

Jewish Feasts 2020: The Mystery of The Feast of First Fruits!

Text: Malachi 3:8-12 ~ Amplified

Intro: This sermon has taken some interesting turns that were quite unexpected. I think it's important to take time to look at the different aspects of what the Lord is saying. I must say, I have seen some things in the scriptures that I have never seen before! The revelations the Lord has given are quite profound, so I think it's worth taking time to see what the Lord is saying without rushing over things. The time from Purim to the ending of the Passover Feasts has brought a significant time of change as the coronavirus has begun to wane and people in the world are beginning to turn to the Messiah for hope!

Comment: Last week I shared about the Passover which had to do with a year-old lamb without blemish that God instructed the Israelites to kill in the evening before their deliverance from Egypt. The Passover lamb was going to help give them the strength to leave Egypt and then enter the wilderness. They were to take the blood of the lamb and smear its blood on the mantle and the sides of the main door of their home, so that the death angel would pass over them and not kill the first born of their family. There's also another interesting aspect that had to do with lambs that's found in the book of Exodus and is known as "The Mystery of The Tamid!"

Exodus 29:38-39 ~ Amplified ³⁸ Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old shall be offered day by day continually. ³⁹ One lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb in the evening.

TOR Videos 2020: [The Mystery of the Tamid](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzaigkKFN0w&list=PLlrcKa_a4rhy2-R1Jbkuwc_9kXAcFNAP&index=1) www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzaigkKFN0w&list=PLlrcKa_a4rhy2-R1Jbkuwc_9kXAcFNAP&index=1

Note: If the Tamid means continual, daily, perpetual, always and forever, then we understand that Jesus is our Tamid. He is the One who will always be there for each of us and will be our continuous answer, every day, always and forever because Jesus is our Messiah!

Comment: After the Feast of Passover came the Feast of Unleavened Bread which was quickly followed by the Feast of First Fruits! One Messianic Jewish teacher explained that the Feast of First Fruits is all about bringing in the

very first grain harvest of the fields & giving it to God. God told the Israelites to give and to dedicate to Him the first of everything they had, their crops, their animals, their money and even their children. God told them over and over, "The first that opens the womb, or the first grains harvested, belong to Me," and we are to treat them as such. The "first" always belongs to God, but God didn't stop there. He created a specific day, called First Fruits, or the Feast of First Fruits to commemorate that the first of everything belonged to Him.

Commentary: Hebrew Roots: The year Jesus was crucified, the Passover sacrifice including the crucifixion occurred on a Wednesday. The Bible states in Matthew 12:40 that just as Jonah was in the belly of a great fish for three days and nights, so Jesus would be in the heart of the earth for three days and nights, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights; or Thursday, Friday and Saturday days. That leads us right to the end of the Sabbath and the beginning of the day after the Sabbath or the day of First Fruits! Jesus, our Messiah, was raised on the Sabbath and then, as the day of First Fruits began, He raised the First Fruits saints whose graves were opened at His crucifixion and presented them in the Heavenly Temple to the Living God. This was literally the fulfillment of the Feast of First Fruits!

Matthew 27:51-53 ~ NKJV ⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, ⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; ⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

Note: Originally, God stipulated that on the first day of the week after the Passover Sabbath, they were to bring in a tithe of their first harvest as an offering to the Lord. They were to bring in this grain before they even ate any portion of the newly harvested grain. It would have been easy for them to take the new grain and enjoy it for themselves, but God told them "No, the first harvested grains must be dedicated to Me!" This isn't just about "Giving to God," it's about putting Him first in our lives and remembering that He gave us everything that we have. When we honor God, we also are honored.

Comment: Barley is the first grain to ripen in the region of Israel. Barley is almost drought resistant and is known as the poor-man's-bread flour. Thus, Barley is the first fruit to be brought before God. ^(speaks of humility) A sheaf of this grain is then waved in the Lord's presence followed by an unblemished male lamb being sacrificed. This gift would then be given to the Lord every year on this day. Jesus was our very "First Fruit" from the dead. He wasn't the first to be raised from the dead physically, as He had already raised Lazarus from the dead, but Jesus was the first one raised from the dead to be presented sin free before God in heaven.

Note: Only perfection can enter God's presence. Jesus rose to heaven after His resurrection and went before God's throne, presenting Himself as the official fulfillment of the Feast of First Fruits. Jesus also went before God as the perfect sacrifice to open the way for those who believe in Him to enter God's throne room. Jesus was the unblemished lamb and the poor-man's-bread flour at the same time. His perfection, mixed with Him being the first of those raised from the dead to bow before God's throne, made Him exactly what God had intended Him to be, the completion of First Fruits.

Point: We can now become God's Temple and experience a personal relationship with Him. Now we can have intimacy with Him that refines us into what He created us to be. God modeled the earthly Temple after the heavenly one and now that Temple is inside each one of us and the sacrifices that were once made in the physical Temple in Jerusalem are now placed before God within our own hearts! Jesus is our High Priest and He helps us place our sins on the altar, covered by His blood and then He burns it as an offering pleasing to God!

TOR Videos 2020: Why God Must Be First: www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKywETrwjgA&list=PLlrcKa_a4rhy2-R1Jbkuwc_9kXAcSFNAp&index=2

Proverbs 11:24-25 ~ New Living Translation ²⁴ Give freely and become wealthier; be stingy and lose everything. ²⁵ The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.

Definition: **Stingy:** Not wanting to give or spend money, small minded, self-serving, tight, sparing or scant in giving or spending; cheap, chintzy, closefisted, mean, miserly, penny pinching, uncharitable, or tightfisted.

Definition: Generous: Characterized by a noble and kind giving spirit; generous, magnanimous, marked by abundance, bigheartedness, charitable, bountiful, freehearted, openhanded, unselfish and unsparing.

Definition: Greedy: Covetous, grasping, materialistic or the inordinate desire to possess wealth, goods, or objects of abstract value with the intention to keep for one's self, far beyond the dictates of basic survival and comfort. It's applied to a markedly high desire for and the pursuit of wealth, status, and power. An inordinate desire to acquire or possess more than one needs. The purpose of greed is to deprive others of basic survival, future opportunities, comfort, or to obstruct them from a measure of competitive advantage. "Given to Greed" literally means, "Given to Filth."

✚ Therefore, I would like to speak on:

The Mystery of The Feast of First Fruits 2020!

Text: Malachi 3:8-12 ~ Amplified ⁸ Will a man rob or defraud God? Yet you rob and defraud Me. But you say, in what way do we rob or defraud You? You have withheld your tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are cursed with the curse, for you are robbing Me, even this whole nation. ¹⁰ Bring all the tithes, the whole tenth of your income into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now by it, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows or the floodgates of heaven for you and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. ¹¹ And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine drop its fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord of hosts. ¹² And all nations shall call you happy and blessed, for you shall be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts.

Definition: Floodgates: A gate that can be opened or closed to shut out or to release a body of water. Figuratively, it refers to windows or floodgates of the sky which God controls. In general, it refers to God's ability to provide and release an abundance of anything including the windows through which God pours judgments or blessings from on high. A window or a floodgate is the last restraint holding back an outpouring of something powerful!

Genesis 7:11-12 Amplified ¹³ In the year 600 of Noah's life, in the seventeenth day of the second month, that same day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up and burst forth, and the windows and floodgates of the heavens were opened. ¹² And it rained upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

Point: It's worth noting that the Latter-Day great outpouring of the Spirit of God is starting to begin! The first outpouring was at the time of Pentecost and now God is opening the floodgates of Heaven for the second time so that the Latter-Rain will fall on thirsty and barren hearts and souls making them fruitful! The result will be the greatest harvest of souls in human history that will take us to the rapture of the church and the passing of the gospel baton from the Gentile believers to the Jewish believers! Since some of the recent events involved Purim and Passover observances, then this coming Pentecost or Feast of Shavuot on May 28-30, may also hold some prophetic fulfillments! The Feast of First Fruits had to do with the first grain harvest, or the barley harvest, and the Feast of Shavuot has to do with the last grain harvest or wheat harvest! Could the rapture be closer than we think?

Luke 3:15-18 NLT ¹⁵ Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered their questions by saying, "I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire." ¹⁸ John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

Comment: Although I would have to say that most people here are tithers, I felt I needed to firm up the perimeters of our understanding when it comes to tithing and giving, if for no other reason than to equip you to bring some clarity to other believers. In recent years, I have been amazed at some of the ideas that people have had regarding tithing. Certainly, the words: "A

carnal mind will always seek to justify what a Godly conscience says is wrong" is readily applied when individuals try to justify to themselves acceptable reasons to withhold their tithes and their offerings from honoring God and His Word!

Point: Our salvation is not the result of our works, but it is the cause of our works. In other words, "You are not made righteous by your works, but you do good works because you are righteous!"

Matthew 7:21-23 ~ New Living Translation ²¹ "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' ²³ But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

Point: Those who break God's Laws are those who operate outside of God's Word. They will not enter the joy of the Lord on the day of judgement unless they repent and put their faith into action by obeying Gods Word through a heart that wants to please and to obey God's Word. This is Mitzvah! Remember a Mitzvah is an understanding that every commandment is an opportunity to build a relationship with God. In the Hebrew, Mitzvah is translated either good deeds, good works or doing what's right, and often refers to tithing and charitable giving!

Matthew 10:39 ~ NKJV "Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."

Quote: "In a kingdom where the King is a servant, losing your life becomes the only way to find it and being generous and obeying God's Word is the only way to prosper. This is a startling message to a world focused on self-promotion, self-protection and self-absorption."

Close: Every Head Bowed and Every Eye Closed!