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 ¶ And there were dwelling in*

Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"

a). And here in Acts Chapter 2 we find ourselves at the Day of Pentecost following the Lord's death and resurrection.

b). If we back track a little we will remember that Christ had come to offer the Kingdom of the Heavens to the nation of Israel, an offer conditioned upon national repentance - Mt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

c). In an event that parallels the events at Sinai, recorded over three Chapters in Matthew, we find Jesus seated upon a mountain, teaching what we have come to call the beatitudes, that reveal the nature and character of God and the obligations to be embraced by the nation in respect of the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens Mt 5:1 ¶ *And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: 3 ¶ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.....*

d). Although this event parallels what God the Father did at Sinai, this is not Pentecost, but an event nonetheless that needed to be set in place before Israel's rejection of the Kingdom.

e). Israel does of course reject the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens and is set aside so that this offer can be made to an entirely new creation – the one new man in Christ Jesus, the church.

f). And again, because of the foundational picture in Genesis Chapters 1 + 2 rulership from this Heavenly realm can only take place with a Man and a Woman within a marriage relationship.

g). There was a pattern set with Israel in Exodus and that pattern having been established must be followed – beginning in the only place it can begin, Passover.

8). 1Co 5:7 ¶ *Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for*

us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

a). Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. It is through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ that we are eternally delivered from slavery to sin within the realm of the god of this age, which is symbolized for us in Egypt.

b). Having been eternally redeemed we are to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, both in the sense of removing the sin from our lives on a continuous basis, signified by the 7 days allotted to the feast in the type, and also in the sense of only eating the unleavened Bread of Life, which is the sinless Lord Jesus Christ, the uncorrupted Word made flesh.

c). Christ the only begotten firstborn Son died and as we saw with Israel, was buried and then raised on the 3rd day - 1Co 15:20 ¶ *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.*

d). As Israel celebrated the Feast of Firstfruits so Christ became the fulfillment of the Feast becoming the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

e). And as we share in His death so we may also share in His resurrection - Ro 6:5 *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

f). Being in the likeness of His resurrection is a present application for us with a future fulfillment. We can be in the likeness of His resurrection now by choosing to walk in the Spirit leaving our flesh in the place of death. Then if we choose to do this consistently in the present we will in the future be in the likeness of His resurrection as a glorified joint heir. This is why we are described as follows in - Jas 1:18 *Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*

g). Then of course 50 days on from the Feast of Firstfruits we come back to Acts Chapter 2 – ‘When the day of Pentecost had fully come’.

9). Ac 1:4 *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

a). It is on this particular day of Pentecost that the promise of the Father comes that they had heard from Him - Joh 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to*

come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

b). On this day the 120 disciples are gathered together in the upper room in one accord just as Israel was camped at Sinai of one mind.

c). On this day the Holy Spirit comes from Heaven to Jerusalem just as God came to Mount Sinai.

d). Just as God spoke in thunderings so there is a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.

e). Just as God appeared on the mountain top in fire so divided tongues as of fire sat upon each of the disciples.

f). Just as God's voice was heard by each individual at Sinai so the wonderful works of God are heard in the language of every nation under heaven.

g). Just as Israel at Sinai becomes the congregation of the Lord so the Church comes into being.

h). Just as Israel is betrothed to God so the search for the Bride begins.

i). Just as faithful obedience was required of Israel for the consummation of her marriage to God the Father, so faithful obedience is required of those who in that Day will experience to consummation of the marriage to God the Son.

j). Just as the commands of God were written by the finger of God on tablets of stone, so the commands of Christ are written by the Holy Spirit on our hearts and minds - 2Co 3:2 *You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.*

k). Just as God revealed His nature and character and intent to Israel so He continues to reveal these same things to us by the Spirit - 1Co 2:9 *But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*

l). And just as Israel's rejection of the marriage contract resulted in the death of 3000 in the camp of Israel, so repentance brought about life for 3000 in the church.

10). It is on this day of Pentecost that the picture given in the instructions for the Feast in Leviticus Chapter 23 come to their fulfillment. Let's read them again –
Le 23:16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. 17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

a). Pentecost celebrates the wheat harvest, and we will remember that Jesus said - *Joh 12:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

b). Jesus is that grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died becoming the firstfruits upon His resurrection, showing the way for all those who would follow Him who would be fruitful.

c). The 2 loaves made of fine flour and baked with leaven picture for us the nation of Israel and the church who stood side by side on the day of Pentecost, both offerings to the Lord. They are made with fine flour which speaks of the grinding and refining process that all wheat must go through. The church through the trials, testing and tribulations of this present dispensation. And Israel during the time of the Great Tribulation. Yet despite the refining process both Christians and Jews retain a sin nature, hence the loaves are baked with leaven. And despite the presence of sin within them they still remain a free will offering and holy to the Lord – *1Pe 1:15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

d). And the number 2 of course is the number of witness and testimony. The Law was given to Israel on 2 tablets of stone and there are 2 commandments that fulfill the whole Law. So the 2 loaves, Israel and the church bear witness to the truth of God and testify to His plans and purposes.

e). Here at Pentecost the mystery of God is revealed - *Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 ¶ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. 19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,*

11). And so as we consider the amazing events surrounding the feast of Pentecost, both from the O/T and the N/T let us conclude with a scripture that looks to the

future with a present application - Heb 12:18 ¶ *For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. 20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." 21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.") 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.*