

SABBATH THOUGHT 2024-06-08—THE FORTY & TEN DAYS OF PENTECOST

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday afternoon and was buried just before sunset. He was resurrected three days and nights later at the end of the Sabbath at sunset, which was also the beginning of the Wavesheaf Offering day. That day is important because it determines the date for the Feast of Weeks. The name refers to counting seven weeks or 49 days from the day of the Wavesheaf Offering. But the Feast of Weeks is also known as Pentecost, which is Greek for 'count fifty' because it is 50 days after the Sabbath, the day before the Wavesheaf Offering. There is much symbolism surrounding the counting of Pentecost. There are 'seven sevens' (seven weeks) and 49 plus one (50), but 50 is also the sum of two significant numbers: forty and ten. Take a look at some of the biblical events that lasted forty days beginning with the forty days Jesus Christ spent with the disciples after His resurrection:

ACTS 1:1-3 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Jesus' last forty days on earth were spent teaching and "speaking of things pertaining the Kingdom of God"—a very important topic indeed. With that in mind, notice some other instances of forty days, starting with the rains during the flood in Noah's day:

GENESIS 7:12 And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

Another occasion was the forty days the ancient Israelites reconnoitered or searched out the land of Canaan, also known as the Promised Land:

NUMBERS 13:25 And they [*the twelve spies*] returned from spying [*searching*] out the land after forty days.

One of the most well-known forty day periods was when Moses was on Mount Sinai where God taught him the Law and he received the two stone tablets:

DEUTERONOMY 9:9 "When I [*Moses*] went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water.

Notice that God not only taught Moses the Law but gave him the "tablets of the covenant." Moses later also fasted twice for forty days each because of the sins of the people. The first was when they made a golden idol and the second was their rebellion at Kadesh Barnea when they refused to enter into the land of Canaan:

DEUTERONOMY 9:18 "And I [*Moses*] fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your [*the ancient Israelites*'] sin which you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.

DEUTERONOMY 9:25-26 “Thus **I [Moses] prostrated myself before the LORD; forty days and forty nights I kept prostrating myself, because the LORD had said He would destroy you.**

Then there was Elijah who fled from Jezebel to Mount Horeb after killing the prophets of Baal. His journey lasted forty days:

1 KINGS 19:8 So he [*Elijah*] arose, and ate and drank; and **he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.**

Forty days was also the time Nineveh had to repent before God destroyed the city:

JONAH 3:4 And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, “**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**”

Finally, forty days was the duration Jesus Christ was tempted by Satan the Devil:

MARK 1:13 And **He [Jesus] was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan,** and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

In these examples are several aspects of the Kingdom. Most are probably obvious except, perhaps, the rain during the flood. All life requires rain, but Hosea said something interesting about rain—the knowledge of God is like *rain*:

HOSEA 6:3 **Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD.** His going forth is established as the morning; **He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain** to the earth.

These examples might be said to represent forty-day periods of:

- The flood rain portrays receiving knowledge of God,
- The spies searching out Canaan is seeking the eternal Promised Land,
- Moses on Mount Sinai is being taught the Law of God,
- Moses fasting for the sins of the people is repentance and seeking God’s forgiveness for sin,
- Moses receiving the covenant tablets is entering into covenant with God,
- Elijah fled to the mountain of God (Horeb) is journeying to reach God’s dwelling place,
- Nineveh’s warning is to repent before it is too late,
- Temptations of Jesus are trials and testing.

All of these things pertain to the Kingdom. The forty days in the count to Pentecost are all things someone must DO. The forty days begin in the middle of the days of Unleavened Bread that picture coming out of Egypt (sin). These events begin when people truly *SEEK* God¹. Their minds are then opened to *KNOWLEDGE* of Him and His *LAW*². The Law reveals *SIN*³, which leads to *REPENTANCE*, *FASTING*, and *FORGIVENESS*⁴. Forgiveness leads to

¹ Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-10; Acts 17:27.

² Matt. 5:17-19.

³ Rom. 3:20; 7:14.

baptism⁵ and baptism to a COVENANT with God⁶. These things are the beginning of the path to the Kingdom, which is a JOURNEY of growing in agape love and enduring testing and trials. But there is a time limit. Procrastination will eventually result in God's calling being withdrawn.

THE FIRST FORTY DAYS OF THE COUNT TO PENTECOST REPRESENTS ALL THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

But what about the remaining 10 days? Notice what Jesus told the apostles:

ACTS 1:4-5, 14 And being assembled together with *them*, He [*Jesus*] commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to **wait for the Promise of the Father**, “which,” *He said*, “you have heard from Me; 5 “for John truly baptized with water, but **you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.**” ... 14 These **all continued [in Jerusalem] with one accord in prayer and supplication.** ...

When Jesus ascended into heaven at the end of the forty days, He told the disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit. Notice these other examples of ten days:

DANIEL 1:12, 14-15 “Please **test [prove] your servants for ten days**, and let them give us [*Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego*] vegetables to eat and water to drink. ... 14 So he [*the steward*] consented with them in this matter, and **tested them ten days**. 15 And **at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh** than all the young men who ate the portion of the king's delicacies.

Daniel and his friends waited ten days for God to miraculously change their bodies. Also, Jeremiah waited ten days for God to answer his prayer for the remnant that Ishmael tried to destroy (the remnant later went against what God told Jeremiah):

JEREMIAH 42:2-3, 6-7, 43:7 [*The Israelites*] said to Jeremiah the prophet, “Please, let our petition be acceptable to you, and **pray for us to the LORD your God, for all this remnant** (since we are left *but* a few of many, as you can see), 3 “that **the LORD your God may show us the way in which we should walk and the thing we should do.**” ... 6 “Whether *it is* pleasing or displeasing, **we will obey the voice of the LORD our God** to whom we send you, that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.” 7 And it happened **after ten days that the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah.** ... 43:7 So they [*the remnant*] went to the land of Egypt, for **they did not obey the voice of the LORD.** And they went as far as Tahpanhes.

Finally, the saints in Smyrna were cast into prison where they were tried and tested as they waited ten “days” (years) to be liberated:

⁴ Acts 2:36-38.

⁵ Acts 2:38.

⁶ Heb. 8.

REVELATION 2:10 “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to **throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days.** Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

THE LAST TEN DAYS OF THE COUNT TO PENTECOST ARE A TIME OF WAITING FOR GOD TO FULFILL HIS PROMISES.

The Firstfruits are now waiting for God to fulfill His promises of being changed to eternal spirit. The count to Pentecost started with the first forty days that portrays ALL things pertaining to the Kingdom. The last ten days are a continuation of that journey but they reflect a mature believer who has come to a point in their spiritual life where they no longer need the milk⁷ of “things pertaining to the Kingdom of God” but feed on the meat of the Kingdom. A mature believer will spend more time toward the end of their journey waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of the Kingdom as they often meditate on it and pray earnestly for it. And that brings us to the 50th day after the Wavesheaf Offering—Pentecost. Fifty is also a significant number—the number of the Jubilee:

LEVITICUS 25:8-10 ‘And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. 9 ‘Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. 10 ‘And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.

Pentecost is the fiftieth day after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That day is the end of the wait for the Firstfruits. It is the day when God will give them that eternal Promised Land:

1 THESSALONIANS 4:16-17 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Fifty is forty plus ten. Forty days is everything pertaining to the Kingdom of God and ten days is waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of that Kingdom. That happens on Pentecost—day fifty of the count. It is like a Jubilee for the Firstfruits when they end their journey and are finally given that Promised Land of paradise!

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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⁷ 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12.