

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The festivals are a time to gather before God. They are also times to give from our abundance but the source of those offerings are from God:
 - i) DEUTERONOMY 16:17 “Every man *shall give* as he is able, **according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.**
- b) Festivals are a time when God BLESSES His people. But those blessings require WORKS during the times BETWEEN all the holyday festival seasons.
- c) **NOTE:** The word translated *feast* is *mow`ed* (H4150) and it refers to an appointed time or season. A *feast* is a celebration that focuses on a banquet so a better translation is *festival*, which refers to public events where people gather to observe a special time.

2) THE HOLYDAYS PORTRAYED BY HARVESTS

- a) DEUTERONOMY 16:16 “**Three times a year** all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the **[#1] Festival of Unleavened Bread, at the [#2] Festival of Weeks, and at the [#3] Festival of Tabernacles;** and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.
- b) The holydays occur at the three main agricultural HARVEST seasons: Festival of Unleavened BREAD in early spring, Festival of Pentecost also called the Festival of the HARVEST of the Weeks¹ during late spring, and Festival of Tabernacles also called the Festival of Ingathering² in early autumn.
- c) All the holydays are linked to harvests, which involve WORK:
 - i) MATTHEW 9:37-38 Then He [*Jesus Christ*] said to His disciples, “The **harvest** truly *is* plentiful, but the **laborers** are few. 38 “Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out **laborers into His harvest.**”

3) THE GRAINS OF THE THREE HARVESTS

- a) **FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD = BARLEY**
 - i) Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread occur in the early spring during the month of Nisan (Abib). Eating unleavened bread is commanded by God so there is a harvest and milling of the grain to make it.
 - ii) LEVITICUS 23:5-6 ‘On the fourteenth *day* of the first month [*Nissan/Abib*] at twilight *is* the LORD’s Passover. 6 ‘And **on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Festival of Unleavened Bread** to the LORD; seven days **you must eat unleavened bread.**
 - iii) The barley crop is harvested early spring at the time of the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread:

¹ Exod. 23:16.

² Exod. 23:16; 34:22.

- 1) EXODUS 9:31-32 Now **the flax and the barley were struck [by the 7th plague of hail]**, for the barley was in the head and the flax was in bud. 32 But **the wheat and the spelt [rye] were not struck, for they are late crops.**
- iv) This plague was prior to Passover so it was early spring. The barley and flax were destroyed since they were nearly ready for harvesting but the wheat and rye had not yet sprouted, so they were undamaged by the plague of hail. Barley is the first harvest of each year and was used to make the unleavened bread.
- b) **FESTIVAL OF WEEKS (PENTECOST) = WHEAT**
 - i) EXODUS 34:22 “And **you shall observe the Festival of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest**, and the Festival of Ingathering at the year’s end.
 - ii) Pentecost is the second harvest season, occurring in late spring following the barley harvest in early spring. It is called the FIRSTFRUITS of the Wheat Harvest because there is another wheat harvest in the early autumn.
- c) **FESTIVAL OF INGATHERING = WHEAT**
 - i) The Festival of Ingathering occurs in early autumn during the seventh month of Tishri.
 - ii) LEVITICUS 23:39 ‘Also **on the fifteenth day of the seventh month [Tishri]**, when **you have gathered in the fruit of the land**, you shall keep the festival of the LORD for seven days; on the first day *there shall be* a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest
 - iii) This harvest included grain (wheat), fruits (grapes, figs, pomegranites), and olives:
 - 1) DEUTERONOMY 14:23 “And **you shall eat** before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of **your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks**, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.
 - iv) Compared to the late spring wheat harvest of Pentecost, the early autumn harvest of the Festival of Ingathering was by far the larger of the two.

4) MEANING OF THE FESTIVAL SEASONS

- a) Barley is unique to the Festival of Unleavened bread while the grain for both the Festival of Weeks and Festival of Tabernacles consisted of wheat. The barley represents Jesus Christ and wheat represents mankind.
- b) **FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD = JESUS CHRIST**
 - i) During the Days of Unleavened Bread, barley from the harvest was used to make the bread. As the first of all the yearly harvests, the barley harvest represents the resurrection of Jesus Christ who is the FIRST of the firstfruits.
 - 1) 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20 But now **Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruit [singular]** of those who have fallen asleep.
- c) **FESTIVAL OF WEEKS (PENTECOST) = FIRSTFRUITS OF MANKIND**
 - i) The early wheat harvest of Pentecost pictures the resurrection of the spiritual firstfruits of mankind.
 - 1) JAMES 1:18 Of His [God’s] own will He brought [begat] us forth by the word of truth, that **we might be a kind of firstfruit [singular] of His creatures.**

- ii) The early wheat harvest is a NEW grain offering.
 - 1) LEVITICUS 23:16 **'Count fifty days to [Pentecost] the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering** to the LORD.
 - a) While wheat is certainly new and distinctive from barley, the word *new* also means REBUILT. In that sense, the firstfruits of God's children are being "rebuilt" after the image of Jesus Christ.
- iii) The harvest of Pentecost is RESERVED for the Firstfruits:
 - 1) JEREMIAH 5:24 They *[the rebellious children of Jacob]* do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the former *[autumn]* and the latter *[spring]*, in its season. **He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.**"
 - a) The "appointed weeks" is an obvious reference to the Festival of Weeks.
 - b) The rebellious are excluded from the Festival of Weeks so they will not be part of the Firstfruits harvest.
- d) **FESTIVAL OF INGATHERING = MAIN HARVEST OF MANKIND**
 - i) The Festival of Tabernacles portrays the great harvest of mankind:
 - 1) HOSEA 6:11 Also, O Judah, **a harvest is appointed to you, when I [Jesus Christ] return the captives of My people.**
 - a) The firstfruit wheat harvest at the time of Pentecost pictures the first and smaller spiritual firstfruit harvest of mankind whereas the later autumn wheat harvest pictures the larger spiritual harvest of mankind.
 - ii) There are workers sent to the harvest of the Festival of Ingathering. These workmen are the resurrected firstfruits of God who will be kings and priests and teachers:
 - 1) MATTHEW 9:36-38 But when He *[Jeuss Christ]* **saw the multitudes**, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd *[like the rescued captives]*. 37 Then He said to His disciples, "**The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38** **Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest [referred to in Hos. 6:11].**"

5) THREE HARVEST OFFERINGS

- a) LEVITICUS 23:37 **'These are the festivals** of the LORD which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, **to offer an offering** made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—
 - i) Sacrifices and offerings are required for all Festivals.
- b) **FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD = WAVESHEAF**
 - i) LEVITICUS 23: 5-6, 9-11 'On the fourteenth *day* of the first month *[Nissan/Abib]* at twilight *is* the LORD's **Passover**. 6 'And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the **Festival of Unleavened Bread** to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ... 9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "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. 11 '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.

- 1) The Wavesheaf was of the barley harvest representing Jesus Christ being accepted by God as the eternal Sin Offering.
- 2) The Wavesheaf did not involve any labor of man since the barley crop was already in the land when they entered. They simply cut a sheaf of the barley. It also did not require milling into flour. The entire Wavesheaf offering was a WORK of God because Jesus Christ's sacrifice was not a work of mankind. This is reflected in "the priest shall wave the sheaf."

c) **FESTIVAL OF WEEKS (PENTECOST) = TWO WAVELOAVES**

- i) LEVITICUS 23:15-17 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath [*during the Days of Unleavened Bread*], from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16 'Count fifty days to [*Pentecost*] the day after the seventh Sabbath; then **you shall offer a new grain offering** to the LORD. 17 '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.

- 1) Pentecost is the harvest of firstfruits. The phrase "YOU shall offer a NEW grain offering" are the wave loaves, which had to be baked with fire and were of the wheat harvest representing the Firstfruits of the wheat harvest. The loaves required MAN'S labors to mill the wheat into flour to make the bread. The wave loaves are due to OUR WORKS. The dough is then baked in fire, a metaphor for being tested.

d) **FESTIVAL OF INGATHERING = OFFERING BY FIRE**

- i) LEVITICUS 23:36 Seven days **you shall offer an offering made by fire** to the LORD. On the eighth day shall be a holy convocation to you. And **you shall offer an offering made by fire** to the LORD. *It is* a solemn assembly. And you shall do no servile work *therein*.

- 1) The phrase "YOU shall offer an offering made by FIRE" is the grain offering of the wheat harvest representing mankind. All grain offerings were made into flour, again requiring MAN'S labors to mill the wheat and fire to bake it.

6) A SPIRITUAL HARVEST REQUIRED

- a) EXODUS 23:14-16 "**Three times you shall keep a festival to Me in the year:** 15 "You shall keep the **Festival 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**); 16 "and the **Festival of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field.**

- i) *Empty* = ineffective, worthless, or in vain.
- ii) **Harvesting** and **ingathering** require WORKS.
- iii) **Harvesting** is reaping by severing or cutting and **ingathering** is gathering the reapings.

- b) All are required to give an offering at each festival season:

- i) DEUTERONOMY 16:17 **Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.**
- c) God sows spiritual seed each festival season and expects us to LABOR (work) throughout the days in between festivals so that we have a spiritual HARVEST to bring the NEXT holyday season.
- d) The command that no one appear before Him EMPTY also indicates something produced by WORKS. God expects everyone to bring a SPIRITUAL harvest that is the result of seeds sown during the previous festival season. It is as each one is “able;” that is, it is dependent upon “the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you”. What does God give us? The means and opportunities to do Good Works.

7) SALVATION REQUIRES GOOD WORKS

a) GOOD WORKS

- i) EPHESIANS 2:10 For **we are His [God the Father’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,** which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
- ii) EPHESIANS 4:15-16 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 **from whom the whole body, joined and knit [united] together by what every joint supplies [Good Works], according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.**
 - 1) Jesus Christ is the Head of the Body.
 - 2) The Body—the *ekklesia*—is to be fitly framed (joined) and compacted (united) by that which everyone supplies; the “inner” works of individuals. These are Good Works.
- iii) Perfection is through Good Works:
 - 1) 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in [justice] [G1343 = *dikaioisune*], 17 **that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**
 - a) Scripture is profitable for Good Works especially to preach the Gospel.

b) JUDGED BY GOOD WORKS

- i) 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 For we must all **appear before the judgment seat of Christ,** that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, **according to what he has done [works], whether good or bad.**

c) GOOD WORKS REQUIRED FOR FAITH

- i) JAMES 2:14, 17, 24, 26 **What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ... 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** 18 But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and **I will show you my faith by my works.** ... 24 You see then that **a man is justified [G1344 = *dikaioo*] by works, and not by faith only.** ... 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without works is dead also.**
 - 1) Faith without Good Works is Dead Works.

d) DEAD WORKS & WICKED WORKS

i) Dead Works receive a judgment to death:

- 1) HEBREWS 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,
- 2) HEBREWS 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve [with Good Works] the living God?

ii) If Good Works do not matter, then why do Wicked Works separate us from God?

- 1) COLOSSIANS 1:21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled

8) **PARABLES OF GOOD WORKS**

a) PARABLE OF THE TALENTS = Good Works produce an increase.

- i) MATTHEW 25:14-30 “For *the kingdom of heaven is* like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 “And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 “Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 “And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. 18 “But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. 19 “After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ 21 “His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ 22 “He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ 23 “His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ 24 **“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 ‘And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have *what is yours*.’ 26 “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 ‘So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 ‘Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 ‘And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’**
- 1) Talents represent the Holy Spirit. God gives each individual in the Body of Christ an initial portion. Trading infers gains through works. God does not give us His Holy Spirit and allow us to do nothing—without Good Works that serve others there is no salvation.

b) PARABLE OF THE SHEEP & GOATS = Good Works supply the needs of others.

- i) MATTHEW 25:31-46 “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 “All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. 33 “And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 ‘for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 ‘I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ **37 “Then the [just] [G1342 = dikaios] will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 ‘When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 ‘Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 “And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’** 41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 ‘for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 ‘I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ **44 “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 “Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* [NO WORKS] to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.’ 46 “And these will go away into everlasting punishment [death], but the [just] [G1342 = dikaios] into eternal life.”**

- 1) All these things—feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, or visiting the sick or those in prison—are Good Works that increase agape love in the Body of Christ.

9) FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT ARE GOOD WORKS

- a) GALATIANS 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control**. Against such there is no law. 24 And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also **walk [doing works] in the Spirit**.
- b) JOHN 15:16 “You did not choose Me [*Jesus Christ*], but I chose you and **appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your [plucked] fruit should remain**, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.
- c) Fruits are not personal traits but are qualities intended to help others. A tree produces fruit that is for OTHERS to pluck and eat; a tree cannot pluck its own fruit. Fruits are referred to as “produce” (emphasis on the first syllable—PRO-duce), which is derived from the verb to produce (emphasis on the second syllable—pro-DUCE), meaning to create or bring forth. Fruits of the Spirit are exactly that—PRO-duce that is pro-DUCED for others! Believers bear fruit FOR others. In fact, if no one picks the fruit on a tree it rots and falls off. Fruit is always for others! Fruits of the Spirit (that are Good Works) are required for salvation:
- i) LUKE 13:6-9 He also spoke this parable: “**A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.** 7 “Then he said to

the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' 8 "But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, **let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it.** 9 'And if it bears fruit, **well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.**' "

- 1) We are the fig tree and God gives us what we need to produce fruits. He is longsuffering even if there are times when we struggle to bear fruit for others. If we stop bearing fruits altogether, we will not have salvation.
- d) People are UNFRUITFUL without Good Works.
 - i) TITUS 3:14 And let our *people* also **learn to maintain good works**, to *meet* urgent needs, that they **may not be unfruitful**.
- e) God *appointed* us to bring forth a bountiful harvest of fruits. Our fruits must also REMAIN; that is, continue to be produced! Fruits are Good Works. If they cease, the old fruit rots and falls to the ground. Good Works must be ongoing to produce new fruit that can be plucked when it ripens.

10)CONCLUSION

- a) Each of the three festivals of God is a harvest. But a harvest requires a planting of seed for the next harvest. The three festival seasons are both a harvest and a planting. The Festival of Unleavened Bread is a harvest by the works of God and the Festival of Weeks of the Harvest of Firstfruits and the Festival of Ingathering are both by the works of man. But it is GOD who plants the seeds for all three festivals. These are God's Salvational Works in us. In between the festivals is when the crops need to be tended to and these are OUR Good Works. The abundance of the crop at the next festival is dependent upon our Good Works. The warning is that "NONE shall appear before Me EMPTY!"³
- b) I pray yours is a plentiful harvest and God BLESSES you with an abundant planting this festival season!

11)MAY GOD'S GRACE AND PEACE BE UPON YOU!

³ Exod. 23:15.