

The FEASTS of ISRAEL

The apostle Paul asserts that the lessons of the Old Testament are applicable to New Testament believers in Christ. He writes of the Exodus from Egypt, "**Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.**" (1 Co 10:6). And again, "**Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.**" (1 Co 10:11).

The writer to the Hebrews is more specific, stating that some things in the OT are patterns, or types, of what is to follow in the NT context. The Tabernacle of Moses and its ministrations are called, "**the patterns of things in the heavens**" and "**the figures of the true.**" (Heb 9:23,24 KJV). In like manner the Law of Moses is described as "**having a shadow of the good things to come.**" (He 10:1). The Feasts of Israel represent another such pattern. While they were observed in the physical realm by Israel, they also provide "**our examples... written for our admonition** [or to put in our minds]; "**the patterns of...the good things to come.**"

The THREE FEASTS

The Children of Israel were commanded by God to observe three great feasts, or celebrations, each year. "Three times you shall keep a feast to me in the year. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread [or Passover] ... and the Feast of Harvest [or Pentecost] ... and the Feast of Ingathering [or Atonement] ... Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD." (Ex 23:14-15,16,17).

These feasts took place at particular times throughout the agricultural calendar, linked firmly with the vital activities on the land. Passover took place at the very beginning of the general harvest, while Pentecost marked the beginning of the wheat harvest, and Atonement occurred at the end of harvest.

Example (1)

"The Feast of Unleavened Bread [or Passover] you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt ... And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks [or Pentecost], of the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering [or Atonement] at the year's end." (Ex 34:18,22).

Example (2)

"You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, the first fruits of your labours which you have sown in the field ; and the Feast of Ingathering, which is at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labours in the field." (Ex 23:15-16).

The SIGNIFICANCE of the SEASONS

The beginning of harvest is not the beginning of the agricultural year. Before that comes ploughing and sowing. But it is the gateway to the harvest. No-one could partake of the harvest until they met God at this point. A spiritual equivalent is the point of personal salvation, marked by the Christian at his or her Water Baptism.

The beginning of the wheat harvest marks the beginning of reaping 'the golden grain.' Wheat, when milled to make bread, was the mainstay or 'staff of life' for ordinary people. The Feast of Harvest represents Baptism of the Holy Spirit, when a Christian is equipped to minister and edify [or build up] the Church.

The end of harvest is, once again, not the end of the agricultural year. In reality the farmer's year has no beginning or end. One harvest comes to a close but the rural cycle goes on. Next year's harvest must be prepared. by ploughing the soil and sowing the grain, and pruning and fertilising vines and fruit trees etc. This Feast represents particular servants of Christ being prepared to go on and do apostolic or foundational work for the life of the Church.

'Bringing in the harvest' is a rewarding and therefore relatively popular task, but special servants are required to undertake the preparing of next season's harvest, with prophecy and 'pruning.' The Feast of Atonement [a solemn assembly of mourning] marks the point of separation for those called on to this task.

The THREE BAPTISMS

Accepting that there are three potential baptisms in the Christian walk is not easy. After all, the NT speaks of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ep 4:5). But the Bible also speaks of "the doctrine [or teaching] of baptisms." (He 6:2).

Most of us accept the first baptism. It is when we ask forgiveness for our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This is the occasion of Water Baptism.

Many of us also acknowledge the reality of a second spiritually empowering experience known as Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is a releasing of the power and personality of Christ through the Holy Spirit, who was given to us at our earlier baptism (ie when we first believed), and whose purpose is to equip us for service.

Very few of us acknowledge the validity of the third baptism. This baptism might be appropriately called the "cup of suffering" or "baptism of brokenness." Given only to those who undertake a life of submission to the Lord's refining work, it is the end-point of a process of cutting away the 'flesh' and reducing every aspect of being into perfect obedience to God. The work that these people face is arduous and unrewarding, and there can be no reliance on the praise of men to sustain the long 'winter' months.

Jesus talked of the third baptism to two of His disciples, who believed that sitting next to Him in heaven would increase their status in front of the others.

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, **"Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will**

indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptised with you will be baptised; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared." (Mark 10:35-40).

Later in the gospel accounts Jesus make clear what He meant by "the cup that I drink" and "the baptism that I am baptised with." Facing His own death and separation from God the Father, "...He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, **"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."** He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, **"O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."** Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, **"What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."** Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, **"O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."** (Matt 26:37-42).

Only those who pass through their personal "dark night of the soul" are equipped to go onto the 'anonymous' preparation of the next harvest. This is not to suggest they 'earn' their position by volunteering to undergo severe trial. It is just that to survive this ministry they must be brought beyond the position of responding to the reactions of others.

The FIRST FEAST

The First Feast of Israel is made up of three parts :

1. The Passover Ceremony - celebrating (or remembrance of) God's deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.
2. Eating Unleavened Bread for seven days - a period of mourning and self-denial to recall their dependence upon God in the Wilderness of Sinai.
3. Offering of First-Fruits - acknowledging God's act of grace in bringing them into the Promised Land.

These three parts of the overall Feast took place over a week in the first Hebrew month of Abib, at the time of the Spring or Latter Rain, and at the very beginning of the barley and flax harvest.

In terms of the Christian walk, the three parts correspond to :

1. Salvation of the Soul - by belief in Christ's work on the Cross in cancelling out all of Satan's claims against the sinner.
2. Putting off the Old Man or sinful nature of the flesh, and
3. Putting on the New Man of resurrection life.

Both 2. And 3. refer to the Path of the Cross, and are symbolised by immersion into and rising

The PASSOVER CEREMONY

“Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. '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. 'And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 'Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 'Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire-- its head with its legs and its entrails. 'You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. 'And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD'S Passover. 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. '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. [And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. "It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. "And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service? "that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'"] (Ex 12:1-14 [24-27]).

For the believer, Christ is our Passover Lamb. **"For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." (1 Co 5:7). "The next day John saw Jesus coming towards him and said 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.'" (Jo 1:29). **"..knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pe 1:17-19). "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Co 1:13-14).****

At the point of belief and confession to salvation we are delivered from the power of darkness by the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of the Lamb is our covering of righteousness, protecting us from judgment and condemnation.

UNLEAVENED BREAD

The period of eating 'flat-bread,' or bread without yeast, is a symbolic period of self-denial and separation to God. **"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel,**

whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations you shall eat unleavened bread." (Ex 12:18-20).

Bread made in haste before a forced march is one explanation for unleavening. But there is more to it than this. In the OT God is adamant He will not receive grain leavened with yeast. **"And if you bring as an offering a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil ... No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven nor any honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire." (Le 2:4,11).**

The process of leavening is really the process of fermentation, and so the difference between 'adding flavour' and rotteness is one of degree! God insists on the simplicity of the pure elements of the grain. So too must the Christian learn that nothing he or she adds to the Grace of God is acceptable. God receives back only what He gives in the first place. The flesh of a believer (ie natural abilities and inclinations) is a hindrance to the spiritual walk - not a help.

The Path of the Cross is the process of stripping away from the Christian all reliance on self and personal effort. It is a long slow work (the Lord does not exceed the pace that a person can bear) but it is foundational to all that follows.

FIRST FRUITS

The celebration of First-Fruits symbolises the new birth and resurrection life for the believer. **"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ... 'You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings." (Le 23:9-11,14).**

The First-Fruits represent the manifestation of Christ-life in us as we follow after Him. **"Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." (Ja 1:18).** After the death of the cross comes resurrection life. **"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.."** (Ro 6:4-5). As the flesh of the old man is stripped away, the new man that is Christ within us begins to reign; **".. since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.."** (Co 3:9-10).

The ANOINTING at BETHANY

It may appear unusual to point out the Path of the Cross so early in the Christian walk. But according to the Bible, teaching on this central concept should accompany salvation and water baptism. An illustration of this principle is found by amalgamating two gospel accounts of the anointing of Jesus with oil, and then considering this in light of an earlier incident

"Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper;

and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil ... But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? "For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply. But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. "For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. "She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." (Jo 12:1-3, Mk 14:4-9).

To gain a sense of the extraordinary nature of Mary's action, we need to look at an earlier example of her relationship to Jesus, and His comments about her at that time. **"Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." (Lu 10:38-42).**

In both cases Mary did not do what the flesh might have done, but what the Holy Spirit told her to do. She did not sell the oil for money to help the poor, or help her sister serve the guests. Instead she did what Jesus wanted her to do, anointing His body for burial, and listening as He taught the Word. Both times Mary acted on what was on her spirit rather than the 'well-intentioned' impulse of her flesh. She did not do what others might reasonably expect of her.

That is why Jesus wanted her deeds to be spoken of wherever the gospel was preached. "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the whole world, what this woman did will also be spoken of as a memorial to her." Mary was prepared to let her 'old man' die, so that her 'new man' might live.

The SECOND FEAST

The second great Feast of Israel is variously called the Feast of Weeks (indicating it took place 7 weeks after the Passover), or Pentecost (meaning the 'fiftieth' day after Passover), or the Feast of Harvest (signifying the Wheat Harvest).

"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. 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. '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 ... 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. 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.'" (Le 23:15-17,21-22).

The Feast of Weeks (or Harvest) took place at Pentecost, seven weeks or fifty days after Passover. It was a celebration of 'plenty' by offering the first-fruits of the wheat crop back to the Lord. Note that this Feast assumed some impurity or mixture by allowing the baking of bread with leaven.

Wheat is a symbol of fruit or gain in the Bible. Jesus used this symbolism in the parables of the Sower, the Growing Seed, and the Wheat and the Tares. In these parables, the Wheat Seed or grain that is planted is called the Word of God, and its increase is referred to as the Kingdom or Children of God.

The purpose of the New Testament Pentecost, or Baptism of the Spirit, is precisely this - to increase the Kingdom of Christ. Jesus told His disciples to wait until they received a special anointing, or empowering, from the Holy Spirit. **"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."** (Lu 24:49).

"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; "for John truly baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ... "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. ... Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ... But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. ... "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptised; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." (Acts 1:4-5, 8, & 2:1-4,14,36-41,46-47).

The THIRD FEAST

Usually called the Feast of Ingathering in the OT, and taking place at the end of the harvest in the seventh month of the year, this feast is made up of three distinct parts.

1. On the first day of the month there is the Blowing of Trumpets.
2. On the tenth day of the month there is the Day of Atonement.

3. During the third week of the month there is the Dwelling in Tabernacles.

In the Christian walk, these three occasions correspond to :

1. A time of warfare or warning.
2. Tasting the 'cup of suffering' or undergoing brokenness.
3. Entering into the rest of the Lord as a sojourner, reliant only on Him.

BLOWING of TRUMPETS

"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'" (Le 23:23-25).

"And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you it is a day of blowing the trumpets." (Nu 29:1).

According to Jewish tradition, the Feast of Trumpets involved the blowing of the ram's horn and the reading of the Scriptures. These trumpets were not musical instruments. Their purpose was to make a loud noise, signalling such things as the beginning of the Sabbath, or warning of approaching danger, or simply making acclamation to God.

In this context they marked (or announced) the end of harvest, when sacrifices of animals and offerings of grain and wine were made to Him. Their call to observance of this 'holy convocation' was an official summons to worship. The ceremony itself represented a roll-call of the preceding season of harvest, with all that had gone before being laid out before God

For the Christian, the roll-call or 'giving account' can take many forms. It is a time of review when past work is weighed and judged. In this reckoning, the spiritual eyes of the believer are opened to recognise all that is dross and fit only for the fire. Paul writes of this test that all workers in the church must face at some stage.

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Co 3:10-15).

DAY of ATONEMENT

The Hebrew word for 'atonement' is 'kippur' and it means expiation of guilt by bearing a penalty, or to make complete satisfaction for a wrong. In the OT this was done by offering

the blood of sacrificed animals, while in the NT believers plead the once and for all sacrifice of the Lamb of God and His shed blood.

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "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. "And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. "For any person who is not afflicted in soul on that same day shall be cut off from his people. "And any person who does any work on that same day, that person I will destroy from among his people."You shall do no manner of work; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. "It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath." (Le 23:26-32)

"On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work." (Nu 29:7).

The Day of Atonement is the most solemn of 'solemn assemblies' in the Jewish calendar. On this one day of the year atoning blood was brought into the Holy of Holies (the divine throne room), by the chief priest as the representative of the people.

It is also a day of 'personal affliction,' interpreted by Jews then and now as a time of prayer and fasting. It is a 'national' day of mourning (Yom Kippur), as Jews remember their failure to live without sin, and their consequent separation from God.

The Day of Atonement is a type of Christ's "dark night of the soul" in the Gethsemene Garden. It is the place of utter brokenness, where it seems that nothing good will prevail. Facing emptiness and despair, the soul mourns in "disbelief," because "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

One such night was experienced by the patriarch Jacob at the creek of Peniel, where he was reduced to 'nothing' by God.

"Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" So He said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob [or 'Usurper'], but Israel [or 'Prince with God']; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank." (Ge 32:24-32).

The natural strength of Jacob (the grasper of advantage) was broken by God that night.

The nights in the Garden of Gethsemane and at Peniel were difficult. But both Jesus and Jacob did prevail. Their suffering had not been without purpose. It enabled them to move on from the struggles in the flesh and into the peace of the spirit. From now on they received rather than strove, entering into a place of rest where all that God had for them was laid out at his hand.

DWELLING in TABERNACLES

The word 'tabernacles' is also translated 'booths.' It can mean a hut, cover, or tent, but the emphasis is on its temporary nature. It can either be put together quickly from whatever is to hand, or it can be packed up and easily transported. This is also the case here. **"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD.' On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. 'For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it. ... 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. 'And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 'You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 'You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 'that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the**

The Feast of Tabernacles, still practised by religious Jews, represented the bountiful provision of God towards Israel when they camped in the Wilderness of Sinai. Despite their apparent lack, God provided more than enough - guiding them by a pillar of cloud during the day and a flaming fire by night, feeding them with manna, and providing them with miraculous supplies of fresh water

Note that the Dwelling in Tabernacles takes place over another period of seven days, and like the seven days of eating Unleavened Bread (a type of the Path of the Cross or putting to death

The Rest of God is where those who are equipped to prepare the next year's harvest are brought. Those who plough and sow are those who are engaged in apostolic work, building the church and laying the foundation.

The apostle Paul says that "...the household of God [has] been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.." (Ep 2:20). These are special servants who can be entrusted to do this holy work, unencumbered by the mixture of fleshly instincts and impulses.

POSTSCRIPT

In reviewing this teaching it is advisable to bear in mind two overriding factors.

1. It is not compulsory for Christians to move on from the first baptism.

2. The experience of Christians on this path may not necessarily be linear or strictly consecutive. Some experiences may be visited more than once for example.