

## ML401 The Doctrine of Eternal Perfection

After Moses and Aaron led Israel out of Egypt, they journeyed to Mt. Sinai. There, the LORD descended and spoke Ten Commandments directly to the people. Afterward, Moses gave them a series of laws which they were to keep in the land of Canaan.

Among these laws are a series of seven sequential, yearly feasts. These appear in order in the 23rd chapter of Leviticus. The sixth feast is the focus of this lesson:

1 The Passover	born of God
2 Unleavened Bread	mind of Christ
3 Firstfruits	new birth
4 Weeks	born of the Holy Spirit
5 Trumpets	Spiritual Light
6 Atonement	enter the priesthood
7 Tabernacles / Ingathering	minister the Gospel

The first 6 of these 7 feasts reveal 6 sequential-steps from sin to perfection in Christ Jesus. As the list shows, after becoming “one with God” via the At-one-ment, the mature disciple enters the field of labor.

The blood of the Passover pays our sin debts. Unleavened bread shows the meekness of our humbled minds. And the feast of firstfruits teaches the born-again experience. These deliver us from the bondage of sin.

You won’t find these written in plain speech anywhere in the scriptures. God hid the gospel of the kingdom and only reveals its hiding places to faithful students of the scriptures. This is also true of the next three yearly feasts.

In the Feast of Weeks [Pentecost], God’s Spirit enters the human spirit and shines light into the soul. In the Feast of Trumpets, the Spirit shines on the unclean that entered the soul while we were in sin. And in the Feast of Atonement, we “put off the unclean” and “put on the clean” which conforms us to the fulness of the figurative image of Christ [Ge 1:26].

Ready to remove a mote from our brother’s eye and to shine the gospel light to sinners, we embrace Step-7 and minister the Gospel to those at home and abroad.

Yet another point is worth noting. A disciple can reach perfection in one area of life but still be imperfect in another area. This is by God’s design:

*De 7:22: And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.*

There are many details regarding how these feasts worked in the OT. And the interpretations of these feasts work to form their NT doctrines. If you don’t know these details, you must be extra careful with NT scriptures less you corrupt these doctrines.

Another danger lurks within the NT scriptures. Scholars must use great care to avoid false doctrine. This care incorporates special rules; some positive, others negative. One rule to always follow is this: “Never interpret a scripture outside of its text.”

Love covers a multitude of sins, and Grace and Mercy extend to the ends of the world. But false doctrines will bring judgment on those who teach them:

*Jas 3:1: My brethren, be not many masters, [teachers] knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.*

Every year, the Priests and Levites offered blood sacrifices according to the laws that governed the feasts. One of these offerings atoned for the sins of Israel.

However, this offering was good for only one year. Why? The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins [Heb. 10:4]. Every year God remembered them again, not for the current year only, but for the sins of all past years. Hebrews 10:1-14 covers this doctrine in detail.

The Priests offered the same sacrifice every year until the “body” came that could take away sins [Heb. 10:7-10]. Read Heb. 10:9: “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”

Clearly, the scriptures from Heb. 10:1 through 10:14 is one text. The theme does not change from beginning to end. And the end includes all concepts before it. Therefore, if you interpret the end without including the complete text, you depart from the rule and take Heb. 10:14 out of its text:

*Heb 10:14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Thus, V14 does not teach “Once saved, always saved;” it teaches that the one offering of the body of Jesus suffices to wash away all sins, never to be remembered again.

However, this “one offering” takes away past sins, but not future sins. Disciples who sin after repentance must return to the Cross and receive forgiveness each time their conscience convicts them of sin.

The Lord will “impute” your sins, although He allows time for repentance before charging your account. Because of their unbelief, Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until all but two of that first-born generation died. During those 40 years, the people played the role of the OT church and gave us the record of “The Church in the Wilderness” [Ac 7:38].

With Aaron and Moses dead, Joshua, led Israel into the land of Canaan. The Book of Joshua, in which Joshua represents the Holy Spirit, parallels the NT church age on the west side of the river Jordan.

## ML401 The Doctrine of Eternal Perfection

Then Israel celebrated the afore mentioned feasts on their appointed dates, and on the 50th day after Firstfruits they celebrated the "Feast of Weeks."

Then on the 1st day of the 7th month they celebrated the Feast of Trumpets. And on the 10th day of this same month, they celebrated the Feast of Atonement — the focus of this lesson.

On that special day, the High Priest took blood and entered the "Holy of Holies." This blood atoned for the sins of Israel, but this atonement was good for one year only.

Each year afterward, the High Priest repeated this ritual with the same offering for the same sins. The Law required this because the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin [Heb 10:1-4].

Now, these yearly blood offerings were not necessary after the cross. Christ's blood took away not just Israel's sins, but the sins of the entire world. But we must understand how this works. When a person repents, Christ's blood cleanses the conscience of sin from that time backward. If the person sins again, he or she must repent again.

Scriptures that explain how Christ's sacrifice replaced the bodies and blood of those bulls and goats are in Heb 10:5-10. Then, the next three verses [Heb 10:11-13] lead to Heb 10:14:

Heb 10:14: *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

This verse teaches that Christ's blood washes all your sins away with one offering. It contrasts the many yearly offerings under the Law to the one offering that abolished the letter of the Law. Therefore, this verse does not teach, "Once saved, always saved."

Again, before the Cross, the High Priest reappeared every year for the same sins. Why? The blood of animals can not purge the conscious of sin. The scapegoat that bears our sins into the wilderness is figurative of Christ taking our sins into the sea of forgetfulness.

Now, if you sin after Christ has cleansed you, you must appear before Him a second time. However, this appearance has nothing to do with the sins that Christ has already cleansed. This appearance is for the sins committed after your first cleansing.

And if you sin 490 separate times more [Mt 18:21-22], then you must repent 490 times more. Yet Christ does not return to His Cross; His first and only offering is good for your entire life. His blood did in one offering what the blood of bulls and goats could not do for the same offerings year after year.