



DAYS *of* HOPE

SPRING FEASTS DEVOTIONAL

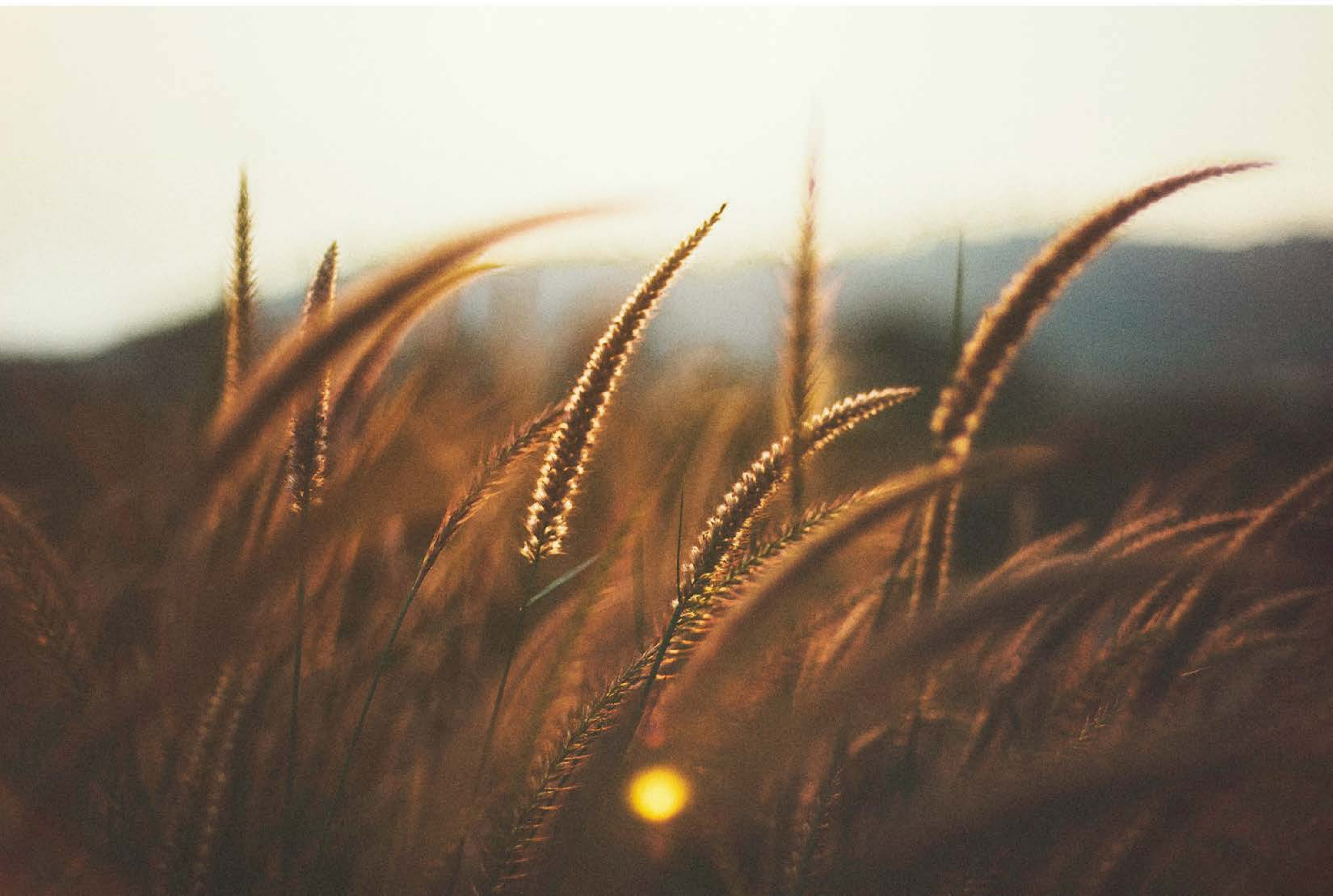
WRITTEN BY
GENE BINDER

SPRING FEASTS

an introduction

THIS WEEKLY DEVOTION CORRESPONDS TO THE THEME OF WAITING FOUND IN THE SPRING FEASTS. JUST AS JESUS COMMANDED THE DISCIPLES TO WAIT IN THE UPPER ROOM FOR THE BIRTH OF SOMETHING BIG THAT WOULD TAKE PLACE ON SHAVUOT (THE FEAST OF WEEKS), THE SUBJECT OF THESE DEVOTIONALS IS ABOUT WAITING IN EXPECTATION OF SOMETHING BIG TO TAKE PLACE IN OUR LIVES. WAITING IS NOT TYPICALLY AN EASY TASK, BUT AS THE SCRIPTURES SAY, "THOSE WHO WAIT UPON THE LORD SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH." THESE DEVOTIONALS WILL END ON SHAVUOT, BUT MAY IT BE THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING NEW IN YOUR LIFE.

BUT FIRST, AN INTRODUCTION...





fulfillment and
FORESHADOWS

GOD GAVE HIS SPIRITUAL FAMILY 7 ANNUAL FEASTS TO OBSERVE. 4 OF THE FEASTS TAKE PLACE IN THE SPRING AND 3 TAKE PLACE IN THE FALL. TAKE NOTE THAT THEY ARE A MYSTERIOUS MIX OF SPIRITUAL AND AGRARIAN OBSERVANCES. SOLVE THE MYSTERY AND WE END UP WITH A ROADMAP OF GOD'S REDEMPTIVE PLAN FOR THE WORLD!

THE BEAUTY OF THESE 7 FEASTS IS THAT THEY ARE NOT ONLY ANNUAL OBSERVANCES OF A PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST, BUT ALSO FORESHADOWS OF A SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST. THESE FORESHADOWS FIND FULFILLMENT DURING THE MESSIANIC ERA WHICH BEGAN WHEN JESUS GAVE UP HIS LIFE ON CROSS, MAKING ATONEMENT FOR SIN ON BEHALF OF THE WORLD. THEY WILL CONCLUDE WITH AN ETERNAL SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST CELEBRATION, AND AGAIN NOT BEFORE ENTERING THE MOST SOLEMN DAYS IN EARTH'S HISTORY.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE ARE THE 7 FEASTS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER INCLUDING THEIR ANNUAL PHYSICAL PURPOSES AND ETERNAL SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENTS. AGAIN, NOTE THE MYSTERIOUS MIX OF SPIRITUAL AND AGRARIAN OBSERVANCES.

THE SEVEN FEASTS

FEAST NAME ENGLISH	FEAST NAME HEBREW	ANNUAL PHYSICAL OBSERVANCE	ETERNAL SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT
PASSOVER	PESACH	DELIVERANCE FROM PHYSICAL DEATH	DELIVERANCE FROM SPIRITUAL DEATH
FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD	HAG HA-MOTZI	NO PHYSICAL YEAST	NO SPIRITUAL YEAST (SIN)
EARLY FIRST FRUITS	HA-BIKURIM	FIRST PHYSICAL FRUIT (GRAIN) OUT OF THE GROUND	FIRST SPIRITUAL FRUIT (JESUS) OUT OF THE GROUND
FEAST OF WEEKS	SHAVUOT (PENTECOST)	BEGINNING OF THE GRAIN HARVEST	BEGINNING OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST

**SUMMER HARVEST TIME
NO FEAST - THE FOCUS IS BRINGING IN THE HARVEST**

FEAST OF TRUMPETS	YOM TERUAH	BLOWING OF THE SHOFARS SIGNIFYING THE END OF THE PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST	BLOWING OF THE SHOFARS SIGNIFYING THE END OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST & THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH
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NOTE - THE PHYSICAL & SPIRITUAL HARVEST CELEBRATIONS ARE DELAYED FOR A SOMBER TIME OF JUDGMENT

DAY OF ATONEMENT	YOM KIPPUR	NATIONAL DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE	GLOBAL DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR THE WOLD
FEAST OF BOOTHS	SUKKOT	ANNUAL PHYSICAL HARVEST CELEBRATION	ETERNAL HARVEST CELEBRATION

PASSOVER

Christ Crucified

THE FIRST OF THE 7 FEASTS IS PASSOVER, AND IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTICE THAT PASSOVER FALLS IN THE SPRING.

THIS IS WHAT GOD SAID TO MOSES AND HIS BROTHER AARON IN **EXODUS 12:1-2**

"THIS MONTH [NISAN] IS TO BE FOR YOU THE FIRST MONTH, THE FIRST MONTH OF YOUR YEAR."

THE JEWISH MONTH OF NISAN TYPICALLY FALLS LATE MARCH TO MID-APRIL IN THE HEART OF SPRING AND GOD DECIDED TO MAKE THIS MONTH THE BIBLICAL NEW YEAR.

THIS MAKES PERFECT SENSE SINCE SPRING FOLLOWS A LONG, COLD, AND DARK WINTER WHEN MOST FIELDS, PLANTS AND TREES ARE NOT PRODUCING CROPS. MANY BECOME DORMANT OR DIE. ANIMALS ARE NOT PRODUCING OFFSPRING.

IN ANCIENT TIMES, AS IT STILL IS IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD TODAY, WINTER CAN BE VERY CRUEL AND CREATE A LOT OF STRESS AS PEOPLE WORRY WHETHER OR NOT THEY WILL HAVE ENOUGH FOOD TO MAKE IT UNTIL THE SPRING. MANY WRITERS USE WINTER AS A METAPHOR FOR SEASONS OF CHALLENGE AND THE EMERGING OF SPRING AS A METAPHOR OF HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE. HOPE FOR REDEMPTION. HOPE TO BE LIBERATED.

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THEN, THAT GOD CHOSE SPRING AS THE BIBLICAL NEW YEAR FOR THE FIRST FEAST- PASSOVER.

PASSOVER IS ABOUT HOPE, REDEMPTION AND LIBERATION.

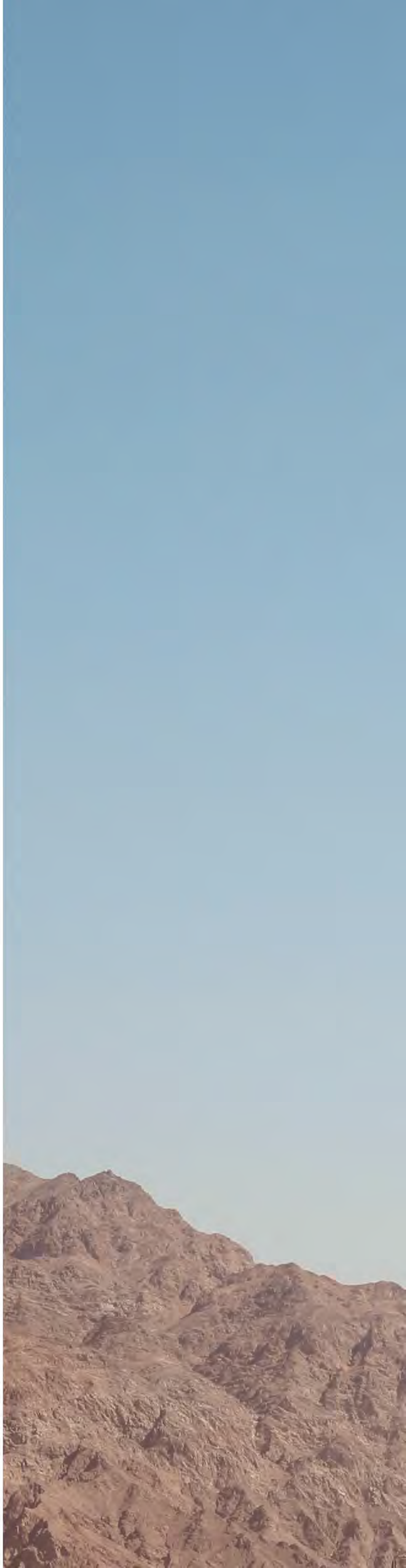
THE JEWS HAD BEEN SLAVES IN EGYPT FOR OVER 400 YEARS - A VERY LONG, COLD DARK WINTER.

SEVERAL GENERATIONS CAME AND WENT DURING THAT TIME; HOWEVER THE JEWISH PEOPLE NEVER GAVE UP ON GOD. NEVER GAVE UP ON HOPE. NEVER GAVE UP ON LIBERATION AND REDEMPTION.

THE ANNUAL FEAST OF PASSOVER IS ABOUT REMEMBERING THIS REDEMPTION STORY, ESPECIALLY THE FINAL PLAGUE; THE DEATH OF ALL THE FIRSTBORN MALES IN THE LAND OF EGYPT. THE ANGEL OF DEATH WOULD SWEEP ACROSS THE LAND AND TO ENSURE THAT NO JEWS PERISHED, GOD INSTRUCTED THEM TO SLAUGHTER AN UNBLEMISHED, PERFECT LAMB AND MARK THEIR DOORPOSTS WITH ITS BLOOD. IN DOING SO, THE ANGEL OF DEATH WOULD PASSOVER THEIR HOMES.

THE BLOOD OF THIS SLAUGHTERED UNBLEMISHED LAMB IS A FORESHADOW OF JESUS, THE PERFECT LAMB OF GOD, WHO WOULD MAKE ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS BY HIS SACRIFICE ON A CROSS.

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SPEAKING OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH, **ISAIAH 53:5-7** SAYS: HE [MESSIAH] WAS PIERCED FOR OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, HE WAS CRUSHED FOR OUR INIQUITIES; THE PUNISHMENT THAT BROUGHT US PEACE WAS ON HIM, AND BY HIS WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED. WE ALL, LIKE SHEEP, HAVE GONE ASTRAY, EACH OF US HAS TURNED TO OUR OWN WAY; AND THE LORD HAS LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL. HE WAS OPPRESSED AND AFFLICTED, YET HE DID NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH; HE WAS LED LIKE A LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER, AND AS A SHEEP BEFORE ITS SHEARERS IS SILENT, SO HE DID NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.

JOHN 1:29 SAYS THIS ABOUT MESSIAH JESUS: THE NEXT DAY JOHN SAW JESUS COMING TOWARD HIM AND SAID, "LOOK, THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!

JESUS WASN'T JUST CRUCIFIED AROUND THE TIME OF PASSOVER; HE WAS SACRIFICED DURING THE EXACT WINDOW OF TIME THAT THE PASSOVER LAMBS WOULD HAVE BEEN SACRIFICED ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT IN JERUSALEM. LIKE THE BLOOD OF THE SACRIFICED LAMBS ON THE DOORPOSTS OF THEIR HOMES IN EGYPT, WHEN WE MARK THE DOORPOST OF OUR HEARTS WITH JESUS' BLOOD THROUGH FAITH, ETERNAL DEATH WILL PASSOVER US AND WE ARE THEN LIBERATED FROM SIN'S JUDGMENT AND ENSURED ETERNAL LIFE. THE BIBLE CALLS THIS GOD'S GRACE.

ROMANS 3:25

GOD PRESENTED MESSIAH AS A SACRIFICE OF ATONEMENT, THROUGH THE SHEDDING OF HIS BLOOD--TO BE RECEIVED BY FAITH.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

FOR IT IS BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED, THROUGH FAITH--AND THIS IS NOT FROM YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD-- NOT BY WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE CAN BOAST.

JESUS, THEN, IS OUR HOPE, OUR REDEMPTION, OUR LIBERATION. THIS IS THE TRUE FULFILLMENT OF PASSOVER.

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON PASSOVER.

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

Jesus was buried

THE SECOND FEAST IS CALLED THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD AND BEGINS AS PASSOVER IS ENDING. IN ISRAEL, A DAY BEGINS AND ENDS AT SUNSET, SO THIS FEAST BEGINS AT SUNSET AND IN THE YEAR THAT JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED, THE SABBATH ALSO BEGAN ON THAT DAY.

JESUS WAS TAKEN OFF THE CROSS MOMENTS BEFORE THE SABBATH BEGAN AND RUSHED TO BE PLACED IN A TOMB SINCE WORK WAS FORBIDDEN ON SHABBAT. THE USUAL BODY PREPARATIONS WOULD NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THE SABBATH WAS OVER. THE SIGNIFICANCE THAT JESUS WAS BURIED ON THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD IS POWERFUL.

SINCE THE ISRAELITES HAD TO LEAVE EGYPT QUICKLY AFTER PHARAOH FINALLY RELENTED AND RELEASED THEM FROM BONDAGE, THEY DID NOT HAVE TIME FOR THEIR BREAD TO RISE AND THEREFORE DIDN'T ADD YEAST TO THEIR DOUGH. IN CELEBRATING THIS FEAST, GOD MADE GETTING RID OF YEAST FROM JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS A BIG DEAL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



EXODUS 12:17-20

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD, BECAUSE IT WAS ON THIS VERY DAY THAT I BROUGHT YOUR DIVISIONS OUT OF EGYPT. CELEBRATE THIS DAY AS A LASTING ORDINANCE FOR THE GENERATIONS TO COME. IN THE FIRST MONTH YOU ARE TO EAT BREAD MADE WITHOUT YEAST, FROM THE EVENING OF THE FOURTEENTH DAY UNTIL THE EVENING OF THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY. FOR SEVEN DAYS NO YEAST IS TO BE FOUND IN YOUR HOUSES. AND ANYONE, WHETHER FOREIGNER OR NATIVE-BORN, WHO EATS ANYTHING WITH YEAST IN IT MUST BE CUT OFF FROM THE COMMUNITY OF ISRAEL. EAT NOTHING MADE WITH YEAST. WHEREVER YOU LIVE, YOU MUST EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD."

TODAY, JEWS AND OTHERS WHO CELEBRATE THIS FEAST CAN SPEND COUNTLESS HOURS SEARCHING AND DESTROYING ANY YEAST FOUND IN THEIR HOUSEHOLDS.

YEAST IS OFTEN EQUATED TO SIN BECAUSE IN THE SAME WAY THAT A SMALL AMOUNT OF YEAST CAN FULLY PERMEATE A BATCH OF DOUGH, EVEN ONE SIN CAN FULLY CONTAMINATE OUR SOULS.

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT JESUS TOOK OUR SINS UPON HIMSELF SO THAT OUR SOULS COULD BECOME UNCONTAMINATED [PURIFIED, HOLY].

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

GOD MADE HIM [JESUS] WHO HAD NO SIN TO BE SIN FOR US, SO THAT IN HIM WE MIGHT BECOME THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

THIS IS WHY THE ACT OF GETTING RID OF YEAST DURING THE PASSOVER SEASON IS SUCH A BIG DEAL TO GOD!

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON PASSOVER.
JESUS WAS BURIED ON THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.

EARLY FIRSTFRUITS

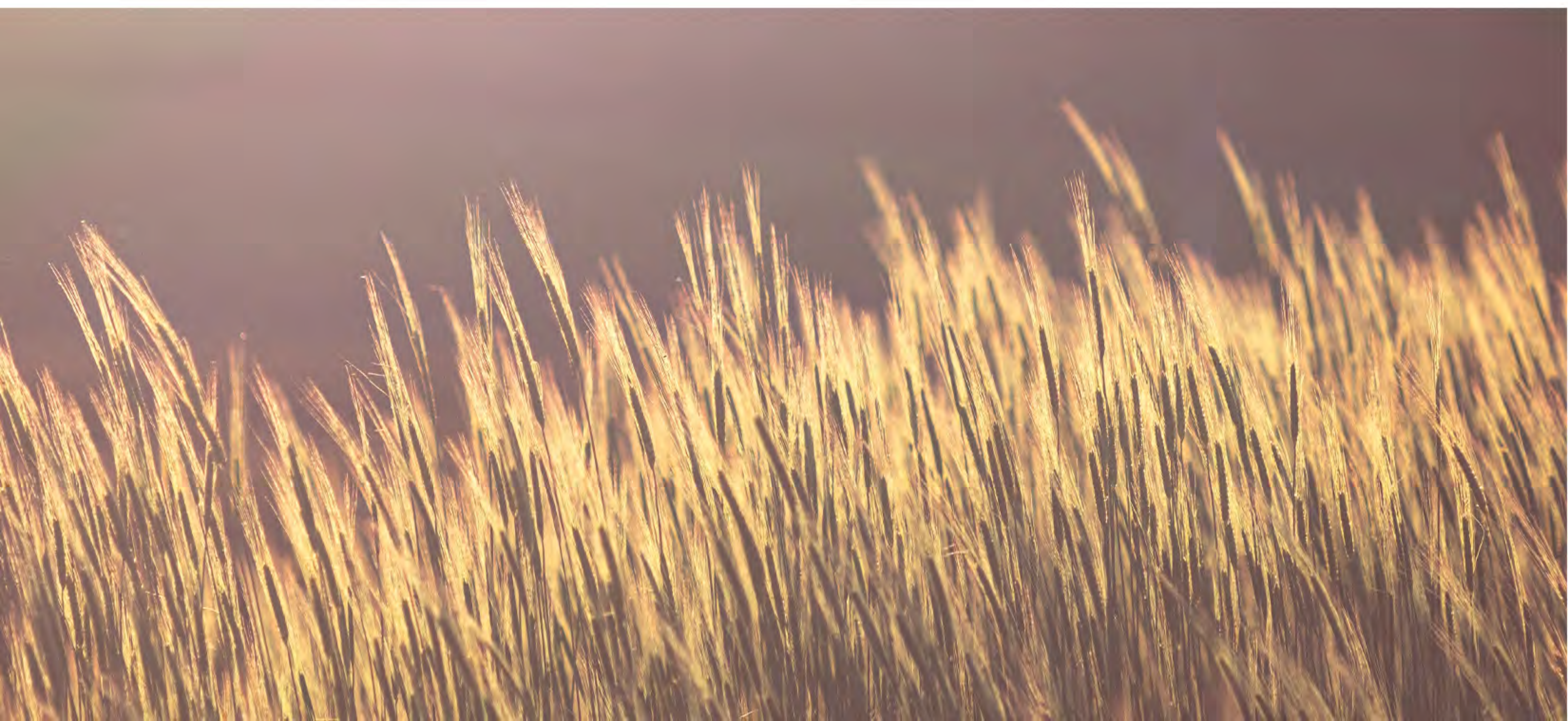
Jesus raised from the dead

THERE ISN'T MUCH INFORMATION ABOUT THIS THIRD FEAST. WE ARE ONLY TOLD THAT JEWISH FARMERS ARE TO BRING THE FIRST SPRIGS OF GRAIN COMING OUT OF THE GROUND ON THE SABBATH THAT FALLS DURING THE PASSOVER SEASON.

LEVITICUS 23:10-11

SPEAK TO THE ISRAELITES AND SAY TO THEM: 'WHEN YOU ENTER THE LAND I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU AND YOU REAP ITS HARVEST, BRING TO THE PRIEST A SHEAF OF THE FIRST GRAIN YOU HARVEST. HE IS TO WAVE THE SHEAF BEFORE THE LORD SO IT WILL BE ACCEPTED ON YOUR BEHALF; THE PRIEST IS TO WAVE IT ON THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH.

REMEMBER, THESE FEASTS ARE A STRANGE MIX OF SPIRITUAL AND AGRICULTURAL OBSERVANCES AND WE ARE ABOUT TO FIND OUT WHY.



THE GRAIN AT THIS TIME WOULD HAVE BEEN BARLEY. EACH JEWISH FARMER WOULD SNATCH UP ONE OF THESE TINY FIRST SPRIGS PEEKING OUT OF THE GROUND AND BRING THEM TO THE TEMPLE PRIEST WHERE HE WOULD MAKE SOME KIND OF A WAVE OFFERING TO GOD. MOST LIKELY HE WOULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING LIKE:

“IF GOD IS FAITHFUL TO BRING THESE FIRST SPRIGS OUT OF THE GROUND NOW, HE WILL BE FAITHFUL TO BRING THE REST DURING THE HARVEST LATER ON.”

NOW, REMEMBER THE DAY THIS WAVE OFFERING WOULD BE MADE IS THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH THAT FELL DURING THE PASSOVER SEASON. WHAT DAY DO JEWS OBSERVE SHABBAT? SATURDAY RIGHT? SO THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH WOULD BE SUNDAY.

SO TRANSPORT YOURSELF BACK TO A PARTICULAR YEAR ABOUT 2000 YEARS AGO. IT'S SUNDAY IN JERUSALEM AND THE PRIEST IS MAKING THIS WAVE OFFERING WITH THE FIRST SPRIGS SAYING, “IF GOD IS FAITHFUL TO BRING THESE FIRST SPRINGS OUT OF THE GROUND NOW..” WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN SOMEONE COMES RUNNING YELLING, “HE HAS RISEN! HE HAS RISEN!”

LISTEN TO WHAT **1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-23** SAYS: MESSIAH JESUS HAS INDEED BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP [DIED]. FOR SINCE DEATH CAME THROUGH A MAN, THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD COMES ALSO THROUGH A MAN. FOR AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, SO IN CHRIST ALL WILL BE MADE ALIVE. BUT EACH IN TURN: FIRST, MESSIAH, THE FIRSTFRUITS; THEN, WHEN HE COMES FOR THOSE WHO BELONG TO HIM [THE REST OF THE HARVEST LATER ON].

DID YOU CATCH THAT? THERE'S GOING TO BE A HARVEST OF SOULS. THE FIRST SPRIG OUT OF THE GROUND IS JESUS, THEN, BECAUSE GOD IS FAITHFUL, THE REST OF THE HARVEST WILL BE GATHERED LATER ON.

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON PASSOVER.
JESUS WAS BURIED ON THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.
JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD ON EARLY FIRSTFRUITS.

FEAST OF WEEKS

the harvest of souls begins

HERE'S WHAT **LEVITICUS 23:15-16** SAYS ABOUT HIS FEAST: FROM THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH, THE DAY YOU BROUGHT THE SHEAF OF THE WAVE OFFERING, COUNT OFF SEVEN FULL WEEKS. COUNT OFF FIFTY DAYS UP TO THE DAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SABBATH, AND THEN PRESENT AN OFFERING OF NEW GRAIN TO THE LORD.

EXODUS 34:22 IS VERY CLEAR ABOUT WHAT THIS FEAST IS ABOUT:

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF WEEKS WITH THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE WHEAT HARVEST [NOT THE SPRIGS OF THE EARLY FIRSTFRUITS, BUT THE ACTUAL HARVEST OF THEM LATER ON], AND THE FESTIVAL OF INGATHERING AT THE TURN OF THE YEAR.

MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, THE FEAST OF WEEKS IS ABOUT BRINGING IN THE HARVEST.



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GOD SAYS THAT FROM THE DAY OF THE WAVE OFFERING ON SUNDAY, THE DAY JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD, COUNT OF 50 DAYS. THOSE WHO OBSERVE THESE 50 DAYS BEGIN WITH THE SAME PRAYER EACH DAY AND END IT SAYING "DAY 1". THE NEXT DAY THE SAME PRAYER AND "DAY 2". AND SO ON AND SO ON UNTIL THEY REACH THE 50TH DAY, SHAVUOT, OR THE FEAST OF WEEKS- CELEBRATING THE BEGINNING OF THE HARVEST SEASON. THE COUNTING WAS LIKE A COUNTUP TO THIS BIG GRAIN HARVEST EVENT BUT GOD ALWAYS HAD AN EVEN BIGGER EVENT IN MIND FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS FEAST.

WHEN JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD HE HUNG AROUND FOR 40 DAYS BEFORE ASCENDING BACK TO THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER. BEFORE THIS HAPPENED, HE TOLD HIS DISCIPLES TO GO INTO AN UPPER ROOM LOCATED NEAR THE TEMPLE AND WAIT FOR THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT AS DEVOUT JEWS, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY WERE PROBABLY DOING IN THAT ROOM? COUNTING! DAY 41. DAY 42. DAY 43...AND MY GUESS IS THAT AT SOME POINT THEY KNEW SOMETHING SPECTACULAR WAS GOING TO TAKE PLACE ON DAY 50 AND IT DOES! LET'S READ ABOUT IT.

ACTS 2:1-4

WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST [SHAVUOT, THE FEAST OF WEEKS] CAME, THEY WERE ALL TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE. SUDDENLY A SOUND LIKE THE BLOWING OF A VIOLENT WIND CAME FROM HEAVEN AND FILLED THE WHOLE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING. THEY SAW WHAT SEEMED TO BE TONGUES OF FIRE THAT SEPARATED AND CAME TO REST ON EACH OF THEM. ALL OF THEM WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN TO SPEAK IN OTHER TONGUES AS THE SPIRIT ENABLED THEM.

I'LL LEAVE IT UP TO YOU TO READ THE REST OF THE STORY IN ACTS 2, BUT LET ME SHARE THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION.

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THOUSANDS OF JEWS WERE IN JERUSALEM FOR THIS FEAST SINCE IT IS ONE OF THE THREE FEASTS THAT REQUIRES A YEARLY PILGRIMAGE THERE. SOMEHOW, MANY HEAR AND SEE WHAT IS GOING ON. PETER TELLS THEM THAT WHAT IS HAPPENING WAS PREDICTED BY THE PROPHET JOEL AND FOLLOWS UP WITH A SIMPLE GOSPEL MESSAGE AND 3,000 JEWISH PILGRIMS GIVE THEIR LIVES TO FOLLOW JESUS THAT DAY.

ON THE DAY THAT JEWS CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF THE PHYSICAL GRAIN HARVEST, GOD BEGAN THE SPIRITUAL SOUL HARVEST.

MIC DROP!

JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON PASSEVER.
JESUS WAS BURIED ON THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.
JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD ON EARLY FIRSTFRUITS.
AND THE SOUL HARVEST BEGAN ON THE FEAST OF WEEKS.

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THERE'S AN INTERESTING BIBLE PASSAGE IN **JEREMIAH 8:20** THE HARVEST IS PAST, THE SUMMER HAS ENDED, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED.

THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF THIS PASSAGE IS THAT WHEN JEREMIAH SAID THIS THE ISREALITES WERE STILL BEING HELD CAPTIVE IN BABYLON. GOD HAD NOT YET ALLOWED THEM TO RETURN TO JERUSALAMEN FOR YET ANOTHER HARVEST SEASON.

HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THIS PASSAGE ALSO LOOKS TO THE FUTURE AND CAN APPLY TO ANYONE WHO HAS NOT YET PUT THEIR FAITH IN YESHUA, GOD'S PASSEVER LAMB, WHO SAVES US FROM OUR SINS BY THE BLOOD HE SHED ON THE CROSS. SOMEDAY, THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST WILL END AND JESUS WILL RETURN TO ESTABLISH HIS ETERNAL KINGDOM HERE ON EARTH. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THAT KINGDOM RIGHT NOW, SIMPLY TURN YOUR HEART TO JESUS AND ACCEPT HIS FREE OFFER OF SALVATION THROUGH FAITH. IN DOING THIS, YOU ENSURE THAT YOU WILL BE PART OF THE GREAT HARVEST THAT WILL OCCUR AT THE END OF GOD'S STORY.



REVELATION 14:14-16

I LOOKED, AND THERE BEFORE ME WAS A WHITE CLOUD, AND SEATED ON THE CLOUD WAS ONE LIKE A SON OF MAN (MESSIAH JESUS) WITH A CROWN OF GOLD ON HIS HEAD AND A SHARP SICKLE IN HIS HAND. THEN ANOTHER ANGEL CAME OUT OF THE TEMPLE AND CALLED IN A LOUD VOICE TO HIM WHO WAS SITTING ON THE CLOUD, "TAKE YOUR SICKLE AND REAP, BECAUSE THE TIME TO REAP HAS COME, FOR THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE." SO HE WHO WAS SEATED ON THE CLOUD SWUNG HIS SICKLE OVER THE EARTH, AND THE EARTH WAS HARVESTED.

WE HAVE AN AMAZING GOD WHO BLOWS ON HISTORY FOR HIS PURPOSES AND THEN BLOWS OUR MINDS AS WELL.

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IF YOU FOUND THIS SPRING FEAST BOOKLET USEFUL, PLEASE PASS IT ON TO SOMEONE ELSE AND MAKE SURE TO DOWNLOAD OUR FALL FEAST BOOKLET TO DISCOVER HOW THE LAST 3 FEASTS WILL FIND THEIR FULFILLMENT IN THE FUTURE.

FIND IT AT
CSTONE.LINK/RESOURCES

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 1



WRITTEN BY
SALLY PETERSON

OUR GOD IS

in the waiting

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY TIMES IN LIFE WHEN WAITING HAS BEEN A STRUGGLE FOR ME. WAITING CAN FEEL LIKE AN ETERNITY, LIKE WE'RE STUCK IN A PIT WITH NO WAY OUT. MAYBE YOU'VE FELT THAT WAY BEFORE? BUT I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TODAY THAT EVEN IN THOSE MOMENTS OF WAITING, GOD IS WITH US.

MY MOST DIFFICULT SEASON OF WAITING WAS WHEN MY SON JACK WAS DIAGNOSED WITH A HEART CONDITION AND NEEDED SURGERY. IT WAS A SEASON OF WAITING, OF UNCERTAINTY, OF FEAR. IN MY DESPERATION OF NEEDING TO HEAR FROM GOD, I WOKE UP EARLY EACH MORNING TO GET INTO THE WORD (THIS WAS A FIRST FOR ME!) AND I SAW SO MANY MIRACLES AND MOMENTS OF GOD'S LIGHT SURROUNDING ME. I FELT GOD'S PRESENCE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

PSALM 43:3 SAYS, "SEND OUT YOUR LIGHT AND YOUR TRUTH; LET THEM GUIDE ME. LET THEM LEAD ME TO YOUR HOLY MOUNTAIN, TO THE PLACE WHERE YOU LIVE." GOD'S LIGHT AND TRUTH GUIDED ME THROUGH THAT DIFFICULT SEASON AND LED ME CLOSER TO HIM. AND EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T GO THROUGH THAT SEASON GRACEFULLY OR BEAUTIFULLY, HE SUSTAINED ME AND BROUGHT ME INTO THE LIGHT.



IN **PSALM 91:4**, IT SAYS, "HE WILL COVER YOU WITH HIS FEATHERS. HE WILL SHELTER YOU WITH HIS WINGS. HIS FAITHFUL PROMISES ARE YOUR ARMOR AND PROTECTION." WHAT A BEAUTIFUL IMAGE OF GOD'S LOVE AND PROTECTION FOR US. WHEN WE'RE IN A SEASON OF WAITING, WE CAN TAKE COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT GOD IS OUR SHELTER AND OUR PROTECTION. HIS PROMISES ARE FAITHFUL AND TRUE. I ACTUALLY PICTURE MYSELF WITH HIS WINGS SURROUNDING ME WHEN I'M REALLY STRUGGLING - AND IT'S WHAT I PRAY FOR PEOPLE WHEN I KNOW THEY NEED HIM CLOSE.

SO MY QUESTION FOR YOU TODAY IS THIS: WHAT SEASON OF WAITING ARE YOU IN RIGHT NOW? CAN YOU SEE ANY MOMENTS OF LIGHT OR MIRACLES THAT GOD HAS BROUGHT YOU DURING THIS TIME? AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, ARE YOU ACTIVELY SEEKING GOD'S LIGHT AND TRUTH IN THE WORD?

I PRAY THAT YOU FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE TODAY, WHEREVER YOU ARE. I PRAY THAT YOU FEEL HIS LOVE AND PROTECTION, THAT YOU KNOW HE IS WITH YOU IN YOUR WAITING - THAT YOU FEEL HIS WINGS AROUND YOU. AND I PRAY THAT YOU SEEK HIS LIGHT AND TRUTH AND LET HIM LEAD YOU TO HIM. HE LOVES YOU SO VERY MUCH.

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 2: TRUST GOD AND SEE WHAT HE CAN DO

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 2



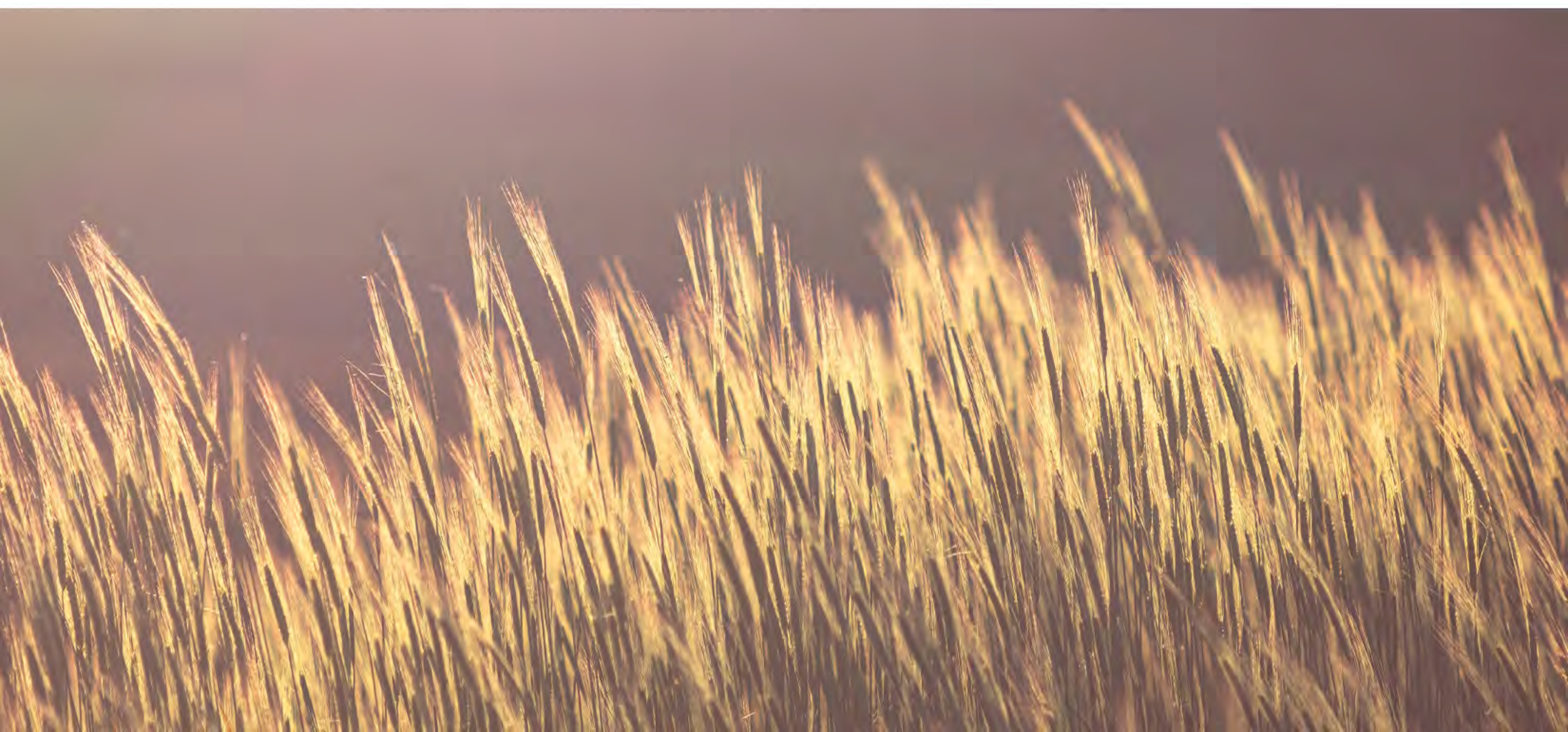
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OSEI MAY

TRUST GOD

and see what He can do

IN **NUMBERS 20.1-13**, THE LORD INSTRUCTED MOSES AND AARON TO "TELL THE ROCK BEFORE THEIR EYES TO YIELD WATER." INSTEAD MOSES STRUCK THE ROCK TWICE, PRODUCING AN ABUNDANT FLOW OF WATER TO FEED ALL THE PEOPLE AND THEIR LIVESTOCK. HOWEVER, GOD WAS NOT PLEASED WITH MOSES AND AARON. AFTER THE WATER FLOWED THE LORD SAID, "BECAUSE YOU DID NOT BELIEVE IN ME, TO UPHOLD ME AS HOLY IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, THEREFORE YOU SHALL NOT BRING THIS ASSEMBLY INTO THE LAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN THEM."

MOSES DISOBEYED GOD AND WITH A DECENT DOSE OF ANGER. HAVE YOU EVER DISOBEYED GOD IN THE HEAT OF A MOMENT? MOSES COULD HAVE CHOSEN TO OBEY BY SPEAKING TO THE ROCK AND WAITING ON THE LORD TO DO HIS WORK. I'M JUST GUESSING HERE BUT IT PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TAKEN ABOUT 4 SECONDS. IF HE OBEYED AND WAITED, IT WOULD BE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ENDING FOR THIS PASSAGE AND THE BOOK OF NUMBERS. CAN I WAIT JUST 4 SECONDS BEFORE RESPONDING IN FRUSTRATION? CAN I WAIT JUST 4 SECONDS ON THE LORD?



I DON'T READ EVERY MOMENT AND SITUATION IN MY LIFE, PERFECTLY, IN BIG THINGS (CAREER/WORK, MOVING, PARENTING, PARENTS, PERSONAL GROWTH) AND SMALL THINGS (CONVERSATIONS, CHORES, MEALS, AND TEXT MESSAGES). SHOULD I WAIT ON THE LORD AND TRUST HIM OR JUST DO IT MYSELF - THAT IS - DO IT MY WAY. WELL, SAUL ALSO DIDN'T WAIT ON THE LORD AND IT COST HIM DEARLY (1 SAM 13.1-15). THE ISRAELITES WAITED 400 YEARS FOR DELIVERANCE. JOSHUA AND CALEB WAITED 40 YEARS TO ENTER THE PROMISED LAND. IF MOSES SPOKE TO ROCK AS GOD INSTRUCTED, GOD WOULD HAVE DELIVERED JUST AS PLANNED AND PROBABLY, RATHER QUICKLY. INSTEAD OF ACTING FIRST OUT OF FEAR, ANXIETY, OR ANGER, CAN I STAND FIRM (EX. 14:13-14) AND WAIT ON THE LORD FOR JUST 4 SECONDS? 4 MINUTES? 4 DAYS? 40 YEARS? I WANT TO SEE WHAT HE CAN DO. I NEED TO SEE WHAT HE CAN DO.

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NEXT WEEK

WEEK 3: NEVER DOUBT IN THE DARKNESS WHAT GOD HAS SHOWN YOU IN THE LIGHT

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 3



WRITTEN BY
KEVIN COX

NEVER DOUBT

in the darkness what God has shown you in the light

GENESIS 50:20

AS FOR YOU, YOU MEANT EVIL AGAINST ME, BUT GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD, TO BRING IT ABOUT THAT MANY PEOPLE SHOULD BE KEPT ALIVE, AS THEY ARE TODAY. JOSEPH WAS HIS FATHER'S FAVORITE SON, WHICH CAUSED HIS ENVIOUS BROTHERS TO HATE HIM. HE ALSO HAD DREAMS WHICH SHOWED HIM RULING OVER HIS FAMILY WHICH FURTHERED HIS BROTHERS HATRED OF HIM. THEY WANTED TO KILL HIM, BUT INSTEAD STAGED HIS DEATH AND "TRAFFICKED" HIM INTO SLAVERY TO A GROUP OF ISHMAELITE TRADERS ON THEIR WAY TO EGYPT.

AFTER BEING TRAFFICKED BY HIS BROTHERS HE WAS EVENTUALLY THROWN INTO PRISON FOR A CRIME HE DIDN'T COMMIT WHICH CERTAINLY QUALIFIES AS A "STORM". WHILE THERE HE INTERPRETED THE DREAMS OF FELLOW PRISONERS, INCLUDING ONE WHO HAD SERVED AS THE CUPBEARER TO PHARAOH WHO WAS RELEASED FROM PRISON JUST AS THE INTERPRETATION JOSEPH HAD MADE OF HIS DREAM PREDICTED. JOSEPH ASKED THE CUPBEARER TO MENTION HIM TO PHARAOH TO GET HIM OUT OF PRISON TOO (GEN 40:12-15). TWO MORE YEARS OF WAITING PASSED BEFORE PHARAOH NEEDED HIS OWN DREAM INTERPRETED AND THE CUPBEARER REMEMBERED THAT JOSEPH INTERPRETED DREAMS.



EVENTUALLY PHARAOH MADE JOSEPH THE SECOND-IN-COMMAND (PRIME MINISTER) IN ALL OF EGYPT. FROM PRISON TO POWER, JOSEPH WAS PLACED STRATEGICALLY BY GOD TO PREPARE THE LAND AGAINST A COMING FAMINE. JOSEPH BELIEVED THE DREAMS HE HAD ABOUT HIM RULING OVER HIS FAMILY WERE WORDS FROM GOD AND THIS SUSTAINED HIS TRUST IN GOD DURING THE STORM IN PRISON AS HE BELIEVED GOD'S WORD TO BE TRUE. HE TRUSTED GOD AND THE LORD BLESSED HIM AND SAVED MANY LIVES THROUGH HIM, INCLUDING THE LIVES OF HIS FAMILY THROUGH WHICH THE MESSIAH OF ISRAEL (THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, SEE: GEN 49:9-10 AND REV 5:5) THE ANOINTED ONE WOULD COME TO "TABERNACLE AMONG US" TO SAVE MANY LIVES FOR ETERNITY.

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 4: WAITING IS FILLED WITH PURPOSE

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 4



WRITTEN BY
JOYCE LARSON

WAITING IS FILLED

with purpose

ROMANS 5:3-5 TPT

“BUT THAT’S NOT ALL! EVEN IN TIMES OF TROUBLE WE HAVE A JOYFUL CONFIDENCE, KNOWING THAT OUR PRESSURES WILL DEVELOP IN US PATIENT ENDURANCE. AND PATIENT ENDURANCE WILL REFINE OUR CHARACTER, AND PROVEN CHARACTER LEADS US BACK TO HOPE. AND THIS HOPE IS NOT A DISAPPOINTING FANTASY, BECAUSE WE CAN NOW EXPERIENCE THE ENDLESS LOVE OF GOD CASCADING INTO OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO LIVES IN US!”

ONE OF THE MOST CONFUSING AND DISAPPOINTING TIMES OF MY LIFE WAS WHEN I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO MARRY A BOY I HAD BEEN DATING ONLY TO HAVE THAT RELATIONSHIP COME CRASHING TO AN END. A PERIOD OF DEPRESSION AND GRIEF FOLLOWED BECAUSE I COULDN’T UNDERSTAND WHY THIS HAD TO HAPPEN. MY MENTOR AT THE TIME TOLD ME, “THERE ARE SOME THINGS IN LIFE THAT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND AS YOU HAVE MORE PERSPECTIVE AND I THINK THIS IS ONE OF THOSE THINGS.” WHILE THAT WASN’T COMFORTING TO ME IN MY TIME OF GRIEF, I NOW LOOK BACK KNOWING MORE OF THE STORY AND AM SO GRATEFUL. THE PERIOD THAT FOLLOWED THE DEPRESSION AND GRIEF WAS THE MOST FRUITFUL PERIOD OF MY LIFE SPIRITUALLY AND ROMANS 5:3-5 WAS MY ENCOURAGEMENT THAT THERE WAS PURPOSE TO MY SUFFERING. I HAD A FERVOR TO SEEK THE LORD WHOLEHEARTEDLY, WITHOUT ANY DISTRACTIONS, AND HE USED THAT PERIOD TO REFINE ME IN NUMEROUS WAYS. I PRAYED THAT HIS DESIRES WOULD BECOME MY DESIRES AND I FELT THAT HE WAS CALLING ME TO THE

I LED A TEAM OF STUDENTS ON A SUMMER TRIP AS A VISION TRIP TO SEE IF I WOULD FIT IN WELL WITH THE MISSIONARIES AS I PLANNED ON MOVING THERE AFTER THAT SUMMER. ONE OF THE STUDENTS ON MY TEAM HAD BEEN WRESTLING WITH HIS FAITH BUT STILL WENT ON THE TRIP. OUR TRIP ENDED SHORT AS WE HAD TO EVACUATE THE COUNTRY DUE TO DEADLY RACIAL RIOTS AND OUR TEAM BONDED TREMENDOUSLY IN THE AFTERMATH OF THOSE EVENTS. THAT STUDENT MATURED AFTER THAT TRIP, BEGAN PURSUING ME ROMANTICALLY, AND IS NOW MY HUSBAND. DUE TO OUR FIVE-YEAR AGE GAP, I HAD NEVER CONSIDERED HIM AS A ROMANTIC POSSIBILITY. BIBLICAL WAITING ALWAYS HAS PURPOSE. IN MY DARK NIGHTS OF THE SOUL AFTER THE BREAKUP WITH MY EX, I THOUGHT THE CRUSHING WEIGHT OF SORROW WOULD NEVER LEAVE. BUT GOD WAS POSITIONING ME EXACTLY WHERE HE WANTED ME FOR GROWTH AND SIMULTANEOUSLY POSITIONING MY HUSBAND FOR HIS OWN SEASON OF GROWTH.

GOD DOESN'T WASTE ANY PAINFUL CIRCUMSTANCE. THE PRESSURES OF LIFE REVEAL OUR CHARACTER AND THEY ARE ALWAYS OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFINEMENT. IN YOUR WAITING, HOW ARE YOU ALLOWING GOD TO REFINE YOUR CHARACTER? ARE YOU ABLE TO HAVE TRUE HOPE—BEING FILLED WITH THE ENDLESS LOVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO LIVES IN YOU DESPITE YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES? WE WILL EITHER COME OUT OF THE PRESSURE COOKER OF LIFE HAVING PROVEN CHARACTER AND KNOWING MORE FULLY THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH ENABLES US TO BE HOPEFUL OR WE CAN EASILY BECOME MORE CYNICAL. WHICH DO YOU CHOOSE? MY HUSBAND AND I ALWAYS SAY THAT WE WANT TO BE SWEET, OLD PEOPLE BUT IN ORDER TO BE SWEET, OLD PEOPLE WE NEED TO WORK NOW ON NOT BECOMING CYNICAL AND TRUSTING THAT GOD HAS A BIGGER PLAN FOR US.

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 5: WAITING WITH OTHERS

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 5



WRITTEN BY
DESTRY WARDLE

WAITING WITH

Others

HEBREWS 10:23-25

LET US HOLD UNSWERVINGLY TO THE HOPE WE PROFESS, FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL. AND LET US CONSIDER HOW WE MAY SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON TOWARD LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS, NOT GIVING UP MEETING TOGETHER, AS SOME ARE IN THE HABIT OF DOING, BUT ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER—AND ALL THE MORE AS YOU SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.

WE LIVE IN A CULTURE THAT CELEBRATES IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION.

FROM INSTAGRAM TO INSTA-POTS TECHNOLOGY PROMISES TO MEET OUR NEEDS AND FIX OUR PROBLEMS WITHOUT DELAY. YET A BY-PRODUCT OF MODERN CONVENIENCE HAS BECOME THE INABILITY TO WAIT. WE AS A SOCIETY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN RESPONSES, DIRECTION, OR CONNECTION ARE NOT PROVIDED AT THE SPEED OF OUR WISHES. WE VIEW WAITING AS FRUSTRATING, ISOLATING, AND DOWNRIGHT UNACCEPTABLE. YET WAITING IS AN UNAVOIDABLE PART OF LIFE AND SOMETHING THAT GOD LOVES TO USE TO BRING ABOUT TRANSFORMATION IN OUR LIVES.

AS I LOOK TO THE SCRIPTURES THE WRITER OF HEBREWS OFFERS A COUNTER-CULTURAL POSTURE FOR WAITING. FIRST, WE PRESS INTO THE WAITING WITH HOPE. HOPE, NOT IN THE OUTCOME OR FULFILLMENT OF EXPECTATION BUT IN THE DEEP KNOWLEDGE THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL TO MEET OUR NEEDS.

SECOND, WE STEP INTO RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING. THE AGITATION OF WAITING IS OFTEN RELIEVED WHEN WE WAIT WITH OTHERS, REMINDING ONE ANOTHER THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE AND THAT GOD IS FAITHFUL.



WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? DO YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A LONG SEASON OF WAITING WHERE YOUR FAITH IN GOD'S INTERVENTION IS WANING?

LOOK FOR SOMEONE TO INVITE INTO THAT SPACE WITH YOU. SEE WHAT BRINGING THE HONESTY OF YOUR DISCOURAGEMENT DOES TO YOUR ABILITY TO CONNECT AND FEEL ENCOURAGED IN COMMUNITY. THE ENEMY WANTS TO USE DISCOURAGEMENT TO ISOLATE US BECAUSE HE KNOWS COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION HAVE THE POWER TO INFUSE HOPE AND STRENGTH INTO OUR FAITH. HOW CAN YOU POSITION YOURSELF FOR CONNECTION TODAY?

GO TO COFFEE WITH A FRIEND, INVITE A FRIEND TO TAKE A WALK WITH YOU, OR MAKE THE SPACE TO GO TO CHURCH TO WORSHIP WITH OTHERS WHO MOST LIKELY ARE LONGING FOR ENCOURAGEMENT IN THEIR WAITING SEASON AS WELL.

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 6: WAITING IS HARD, BUT WAITING IS GOOD

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 6



WRITTEN BY
DAN LANCE

WAITING IS HARD

but waiting is good

THE STORY OF JESUS COMING IS THE CLIMAX TO A MUCH LARGER STORY THAT MANY TIMES IS OVERLOOKED. YOU HAVE TO START IN GENESIS, NOT IN LUKE. THE STORY STARTS WITH A CREATOR AND A BLANK CANVAS. HE SPEAKS WORDS AND THE WORLD SPRINGS INTO ACTION. HE LOADS CREATION WITH POTENTIAL. THIS CREATOR IS INTIMATELY CONNECTED TO HIS CREATION. HE MAKES PROMISES WITH PEOPLE EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE UNFAITHFUL TO HOLD UP THEIR END OF THE BARGAIN. HE PROMISES TO BLESS ALL PEOPLE ON THE EARTH. PEOPLE TURN FROM GOD AND HE SENDS A FLOOD TO PRESERVE THE STORY. PEOPLE TURN FROM GOD OVER AND OVER AND FIND THEMSELVES IN SLAVERY. THEY LONG FOR GOD TO INTERVENE SO THEY CRY OUT AND GOD COMES TO THE RESCUE.

PEOPLE CONTINUE TO FORGET THE PROMISES AND GOD RAISES UP PEOPLE AS VOICES TO REMIND THEM THAT GOD HAS NOT GIVEN UP ON THEM. THE PROPHETS START SPEAKING OF ONE THAT WILL COME TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

ISAIAH PROPHESED IN ISAIAH CHAPTER 7, VERSE 14 THAT THE LORD HIMSELF WILL GIVE YOU A SIGN: THE VIRGIN WILL CONCEIVE AND GIVE BIRTH TO A SON, AND WILL CALL HIM IMMANUEL. FINALLY AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME IN HISTORY AND THE STORY, GOD SENDS HIS SON TO ENTER OUR WORLD. GOD MOVES INTO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD TO SHOW US THAT ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE. HE HAS HEARD OUR CRIES AND ENTERS INTO THE STORY AGAIN. JESUS IS THE FULFILLMENT OF A MUCH LARGER STORY. FINALLY! EMMANUEL, GOD IS WITH YOU AGAIN, HE IS GOING TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT. THIS IS GREAT NEWS FOR ALL PEOPLE.



THIS STORY IS JAM PACKED WITH WAITING, EXPECTATION, DESPERATION AND LONGING. THE FAMOUS THEOLOGIAN TOM PETTY IN HIS SONG, THE WAITING, RELEASED IN 1981, FAMOUSLY WROTE, "THE WAITING IS THE HARDEST PART. EVERY DAY YOU GET ONE MORE YARD. YOU TAKE IT ON FAITH, YOU TAKE IT TO THE HEART, THE WAITING IS THE HARDEST PART." THAT IS TRUE BUT IT CAN ALSO BE THE BEST PART.

WE ARE STILL WAITING TODAY. WE STILL FIND OURSELVES SITTING IN CONFUSION. WE STILL HAVE QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS. WE STILL GET DESPERATE, BUT WE HAVE HOPE BECAUSE OUR STORY IS NOT A NEW STORY. IT'S A VERY OLD STORY. IT'S OK IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND IT ALL, IT'S OK IF YOU DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, IT'S OK IF IT SEEMS BLEAK AND IF IT SEEMS LIKE THIS STORM WILL NEVER END. THE COMING OF JESUS REMINDS US THAT WE ARE IN A SEASON OF WAITING WITH HOPE. HOPE IN THE ONE THAT COMES TO THE RESCUE, HOPE IN THE ONE THAT INVADES OUR CRAZY WORLD AND MAKES IT BETTER. WAITING IS HARD BUT WAITING IS GOOD.

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 7: LEARNING HOW TO WAIT IN THE MOMENT

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 7



WRITTEN BY
CHAD SEIDEL

LEARNING HOW

to wait in the moment

I HAVE A HARD TIME WAITING. WHICH MEANS I DON'T LIKE ARRIVING EARLY WHICH IN TURN MEANS I'M OFTEN NOT ON TIME. WHENEVER I HAVE A FLIGHT TO CATCH, IT'S MY GOAL TO ARRIVE WITH LITTLE TIME TO SPARE SO I DON'T HAVE TO WAIT AROUND. I'VE EVEN BEEN SAVED BY SOME FLIGHT DELAYS WHEN I WOULD HAVE MISSED MY FLIGHT! ALL IN ALL, NOT THE BEST APPROACH AND SOMETHING I NEED TO GET BETTER AT PREPARING FOR, BEING WILLING TO, AND ACTUALLY WAITING.

THIS HAS PLAYED OUT IN DIFFERENT WAYS THROUGHOUT MY LIFE. ONE KEY EXAMPLE WAS WHEN MAKING A SIGNIFICANT CAREER CHANGE. GOD HAD BLESSED ME WITH A SENIOR POSITION WITHIN A BIG COMPANY. FOR THE FIRST COUPLE YEARS IT SEEMED LIKE IT COULD BECOME AN EVEN BETTER POSITION AND OPPORTUNITY TO DO WHAT GOD HAD CREATED ME TO DO, BUT IN THE THIRD YEAR THE PENDULUM SWUNG BACK AND FORTH FROM "THIS IS GREAT!" TO "THIS IS HORRIBLE!" TO "THIS IS GREAT" TO "THIS IS OVER!" THROUGHOUT THAT YEAR I WAS FRUSTRATED AND IMPATIENT - PRAYING THAT GOD WOULD REVEAL WHAT WAS TO COME NEXT AND HOW I SHOULD BEST FOLLOW HIS LEAD. THROUGH THAT TIME, IT ALL SEEMED PRETTY UNCLEAR, BUT THERE WERE OPPORTUNITIES AND SIGNS ALONG THE WAY THAT LED ME TO STEP OUT IN FAITH AND START A NEW COMPANY.



LOOKING BACK, GOD CLEARLY DIRECTED ME AND THE PEOPLE AND CIRCUMSTANCES AROUND THAT TO MAKE THE NEW COMPANY A REALITY. EVEN NOW AFTER ALMOST 10 YEARS, I STILL DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND OR SEE WHAT GOD HAS PLANNED FOR ME AND THE NEW COMPANY TO ACCOMPLISH. I'M WAITING TO SEE THAT REVEALED - AND DAY BY DAY I SEE LITTLE MORE OF IT. I ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT IT'S MUCH MORE ABOUT THE DAILY ENCOUNTERS AND EXPERIENCES ALONG THE WAY THAT BUILD GOD'S KINGDOM, RATHER THAN THE ULTIMATE OUTCOME OR ACCOMPLISHMENT AT THE END. I'M TRUSTING GOD THAT HE LEADS THE WAY AND HIS PURPOSES ARE ACCOMPLISHED.

PSALM 37:3-7 RESONATES WITH ME AND THIS EXPERIENCE, PARTICULARLY "DWELL IN THE LAND AND BEFRIEND FAITHFULNESS" AND "BE STILL BEFORE THE LORD AND WAIT PATIENTLY FOR HIM". RATHER THAN THINKING AHEAD TO ALL THAT I THINK NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED, I SHOULD SIMPLY BE IN THE MOMENT - TRUSTING, WAITING, AND HOPING IN HIM. EVEN IF THAT MEANS ARRIVING A LITTLE EARLY AND WAITING FOR WHAT COMES NEXT!

PSALM 37:3-7

TRUST IN THE LORD, AND DO GOOD;
DWELL IN THE LAND AND BEFRIEND FAITHFULNESS.
DELIGHT YOURSELF IN THE LORD,
AND HE WILL GIVE YOU THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART.
COMMIT YOUR WAY TO THE LORD;
TRUST IN HIM, AND HE WILL ACT.
HE WILL BRING FORTH YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS AS THE LIGHT,
AND YOUR JUSTICE AS THE NOONDAY.
BE STILL BEFORE THE LORD AND WAIT PATIENTLY FOR HIM;
FRET NOT YOURSELF OVER THE ONE WHO PROSPERS IN
HIS WAY,
OVER THE MAN WHO CARRIES OUT EVIL DEVICES!

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NEXT WEEK
WEEK 8: WAITING FOR GOD TO ANSWER

DAYS *of* HOPE

WEEK 8



WRITTEN BY
ALYSSA LANCE

WAITING FOR

— *God to Answer* —

SEASONS ARE EVER CHANGING, FLOWING INTO THE NEXT WITH SWIFT FORCE, BUT MORE OFTEN SLOWLY TRUDGING ALONG FORCING US TO WAIT. THEY CAN BE LONG AND DARK, ROLLING AND CHANGING LIKE A CURRENT. WHAT A BEAUTIFUL REMINDER GOD GIVES US, EVENTUALLY WE WILL COME UP OUT OF IT, OUT OF HIBERNATION AND INTO THE SUNSHINE. BUT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT WE CAN FEEL STUCK AND HOPELESS, UNMOORED, AND ADRIFT.

IN ONE SUCH SEASON LONG AGO I WAS TRAPPED, SEVEN YEARS LONG IN A SUSPENDED STATE OF ANTICIPATION AND LIMBO, A SLOW UNCERTAINTY, WAITING FOR GOD TO ANSWER ME. DAY AFTER DAY, MONTH AFTER MONTH, YEAR AFTER YEAR GOD DID NOT ANSWER ME IN THE WAY I WANTED, THE WAY I EXPECTED. IT TOOK ME FIVE OF THOSE SEVEN YEARS TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE TRUTH THAT GOD WAS ANSWERING ME IN DIFFERENT BETTER WAYS AND IN TIMING OF HIS OWN. I WAS MISSING THE HOPE, JOY, AND NEW GROWTH IN THIS IN BETWEEN. I SPENT MUCH OF THAT SEASON PRAYING WITH WORDS INSTEAD OF WITH A DEEP HEART CONNECTION. I WAS TALKING OVER AND OVER, WAITING FOR A DIRECT ANSWER TO A PROBLEM I WAS STUCK INSIDE. I WANTED A QUICK FIX; I WANTED SOLUTIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER.

MUCH LIKE THE WORLD AROUND US, I WANTED TO GET IN AND GET OUT AND MOVE ALONG. INSTEAD OF FINDING GOD IN THE HOLY MOMENTS AROUND ME, ALLOWING HIM TO UNRAVEL ME. WHEN I WAS TRYING TO QUICKLY SOLVE THIS PROBLEM AND GET OUT OF THE HARD SEASON, I AVOIDED THE DEEP DIFFICULT MOMENTS WHERE GOD WANTED TO GROW ME. THOSE STRETCHES OF TIME ARE WHEN GOD WANTED TO BIRTH SOMETHING NEW AND BEAUTIFUL IN ME, HE WAS NOT GOING TO WORK SUDDENLY. HE WANTED ME TO DWELL, TO LINGER IN THESE MOMENTS WITH HIM WHILE HE DID THE WORK IN MY HEART.



I SPENT YEARS IN SADNESS AND TURMOIL WHEN GOD WANTED ME TO REST AND REMAIN IN HIS DEEP LOVE. HOW CAN WE FIND GOD IN THIS SECRET HOLY PLACE? HOW CAN WE TRUST, ANTICIPATE, WATCH, AND HOPE INSTEAD OF PACE, BE UNSTEADY AND FEEL UNEASY WHILE WE WAIT?

WHAT I FOUND WAS THAT IF I INVITED GOD INTO THE WAITING WITH ME, IF I BEGAN THE WORK OF HAVING AN ACTIVE DEPENDENCE ON HIM THERE WAS A PEACE THAT BEGAN TO SETTLE IN MY SOUL. MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO ASK FOR WHAT I WANTED AND THEN WAIT FOR A DIRECT ANSWER. HENRI NOUWEN SAID IN HIS BOOK THE WAY OF THE HEART, "THE CRISIS OF OUR PRAYER LIFE IS THAT OUR MIND MAY BE FILLED WITH IDEAS OF GOD WHILE OUR HEART REMAINS FAR FROM HIM. REAL PRAYER COMES FROM THE HEART." AND YES, THE LORD WANTS US TO ASK HIM, OUR FATHER FOR THE GOOD THINGS HE WANTS TO GIVE US. BUT IT IS NOT ALWAYS IN OUR TIMING OR IN HIS PLAN. GOD'S WAY IS NOT A RUSH PAST, SKIP AHEAD AND OVER THE PAIN HURT AND UNKNOWN. HE IS NOT A GOD WHO ERASES ALL WOUNDS AS IF THEY NEVER HAPPENED. HE IS THE IN BETWEEN, THE GROANING AND STRETCHING, THE JOURNEY THAT LETS US WRESTLE THROUGH THE PAIN TO PRODUCE SOMETHING NEW AND STRONG WITHIN US. SO, WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE IF WE BEGAN TO PRAY IN A DIFFERENT WAY, A HEART WAY INSTEAD OF ONLY WORDS.

PSALM 27:4-6 SAYS "I WANT TO LIVE MY LIFE SO CLOSE TO HIM THAT HE TAKES PLEASURE IN MY EVERY PRAYER. IN HIS SHELTER IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE, THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME, FOR HE HIDES ME IN HIS HOLINESS. HE HAS SMUGGLED ME INTO HIS SECRET PLACE, WHERE I'M KEPT SAFE AND SECURE- OUT OF REACH FROM ALL MY ENEMIES." (PASSION TRANSLATION) LATER IN VERSE 14 "WAIT FOR THE LORD; BE STRONG, AND LET YOUR HEART TAKE COURAGE; WAIT FOR THE LORD!

WAITING FOR GOD TO ANSWER ME AND NOT HEARING HIM WERE SOME OF THE LONGEST DARKEST YEARS OF MY LIFE. WATCHING ALL THE PEOPLE AROUND ME MOVE FORWARD WITH JOY AND HAPPINESS WHILE I WAS SINKING. I DISCOVERED HOPE WHEN I WAS ACTIVE IN MY DEPENDENCE ON GOD. WHEN I STOPPED ASKING FOR ANSWERS AND BEGAN CONNECTING WITH HIM IN A SECRET QUIET PLACE. THIS IS STILL A PRACTICE FOR ME, I STILL STRUGGLE TO IGNORE THE RUSH AND HURRY OF THE WORLD AROUND ME. BUT WHEN WE SETTLE INTO HIS PRESENCE IN THE WAITING, WHEN WE DON'T RACE PAST THE SEASON WE ARE IN, THERE IS MUCH JOY, HEALING, AND RESILIENCE THAT GOD BEGINS TO DEVELOP IN US.



WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS SPRING FEASTS DEVOTIONAL.

VISIT [CSTONE.LINK/RESOURCES](https://cstone.link/resources) TO DOWNLOAD OTHER DEVOTIONALS AND PRAYER BOOKS CREATED BY OUR CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY