

Events of the Seven Week Harvest

(Day 49)

Fred R. Coulter—May 27, 2023

Greetings, brethren, welcome to Day 49 in the count to Pentecost! Tomorrow will be Pentecost!

We come to Lev. 23, because this is where we always start; since all the Holy Days are mentioned right here in this one place according to the dates on the Calculated Hebrew Calendar.

Let's see how we get from the Feast of Unleavened Bread to Day 49 and then Day 50. After telling the children of Israel the command for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6-7), v 9 is where a great deal of confusion has come into the Church of God for many, many years. Some of them still believe the error of Herbert W. Armstrong.

One of the reasons that the Church never understood about Pentecost and the true meaning of it—that it pictures the resurrection—is because they kept it on a Monday, the 2nd day of the week instead of on the 1st day of the week as the proper count is.

When it came time for understanding the proper counting, Armstrong said that 'God bound Pentecost on Monday for 40 years.' *That's not true!* Has God ever bound Sunday or any of the holidays of this world? *No!* Let's read the command:

Leviticus 23:9: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "When you have come into the land..."'" (vs 9-10).

So, they did not observe Pentecost until they came into the land. The only Pentecost they observed was in the wilderness in commemoration of the giving of the Ten Commandments. But they did not have the Wave Sheaf Offering that was waved during Unleavened Bread.

"...**When** you have come into the land, which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest of it, **then** you shall bring *the premier* sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it" (vs 10-11).

The Jews have an error in that, because they say that is the first Holy Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. But that only occurs on a rare occasion, which is this: When Passover falls on a Sabbath—taken Friday night, Passover Day, *which is an unleavened bread day*—then the next day after the Sabbath is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That means that the last day of

Unleavened Bread is the next Sabbath.

This brings up another error as well. There are those who say that when it occurs in this manner that you take the first day of the week *after* the last day of Unleavened Bread. This takes the Wave Sheaf Offering outside the days of Unleavened Bread, *which is not correct!*

The other error that was found in Worldwide Church of God, and even some people today believe—because they idolize Herbert Armstrong more than Christ—he counted away from the day after the Sabbath! He began his count on Monday, which meant that for all those years in Worldwide they kept Pentecost on a Monday, which is the 2nd day of the week. *It must be on the 1st day of the week.*

Verse 12: "And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering to the LORD. And its grain offering *shall be* two tenth parts of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD for a sweet savor. And the drink offering of it *shall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of a hin. And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched grain, nor green ears until the same day, until you have brought an offering to your God. *It shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings" (vs 12-14). *Then He begins how to count!*

This is interesting, because everything involving with the count to Pentecost, and the meaning of it, is the longest command for a Holy Day in Lev. 23. That also shows the importance of it.

Verse 15: "And you shall count to you beginning **with the next day**..."

Not from the day, being misinterpreted by Herbert Armstrong as the day after the 1st day of the week after the regular Sabbath.

"...beginning **with the next day after the Sabbath**, beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering..." (v 15). *So you must count that day!*

We need to understand that that Wave Sheaf Offering pictured *the resurrected Christ ascending to heaven!*

The Protestants have it all wrong. They

think He was raised on that day from the dead. NO! He was raised from the dead three days and three nights after He had died! He was in the heart of the earth three days and three nights before He came out of the tomb!

Then in the morning Mary Magdalene came along very early and she was going to prepare spices to anoint His body even more. But the tomb had been sealed really tight by the Romans, and they had guards there! So, when Mary Magdalene came the stone had been rolled back. She didn't go look into it, she ran to tell the apostles that the tomb was open.

When they came there they didn't find the body of Jesus. Right here is another error that I have mentioned before: that there are those who believe the lie of Herod to the soldiers that they were sleeping and the disciples came and stole the body away.

A variation on that is that Jesus never died, they revived Him and took Him and He lived and married Mary Magdalene and went to Spain. He died in Spain. The Society of the Brotherhood of the Bloods say that He's buried in Spain.

Think of all the heresies that surround the things concerning Christ, His death, His resurrection and His ascension! When Mary Magdalene came the first day of the weeks—the 1st day of counting to Pentecost—Jesus was not there! The angel told her that He is risen from the dead, and she didn't really understand that.

So, the first day to count is the day of the waving of the premier sheaf, which was a type of Christ's ascension and acceptance by God the Father!

"...beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; **seven Sabbaths shall be complete**" (v 15)—*or seven weeks shall be complete* (Deut. 16). *Count seven weeks, then one day!*

Verse 16: "Even unto the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days...."

Is Monday the day after the seventh Sabbath? *No!* There's the first day of the week in between the Sabbath and the second day!

"...And you shall offer a new grain offering..." (v 16)—*we'll get to that tomorrow and what that means!*

We need to understand that this Feast of the Firstfruits is very important for us, for the Plan of God and how we fit into it.

We will see in the book of Exodus that God

places an awful lot of emphasis on the firstfruits. Here's something you need to understand when we read Exo. 23, which is the Holy Days are mixed in with other commandments. It does, on a couple of occasions follow the explanation of the weekly Sabbath. But notice what it is here:

Exodus 23:12: "Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your handmaid, and the stranger, may be rejuvenated." *Of course, they were to rest, too!*

Verse 13: **And be watchful in all that I have said to you.** And make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of your mouth. You shall keep a Feast unto Me three times in the year. 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. **And no one shall appear before Me empty.** Also, the Feast of the Harvest of the Firstfruits of your labors, which you have sown in the field...." (vs 13-16).

That's where the grain offering comes in on the day after the Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread.

"...And the Feast of Ingathering, in the end of the year, when you have gathered in your labors out of the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD" (vs 16-17).

Verse 19: "The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring *into* the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."

That was a practice of the pagans with some of their offerings.

The first of the firstfruits! Who was the Firstborn from the dead? *Christ!* So, all of these come into picturing Christ. He also says this in Exo. 34.

Deut. 26 will tell us very importantly how much that the firstfruits, the firstborn, and the first of everything means to God, ***and what they are to mean to us!***

Deuteronomy 26:1: "And it shall be when you come into the land, which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance, and possess it, and live in it."

God wants us to live, possess and worship Him ***His way!*** That's what's important, and especially when we come to the New Testament and the importance of the New Testament Church! It's

an amazing thing how all of these things from what we call the Old Testament are contained in the Law apply and are fulfilled in the New Testament.

The whole meaning of the firstfruit of everything that you have *applies to*—as we will see tomorrow—*the first resurrection!*

Verse 2: “You shall take of the first of all the fruit of the earth which you shall bring of your land that the LORD your God gives you, and you shall put *it* in a basket, and shall go to the place which the LORD your God shall choose to place His name there.” *That was at the temple!*

Later, when they received their inheritance in the land, they had cities for the priest and additional cities for the Levites. They could take their firstfruits to the priests right close at hand. Then what he could bring to the temple when he went to his course to work in the temple.

Verse 3: “And you shall go to the priest in those days, and say to him, ‘I profess today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land, which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.’ And the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God” (vs 3-4).

Notice this profession and we need to think about it in our relationship to God the Father and Jesus Christ today, as well! Remember that Jesus said, *‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God!’*

This is what you shall say; “...‘I profess today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land, which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.’ And the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. And you shall declare and say before the LORD your God...” (vs 3-5).

Listen to what said here, and this is type of us coming out of the world; a type of God calling Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

“...‘My father *was* a Syrian ready to perish. And he went down to Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and many. And the Egyptians ill-treated us, and afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. And when we cried to the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice and looked on our afflictions and our labor and our oppression. And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with awesome might, and with signs and with wonders’” (vs 5-8).

Think about this with our calling! *God calls*

us out of the world:

- to be a part of His Church
- to be a part of God the Father and Jesus Christ
 - that’s how important this is
 - that’s how important that our calling is

Verse 9: “And He has brought us into this place, and has given us this land, a land that flows with milk and honey.”

We’re coming into the Kingdom of God, the spiritual Kingdom of God! What else? *New Jerusalem!*

All of this projects forward in everything that is done.

Verse 10: “‘And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which You, O LORD, have given me.’ And you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. And *you shall* rejoice in all the good which the LORD your God has given to you, and to your house; you, and the Levite, and the stranger in your midst” (vs 10-11).

That was really something, and that’s how important it was. This also shows us something else. When you look back to the offering of Cain, he brought it from the land.

- Why did God not accept his offering?
- Didn’t God accept the offering of the one who brought the firstfruits of everything before the Lord? *Yes!*

So, this tells us that the offering by Cain was of his on devising and not of God! God said to Cain, ‘If you do well, you shall be accepted. But if you do not do well *sin lies at the door.*’

Think about that! The offering that He brought was not proper, therefore, it was sin.

Then God goes on showing here some other things that are important after that:

Verse 12: “When you have made an end of tithing all the tithes of your increase the third year, *which is* the year of tithing, and have given *it* to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow (that they may eat inside your gates and be filled), then you shall say before the LORD your God, ‘I have brought away the Holy things out of my house, and also have given them to the Levite, and to the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me. **I have not broken Your commandments, neither have I forgotten them.**” (vs 12-14).

Very important! That's why we do what we do! That's why we keep what we keep! That's what God wants. Anything that is devised by men will not work. Let's apply that to what happened in the Church when they kept a Monday Pentecost.

It was not according to the commandments of God, was it? *No!* It took 40 years of pounding on Herbert Armstrong to get him to understand the proper count. When the proper count came, he didn't give God the credit! I know, because I was there with the ministerial council when they were going through this meticulously.

I remember the first Pentecost that we had, I was pastoring in the Los Angeles and Torrance area at the time, close to Pasadena. For our Day of Pentecost we had a leading evangelist Gerald Waterhouse to give the main message. One of the other elders gave the sermonette. I led the music, read the announcements, and introduced the speakers. I made the comment that very day, that very first Pentecost that we were keeping in WCG with Gerald Waterhouse sitting right down in front of me.

I said, very casually, 'Well, today, brethren, we're keeping Pentecost for the first time on the correct day. And who knows, this will probably show that the resurrection is on Pentecost.'

If Gerald Waterhouse had been paying attention, he would have ripped me in shreds for saying that. That comment was true and that was proved right later on.

Then it talks about the land sabbath and the Jubilee and all of these are important to keep.

(break@27:55)

Now we'll continue on with the harvest, which was seven weeks! Tomorrow we're going to talk about the firstborn! This means that God is involved with everything that there is that reproduces itself! Isn't that something? Think about how great that is!

Take an apple tree, whatever kind, and you harvest it and then after the harvest and it starts getting into winter time, all the leaves come off and the tree looks barren, nothing on it. Then springtime comes and it's starts sprouting leaves and then the blossoms and then the apples and you have the harvest again the next year. *It's automatic! That's something! God set that in motion!*

Here we have the grain, and it's the same thing with the grain: you plant it, it grows, you harvest it! We will see how this ties in with the plan of God and the first resurrection!

Christ spoke to the multitudes in parables. That's an interesting thing!

Matthew 13:10: "And His disciples came to Him and asked, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?'"

Notice Jesus' answer and I want you to mark this verse and really think about it, and how important it is. How important it is what we have that God has given us and our relationship with God, and with the Spirit of God within us!

I want you to understand—and maybe we can grasp it to a fairly good degree—that when you look at the world and see the things that are going on in the world, and you wonder what's going on.

- Who am I?
- What am I?
- What are all the other brethren whom God has called?
- What are we?

We're God's called, chosen and faithful! The world doesn't know us! But we're the future rulers of the Kingdom of God, along with all the saints from Abel to the end with the first resurrection! *I want you to notice:*

Verse 11: "And He answered *and* said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know...'"

That knowledge comes from God through His Word by His Spirit:

- to lead us
- to guide us
- to teach us

"... 'Because it has been given to you...'" (v 11).

It has to be given! It's not something that theologians can study, think about and get the best brains in the world to come together and '*let's determine what the plan of human beings is.*'

Of course, they may even bring in the Bible, but they virtually leave it out. We have Psa. that is a key to understanding.

Psalm 111:10: "...a good understanding have all those who do His commandments..."

- that's why we keep the commandments
- that's why we love God

Isn't that one of the commandments? *Yes, indeed!*

Matthew 13:11: "...given to you to know..."

This is why everything we do has to be based on the Word of God!

“...given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven...” (v 11).

It is a mystery to them and a mystery to us that only God can reveal what it means, *and that's hidden in the Sabbath and Holy Days!* That's why we have the book: *God's Plan for Mankind Revealed...* [it has to come from God] *...by His Sabbath...* [the key connection to God] *...and Holy Days!* Think on that!

Notice what Jesus also says:

“...but to them...” [the rest of the world] **...it has not been given”** (v 11).

- you cannot know *unless God gives you understanding*
- you cannot have understanding *unless you believe and obey Him*

That's the simplicity of Christ!

Notice what else He says, and this is true, it always happens this way. Whenever a false doctrine comes along, they lose understanding. Isn't that true?

Verse 12: “For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance...”

That's why we stay close with the Truth of God always, always! The ways of men just don't work! They may sound good when you hear it, but:

- Will it work? *In the long run, no!*
- Why? *Because there's a way that seems right to a man but the ends thereof are the ways of death!*
- Is that not the lesson of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? *Yes!*

“...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him” (v 12).

That's precisely what we're seeing happening in the world today. What understanding people have concerning law and order, good and evil is being taken away from them. Because they have rejected God and Satan is out of the closet, the demons are swarming everywhere!

Verse 13: “For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, ‘In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in

no way perceive” (vs 13-14).

God doesn't have to do a thing! It's automatic, because His Law and His Word are the living Truth of God! Those who will not love God and keep His commandments will never understand, automatically! It's impossible to know *because it has to be given by God to us through His Word and through His Spirit, and through walking in the way of God!*

That has to do with Psa. 25 and I'll bring a message on that later. *We all must be taught of God!* In addition to that, the way that the world can't understand it is because *Satan has blinded their eyes so that they don't know! They will not know!*

Verse 15: “For the heart of this people has grown fat...”

In other words, through everything that they have, they're pleased with their pleasures and their delights and what they want to do. Satan has given them plenty of it, so they're content!

“...and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; **lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them**” (v 15).

Isn't that something? Their conversion will come later; *our conversion is now!* We are willing to repent and we have to choose to repent. We have to choose to love God!

I want you to think about everything that you know concerning the Word of God, and everything that we have concerning the Word of God. If we yield to Christ—praying, studying, growing, overcoming—here's what will happen.

Verse 16: “But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see...” *You can understand Truth from error, because you:*

- keep the Truth
- love the Truth
- live by the Truth

Christ is **the Way, the Truth and the Life**, and **God is a God of Truth!**

“...and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and **righteous men have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard**” (vs 16-17).

Even in this age, in spite of all difficulties that are all around us, and I submit to you that down

through the history of the Church they have always had difficulties.

Why? Why does that happen? *Jesus said it would!* He said, ***'Broad is the way that leads to death; narrow is the way leads to life and difficulties.'*** That why the first resurrection is the most fantastic thing we can be part of.

Verse 18: "Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand it, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart..." (vs 18-19).

Does Satan work in the mind and heart of people? *Yes indeed* (Eph. 2:1-3) *the prince of the power of the air!* He appeals to the lust of the heart, the lust of the mind and the pride of life!

"...This is the one who was sown by the way." (v 19). *Because the seed went there and it didn't have any depth so nothing took place!*

Verse 20: "Now, the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy."

They get all excited, 'Oh, this is wonderful! Oh my, I want to be baptized immediately!' *Then difficulties come!*

Verse 21: "But *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended.... [because they do not have deep roots] ...And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful" (v 21-22).

It's like a man Bill Wax, one of our elders, was talking to a Baptist, and he said, 'You know that the Bible says that the Sabbath is the seventh day, and that's from sundown on Friday to sundown Saturday.'

This man was a good and faithful Sunday-keeper. So, Bill asked him, 'Why don't you keep it?' He knows it, and all the preachers know it, and how many others know it? *But they don't do it!* This man said, 'I can't bring myself to do it.' Quite a statement, isn't it? There it is right there *unfruitful!*

Verse 23: "But the one who was sown on good ground, **this is the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces...** [that means living by every word of God] ...one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold and another thirtyfold."

That's quite an amazing thing, isn't it?

Verse 24: "And He put another parable before them, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field.'"

This is the way it is in the world! We're scattered in the world, everywhere in the world! Notice: "... **The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field.**"

Verse 25: "But while men **were sleeping...**"—*when you're not paying attention; let us not sleep lest we fall into temptation!*

"...**his enemy came...**" (v 26).

Who is the enemy? *Satan the devil and the demons! False teachers! Coming in sheep's clothing appearing as ministers of righteousness!*

"...and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. Now, when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared" (v 25-26).

You can't tell the difference until it's time for the fruit or the heads of grain to come appear. But the tares do not reproduce! They do not bring additional life!

Verse 27: "And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?'"

How did this happen, Lord? That's quite a thing, isn't it?

Verse 28: "And he said to them, 'A man *who is* an enemy has done this.' Then the servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go out and gather them?'.... [take them out] ...But he said, 'No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them. **Allow both to grow together until the harvest...**" (vs 28-30).

When is the harvest? *At the end of the age!*

"...and at the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, 'Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary'" (v 30).

That's quite a statement, and we'll talk about that tomorrow, *the granary!* What does that represent? Remember this: *Every good seed after it is harvested has life in it!* Likewise when we die and our spirit returns back to God our spirit is like the grain stored for future eternal life combined with the Spirit of God!

So, all of those who die in the faith, their

spirit is returned to God, and that's where what they are waiting for. That's why He put it this way:

Verse 31: "Another parable He presented to them, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a *tiny* mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is very small among all the seeds; but after it is grown, it is greater than all the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches'" (vs 31-32).

- How much are we to grow?
- How much are we to produce?

That's why:

- we walk by faith
- we believe in hope
- we live in love

That's what God wants us to do?

All of these parables are about the Kingdom of God are talking about all the events in the seven weeks leading up to the harvest of the firstfruits!

This next parable is one that seems to contradict the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread leaven is a type of sin. But is leaven always sin? *No!* Let's look at this verse and see what that means.

Verse 33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven...'"

The Kingdom of God/Heaven can't be compared to sin, because it's nothing but righteousness! So, what does this mean?

Leaven grows! Take dough and put it into another form and when it is baked it permanent and it is bread. As long it's still dough, if it rises up you can crush it down and it will rise again. So this parable pictures the good action of the Holy Spirit. Just like the work of leaven is unseen, so the work of the Holy Spirit in our mind and heart is unseen by anybody else except those of us who are growing in grace and knowledge.

This is the good work of leaven, and we will see that tomorrow, because the offering to be brought on Pentecost was leavened loaves of baked bread!

"... 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened.' Jesus spoke all these things to the multitudes in parables, and without a parable He did not speak to them; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from *the* foundation of *the*

world'" (vs 33-35).

In other words, the Plan of God from the beginning; this is what He's teaching us! Do we understand that? Do we know that? *Yes, indeed!*

Then the disciples wanted to know about the tares! They could understand all the other parables to a certain extent, so they said: '

"...Then His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.' And He answered *and* said to them, 'The One Who sows the good seed is the Son of man'" (vs 36-37).

How does He do that? *We find in Rev. 1 that He is the Firstborn from the dead!* Then He has seven spirits that He controls. These seven spirits go around the world looking for those who are trying to find God. Then the call goes out to that individual or individuals to see if they will answer that call and come to Christ and believe.

So, the seed goes out, and the seed is also the Word of God. How much is out there out there in the world, counting all the Bibles, digital Bibles and studies that go with. It's an amazing amount, but how many people understand and come to God.

Verse 38: "And the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the Kingdom; but the tares **are the children of the wicked one.**"

Think about that! Those in the world who follow Satan are called "...**the children of the wicked one.**"

Verse 39: "Now, the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is *the* end of the age, and the reapers are the angels." *We will see that tomorrow in Rev. 14!*

Verse 40: "Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kingdom all the offenders **and those who are practicing lawlessness**" (vs 40-41).

That's going to be something! This is why we have to live in the world and be faithful and understand what God wants us to understand.

Verse 42: "And they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear**" (vs 42-43).

Let's see what John wrote concerning the things of the resurrection, concerning the harvest of

the righteous. When I read 1-John 3, and we've read this many times, think about your calling, and let's think about what we have been called to. Then when we look at the circumstances we are in—and in many cases they are difficult indeed—compare that to this promise, the promise that God cannot, will not, never has, and never will *lie!*

1-John 3:1: “Behold!... [meaning *pay attention*] ...What *glorious* love the Father has given to us...”

- that we can understand His Word
- that we can know He loves us
- that we love Him
- that Jesus died for us and is our sacrifice and His shed blood
 - ✓ by Whom we are healed with His stripes
 - ✓ by Whom we receive the Holy Spirit

“...that we should be called the children of God!...” (v 1)—*that's the whole purpose right there!*

“...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him” (v 1).

They don't know Him! If they don't keep His commandments they don't know Him! They know of Him, but they are tares without fruit!

- they look good
- they sound good
- they act good

but they're not! Quite an amazing thing, indeed!

Verse 2: “Beloved, now... [just like a child in the womb is a child and living, not yet born, but will be at the proper time] ...we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed... [at the time that John wrote this; we see later on that it is revealed what we should be like] ...what we shall be; **but we know** that when He is manifested... [at His return] **...we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.**”

Verse 3: “And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.”

1-John 5:10: “The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself... [through the Holy Spirit] ...the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the witness that God has witnessed concerning His Son. And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son” (vs 10-11).

That's what the begetting of the Holy Spirit is. The seed of eternal life from God the Father!

That's why *the Feast of Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of the Firstborn* is so important and powerful! Why, in Lev. 23, it is the longest commandment of all the Holy Days!

Verse 11: “And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has *eternal* life the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life” (vs 11-12). No in between, sorry about that, Protestants.

Verse 13: “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God **in order that you may know that you have eternal life...**”

- we are to know that
- we are to understand that
- we are to realize that

“...and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him...” (vs 13-14).

Here's where prayer comes in, and this is why we have to believe God! When we pray, He will answer us.

- sometimes *yes*
- sometimes *no*
- sometimes *immediately*
- sometimes *later on*

But He always answers our prayers!

“...that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him” (vs 14-15).

Eph. 1 & 3 are some of the most inspiring that we have in the New Testament, so that we realize and understand:

- our calling
- why we're here
- where we're going
- what we're doing
- what we're believing
- what we are teaching
- what we are preaching
- what we are writing
- how we live our lives

Yes, when we come to the end, and for many of us the place of safety will be our grave. When death comes it's not easy, but when we die in the faith we are guaranteed the resurrection to life.

Just like when the harvest takes place with

wheat, the stem and the blades all go; the grain remains. There's life in the grain! When it's planted it sprouts and grows again. A type of resurrection and growing in grace and knowledge.

It's always important that we begin with the first couple of verses, because Paul writes these to sanctify what is being written to show that it comes from the inspiration of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

- not the writings of men
- not just the writings of Paul

But the writings of God as Paul is the scribe!
That's what we all are as elders in serving the people. We're not an end to ourselves! Our authority is to teach and to preach"

- not to rule
- not to oppress
- not to rob and take from

But to serve so that we all grow in grace and knowledge! This why Paul opens every one of his epistles with a salutation from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus." *That goes out in time for everything!*

Verse 2: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ." *That's what we want from that grace:*

- peace
- understanding
- love
- truth
- confidence

All of that together! All comes from God!

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us... [now and in the future] ...with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ."

When God has pronounced that it will be, ***it is as good as done regardless of how long it takes to fulfill it!***

Verse 4: "According as He has personally chosen us for Himself **before the foundation of the world...**"

1. Christ was already set to be the sacrifice and the Lamb of God
2. it includes the *Book of Life*
3. those who answer the call are

predestined—when they answer the call—
to be written in the *Book of Life*

The predestination is in the *Book of Life!* And answering the call! It's not that some are predestined by God before they're even born.

Verse 4: "According as He has personally... [God the Father] ...chosen us for Himself **before the foundation of the world** in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love... [that's the whole thing of the Kingdom of God right there] ...having predestinated us..." (vs 4-5)—*according to His Plan!*

So, when our name is written in the *Book of Life* when we repent, are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, our name is there and we are predestinated at that point:

"...for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will" (v 5). *That's something!*

Tie that in with 1-Cor. 2:9-11, that ***the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, the things that God has prepared for those who love Him!***

It is going to be so fantastic, it's going to be amazing and astounding, thrilling and great, forever!

Verse 6: "To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*." ***We have become objects of the grace of God!***

- to give us access to Him
- to pray to Him
- to have our sins forgiven
- to grow and overcome
- to love God
- to love the brethren

All of that comes from God! That's a tremendous thing!

Verse 7: "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence" (vs 7-8).

- Isn't that what Jesus said to you? *It has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven!*
- How?

"...abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; having made known to us the mystery... [Just like Jesus said] ...of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself" (vs 8-9). *Think about that!*

- the next time you get discouraged
- the next time you get down
- the next time you have a little pity party for yourself

You open Ephesians and read the first chapter again!

God loves you and has called you, and He wants you in His Kingdom! He wants you to grow in grace and knowledge to the maximum extent that you can.

He will bless you in it, and be with you in it! We can look forward to the resurrection!

Verse 10: “That in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times... [we are living in it right now] ...He might bring all things together in Christ... [that’s what the book of Revelation tells us] ...both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; yes, **in Him**, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated... [by that inheritance] ...according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will” (vs 10-11).

Don’t we pray that every day? *Our Father, in heaven, Your name is hallowed and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!* Let God’s will be done in our lives—in our heart and mind—so that we can be in the Kingdom of God. That’s what all of this is about!

Verse 12: “That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ.”

This is what the seven week harvest means!

We will see tomorrow on Pentecost the 50th day harvest! All of these things that we have read today—which are promises—will be fulfilled to the maximum degree possible!

See you tomorrow!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:9-16
- 2) Exodus 223:12-17, 19
- 3) Deuteronomy 26:1-13
- 4) Matthew 13:10-11
- 5) Psalm 111:10
- 6) Matthew 13:11-43
- 7) 1 John 3:1-3
- 8) 1 John 5:10-14
- 9) Ephesians 1:1-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Leviticus 23:6-7

- Deuteronomy 16
- Exodus 34
- Psalm 25
- Ephesians 2:1-3
- Revelation 1; 14
- Ephesians 3
- 1 Corinthians 2:9-11

Also referenced: Book:

God’s Plan for Mankind Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days! by Fred R. Coulter {truthofGod.org}

FRC:bo
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