

18-19 Bible Study #16

1/15/19

Exodus 23

Laws concerning Justice

Exodus 23

- **Exodus 23:1-13**

- As discussed **last time**, this first section contains a few more ordinances and the legal requirements for the **Jubilee year** and the **Sabbath rest** *

Exodus 23 (Cont)

- **Exodus 23:14-17**

- Here, we are introduced to the **three feasts of the festival cycle**:
 - Passover (Feast of Unleavened Bread)
 - Pentecost (Feast of Weeks)
 - Tabernacles (Feast of Booths or Sukkot)
- It is very important that we understand these requirements and their impact on the rest of *Salvation History*

Exodus 23 (Cont)

- Christians celebrate *Passover* (not because we are *Judaizers*) because it was on the Jewish feast of *Passover* that Jesus died and rose from the dead
- We also celebrate *Pentecost* because on that day the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles
- To properly understand how those feasts impacted on the early Christians, we must understand what was going on in the first century and how the Jews celebrated these feasts and the Old Testament background for each feast

Exodus 23 (Cont)

- These three feasts were first and foremost “agrarian feasts” and were practiced by the local pagans as well
- Their Jewish significance was related to their parallels and contrasts
- The *Torah* commanded that all three were to be celebrated as “pilgrim feasts” which required all males to appear before God (initially at the tent of meeting and later at the Temple in Jerusalem)

Exodus 23 (Cont)

- This was why there were so many people in *Jerusalem* at the *Passover* during Jesus' passion and at *Pentecost* when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles (Acts)
- Father asked that we make a note here in **Exodus 23:14-17** to **Deuteronomy 16** where there is a more detailed explanation of the requirements

Deuteronomy 16

- It also provides additional details linking the salvific moments to these agrarian feasts
- Father said that we need to understand this to fully appreciate the rest of the *Pentateuch* and Salvation History *

Deuteronomy 16

- **Deuteronomy 16:1-6**

- Provides a reminder for the need for unleavened bread because of the speed of flight from Egypt

Deuteronomy 16:9-12

- Discusses the seven weeks as a reference to Pentecost

- **Deuteronomy 16:13**

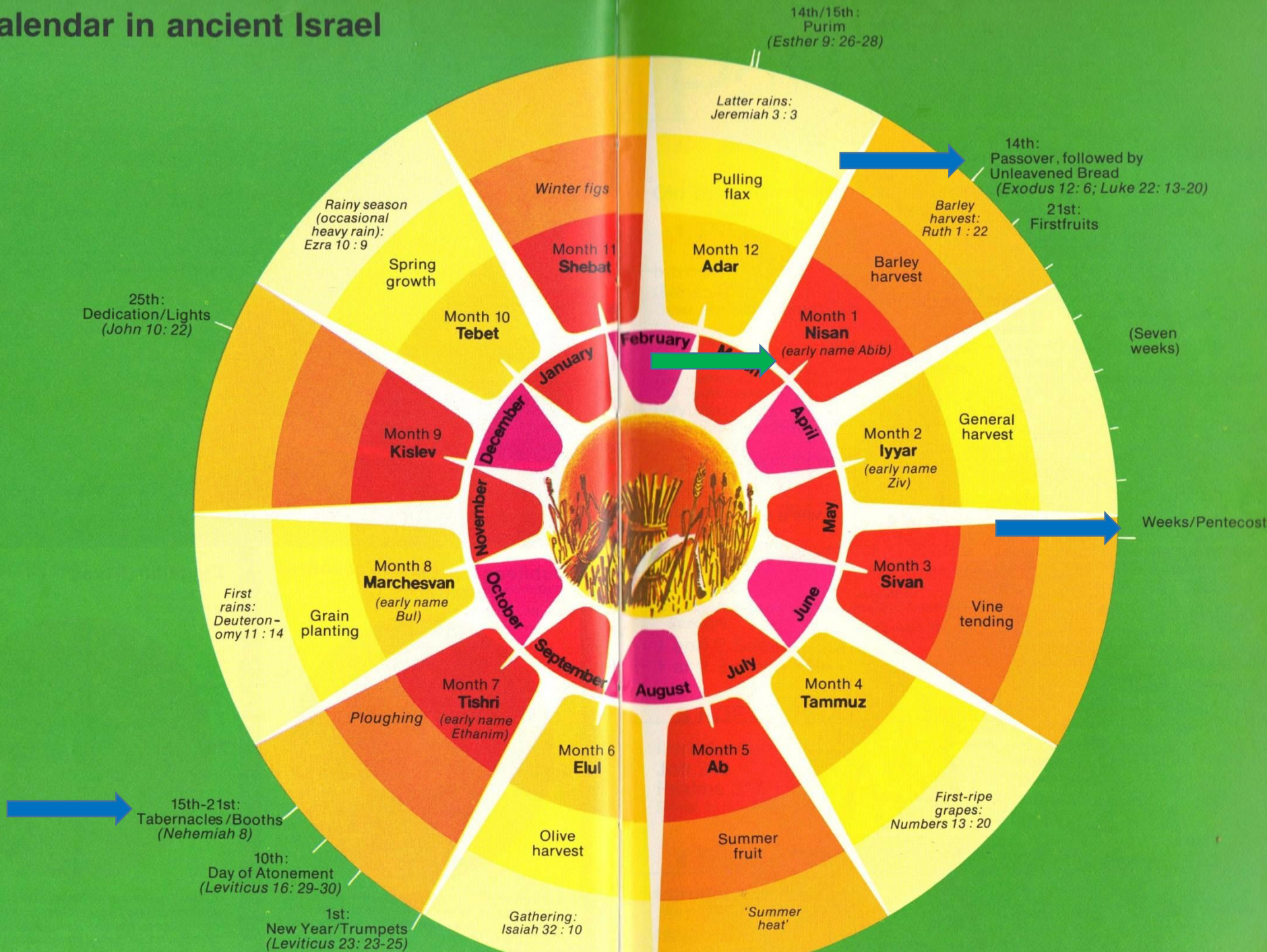
- Presents the duration of the feast of Booths

Deuteronomy 16 (Cont)

- **Deuteronomy 16:16**

- Offers a few more details concerning these as agrarian feasts as well as their salvific moments
- These feasts will come up over and over again in the rest of the Pentateuch and Salvation History
- In fact we still celebrate a good portion of them today
- **Father Sebastian gave an incredible overview of the three feasts** , which I will present
- This will be followed by a few charts summarizing each feast

calendar in ancient Israel



Passover

- Spring (month of *Abib* meaning year of grain)
- First month of the liturgical year
- First green grass after winter was the barley
- A time for hope for the coming year
- At the beginning of the barley harvest, the priests would harvest a small portion and make barley bread to be offered to God as first fruits

Passover (Cont)

- Then they would wait until it was bone dry before harvesting the main crop
 - **Deuteronomy 24:21**
 - **Ruth 2:2-7**
 - **Leviticus 19:9**
- This feast celebrated the time God brought Israel out of Egypt (Israel was harvested by God from the Egyptians)
- It provided them with the first staple food for the year (barley loaves)

Pentecost

- Approximately 50 days after the beginning of the barley harvest they started with the **wheat harvest** (the Feast of *Pentecost* or *Weeks*)
- This enabled them to bake wheat bread which was the main staple of their diet (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- At this point, the weather was hot and the wheat was dry
- After harvesting, threshing, and winnowing, they put the grain into baskets which they placed in their storage tents or barns or caves for the rest of the year
- Then they would celebrate their good fortune

Pentecost (Cont)

- The two feasts were bookends of the grain harvests
- There were armies of harvesters who lived in the fields and slept on the ground at night (Look at the story of *Ruth* and *Boaz*)
- It celebrated the receipt of the true bread, the Law (Torah) from God on *Mt. Sinai*
- It reminded them of the spring time of the nation when God saved them from the darkness and cold of their persecution in *Egypt*

Booths

- The third feast of the year was *Booths, Tabernacle* or *Succoth*
- It celebrated the **final harvest of grapes, olives, dates, and nuts**
- This was the Fall festival (Octoberfest) when it was getting cold with frost requiring a hut made from pruned sticks for a temporary shelter at night
- This feast celebrated God dwelling in a tent (tabernacle) among His people for forty years as they wandered in the wilderness

Booths (Cont)

- This is very important when we get to the New Testament, especially in John's Gospel
 - John sees the fulfillment of this feast when the word became flesh and dwelt among us
 - Jesus was the new *Moses to John*
 - Tabernacle was a major theme for him
 - "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink"
 - John even speaks about this feast
 - More detail of these events can be seen in **Deuteronomy 16**