

Count to Freedom from Sin

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In God's law, the ancient nation of Israel would count their years in groups of seven, and following the completion of seven groups of seven, or forty-nine years, they would celebrate the 50th year as a Jubilee during which everyone would forgive those who owed them money, and anyone who leased their land because they fell into debt would have it automatically returned (Leviticus 25:1-17). Obviously, anyone in debt would look forward to this 50th year because their debt would be forgiven.

Christ tied this use of the number "seven" to God's willingness to completely forgive sinful conduct.

Peter came to him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Being free from debt was central to the exodus of Jacob's descendants from Egypt because this extended family was in deep debt to God for the sins, they had accumulated over the hundreds of years they were participating in Egypt's polytheistic religious system.

*Yet she (Israel) multiplied her harlotry in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, when **she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt** (Ezekiel 23:19; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

*Thus I (God) will make you (Israel) cease **your lewdness and your harlotry brought from the land of Egypt**, so that you will not lift your eyes to them (the gods*

of Egypt), nor remember Egypt anymore (Ezekiel 23:27; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Counting seven times seven, or forty-nine days, brought Israel from Egypt to the foot of Mt. Sinai, and this count began after the sacrifice of a lamb whose blood was placed on the doorposts and lintels of each family's home.

And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the house where they eat it (Exodus 12:7).

This shed blood of a lamb foreshadowed the blood of Christ; without which no sinner can begin their journey out of, and away from, sin.

The next day John (the baptizer) saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29; cf. Heb. 9:22; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Because Christ's shed blood provides forgiveness for one's sins, the nation of Israel's ultimate and future forgiveness was foreshadowed when they journeyed through the Red Sea.

I (Paul) do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, and all were baptized by Moses... (1Corinthians 10:1-2; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Following baptism, a repentant individual makes a commitment to begin living a new life of willing obedience to God.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace (God's forgiveness) may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin (figuratively in the waters of baptism) live any longer in it? Therefore we were buried with him (Christ) through

baptism into death (of the old sinful way of living), *that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the power of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life*** (Romans 6:1-4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This new way of living in accordance with God's law and commandments will occur on a national basis in the future.

Thus says the Lord God: "I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations. Then I will give them one heart (purpose/attitude), and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart (stubborn/rebellious attitude) out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh (teachable attitude), that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them..." (Ezekiel 11:17-20; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Going back to ancient Israel's figurative journey out of sin, pictured by leaving Egypt, they heard God's law of liberty expounded on the fiftieth day. This calculation is covered in an article at this link:
https://www.onetruthonelaw.com/uploads/4/2/3/5/42356753/pentecost_count_fifty.pdf

But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does (James 1:25).

Christ compared his Father's law to fire that refines and improves the individuals who are affected by it, which explains why the Holy Spirit appeared like tongues of fire descending upon those who were assembled together on the Day of Pentecost after Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:3-4),

*I (Christ) counsel you to **buy from me gold refined in the fire**, that you may be rich* (in righteous character); *and white garments* (righteous actions; Rev. 19:8)... (Revelation 3:18; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

*The Lord came from Sinai and dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mt. Paran, and came with ten thousands of saints; **from His right hand came a fiery law for them*** (Deuteronomy 33:2; emphasis added).

God the Father does not grant the power of His Holy Spirit to those who do not embrace and follow His law and commandments. Therefore, the bulk of the ancient nation of Israel did not receive this power, although God promised it to them in the future per Ezekiel 11:17-20; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Joel 2:28-32.

And we (Christ's apostles) *are his witnesses and so also is **the Holy Spirit which God*** (the Father) *has given to those who **obey Him*** (Acts 5:32; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

He who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us (1John 3:24; also Heb. 5:9; emphasis added).

If Israel had embraced and willingly obeyed God's law, they would have remained in the Promised Land, but they rebelled and devastating consequences followed.

Most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert. These things happened as warnings for us, not to have the wicked lusts for forbidden things that they had. Do not become idolaters as some of them did, for scripture says: After sitting down to eat and drink, the people got up to amuse themselves; (which included) falling into sexual immorality as some of them did and twenty-three thousand met their

downfall in one day (1Corinthians 10:5-9; Ed. note in parenthesis; The Jerusalem Bible).

So God brought them to the Promised Land, but He did not force them to obey His laws which were created for their benefit and longevity as a nation. By counting each day up to Pentecost, these people were being reminded of their gradual journey away from sin toward the freedom offered by obeying God's perfect law of liberty in their new land. Instead, they chose to go in the opposite direction and went back into captivity among their enemies. Nonetheless, the count of fifty years to the Jubilee still holds out hope for every sinner because it has not reached its ultimate fulfillment yet. This will come to fruition at the end of Christ's one thousand year reign on earth. He spoke about this future scenario.

And he was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written: *The Spirit of the Lord (Almighty) is upon me (Christ), because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance (from sin) to the captives (of sin) and recovery of sight to the blind (to see God's truth accurately), to set at liberty those who are oppressed (by sin), to preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Jubilee)* (Luke 4:17-19; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness. The humble also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 29:18-19).

The final fulfillment of this acceptable year of the Lord will occur when Israel is finally and permanently free from sin, and its negative

consequences. Until then, they will not inherit the promises made by God to their forefathers.

In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you; I will preserve you and give you as a covenant to the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the desolate heritages (inheritances); that you may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves' (Isaiah 49:8-9; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Although the Jubilee year represented freedom from debt, and a return to the inheritances originally intended for every family, what this 50th year foreshadowed has not been fulfilled yet. In the meantime, counting fifty days to Pentecost each year can serve as a reminder that God the Father is counting down the years to a final Jubilee that will occur in the physical realm at the completion of His Son's one thousand year reign on earth (cf. Revelation 20:4-6).

Then comes the end, when he (Christ) delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when he put an end to all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet (1Corinthians 15:24-25; Ed. note in parenthesis).

As God's Holy Days are a blueprint for His plan of salvation, it is important to consider them in the context of dealing with sin once and for all. These annual festivals consist of seven Holy Days (Leviticus 23:1-44). The first two Holy Days occur during the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread; next is the Holy Day of Pentecost; then the Day of Blowing Trumpets followed by the Day of Atonement. Finally, there is the first Holy Day during the seven day Feast of Tabernacles. The Last Great Day of this festival is the last Holy Day of the year, and it follows immediately after the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. Therefore, it occurs on the eighth day in that sequence and,

therefore, is a stand-alone Holy Day unassociated with the previous seven days. In a similar manner, the Jubilee year is separate from the previous seven Sabbaths of years that led up to it. It is unlikely that this sequence during the Feast of Tabernacles is just a coincidence. Instead, the intent may be to link complete and final freedom from sin with the release of all physical debts at the time of the Jubilee year. And, as the Last Great Day ends God's Holy Days; it must represent God's final act of dealing with sin during the second resurrection of the dead. Consequently, it will be the last opportunity for all remaining sinners to repent and be restored in their relationship with God the Father. Once reconciled, they can enter the spiritual Promised Land, or Kingdom of God, and live forever.

Central to this repentance will be a humble and teachable attitude, which is pictured through the physical act of circumcision on the eighth day (cf. Leviticus 12:3). Therefore, the eighth day at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles would remind everyone coming up in the second resurrection that they need to have a major change of attitude toward their God, and His law and commandments, if they want to be in His kingdom forever.

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live (Deuteronomy 30:6).

But if you want you want to enter life (everlasting), *keep the commandments* (Matthew 19:17b; Ed. note in parenthesis).

For the majority of mankind throughout history, this attitude has been absent.

Because the carnal mind is enmity (hostile) *against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be* (Romans 8:7; Ed. note in parenthesis).

However, when mankind arrives at the time pictured by the Last Great Day, it is likely to be similar to the year Jubilee when people can finally have their debts (sins) removed and be reconciled to their Creator. When this occurs, it will be a time of great jubilation because the self-serving and hostile attitudes associated with human nature will be gone forever. When this happens, the love of God will be experienced by everyone.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And (that) His commandments are not (considered) burdensome (1John 5:2-3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

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