

An outline for salvation

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By Wesley Higgins

WEISER, Idaho—God in His mercy and love tells us He will do nothing without first revealing it through His prophets (Amos 3:7).

One of the things He has done to fulfill His obligation is to give us an outline of how He is bringing us to salvation. This outline can be found in Leviticus 23.

This chapter lists a series of holy convocations, or meetings, that God calls His feasts (Leviticus 23:2). These feasts, designed to be celebrated yearly at their appointed times (verse 4), are a prophetic look at the salvation acts of Jesus Christ.

The Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread have already been fulfilled in the 1st century by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Pentecost marked the giving of the Holy Spirit.

Now we come to the last four feasts, which proclaim prophetic events Christ has not yet fulfilled.

It sometimes comes as a shock to realize that the cross was not the end or final act through which Jesus Christ brings us salvation. It is the beginning act of salvation.

The book of Hebrews tells us that "Christ was offered to bear the sins of many" and "He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation" (Hebrews 9:28).

This means that when Jesus Christ was here the first time He took care of our sins by dying in our place. For all who have accepted His first sacrifice, He is returning "a second time" to bring salvation.

This "second time" (this return of Christ) is prophesied by the last four feasts listed in Leviticus 23.

The Feast of Trumpets heralds the return of Christ. Paul wrote: "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

It also proclaims the resurrection of the saints. Paul also wrote: ". . . We shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

The Day of Atonement, which foreshadows eternal oneness with our Father, reveals that there is no work, no accomplishment, on our part that will earn us salvation. Moses wrote: "You shall do no manner of work in that day" (Leviticus 23:28). Since salvation has come to God's people, the accuser of the brethren has no power over the saints (Revelation 12:9-10).

The Feast of Tabernacles prophesies a yet-future time when Jesus and His saints will reign over the earth for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4, 6).

The Eighth Day of the Feast (Leviticus 23:39) pictures a time of hope. The new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:1-2) will be a time when God Himself will be with them and be their God (verse 3).

John wrote about this marvelous time in verse 4. This is the time when God will wipe away all tears. This will be the time when there will be no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying and no more pain. The former things will have passed away.

In the next chapter (Revelation 22:20) Jesus said: "Surely I come quickly." John wrote: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."