

Arlington Church of Christ

Sunday Night Bible Study

Special Holy Days-3

In last week's lesson we looked at the Passover celebration and the significance of the statements by Jesus about the bread representing his body and the cup representing his blood and how it tied into the Passover celebration ritual.

Then we saw the feast of Pentecost and the start of the church on that first day of the week.

The third festival that all the Jewish men were to attend was the feast of Tabernacles or the feast of Ingathering at the time of the grape harvest. The visitors to Jerusalem were expected to be involved in the grape harvest and then to construct temporary places to stay during the festival.

The feast of Tabernacles was a time of thanksgiving for all the blessings that the Lord had given them. By New Testament times, tents for the festival were made of palm leaves and placed on rooftops, in courtyards, in gardens, and wherever people could build them



Some priests would go out every day of the feast to the pool of Siloam and get a pitcher of water water which would be carried around the altar once a day for six days, then seven times on the seventh day (See Josh 6: 3-4) and then poured on the steps of the altar to flow out representing the idea that the Jewish faith would flow out to the world outside.

Joshua 6:3-4

March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. ⁴ Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets.

John 7:37-43

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified



I can imagine Jesus standing near the altar as the water flows down the steps and into the courtyard – the people thinking about that water representing the spreading of God’s Word– and then hearing Jesus say: “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

⁴⁰ On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.” ⁴¹ Others said, “He is the Messiah.” Still others asked, “How can the Messiah come from Galilee? ⁴² Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?” ⁴³ Thus the people were divided because of Jesus.

Remember what Jesus had told the Samaritan woman at the well - “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
The words and teachings of Jesus are Spirit and they will be the source of life for those who follow and obey Him.

Four large candelabras were set up in the temple. They were filled with oil and had wicks made from used clothing of the priests. Everyone in the city could see the light from the flaming torches symbolizing the truth of God.



Other Festivals

Festival of Trumpets There were two other festivals that occurred during the same month as the Feast of Tabernacles. The first was the festival of Trumpets. At the beginning of each month, trumpets were blown (Num 10:10), but the month of Tishri was special because it was the beginning of a new civil year. **Ram's horns (shofars) were blown throughout the day and no work was to be done. The blowing of the trumpets was to cause God to hear and remember His covenant, to frighten Satan, and to cause Israel to repent.**



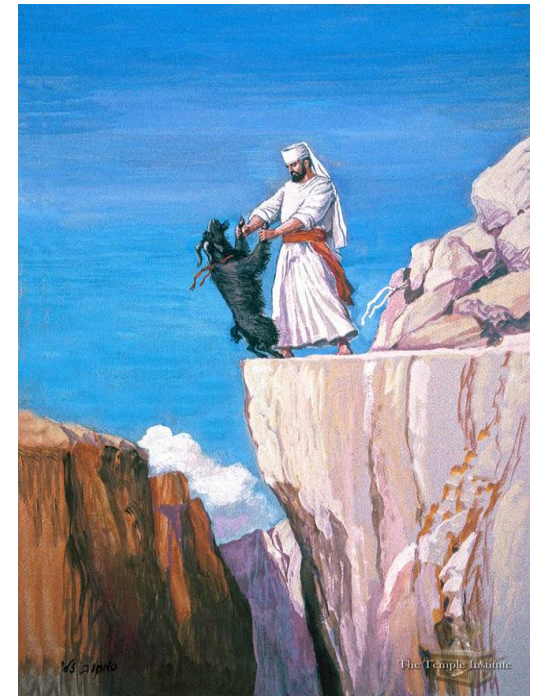
Day of Atonement

The 10th of Tishri (Sept/Oct) was the climax of the Jewish religious year. While sacrifices had been made all year, the Day of Atonement was 'to keep the way open to God for another year'. Only the High priest could be involved in what was to be done.

The High Priest was kept awake all night, and then in the morning was dressed in white robes. He confessed the sins of all the people with his hand on the neck of a bull that was then killed and the blood collected. Two goats were brought and lots were cast to choose one to be God's and one to be the people's. God's goat was then killed and its blood mixed with that of the bull. Then alone, the High priest took incense and coals from the altar of sacrifice and went into the Most Holy Place. The incense was burned and the smoke filled the place. In the Old Testament, the 'mercy seat' (top of the Ark of the Covenant) was then sprinkled with the blood. But in New Testament times, there was no Ark so everything in the Most Holy place was sprinkled with the blood.

The people's goat (scapegoat) then had **the High Priest's hands placed on it and symbolically took the sins of the people. It was then lead to the desert and released to symbolize the taking away of sin.**

The carcasses of the sacrificed animals were then disposed of outside the city walls.



Hebrews 9:7-14 But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance. ... ⁹ This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper. ¹⁰ They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order.

¹¹ But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

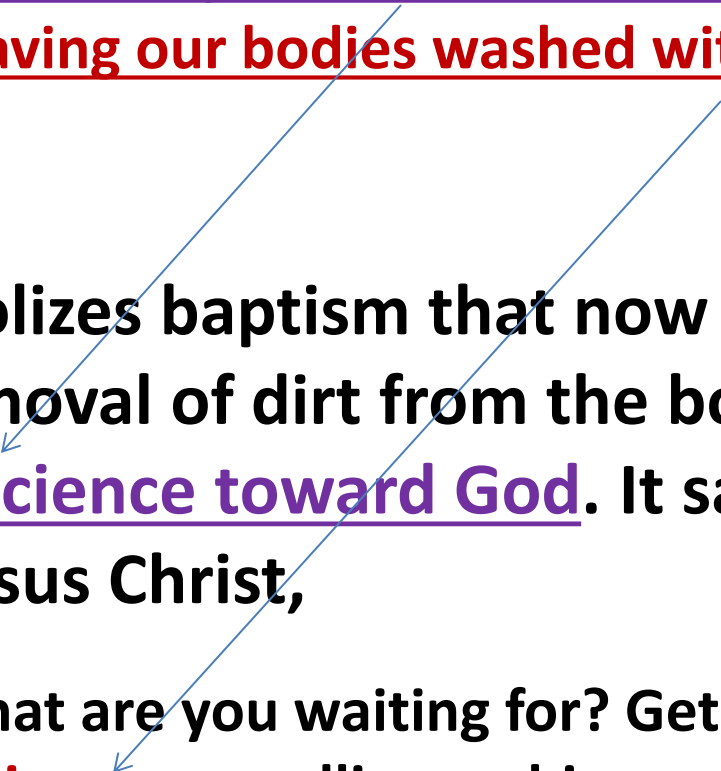
¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 10:19-22

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

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The diagram consists of two blue arrows. One arrow originates from the underlined phrase 'having our bodies washed with pure water' in the Hebrews passage and points to the underlined phrase 'pledge of a clear conscience toward God' in the 1 Peter passage. The second arrow originates from the underlined phrase 'wash your sins away' in the Acts passage and points to the same 'pledge of a clear conscience toward God' phrase in the 1 Peter passage.

1 Peter 3:21

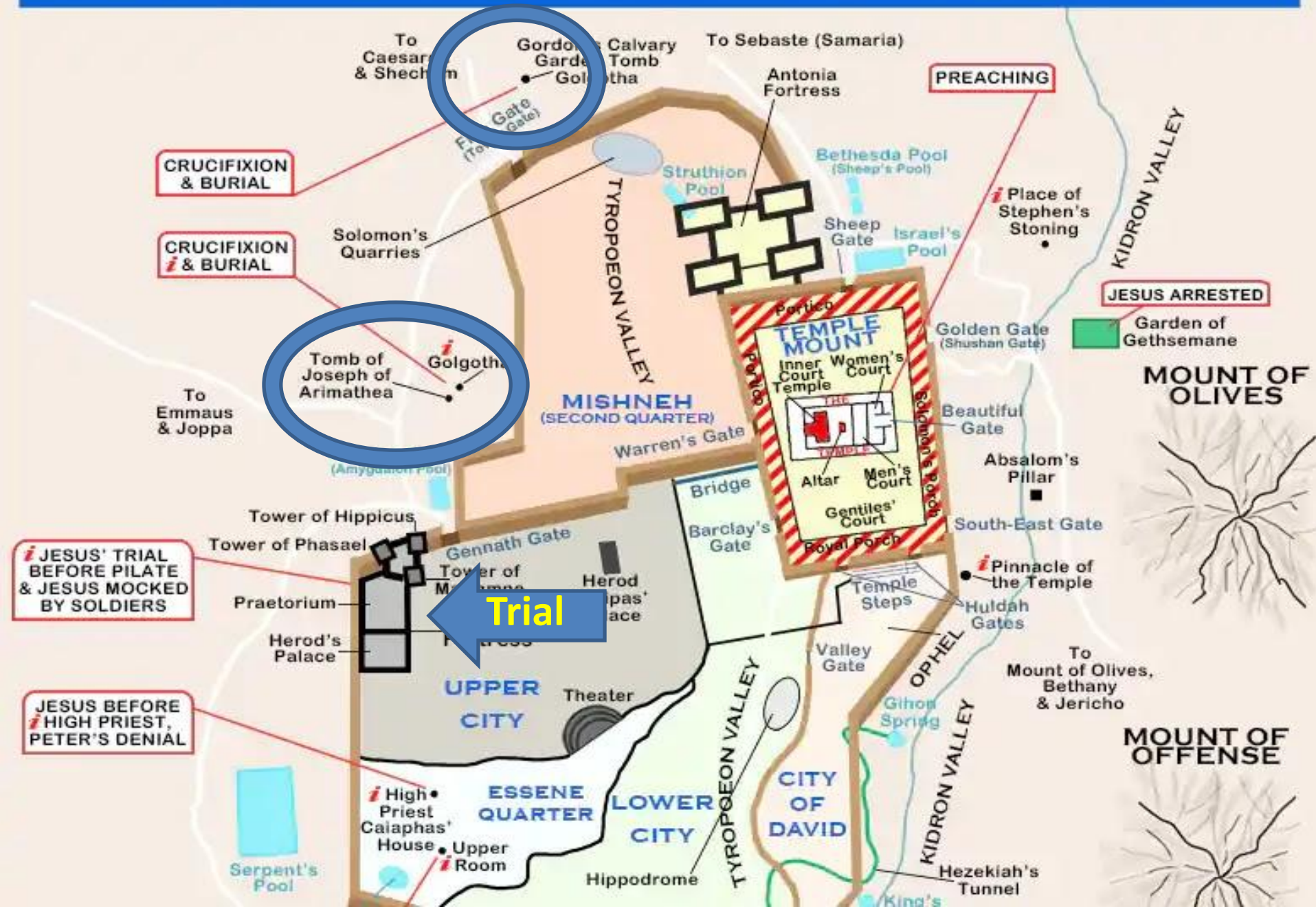
and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

Hebrews 13:11-12

The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.

JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF JESUS



Additional Festival

Purim

Purim was celebrated from the 13th to the 15th of Adar (Feb/March) to commemorate the time when Esther saved the Jews from extinction during the reign of the Persian King Ahasuerus. **During the festival, the book of Esther was read and Haman, the villain, was booed and Mordecai, the hero, was cheered.** This festival was kept in New Testament times, but is not celebrated today.



Festival of Lights

Celebrates the time when Judas Maccabaeus drove the Syrians out of The country in 164 B.C. and then purified the temple. Every household was to bring a candle to remember the legend that when the temple was entered there was only a one days supply of oil for the golden lamp stand, but the oil miraculously lasted eight days.

The festival began on the 25th of Chislev (November/December). This today is called Hanukkah and is celebrated from Dec 12th to Dec 20th

This festival coincided with other winter festivals which relieved the darker times of the year.

