

that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to wash away sin, that these were but shadows, and that God Himself had provided a lamb for a burnt offering.

SECOND SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*The three great festivals. Lev. 23, 4-6, 15-21, 33-36. Golden Text, John 7-14.*

There were several arrangements common to the three great feasts. 1. Due proclamation of them. Thus the people were prepared to observe them with solemnity. 2. While being observed, holy convocations were held of all the people, solemn and devotional. 3. The forbidding of servile work, to some extent that they might serve the Lord with greater liberty. 4. The convenient times fixed, corresponding to our March, May, September. Not in the winter when days were short and travelling difficult. Not in the summer when the harvest and vintage had to be attended to.

Vv. 4-6. The passover was a perpetual memorial of redemption from Egypt, as it was the type of redemption by the blood of Christ. It was the first of the great feasts, and laid the foundation for the others. Redemption by blood lies at the foundation of all joyous feasting in Christ. The unleavened bread reminded them of their hasty escape. Along with the ordinary offerings, there were offerings by fire. These point to the awful sufferings of Jesus, which should be thankfully remembered.

Vv. 15-21. The feast of Pentecost.

V. 15. The morrow after the Sabbath, i. e. after the first day of the passover week, which was observed as a Sabbath.

V. 16. Fifty days. The forty-ninth day after the presentation of the first fruits, or the fiftieth, including it, was the feast of Pentecost.

Vv. 17-21. These loaves were made of 'fine' or wheat flour, weighing above ten lbs. The wave sheaf gave the signal for the commencement, the two loaves solemnized the termination of the harvest season. Did not the first point to the Resurrection of Christ, the first fruits of them that slept, (1 Cor. 15-20) and the second to the church in its Pentecostal season of grace, 50 days after the resurrection? In the two loaves leaven was mixed, but none in the first wave sheaf. Does not this point to the defective elements in the Pentecostal church, none of which were to be found in the true wave offering, even Christ.

This feast was accompanied with burnt offerings, a sin offering and peace offering. There is a difference in the number of the animals in Numb. 23, 27. Some of them may have been left to the priest. These offerings point to the perfection of the person, righteousness and sacrifice of Jesus, to our unworthiness, to our acceptance in Christ, to our consecration of this to Christ, and to our delightful peace and communion in Christ with God and all believers.

Vv. 33-36. The feast of Tabernacles. During this feast the people dwelt in booths, unless sickness or some other hindrance prevented them. These were erected on the flat roofs of houses, in the streets or fields. While the solid branches were reserved for the construction of the booths, the lighter branches were carried by men who marched in triumphal procession singing Psalms and shouting Hosanna: It was a season of great rejoicing. The drawing of water from the pool, which was done on the last day, seems to have been the introduction of a later period (John 7, 37). It was held in commemoration of the Israelites having dwelt securely in booths or tabernacles in the wilderness. The decrease of the number of bullocks which were sacrificed on the several days of this feast (see Numb. 29, 12-37) until on the last and great day only one was offered seems to point to the gradual passing away of the Mosaic system of sacrifice, into at last the one sacrifice Jesus has offered up.

These feasts were memorial feasts of great joy. Let us remember, rejoice in, the Lord's mercies. They all pointed to Christ. Let us growingly trust, love and rejoice in Him.

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*The Lord's Ministers.—Numbers iii. 5-13.*

Passages to be consulted:—Numbers chs iv., viii., x., xviii.

The heading of this lesson is not strictly correct. The Levites of whom it gives us information did not of themselves constitute the Lord's ministers in the Old Testament Church. They were only a part of the ministry. The priests were also ministers, and more important ministers than the Levites. Indeed the Levites were only assistants to the priests. They were "given to Aaron and his sons" to minister unto him in subordinate and preparatory offices, while he was doing the service of the tabernacle, and generally "to execute the work of the Lord."—*Fairbairn*.

V. 6. They were all of the tribe of Levi, —both priests and Levites—see verses 11 and 12. Aaron and his male descendants were chosen to be priests. The rest of the tribe were at the time our lesson speaks of, called to be a kind of inferior agents in holy things. They entered upon their work at 30 years of age and withdrew at 50. See chapter 4th for this and other points. As to the way in which, or the ceremonies by which, they were set apart to their duties, see chapter viii. 5-23.

Vv. 7, 8. Duties of the Levites.—In a word it was "to do the service of the tabernacle." It fell to them to keep the tabernacle and its instruments in a proper state for the Divine service, to bear its different parts when removing from place to place, to occupy in later times the post of door-keepers in the temple, to take part in the musical arrangements connected with the public service, to assist at the larger feasts in the