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SEVEN
BLESSINGS
OF THE
ATONEMENT

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OF THE
ATONEMENT

UNLEASH THE ANCIENT
DOUBLE-PORTION PROMISES
IN YOUR LIFE TODAY

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DALLAS, TEXAS

SEVEN BLESSINGS OF THE ATONEMENT

Published by Clarion Call Marketing
P.O. Box 610010
Dallas, TX 75261

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ISBN 1-59574-965-1

Printed in the United States of America

2006—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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INTRODUCTION



And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.’... Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.”

—LEVITICUS 23:1-2, 27

In Leviticus, God instructed Moses to observe the “feasts of the Lord,” but what does an ancient Hebrew commemoration called the Day of Atonement have to do with Christian believers nearly 3,500 years after the day of fasting and prayer began to be observed?

What started out as a time of personal Bible study for me has now spanned the globe and spawned two books. No one could be more surprised than I am!

Several years ago, the Lord began directing me to study intently

on the subject of the seven feasts which were given to Moses and the children of Israel, as found in Leviticus 23 and throughout the Bible.

I ended up sharing what the Lord impressed upon my heart with the precious people who attended the church I have pastored for many years, Family Christian Center, in Munster, Indiana. The response was simply amazing to me, for I knew it was very interesting on a personal level, yet I was pleasantly surprised to see others “getting it,” too, and beginning to discover for themselves what God had in store for them.

Since that time, God has given me the opportunity to minister from some of the nation’s best pulpits and the largest Christian television networks. I began speaking on the Leviticus 23 feasts to these audiences, and the results continued to spread.

As a result, eventually God directed me to write a book with the specific title, *Seven Blessings of the Passover*. That book has since circled the globe in different languages. Over and over, I receive reports from people who have heard me teach about this subject on television or have read my book, and then they decided to accept the challenge of observing the Passover and giving a special offering, and their lives have changed forever as blessing upon blessing has been heaped upon them. Again, I am more amazed than anyone how widespread this has become!

Of course, I know that others have been receiving this revelation from the Lord, but I feel as if my little personal Bible study has been used of God to touch a lot of lives. To Him be all the glory!

I say all that to point to the fact that I am now feeling the same

compulsion and direction to write this book, focusing on the Day of Atonement and its seven very specific blessings.

THE FEASTS

From the beginning, as with most Christians today, I approached the study of the seven feasts mentioned in Leviticus 23 with a “take it or leave it” attitude. My personal journey took a different turn when I discovered the meaning of the two Hebrew words found in that chapter: *mo’ed* (verse 2) and *chag* (verse 6). Both are translated “feasts” in English, but they have even more meaning when you seek to understand the true Hebrew meaning:

- In verse 2, the word for feast is the Hebrew word *mo’ed*, as it is written, “*Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.’*” The word *mo’ed* means “an appointment, a fixed time or season, a cycle or year, an assembly, an appointed time, a set time, or exact time.”¹ By instructing with the word *mo’ed*, God set an appointment with His followers for a specific reason.
- In verse 6, the word *chag* is used: “*And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD.*” The English word closest to the meaning of this word is “festival.”² According to Strong’s *Exhaustive Concordance*, *chag* is taken from the Hebrew word *chagag*, defined as “to move in a circle, to march in a sacred procession, to celebrate,

dance, to hold a solemn feast or holiday.”³ God clearly gave these cyclical festivals to be observed year after year.

Why were these seven feasts or festivals started? More importantly, what did God want to teach His children through the specific instructions He gave as He instituted these appointed times?

Before we can answer that question, it is important to have a brief history lesson, as I did in my Passover book:⁴

- As part of the Exodus from Egypt, as recorded in Exodus 12, God instituted seven feasts. In Leviticus 23, God additionally instructed the children of Israel to hold seven holy gatherings each year, celebrated during three feast seasons.
- God designed seven feasts for the Israelites (Leviticus 23). These feasts were God’s own Holy Days, and there were specific instructions given for their observance. God Himself orchestrated the sequence and time of each of these feasts.
- The feasts fall into three clusters: the Passover season (the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits), the Feast of Weeks (also known as Pentecost), and the Tabernacles season (Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles).
- During these times the Israelites were to appear together before the Lord. The Word of God strictly instructed them that they must not appear before Him without an offering. Deuteronomy 16:16 states: *“And they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.”*

- The last three gatherings, the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles, extend over a period of twenty-one days in the fall of the year. They are known collectively as “Tabernacles.”

Each of these feasts was extremely significant for Israel, and they honored God for what He had done. Every feast points us to the Son of God and very special blessings assigned to each time of appointment.

THREE SEASONS—SEVEN FEASTS

All of these feasts were extremely significant times for the Hebrews, for they taught the children of Israel and their descendents to honor God for what He had done in their lives. More importantly, each feast pointed to the Messiah, distinctively describing a vital part of His life and ministry:

Passover Season

The first three feasts—Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits—occur during the spring of the year over a period of eight days. Referred to collectively as “Passover,” its purpose was (and is) to teach the children of Israel how to find and enter God’s true rest.

The Bible commanded that the various feasts of the Passover season were to be kept in their appointed seasons: *“Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season:*

according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it” (Numbers 9:2-3, KJV).

During the Feast of the Passover (Leviticus 23:4-5), the Lamb died so we might receive salvation. In the Feast of Unleavened Bread (23:6-8), we received deliverance from sin, so we must turn from our disobedience. In the Feast of Firstfruits (23:9-14), we rise with new life, a new creation, leaving the old things behind.

Pentecost Season

The fourth feast, Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost, occurs fifty days (the Greek name *Pentecost* means “fifty”) later at the beginning of the summer. It was a single gathering (Leviticus 23:15-22). During this feast the Hebrews were taught specifically how to receive and live in God’s supernatural power.

Tabernacles Season

The third season of feasts is collectively known as Tabernacles. This season included the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles. Always the most glorious season of all and celebrated over twenty-one days in the fall of each year, the purpose of this season was to teach the children of Israel how to enter God’s protection.

In the Feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:23-25), the gathering of Israel points to repentance and incorruption of the saints of God. During the Feast of Atonement (23:26-32), prayer, righteousness, and faith are emphasized through supernatural cleansing. And during the Feast of Tabernacles (23:33-44), the main themes are

fruit, harvest, and latter rain, pointing to the ultimate reign of the Messiah.

I will focus more specifically on the Tabernacles season in chapter 2. Suffice it to say that each of these seven feasts presented (and still do) an opportunity for the children of Israel and their descendants to honor God for what He had done in their lives. These were God's own holy days, and specific instructions were given for their observance.

Through ancient times, the children of Israel traveled to Jerusalem three times a year to commemorate these feasts. As a special note, it is important to realize that the Jewish calendar is based on the lunar cycle, so it is different from our Gregorian or Julian calendar, both based on the solar cycles. The Jewish calendar is eleven days shorter than a solar-based calendar. To reconcile the difference between our solar-based calendar (365.25 days) and the lunar year (354 days), the Jewish calendar is based upon a nineteen-year cycle in which the third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth years are leap years. It is for this reason that the feasts do not fall on the same day each year of the calendars we use today.

WHY NOT TODAY?

While Jewish people around the world continue to observe the seven feasts, the observance fell into disuse among Christians after AD 325. That was the year the Roman Emperor Flavius Valerius Constantinus convened the Council of Nicaea. Known better as Constantine the Great, he converted to Christianity—a wonderful thing—then decided to unite the many Christian groups throughout

his kingdom. Many changes (some not so wonderful as Constantine's conversion!) happened as a result of the Nicene Council, including:

- The date of observance of Jesus's birth became December 25.
- The day of worship was moved from the Sabbath (Saturday) to the first day of each week (Sunday).
- The doctrine of the Trinity was confirmed as orthodox Christian belief.
- The Church of Rome was officially established.

One of the important teachings omitted from Constantine's Creed—as a result of the Nicene Council—was the observance of the “Hebrew” feasts. Some believe that Constantine had seen that God's people were blessed as a result of observing the feasts, and as a consequence, perhaps to keep them from getting too much power—financially, spiritually, or politically—he stopped their adherence to God's command of observing the feasts.

Regardless of his reasons, since AD 325, celebrating the holy convocations (the feasts) has largely not been a part of the church knowledge or practice. It is time to change that perception. It is time to move into the blessings that God provided to those who observe the feasts!

WHY STUDY THESE SEVEN FEASTS?

I wish I had a dollar for every time I've been asked why we should study these feasts? I run into people all the time whose eyes glaze over

at the mere mention of anything dealing with the Old Testament. They say, “I don’t get it. What’s with the symbolism and ‘begats’ and the ancient ceremonies? What do those things have to do with the New Testament and how believers should live today?”

Others bring out the well-worn statement, “We’re not under the law anymore. We’re under grace. All of those Hebrew laws passed away after the cross.”

As recorded in Matthew 5:17, the Savior told His followers very clearly, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”*

Granted (and thanks be to God!), we *are* redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. We don’t have to follow the ancient blood sacrifices for our sins to be atoned. That *was* settled at the cross. However, what God gave to us in the Old Testament is extremely important to know and understand in order to become what God expects us to be today.

In fact, it is impossible to truly understand what God gave us in the New Testament unless we grasp and build on the foundation of the Old Testament. Benny Hinn says this best:

All the foundations for the final twenty-seven books of the Bible are laid in the first thirty-nine books. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old. Each is incomplete without the other.

The New in the Old is concealed; the Old in the New is revealed! Praise God for the fact that we have both.

And one of the most remarkable treasures in all of

Scripture is the study of the feasts which God outlined through the instructions He gave to the children of Israel.⁵

The feasts of Israel were built upon the foundation of God's blood covenant with mankind. This goes back to Adam and Eve, who lived in a perfect world, blameless, and without guilt. The first man and woman knew God intimately. They walked with Him and fellowshiped with Him regularly. Then they rebelled through a sin of disobedience. They ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is more than a mere allegory. It is the basis for all that follows for mankind, as presented throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

Again, let me quote Benny Hinn: "The feasts of Israel...are graphic object lessons. From the time they were given to the children of Israel, these laws were ever-present visual aids, or pictures, if you will, to use physical rituals to help them understand spiritual truth and to walk therein."⁶

SEVEN BLESSINGS OF THE ATONEMENT

Of all the seven yearly appointments with God, the Day of Atonement was (and still is) the most solemn and awe-filled of commemorations. It was a time set aside for national and sanctuary cleansing. On this day special sacrifices were offered for atonement or reconciliation.

God established the Day of Atonement to be kept forever: "*So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to*

the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance” (Exodus 12:14). This feast was established not only for the Israelites in the time of their flight from Egypt, but also consecrated as an “appointed [holy] time” each year throughout both the Old and the New Testaments. I will detail more about this in chapters 1 and 2.

Lost through the centuries since AD 325 is the fact that God promised blessings to those who observe His feasts. Specifically, those obedient in the Day of Atonement were promised seven blessings—seven specific, supernatural atonement blessings:

1. A double portion on the economy
2. Financial blessings
3. Restoration
4. Special miracles
5. A divine presence
6. Blessings upon your family
7. Deliverance

However, for nearly seventeen centuries, these powerful truths have been mostly ignored and even rejected by Christians. Thankfully, that is now changing. It must change! There is too much at stake during these crucial, prophetic days.

As I said, God has been stirring me to write this book for years since I started my own personal study. I believe the time is perfect

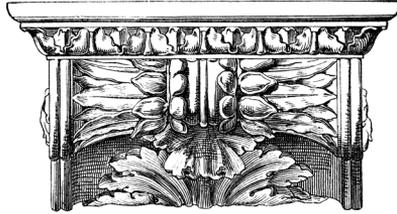
now to tell people how their lives will change dramatically when they restore the Day of Atonement observance and offering, for God absolutely, positively sets schedules and time boundaries, especially for His feasts and blessings.

I also know, based upon my own life and the testimonies of people all around the globe, that God is poised to pour out these seven blessings upon your life. As you read *Seven Blessings of the Atonement*, you can unleash these very special ancient blessings in your life today.

It is my prayer that God will use the pages of this book to revolutionize your life and that He will pour out more blessings than you ever dreamed possible. More than anything, I pray that you will understand why God wants you to receive these seven blessings. I know your life will be changed forever as a result!

—STEVE MUNSEY

PART ONE



ATONEMENT

1

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT



And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.... These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.’”

—LEVITICUS 23:1-2, 4

After the Exodus—the great escape and deliverance from captivity in Egypt—the children of Israel were instructed by God to hold seven holy gatherings each year and established them on the Jewish calendar.

The feasts fall into three groups—the Passover season (the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits), the Feast of Weeks (also known as Pentecost), and the Tabernacles season (Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles). These represented the three major links between God and His covenant children. These feasts also related directly to Israel’s agricultural seasons.