

Celebration

Long Beach Alliance Church • May 13th, 2012 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

~Deuteronomy 16:16 (NASB)

1) Redemption Through Sin, Forgiveness, Renewal

- A) As God's chosen people work out their salvation (cf. Philippians 2:12-13) in relationship with God, we experience the unfortunately "normal" process of redemption.
- B) The unfortunate aspect of redemption always begins with our rebellion against God. Despite being saved from slavery in Egypt (salvation), Israel sinned against God by worshipping the golden calf (Exodus 32:1-18).
- C) Sin always causes separation between God and His people, and the Golden Calf rebellion was no different. The sin of the people brought the wrath of God (32:7-10), and shattered the relationship between the people and God (32:19).

- D) Moses immediately intercedes, destroying the golden calf (32:20) and delivering God's difficult judgment against the leaders of the rebellion (32:25-29).
- E) Despite Moses' intercession and offer of atonement for the sins of the people (32:30-35), God's wrath remains (33:1-3). Despite the sincerity of Moses' leadership, the people had not repented. Forgiveness comes through personal repentance, not through your church or leaders!
- F) Once the people repent authentically though (33:4-11), God relents from his wrath and forgives Israel, promising His presence and a restored relationship (33:12-23).
- G) God doesn't just leave His people stuck in repentance, renewing His relationship with us and completing the redemptive process in restoration (34:1-17).

2) A Life Of Celebration

- A) Renewal immediately leads to a lifestyle of regular celebration amongst God's people (34:18-26). God re-establishes a pattern for celebration and worship!
- B) First, all of the people were to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread (34:18), which began with Passover (34:19-20) and concluded with a week of celebration. The unleavened bread was a reminder of Israel's separation from sin, and the haste with which they departed Egypt. This was a celebration of deliverance by God in all of life!
- C) Second, the people were to celebrate the Feast of Weeks (Feast of Harvest/Firstfruits, 34:22), observed seven weeks from Passover (NT Pentecost). This feast celebrated the abundance of harvest and the land God provided.
- D) Third, the people were to celebrate the Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles), at the end of the harvest time. There were large offerings for God, and the people lived in makeshift homes, a reminder of Israel's time in the desert and God's abundant provision. This was Israel's pattern of worship and celebration -- three festivals for God's chosen people!