

# The PLAN for the People of the WAY!

by Robert Schmid

Who are the People of the WAY? Jesus taught about two ways - the broad way that leads to destruction and the narrow way that leads to life (Mt 7:13-14). He then said: "*I am the Way.*" In other words, People of the WAY are followers of Jesus Christ, for Jesus is the only WAY to God (Jn. 14:6).

But God not only provided the WAY through His first born Son, He also designed and provided a step by step PLAN that will bring the People of the WAY to God. What is that PLAN? That PLAN begins with God giving Ten Commandments to His chosen people – Israel. Only Ten Commandments, but they are all inclusive, defining how to love God through the first four, and how to love neighbor as yourself, through the last six (Ex 20:1-17).

Specifically, the PLAN begins with the fourth commandment that says: "*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*" The fourth commandment is the test commandment for there is no logical reason for this commandment, only: "*If you love me keep my commandments.*" Those who do not remember and keep the weekly Sabbath do not love Jesus. There are few Christians in the world who keep the weekly Sabbath, but there are even fewer who have moved on to keep the annual Sabbaths as well. In Lev 23 the Lord says: "*Say to the people of Israel (US): The appointed feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, **my appointed feasts** are these.*" He then begins with the weekly Sabbath, followed by the seven annual Sabbaths.

The seven annual Sabbaths are divided into three and four and constitute the PLAN for the People of the WAY. The first three annual Sabbaths are: **Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost**. These three annual Sabbaths had their literal fulfillment in the first century and we look back at them when we commemorate and celebrate them.

The PLAN begins with the **Passover** (Nisan 14). The significance of the Passover is that God does something for us that we *cannot* do for ourselves. God passes over our past sins, because we have accepted Jesus Christ who paid the death penalty on our behalf.

The very next day after Passover is the first day of **Unleavened Bread**, a holy day (Nisan 15). The significance of this day is that God now expects us to do something that He will not (cannot?) do for us. Beginning with the first day of Unleavened Bread we must identify and remove leaven, a symbol of sin, from our life. Sin, just as leaven, permeates the whole body and must be removed by identifying sin and the keeping of the commandments. Obviously, the task of removing sin is not just a one day requirement, and so God gave us seven days of Unleavened Bread, symbolic of a lifelong requirement.

As God sees that we are serious about the problem of sin, and knowing that we are powerless to remove sin on our own, He planned for us the third annual Sabbath, **Pentecost** (50 days from Days of Unleavened Bread). On Pentecost God will give us a gift, the gift of His Holy Spirit that will provide us with the power to overcome sin and to keep the commandments.

What is the significance of the first three annual Sabbaths? The significance is that they are designed to change us **personally**.

As we consider the next four, we will see that they have another purpose. The next four annual Sabbaths are: **Trumpets, Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day**. These annual Sabbaths are yet future and we look forward to them as we celebrate them.

The next event in the PLAN is the **Feast of Trumpets** (Tishri 1), when the Trumpet will blow, heard worldwide, and Jesus Christ will return from heaven to earth.

The next event in the PLAN is the **Day of Atonement** (Tishri 10), when one of the first jobs Jesus will perform is to remove Satan as god of the world and banish him for 1000 years to a place where he can deceive the nations no more.

The next event in the PLAN is the **Feast of Tabernacles** (Tishri 15-21), when Jesus Christ will assume ruler-ship of the earth, as King of kings and Lord of lords for the next 1000 years, symbolically represented by the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

The last event in the PLAN is the **Last Great Day** (Tishri 22), when all those who have died without knowledge of Jesus Christ, will be given that first opportunity to accept or reject the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

What is the significance of the last four Annual Sabbaths? The significance is that they are designed to change the **world**.

We have no comprehension of what a world will be like without the influence of Satan, except to know that it will be awesome and very desirable.

So, the PLAN begins with the Passover and the first three annual Sabbaths that had their literal fulfillment 2000 years ago, that are designed to **change us personally**. The PLAN continues with Trumpets and the next four annual Sabbaths that are yet future, that are designed to **change the world**.

Jesus instituted the New Testament Passover on the eve, the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. Later on this same day, in the afternoon, the sinless Son of God was crucified and died for the sinful us.

One may have kept the Passover for many years, but as we can see from our example Jesus Christ, we must keep the *last* Passover before we die. We can know the PLAN and follow the PLAN, but if we do not follow the PLAN to the end and keep our last Passover before we die, it matters not how many Passovers we have kept before. They would have been in vain!

Ultimately The PLAN, for the people of The WAY, is designed to change **physical, sinful, human beings** into **spiritual, sinless, God beings**. May God speed that day.