

Chapter VIII

Are They Required?

We are now poised to answer the question as to whether or not the festivals and sacred days of Yahweh are a requirement under grace in order to receive the inheritance granted by the Torah of Trust (Covenants of Promise). Our guiding principle is the knowledge that there are two levels of sin found in the handwritten Torah. First, there is sin against the Covenants of Promise (Torah of Trust) to which Abraham was subject. Second, there is sin under the augmentations of the handwritten Torah with its works of the flesh. As we have demonstrated, knowledge of both levels is found within the handwritten Torah.

Order of Prominence

There is an obvious order of importance in the list of the various conditions to the different covenants. For example, this order is demonstrated when Yahweh foretold that Abraham would inherit because he “obeyed my (Yahweh’s) voice, attended to my charge, my commandments, my חֻקֹתַי (*khoquth*; statutes), and my תּוֹרָתַי (*torath*; laws).”¹ This list is given in order of importance.

The primary command is to obey Yahweh and to attend to his charge. Yet one must have love and trust to facilitate obedience and the ability to follow through with Yahweh’s instructions. Then, flowing from obedience and the willingness to follow instructions, come the commandments—the greatest two being to love Yahweh with all your innermost self and to love your neighbor as yourself. All of these conditions are meant to be followed during the עַד עֲלָם (*ad olam*; a perpetual world-age) to come and all reflect the divine nature.

The *khoquth* (statutes) and laws of Yahweh are of a lesser place in this order, following after the commandments. Statutes determine time, space, labor, and usage, while laws teach. Yet if the labor, usage, or teaching are no longer required, they are no longer applicable and fall into disuse. Therefore, by definition these things have a less permanent character and are controlled by circumstance. These statutes and laws are themselves divided into two classes: (1) those which are meant as conditions for the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants and continue during this entire present *olam* (i.e., world-age from Adam until heaven and earth pass away) and (2) those meant to exist as conditions only under certain limited bounds, such as a requirement for justification under the written Torah. In each case they are constructed so that, if circumstances dictate, they are no longer relevant.

For the מוֹעֲדֵי (*moadi*; appointed times), i.e., festivals and sacred days, to still be relevant for all Christians trying to qualify for the inheritance under grace, there must be scriptural evidence in two areas.

¹ Gen., 26:5.

- There must be evidence that these particular *moadi* existed and were observed prior to the handwritten covenant made at Mount Sinai.
- The observance of these days must have authority for the time after the death and resurrection of Yahushua the messiah. To demonstrate, they either can be prescribed as a future observance by the prophets, affirmed by the messiah as a future event, or continued in the early assemblies by apostolic authority.

It is now left up to us to examine the evidence and determine whether or not the statutes for the festivals and sacred days of Yahweh meet these qualifications.

Two Sets of Requirements

There are two important groups of requirements found in the greater Torah (Old Testament): (1) the requirements for justification under the written contract of the Old Covenant made at Mount Sinai (with the augmentations found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy); and (2) the requirements for justification under the verbal contract of the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants. The *khoquth* observed by Abraham were neither formally written down nor classified as works of the Torah.² Therefore, they were not annulled with the death of the messiah.³ At the same time, sin against the Adamic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenants of Promise is revealed within the handwritten Torah of Moses.

With this information in hand, we can now proceed to verify whether or not the festivals and sacred days of Yahweh represent statutes required by the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants. To separate those requirements (i.e., those applicable under grace) that belong to the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants from those requirements that belong only for those under the handwritten Torah, we must divide them into three levels.

(1) The first level is based upon fleshly requirements and itself has two parts. In one part, it contains the works of the Torah established by δόγματασιν (*dogmasin*; public decrees) which are adverse to us (e.g., the judgments, curses, animal sacrifices, cleansing rites, customs in food and clothing, etc.). These *dogmasin*, coming in the form of *khoquth* and *torath*, are augmentations of the original requirements under the Abrahamic Covenants. With the manifestation of grace at the death of the messiah, these augmentations (*dogmasin*) have been nailed to the stake.⁴

Along with these fleshly requirements comes a second part, the four categories of *dogmasin* that are not adverse to us (i.e., adhering to the laws against πορνεία [*porneia*; sexual misconduct] and observing the restrictions against eating blood, things strangled, and things offered to idols).⁵ These were part of the fleshly works in the covenant of the handwritten Torah but are also applicable to this day.

² Gen., 26:5; cf., Rom., 4:1-3.

³ Eph., 2:11-17; cf., Rom., 9:30-32; Gal., 2:15-3:14.

⁴ Col., 2:11-16.

⁵ Acts, 15:18-29. See our discussion above Chap. IV, pp. 66-69.

(2) The second important level contains the royal commandments (including the command to obey the voice of the angel named Yahweh),⁶ the *khoquth*, and those *torath* which are not part of the works of the Torah but were observed by Abraham. The royal commandments further reveal Yahweh's requirement for perfect love, especially expressed in the greater commandments to love Yahweh with all your innermost self and to love your neighbor as yourself.

These commandments, statutes, and laws were requirements of the Covenants of Promise and existed prior to the handwritten Torah. All of them are applicable to this day. They are also found as a condition of the covenant of the handwritten Torah and represent part of the justification found in that Torah. At the same time, when one comes under the covenant of the handwritten Torah, he is subject to both the first and second levels of conditions.

(3) The third level represents those conditions of the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants not directly required by the covenant of the handwritten Torah at Mount Sinai and its augmentations but are revealed in the greater Torah (Old Testament). Along with the above second level, this group is applicable for those coming under grace. For example, the Torah reveals the existence of the Adamic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenants of Promise and the need for grace, obedience to Yahweh, the promise of the sacred *ruach*, and justification by trust (the Torah of Trust).

Next, we know that sin against the Adamic Covenant and the Covenants of Promise is revealed in the handwritten Torah separately from the works of the Torah. Therefore, the commandments, statutes, and laws required for Abraham under the Torah of Trust are also listed in the covenant of the handwritten Torah. It is merely a matter of separating them out. Separation between the commandments, statutes, and laws of the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants and the works of the Torah is accomplished with a simple formula:

Except in reference to the four categories of *dogmasin* not adverse to us, those conditions no longer applicable were not required prior to the composition of the written Torah. They have been nailed to the stake and annulled with the death of the messiah. Therefore, those things which are still applicable, unless otherwise stated, must have existed prior to the written Torah and continued to exist after the messiah's resurrection.

This formula is based upon the scriptural principle that we must use line upon line, here a little, there a little, to discover any scriptural doctrine, and that every issue is established upon two or three witnesses.⁷

Examples of this Principle

To demonstrate our principle let us give some examples of these levels. For instance, under the handwritten Torah the Israelites were required to eat meat

⁶ The Ten Commandments (Exod., 20:1–17); obey the voice of the angel named Yahweh (Exod., 23:20f).

⁷ For line upon line see Isa., 28:9f, cf., 34:16f; for two or more witnesses see 2 Cor., 13:1; Heb., 10:28–31; John, 8:12–20; Deut., 17:6f, 19:15–20. Each scripture has its mate within the Scriptures (Isa., 34:16), forming at least two witnesses.

from clean animals and to abstain from eating meat from unclean animals.⁸ Earlier, in the antediluvian world, only the command to eat green vegetation was given.⁹ Nevertheless, during this same period, animals were already classified as clean and unclean.¹⁰ Then, after the great flood of Noah, mankind was given permission to eat “all things, even as the green plants.”¹¹ This statement is all-inclusive and refers both to clean and unclean types. In time came the Torah of Moses, which restricted the Israelites, as a priestly nation,¹² from eating any unclean meats.

Later, the messiah states that the things which go into the mouth, pass through the stomach, and cast into the sewer do not defile us; but the things coming out of the mouth, i.e., from the innermost self, do defile.¹³ After the resurrection of the messiah, Saul reports that whether we are vegetarians or not, and despite our choice of fast days, or what we choose to eat, it should have no bearing on receiving grace.¹⁴ Accordingly, the restrictions with regard to eating unclean meat were not a condition of the Covenants of Promise.

Of course, this freedom to eat anything does not mean that one must or should eat unclean animals (dogs, skunks, rats, snakes, etc.). Yahweh established such rules of the flesh under the Torah for health reasons and to parabolically teach us two things: (1) we should not partake in unclean knowledge and (2) those nations living without Yahweh are unclean.¹⁵ If one follows these rules for their intended reasons of health and their parabolic meaning, they are a good thing. Nevertheless, what food you eat does not justify you to receive the eternal inheritance under grace and the Covenants of Promise. If you eat clean meat in an effort to be justified then you have brought yourself under the Torah of Moses. In that case, you must keep all the handwritten Torah, not just this one part.¹⁶

Circumcision in the flesh is another case.¹⁷ For instance, Abraham was declared justified before he received the token of fleshly circumcision.¹⁸ The Israelites born after the Exodus, though ordered to be circumcised in the flesh under the Levitical codes composed while still at Mount Sinai,¹⁹ were not immediately circumcised. Regardless of the fact that Yahweh was with them,

⁸ Lev., 11:1–47, 20:25; Deut., 14:3–20.

⁹ Gen., 1:29f, 2:16f.

¹⁰ Gen., 7:2f, 8, 8:20.

¹¹ Gen., 9:3.

¹² Exod., 19:3–8.

¹³ Matt., 15:11–20, esp. v. 11, 17, 12:34f; Luke, 6:45.

¹⁴ Rom., 14:1–20; and cf., the theory behind Acts, 10:9–48; Titus, 1:5; Col., 2:16; 1 Tim., 4:1–5.

¹⁵ One of the parabolic meanings of such works of the Torah was to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean (Lev., 10:10, 11:47). For example, one can eat the words of Yahweh (Jer., 15:16; Ezek., 3:1–4; Rev., 10:8–11), and there is bread of an evil eye, which delicacies we are not to desire (Prov., 23:6). We are also told that it is not the physical items of food which enter the mouth of a man that make him unclean, but rather the thoughts from his innermost self (Matt., 15:10–20; Mark, 7:14–23). For this reason, one can have unclean lips (Isa., 6:5), the wicked are called unclean (Isa., 35:8, 52:1), and our sins make us “as the unclean thing, and all our justifications are like filthy cloths” (Isa., 64:5f). The nations living without Yahweh are counted as unclean, but Yahweh makes these nations clean once they join themselves to him (Acts, 10:1–48).

¹⁶ James, 2:10.

¹⁷ Also see App. D.

¹⁸ Gen., 15:6, cf., 17:23f.

¹⁹ Lev., 12:1–3.

they did not receive this fleshly circumcision until they invaded the land of Kanaan, which followed their 40-year sojourn in the wilderness.²⁰ Further, fleshly circumcision, as with any work of the handwritten Torah, is only relevant if you keep all the conditions of the handwritten Torah. Saul writes:

For indeed, circumcision profits if you do the Torah (of Moses); but if a transgressor of the Torah (of Moses) you are, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the justification of the Torah, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? and the uncircumcision out of nature, fulfilling the Torah, shall judge you, who with the letter and circumcision are a transgressor of the Torah? For he that is not outwardly one is a Judahite; but he that is hiddenly a Judahite; and circumcision is of the innermost self, in *ruach*, not in letter; of whom the praise is not from men, but from *eloah*.²¹

Therefore, Saul writes, “Has anyone been called being circumcised? Let him not be uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping *eloah’s* commandments is (something).”²²

Does that mean that fleshly circumcision as a token is wrong? Certainly not. If it were wrong then Abraham would have erred under grace. Do we charge him with coming under the works of the Torah when he was circumcised? Scriptures deny it. But Abraham kept fleshly circumcision as a token of the covenant of circumcision, a covenant which calls for the circumcision of one’s innermost self, i.e., the removal of the excess of sin from one’s very nature.²³ Abraham was not circumcised in the flesh as a condition of the covenant. Therefore, if one is circumcised or has his infant son circumcised in the flesh, and he does so as a token of the covenant of circumcision of the mind and one’s nature, it may enhance his trust. But if he does it in order to be justified, he is subject to the whole handwritten Torah and falls from grace. It is not circumcision in the flesh that pleases Yahweh but the circumcision of the innermost self (i.e., the removal of our sinful nature).

Still another example of a work of the Torah is the command to have animal sacrifices and burnt offerings. Sacrifices and burnt offerings were performed by men from the very beginning, but these were counted as free-will offerings.²⁴ When the Israelites left Egypt there were no commanded sacrifices.²⁵ Even under the handwritten Torah, Yahweh took no delight in sacrifices and

²⁰ Josh., 5:1–9.

²¹ Rom., 2:25–28.

²² 1 Cor., 7:18f.

²³ Gen., 17:11; cf., Rom., 4:11. That fleshly circumcision is a token of the true circumcision of one’s *לבב* (*lebab*; innermost self) see Deut., 10:16, 30:6; and cf., Rom., 2:27–29; Col., 2:8–12; Phil., 3:3. Also see Jer., 4:4, 9:25; cf., Isa., 52:1.

²⁴ For example, Abel’s sacrifices to Yahweh (Gen., 4:4–7) were called a “gift” (Heb., 11:4, 12:24), and Noah’s burnt offering was on the occasion of being saved from the flood (Gen., 8:20:f).

²⁵ Jer., 7:22.

burnt offerings. Rather he desired mercy and the knowledge of *eloahim*,²⁶ justification and justice.²⁷ The true sacrifices of *eloahim* are a broken *ruach* and a repentant innermost self,²⁸ and the sacrifices of giving thanks to Yahweh, demonstrating joy about Yahweh, and accomplishing those things relevant to justification.²⁹

In turn, after the death of the messiah, the requirements for commanded sacrifices once more ceased. Instead, we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices,³⁰ to give the sacrifices of the *ruach*,³¹ to give the sacrifice of thanksgiving,³² the sacrifice of trust,³³ and the sacrifice of praise to Yahweh continually, confessing his name.³⁴ Why, for example, kill the Phasekh lamb when the true Phasekh lamb, the messiah, has already been slain for us?³⁵ Indeed, once we attain to the knowledge of the truth, if we then willingly sin, there no longer remains any sacrifice for sins.³⁶

On the other hand, the royal commandments are on a higher level. To demonstrate, adultery, stealing, and disobeying Yahweh were considered sins prior to the covenant at Mount Sinai,³⁷ and they shall continue to be sins until the end of our present world-age.³⁸ According to the messiah, “if you desire to enter life, keep the commandments,”³⁹ and those who would break even the least of the commandments and teach others to do so will be considered the least of things by those in Yahweh’s kingdom.⁴⁰ As mentioned above, fleshly circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping *eloah*’s commandments is something.

Before Mount Sinai

Did the *khagi* and sacred days of Yahweh exist prior to the covenant at Mount Sinai? Most definitely, and from the very beginning. The festivals and sacred days of Yahweh were established during the very first week of creation. Genesis, 1:14–18, for instance, notes that on the fourth day of the creation week the luminaries (the sun, moon, and stars)⁴¹ were made to appear in the open expanse of the heavens, “to give light upon the earth.”⁴² These lights appeared in order “to divide between the day and the night” and to be “for signs and for the *מוֹעֲדִים* (*moadim*; group of appointed times)⁴³ and for days

²⁶ See for example Ps., 51:16; Jer., 6:20; Hos., 6:6; Amos, 5:22. Also see Matt., 9:13, 12:7.

²⁷ Prov., 21:3.

²⁸ Ps., 51:17.

²⁹ Thanksgiving, Pss., 107:22, 116:17; justification, Pss., 4:5, 51:19; joy, Ps., 27:6.

³⁰ Rom., 12:1.

³¹ 1 Pet., 2:5.

³² Pss., 107:22, 116:17.

³³ Phil., 2:17.

³⁴ Heb., 13:15.

³⁵ 1 Cor., 5:7; Eph., 5:1f; Heb., 10:11–26.

³⁶ Heb., 10:26.

³⁷ Gen., 20:1–9, 39:6–9, 31:32–36; Rom., 5:12–20 (cf., Gen., 2:15–17, 3:1–24).

³⁸ Rev., 21:8; 1 Cor., 6:9f; Eph., 5:5f; Col., 3:5f.

³⁹ Matt., 19:17, in context with v. 16–22.

⁴⁰ Matt., 5:19.

⁴¹ Gen., 1:14, cf., v. 16.

⁴² Gen., 1:15.

⁴³ See above Chap. I, p. 15, n. 70.

and years.”⁴⁴ In one of the Psalms, for example, we read that Yahweh, “made the moon for the *moadim*.”⁴⁵

Accordingly, one of the stated purposes of the sun, moon, and stars is to clock-in the *moadim* of Yahweh. This detail makes no sense unless the *moadim* of Yahweh were brought into existence at that point. The *moadim* of Yahweh are specifically defined in Leviticus as the weekly Sabbath day, the Khag of Phasekh (Passover) and Unleavened Bread, the Khag of Weeks (Pentecost), the Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Khag of Tabernacles, together with its eighth day, also called the Last Great Day.⁴⁶

The Sabbath day is an important example of a pre-Exodus sacred day. The seventh day of the week was designated as the Sabbath day during the very first week of creation.⁴⁷ The messiah adds that, “the Sabbath (day) was made for the sake of mankind, not mankind for the sake of the Sabbath (day).”⁴⁸ Accordingly, the Sabbath day was established from the very beginning for all mankind, not just for the Israelites under the handwritten Torah. It was even observed by the Israelites prior to their arrival at Mount Sinai.⁴⁹

These *moadi*, therefore, have to be the statutes observed by Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob. The pre-Exodus nature of these statutes was even understood by the Jews of the second century B.C.E., who noted that the Patriarchs, from Noah to Jacob, observed them.⁵⁰ This combined evidence proves that the *moadim* for the royal festivals and sacred days of Yahweh were established on the earth before the first man was even created. They were made for mankind. By necessity, therefore, they were part of the Adamic Covenant, the transgression of which was a sin.

Phasekh and Unleavened Bread Before Sinai

As already demonstrated, the festivals and sacred days of Yahweh derive their legal power by the כְּתוּבָה (*khoquth*; statutes)—enactments dealing with an appointment of time, space, quantity, labor, or usage.⁵¹ To this detail we can add the fact that the statutes and laws of Yahweh, which give legal power to

⁴⁴ Gen., 1:14.

⁴⁵ Ps., 104:19.

⁴⁶ Lev., 23:1–44; John, 7:37.

⁴⁷ Gen., 2:2f.

⁴⁸ Mark, 2:27. The Greek term ἀνθρώπων (*anthropon*) means “man” as a species, i.e., “mankind” (GEL, p. 71; GEL, 1968, pp. 141f; SEC, Gk. #444; ILT, *Lex.*, p. 9).

⁴⁹ The Sabbath day was already being observed by the Israelites prior to their reaching Mount Sinai (Exod., 16:4–30). During this pre-Sinai period, when some had broken the Sabbath, Yahweh complained, “How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws” (Exod., 16:28). These words indicate that the Sabbath day had already been a commandment for some time. The oracle given at Mount Sinai, as another example, commands the Israelites to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it sacred” (Exod., 20:8). This statement is premised upon the assumption that the Sabbath day already existed and the Israelites were not to forget its observance. Further, the fourth commandment was required in the covenant given at Mount Sinai because, “in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all which is in them, and he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it sacred” (Exod., 20:11). Therefore, the Sabbath day was sacred from the very beginning of man’s world.

⁵⁰ E.g. in the late second century B.C.E. book of Jubilees: Jub., 2:17–33 (the Sabbath day); Jub., 16:28–31 (the Festival of Tabernacles); Jub., 6:17–22, 22:1f, 44:1–4 (Festival of Weeks). The observance of the Sabbath and Jubilee years is also taken for granted throughout this text.

⁵¹ SEC, Heb. #2706. See our discussion above in the Intro. to Part I, pp. 25ff.

a *moad*, already existed in the days of Abraham and prior to the covenant made with Israel at Mount Sinai.⁵² To demonstrate, in the description of the Phasekh statute prior to it becoming part of the written Torah made at Mount Sinai, we are told that this *khag* was already in legal force for a period lasting an עולם (*olam*; world-age).⁵³

And this day (the Phasekh) is a memorial for you, and you shall נחג (*khag*; celebrate), it is a *khag* to Yahweh for your generations, an עולם (*olam*; world-age lasting) *khoquth* (statute), you shall *khag* (celebrate) it . . . And you shall observe this day for your generations, a *khoquth olam* (world-age lasting statute).⁵⁴

Therefore, the Khag of Phasekh is to continue in legal force outside of the handwritten Torah made at Mount Sinai until the end of our present world-age. This world-age does not pass away until our present heavens and earth pass away, which is when the written Torah, which gives us knowledge of sin, shall also be abolished.⁵⁵ Though nothing is said of the eternal *olam* or world-age that is to follow, this passage clearly demonstrates that this *khag* is still in force today, despite the existence of the handwritten Torah.

Another point of evidence comes with the story of Lot, the nephew and adopted son of Abraham.⁵⁶ The relevant event occurred on the day that Lot was delivered from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot, like Abraham,⁵⁷ is described as being a very wealthy man.⁵⁸ He dwelt for a considerable period of time with Abraham but eventually had to separate because of the large numbers of flock and herd animals each possessed.⁵⁹ As with Abraham, Lot is emphatically referred to as “justified (righteous).”⁶⁰ For Lot to be described as a justified man it can only mean that he followed the same path as his uncle, Abraham. Therefore, Lot also trusted and obeyed Yahweh, keeping Yahweh’s commandments, statutes, and laws as found both in the Adamic and Abrahamic covenants.

According to Scriptures, on the day prior to the destruction of Sodom and its neighboring cities, Abraham entertained the same angels that later appeared to Lot. He gave them, among other things, a morsel of bread and some freshly baked cakes to eat.⁶¹ The angels then left for Sodom and arrived in the city at ערב (*arab*; evening twilight).⁶² Seeing them at the city gate, Lot brought

⁵² Gen., 26:2–5; e.g. Exod., 12:14f, 17, 43, 13:3–10, 15:26, 16:28.

⁵³ See above Intro. to Part I, p. 26, n. 10.

⁵⁴ Exod., 12:14f, 17.

⁵⁵ Matt., 5:17f; cf., Isa., 66:22f; 2 Pet., 3:11–13; Rev., 21:1–8.

⁵⁶ Gen., 11:27, 31, 12:4f; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:7:1, “Now Abraham, having no legitimate son, adopted Lot, his brother Harran’s son.”

⁵⁷ That Abraham was a wealthy king see Gen., 12:4f, 13:1–12, 23:14–16, 24:10, 22, 34f, 52f; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:8:1. He also had an army of 318 men under his authority (Gen., 14:14; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:10:1).

⁵⁸ Gen., 12:5, 13:1–12. Lot had many servants of his own (Gen., 12:5, 13:7f).

⁵⁹ Gen., 11:30–32, 12:4f, 13:1, 5–12.

⁶⁰ 2 Pet., 2:7.

⁶¹ Gen., 18:5–8. That two of the same angels seen by Abraham went to Sodom and were seen by Lot see Gen., 18:1–19:3.

⁶² Gen., 19:1.

them into his house to spend the night's lodging: "At that time he made them a *בַּמִּשְׁתֶּה* (*mishteh*; banquet),⁶³ he baked UNLEAVENED BREAD and they ate."⁶⁴ Unleavened bread is called the "poor man's bread, as he could not afford to wait even twenty-four hours for it to leaven."⁶⁵ Therefore, it was called "the bread of the *עֲנִי* (*aniy*; afflicted)."⁶⁶ Before the angels had lain down to sleep for the night, the townspeople tried to make a sexual attack upon them. After this horrible experience, the angels warned Lot to flee from the coming disaster. The catastrophe occurred just after sunrise on the following morning.⁶⁷

Why would a very wealthy man serve unleavened bread at a sumptuous feast? Certainly, for such special guests as these angels, Lot could have spared some of his leavening. Indeed, why even mention that the bread at this feast meal was the unleavened type? These statements only make sense if Lot was celebrating the first day of the Khag of Unleavened Bread and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah took place on that date.

This conclusion is supported by other data. Just prior to the destruction of Sodom, Yahweh spoke to Abraham and had given him another covenant with further promises. On that same day Abraham circumcised the flesh of his foreskin and of all the males in his household.⁶⁸ Abraham is said to have been 99 years old at the time.⁶⁹ Yahweh also promised Abraham on that occasion that his wife Sarah would bear "to you *לְמוֹעֵד הַזֶּה* (*la-moad hazah*; toward this *moad*) in the next year" a son.⁷⁰ This phrase refers to a *moad* which was at hand and points to the birth of Abraham's son, Isaak, during the same *moad* when it reoccurred the next year.

Then, shortly after Abraham had been circumcised in the flesh, and on the day before the angels stayed the night with Lot, he had another conversation with the angel (Yahu Yahweh).⁷¹ In their conversation, this Yahweh told Abraham, "I will return to you according to the time of life, and behold a son shall be to Sarah your wife."⁷² The expression, "according to the time of life" literally means, "next year at this time."⁷³ Philo, for example, translates this passage to read, "I will return and come to you at this season next year."⁷⁴ The LXX similarly renders it, "I will return and come to you according to this season"; and the James Moffatt translation gives, "I will come back to you next spring."⁷⁵

⁶³ *בַּמִּשְׁתֶּה* (*mishteh*), "drink; by impl. drinking (the act); also (by impl.), a banquet or (gen.) feast" (SEC, Heb. #4961; HEL, p. 278).

⁶⁴ Gen., 19:1-3.

⁶⁵ JE, 8, p. 393.

⁶⁶ Deut., 16:3. The term *עֲנִי* (*aniy*) means, "depressed, in mind or circumstances . . . afflicted, humble, lowly, needy, poor" (SEC, Heb. #6040-6042); "afflicted, miserable, poor" (HEL, p. 197).

⁶⁷ Gen., 19:4-24.

⁶⁸ Gen., 17:1-27.

⁶⁹ Gen., 17:1, 24.

⁷⁰ Gen., 17:21. That *לְ* (*la*) means "to, towards . . . at, in" see HEL, p. 131.

⁷¹ That the angel who appeared to Abraham was Yahu Yahweh see TTY.

⁷² Gen., 18:10.

⁷³ Cf., 2 Kings, 4:16f, and see CHAL, p. 286f; HEL, p. 205; NJB, "I shall come back to you next year"; Thackeray, *Jos.*, iv, p. 97, n. d, "the Heb. is taken to mean 'a year hence'"; AB, "I will surely return to you when the season comes around."

⁷⁴ Philo, *Abr.*, 23, §132.

⁷⁵ NTB, loc. cit.

This statement connects the *moad* which would reoccur in the next year with this second conversation with Abraham, and with the feast meal given by Lot the next day, during which unleavened bread was served.

Next, based upon parabolic types used in Scriptures and upon the context of Abraham's fleshly circumcision, there would seem to be little doubt of a connection between the date of the fleshly circumcision of Abraham and the much later date for the fleshly circumcision of the Israelite men when they entered Kanaan. After 40 years of sojourning in the wilderness without being circumcised, the Israelites invaded the Promised Land. At the beginning of that invasion there was an en masse circumcision of all the Israelite males. This event took place on the 10th day of Abib, being four days before they kept their first Phasekh in the Promised Land.⁷⁶ Abib 10 is also the date that the Phasekh flock animals were set aside and held until the 14th to be slaughtered.⁷⁷

The fact that Abraham's "first conversation," at which time he was circumcised, occurred shortly before his "second conversation" with Yahweh, itself followed the next day by Lot's eating of unleavened bread, points to the 10th of Abib as the day of Abraham's fleshly circumcision. Therefore, the *moad* in which Isaak was to be born occurred the year after the date that Abraham had been circumcised, and was a reference to the Festival of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread.

In support of this construct we have two other items of evidence. First, when Isaak was born, Scriptures state that Sarah bore "a son to Abraham in his old age, לְמוֹעֵד (*la-moad*; to the appointed time) that *eloahim* had spoken with them,"⁷⁸ Abraham being 100 years old at the time.⁷⁹ The age of Abraham, going from 99 to 100, and the arrival of the *moad* of the next year indicates the passage of a year. Second, Jewish tradition reports their belief that Isaak was born on the day of Phasekh.⁸⁰ This combined evidence verifies that Lot had been keeping the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Indeed, Jewish traditions also hold that Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob all observed the Khag of Unleavened Bread (later called Phasekh).⁸¹ The book of Jubilees not only notes that Abraham observed the seven-day Khag of Unleavened Bread every year but connects Yahweh's command to have Abraham sacrifice his son Isaak (seen by early Christian writers as a prophetic type of the sacrifice of the messiah)⁸² with that event.⁸³ A *midrash* (commentary on Scriptures) in the Mekilta also connects the blood of the Phasekh lamb with "the blood of the sacrifice of

⁷⁶ Josh., 4:15–5:12, esp. 4:19.

⁷⁷ Exod., 12:1–6. As we shall later see, the 10th of Abib was also the date that the messiah arrived in Jerusalem to keep his last Phasekh, keeping himself out of the hands of the religious leaders until after midnight on the 14th of Abib, when he delivered himself to these rulers.

⁷⁸ Gen., 21:2.

⁷⁹ Gen., 21:5.

⁸⁰ R.Sh., 11a; LJ, 1, p. 261, 5, p. 245, n. 204.

⁸¹ LJ, 1, pp. 231, 261, 332; 5, p. 224, n. 89, p. 283, n. 87.

⁸² E.g. Melito, frag. 9 (Hall, *Melito*, pp. 74f); Irenaeus, *Ag. Her.*, 4:4. In full support of this connection, we might add, we find that the offering of Isaak took place on Mount Zion (Gen., 22:2, cf., 2 Chron., 3:1; also see Jub., 18:13; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:13:1–2, 7:13:4) the place where Yahushua, the lamb of Yahweh, was murdered.

⁸³ Jub., 18:1–19, esp. v. 18.

Isaak.”⁸⁴ The celebration of the festival was never seen in Jewish history as a later invention. It always existed.

Finally, the seven-day Festival of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread were kept by the Israelites in Egypt during the Exodus, an event that occurred prior to the handwritten Torah covenant made at Mount Sinai.⁸⁵ Even in the oldest literary record of Exodus, 12:21, which discusses the story of the Exodus, it “already presupposes the Passover.”⁸⁶ Because of this presupposition, there have been several theories advanced trying to explain its earlier origin, including a pre-Mosaic shepherd’s festival.⁸⁷ The fact that there has been from the time of Adam a seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread seems too simple for those bent on creating a much more primitive foundation.

It was during the event of the Exodus and in association with the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread that the first Phasekh sacrifice was commanded.⁸⁸ It was understood to be a one-time commanded offering, for when Israel left Egypt (the Exodus) there were no commanded sacrifices or burnt offerings, only free-will gifts.⁸⁹ Indeed, there was no command shortly after the Exodus to sacrifice a Phasekh victim in the handwritten covenant made at Mount Sinai.⁹⁰ Only after the Israelites had sinned against this marriage covenant by building the golden calf was the Phasekh victim reinstated as a commanded work of the handwritten Torah and under that agreement permanently attached to the Festival of Unleavened Bread.⁹¹

Moadi After Yahushua’s Death

Many Christians argue that the festivals and sacred days were eliminated when the works of the handwritten Torah were annulled, either at the death and resurrection of Yahushua or at the time of the famous Pentecost celebration that followed shortly thereafter.⁹² Contrary to this position, Scriptures teach that just the opposite is true. We find that the festivals and sacred days not only continued after the death and resurrection of the messiah but are to be observed in the future. If they are to exist in the future, it confirms their existence in the past, prior to the handwritten Torah, since nothing can be added to the conditions of the promises.⁹³ Remember, the festivals and sacred

⁸⁴ Mekilta, *Piskha*, 7:87f.

⁸⁵ Exod., 11:1–15:21.

⁸⁶ EJ, 13, p. 170; EEC, p. 119, referencing Exod., 12:21, states, “Moses’ way of speaking seems to indicate that the Pesach was already known to the Hebrews. Probably the tenth plague of Egypt and the Exodus simply happened to coincide with the festival—as it is said in Exodus 12:17 that the Exodus occurred on the first day of Unleavened Bread, implying the pre-existence of the feast.”

⁸⁷ THP, pp. 78–95; NSBD, 3, pp. 688–690.

⁸⁸ E.g. Exod., 12:1–11, 21–28. The statute for that day is given in Exod., 12:43–51.

⁸⁹ Jer., 7:22.

⁹⁰ Exod., 23:14–17. The expression “my sacrifice” in v. 18 is unconnected with the previous verses with regard to the festivals and nothing is said that you shall sacrifice on such and such a date or at any given time.

⁹¹ The Phasekh sacrifice was not permanently instituted until Exod., 34:25, and the other Phasekh sacrifices and offerings are added much later in Num., 28:16–25.

⁹² The idea of postponing the annulling of the Torah until Pentecost after the death and resurrection of Yahushua, and, as a result, Yahweh having responded by giving them the sacred *ruach* (Acts, 1:1–2:42). This view is not only without authority but is a total misunderstanding of what was annulled.

⁹³ Gal., 3:15–20; cf., John, 10:35, “the scripture cannot be broken.”

days are not listed among the four *dogmasin* which are not adverse to us. Therefore, if they are to continue they must belong to the statutes that pre-date the works of the handwritten Torah.

Phasekh and Unleavened Bread

Let us first look at the Khag of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread. The apostle Saul, writing many years after the death and resurrection of the messiah, and whose writings are accredited with the instructions for setting aside the works of the handwritten Torah, demonstrates that the Khag of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread continued after the resurrection of the messiah. In his first letter to the people of the nations living in Corinth, Greece, and in a direct reference to the Phasekh festival and days of unleavened bread, Saul writes:

Not good is your boasting. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, according as you are unleavened. For also messiah, our Phasekh, was sacrificed for us. So that WE SHOULD *ἐορτάζομεν* (*heortazomen*; CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL),⁹⁴ not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and of truth.⁹⁵

Not only is Saul commanding the uncircumcised Christians at Corinth to continue to keep this festival, but he is giving us the typology of the lamb and the unleavened bread that goes with this celebration.

Another example is found in the book of Acts. Here we read that Saul, while teaching among the Greeks, set sail from Philippi, in Macedonia (northern Greece) to go to Troas in Asia Minor, “after the days of unleavened bread.”⁹⁶ There was no need to mention his waiting until after the days of unleavened bread unless Saul kept the festival while dwelling among the non-Israelite peoples living in Philippi.

Some argue that Saul continued to keep Phasekh and the days of unleavened bread because he was a Jew. Yet this hypothesis makes even less sense. Only the Israelites were under the handwritten Torah. The nations were never subject to it and, in fact, had effectively been locked out of the inheritance with the Mount Sinai covenant.⁹⁷ Saul merely points out that with the advent of grace the wall between Israelites and non-Israelites had been torn down.⁹⁸ Saul also chastised those who would try to bring the nations under the works of the handwritten Torah.⁹⁹ Why then, if the festival was a work of the Torah,

⁹⁴ The word *ἐορτάζομεν* (*heortazomen*), a form of *ἐορτή* (*heorte*), means a “festival” (GEL, 1968, p. 601) and is the Greek term used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew word *חַג* (*khag*) (CS, 1, pp. 502, 503). Also see above Chap. 1, pp. 16f, n. 79.

⁹⁵ 1 Cor., 5:6–8.

⁹⁶ Acts, 20:5–12.

⁹⁷ In fact, Saul came to announce to the nations the good news that by grace they now had access to the inheritance (Acts, 26:15–18; Rom., 4:13–25, 11:1–28; Gal., 3:21–29; Eph., 1:11–18, 2:11–22, 3:1–6).

⁹⁸ Eph., 2:11–22.

⁹⁹ E.g. Acts, 15:1–10; Gal., 4:21.

would Saul command the Corinthians, a non-Jewish people, to “keep the *khag*” of Phasekh? And if Saul taught that no one is now under the Torah, why would he continue to observe the days of unleavened bread? These details prove that this festival was a condition under the Covenants of Promise and not a work of the Torah of Moses.

Saul gives us still other charges to continue the festival until the messiah returns,¹⁰⁰ as does the messiah in the synoptic texts.¹⁰¹ Yet before we can fully utilize these items of evidence, we must first prove that the famous Last Supper of the messiah was the Phasekh meal. Therefore, we shall wait to explore this additional evidence at the appropriate time in our study.¹⁰²

The future observance of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread is also proven by the prophet Ezekiel. Writing in the 25th year of his exile (during the sixth century B.C.E.),¹⁰³ Ezekiel confirms that the seven-day Khag of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread will be celebrated in the future. He writes that at the time when Yahweh is living in the city of Jerusalem,¹⁰⁴ and after all twelve tribes of Israel have been returned to the Promised Land,¹⁰⁵ there will be a new Temple of Yahweh in the Promised Land.¹⁰⁶ From under this new Temple a river will flow from Jerusalem to the Salt Sea, which will then have fresh water and fish.¹⁰⁷ Obviously, all of these events have not yet occurred. At that time, he writes, “you shall have the Phasekh, a *khag* of seven days of eating unleavened bread.”¹⁰⁸

Finally, that the observance of the Festival of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread was a requirement after the death and resurrection of the messiah is also confirmed by the continuance of the celebration by all the early Christian assemblies.¹⁰⁹ It is true that there arose a dispute in later centuries over exactly how this celebration should be kept, but there was no disagreement that it must be observed in some form. Even under the present Roman Catholic system of Easter, the taking of the Eucharist, and Communion, Phasekh has in some way been continued.

Other Festivals and Sacred Days

There is also substantial evidence that the other festivals and sacred days of Yahweh continued after the resurrection of the messiah and are to be observed well into the future. For example, the apostle Paul (Saul) makes mention of the Fast day (Day of Atonement) during his ministry among the nations.¹¹⁰ Next, not only was the day of Pentecost (the Khag of Weeks) celebrated by the followers of the messiah shortly after his death and resurrection,¹¹¹ but the apostle Saul

¹⁰⁰ 1 Cor., 11:20–34.

¹⁰¹ Mark, 14:22–25; Matt., 26:26–29; Luke, 22:14–20.

¹⁰² See FSDY, 2.

¹⁰³ Ezek., 40:1.

¹⁰⁴ Ezek., 48:34.

¹⁰⁵ Ezek., 48:1–33.

¹⁰⁶ Ezek., 41:1–44:14.

¹⁰⁷ Ezek., 47:1–12.

¹⁰⁸ Ezek., 45:21.

¹⁰⁹ See the discussion below in Intro.: Sect. II.

¹¹⁰ Acts, 27:9.

¹¹¹ Acts, 2:1.

continued to observe Pentecost many years later. Saul's own records prove that he observed one Pentecost in Ephesus and another at Jerusalem.¹¹² Pentecost was also observed for centuries by the early Christian assemblies.¹¹³

The seven-day Khag of Tabernacles will also continue well into the future. Ezekiel, for example, reports that this festival will be practiced at Jerusalem in the kingdom of the messiah after his return.¹¹⁴ In association with this thought, the book of Zechariah notes that after Yahweh begins his reign in Jerusalem "all the nations" left in the world shall keep the Khag of Tabernacles. Those nations that fail to do so shall be struck with a plague.¹¹⁵ The fact that all nations will be required to keep the Khag of Tabernacles fully demonstrates the universality of keeping this and the other *khagi*.

The weekly Sabbath day likewise continued after the death of the messiah. The apostle Saul, for example, kept "every Sabbath" day with both Jewish and non-Israelite Christian converts.¹¹⁶ It was originally observed by all of the early Christian assemblies, even including those at Rome and Alexandria, the first to break from this practice.¹¹⁷ The Sabbath day will even be observed in the days of the Great Tribulation, which occurs just prior to the messiah's return.¹¹⁸ Ezekiel also informs us that the gates to the future Temple that exists in Jerusalem during the earthly reign of the messiah will be opened "on the Sabbath day" and on the "day of the new moon."¹¹⁹ Saul exhorts members in the early assemblies following Yahushua not to be judged for their share in a "festival, or new moon, or Sabbath."¹²⁰ Ezekiel adds, as confirmation, that there shall be Temple services after the return of the messiah "on the *khagim* (festivals) and on the *moadim* (appointed times)."¹²¹ These comments about the observance of the new moon are important, for the moon is used to determine the *moadi*.¹²² There is no reason to mention the new moons if the *moadi* were not to continue.

¹¹² Acts, 20:16; 1 Cor., 16:8.

¹¹³ See below Chap. XXII.

¹¹⁴ Ezek., 45:25.

¹¹⁵ Zech., 12:16–21.

¹¹⁶ Acts, 13:14, 42–44, 16:13, 17:1–4, 18:4.

¹¹⁷ Socrates Schol., 5:22, notes that even in the early fifth century C.E. almost all of the Christian assemblies, except for those at Rome and Alexandria, kept the weekly Sabbath day. He adds that Rome and Alexandria "ceased" this observance after they began another custom (i.e., they once had kept it themselves but discontinued the practice). In time the Roman Catholic Church suppressed the weekly Sabbath day in favor of the Sovereign's day (Sunday). For a complete discussion of the Sabbath day see FSDY, 3.

¹¹⁸ Matt., 24:20.

¹¹⁹ Ezek., 46:1, 3.

¹²⁰ Col., 2:16.

¹²¹ Ezek., 46:11. Ezekiel also mentions the establishment of various sacrifices and Temple services. These new rituals will come about as the result of another covenant that is required to be made with the fleshly Israelites who return to the Promised Land after the second coming of the messiah. This agreement has nothing to do with the previous covenant (the Old Covenant) made at Mount Sinai, which the Israelites transgressed, or with the New Covenant, which is to be made only with the elect of the First Resurrection who will be quickened into eternal life. It is a temporary agreement made with mortal, fleshly Israelites to permit them a right to remain in the Promised Land. This agreement will remain in force until just prior to the general resurrection (the Second Resurrection). At that time, the last fleshly humans, including those of Israelite heritage, will die. When these last deaths occur, the covenant containing the new rituals will pass into disuse. The dying off of fleshly humans will then be followed by the general resurrection and the judgment (Heb., 9:27).

¹²² Ps., 104:19.

Conclusion

According to the evidence, it is clear that the festivals and sacred days commanded as statutes in the Scriptures are Yahweh's *moadi*. They are not Jewish holy days meant only for those of the Jewish faith and should not be so construed. It is proper to conclude that the observance of the festivals and sacred days are derived from an *olam* (world-age) lasting statute which are a condition of the Covenants of Promise (Torah of Trust). They apply to all mankind as conditions for receiving the eternal inheritance by grace under the Torah of Trust.

Yahweh's festivals and sacred days were in force from the very beginning of man's existence. They were kept, for example, by the justified patriarchs (e.g., Abraham, Lot, Isaac, and Jacob), who lived long before the handwritten covenant was agreed to with Israel at Mount Sinai. Abraham kept these statutes while he was under trust. The Phasekh and the weekly Sabbath day are even specifically said to have been kept by the Israelites under instructions of Yahweh before they came to Mount Sinai. The apostle Saul kept these days himself long after the death and resurrection of the messiah and instructed those from among the nations to observe the Phasekh.

The prophets tell us that the festivals and sacred days of Yahweh are to be kept well into the far distant future. Not only are celebrations like the Khag of Tabernacles to be observed by the messiah during his millennial reign at Jerusalem but those nations not celebrating that festival shall be cursed. These *moadi* shall continue as a condition of the eternal inheritance until heaven and earth pass away, when the wicked are destroyed in the lake of fire (i.e., the Gehenna fire). At that time the eternal inheritance will have been dispensed to all those remaining to be saved. The role of the *moadi* as a shadow of coming things will have been fulfilled and even the handwritten Torah, which gives us the knowledge of sin, shall pass away.

Accordingly, for all those following Yahweh and seeking to be justified to receive the eternal inheritance under grace, by means of trust rather than by means of the fleshly works of the written Torah, it is necessary that we too continue the proper observance of Yahweh's festivals and sacred days. With this understanding in mind, our efforts must now shift to answering new questions:

- When exactly do we observe them?
- How are they to be kept?
- What are their purpose?

To this effort we dedicate the remainder of our study.