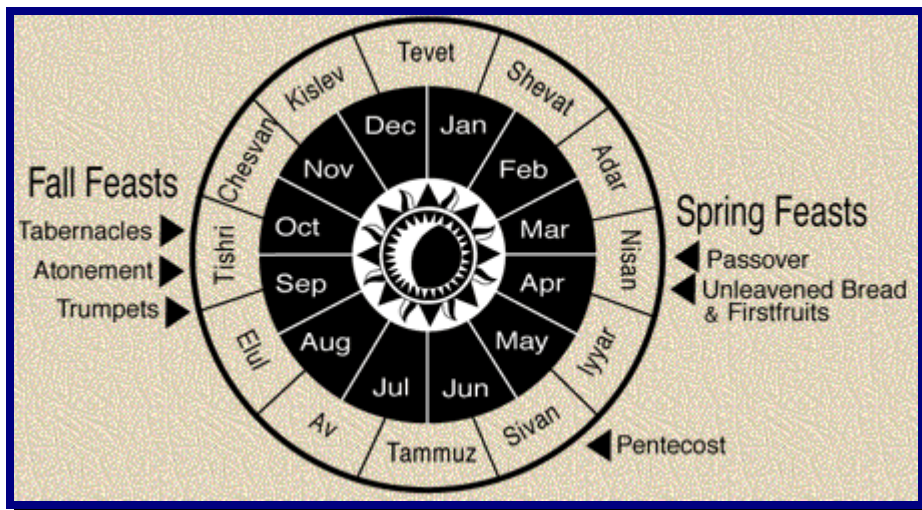


# A Study of Israel's Feasts and Their Prophetic Significance



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**Editor's Notes:** Much of the information in this study of Israel's Feasts is general knowledge, and other commentary came from the editor and from the books *God's Prophetic Calendar*, by Lehman Strauss, published by Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune NJ, ©Copyright 1987; and *The Gospel in the Feasts of Israel* by Victor Buksbaze, published by Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Bellmawr NJ, ©Copyright 2004. Used with permission. Both Dr. Strauss and Dr. Buksbaze have since gone home to be with the Lord. The feast overview charts were used with permission from Peter Wise of Internet Biblical Resources located on the web at [www.biblicalresources.info](http://www.biblicalresources.info). Other sources are noted in the text of the study. Much thanks to missionary Gary Zimmerman for several of the graphics used in this study. All Scripture references are from the *Authorized King James Version*.

Steve Wagner Sr., Editor  
Messiah Ministries, Inc.



# Introduction to the Feasts of Israel and The Passover Feast

The following quote is by the late Dr. Lehman Strauss and is from his book *God's Prophetic Calendar* which is published by Loizeaux Brothers in Neptune, New Jersey. ©Copyright 1987. Used with permission.

*“The idea of a calendar originated with God, but it was for man’s benefit. God does not need a calendar. He is not a victim of time. God did not prepare a calendar to keep Himself informed of His future plans, but He did arrange one for the human race, presenting it first to the young nation of Israel. The calendar God gave Israel shows His plan for the human race beginning with the death of Messiah Jesus at Calvary, followed by His bodily resurrection from death and the grave, His ascension to Heaven, the beginning of the Church at Pentecost, the present Church Age, the appearing of our Lord to translate the Church to Heaven, the Tribulation that follows the Church’s Rapture, the re-gathering and regeneration of Israel, and the return of Messiah to reign on earth. God’s prophetic calendar containing all of the above events is recorded in one chapter of the Bible. All of these future events are located in various parts of the Bible, but in Leviticus 23 they are presented in sequence.”*

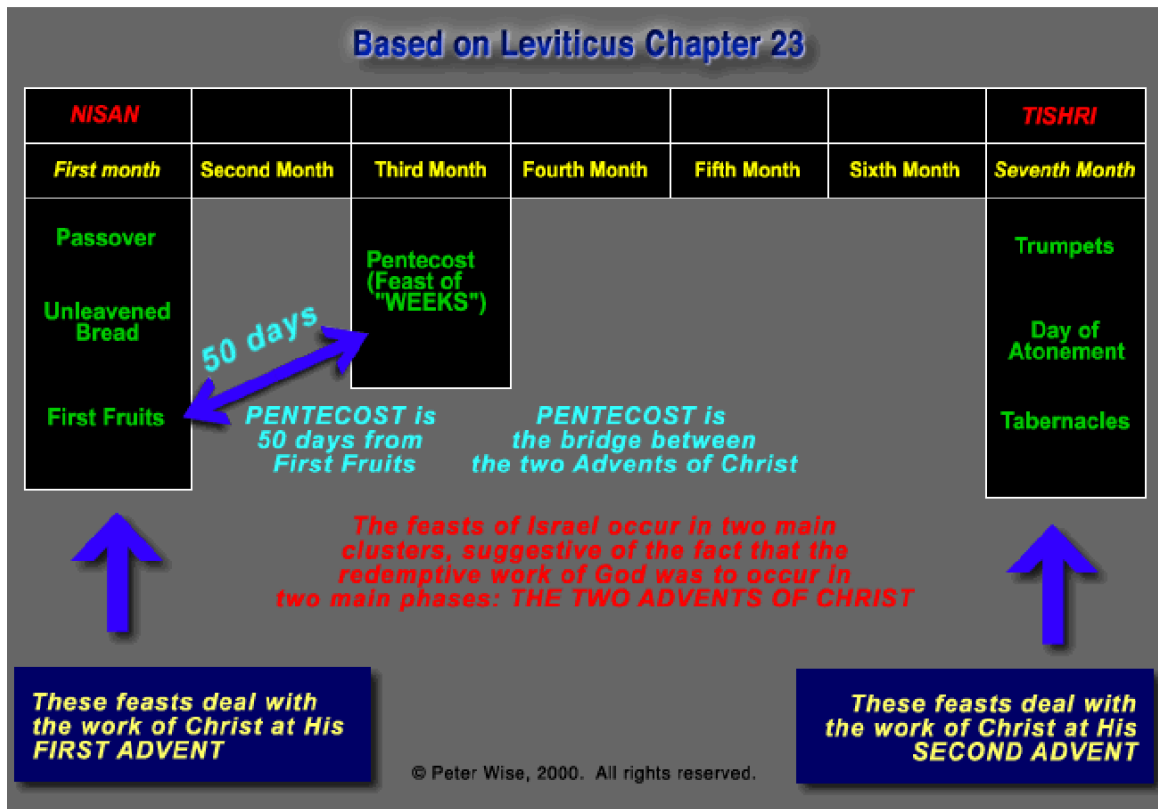


## Introduction to the Feasts

The Feasts and holy days of God are called, in Hebrew, *HaMoyadim* (ha mow ya dimm), the appointed times. These are the specially appointed times for holy days in a year as defined by Leviticus 23:

- ✧ Weekly **Sabbaths**
- ✧ 8 days of **Pesach/Passover** [encompasses Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Firstfruits]
- ✧ 1 day for **Shavuot** [Feast of Pentecost or Feast of Weeks]
- ✧ 1 day for **Yom Teruah** [Feast of Trumpets or Rosh Hashanah]
- ✧ 1 day for **Yom Kippur** [Day of Atonement]
- ✧ 7 days for **Sukkot** [Feast of Booths or Feast of Tabernacles]
- ✧ 1 day for **Shmini Atzeret** [Eighth Day of Assembly]

# Overview of the Seven Feasts



The festivals of the Lord found in Leviticus 23 were given by God so that His people could understand the coming of the Messiah and the role that Messiah would play in redeeming and restoring both man and the earth back to God following the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. The feasts are types or beautiful shadow pictures of God's redemptive work through His only begotten Son, and they also have great prophetic significance. Here in this one chapter of Leviticus, we find more doctrine and prophecy than in any other one single chapter of the Bible.

The major theme of Leviticus is **HOLINESS!** God is holy, He commands that His children live holy, and He has made it possible for us to live holy lives. The holiness of God is the basis for our separation from the world, and we must practice separation in all areas of our lives because God commands us to live holy lives. That includes entertainment, music and church affiliations. When it comes to worship, the question is not "Am I satisfied with my manner and motive of worship?" but rather, "Is God satisfied?" Since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, we can glean some truths here about godly living, and we can also get a glimpse into the future as we study Leviticus 23.

There is a passage in the New Testament with regards to the holy days. We read in Colossians 2:16-17: *"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."* The feasts are not the ultimate goal of faith, and we are to avoid legalism. Yet, they do hold some profound lessons for God's children and are types [shadows, pictures or models] of God's Truth. We find the word *convocation* used ten times in this chapter. It means a "calling together" or "an assembly." The feasts were annual times of fellowship and refreshment for the people of God. Yahweh delights that we come together as His people to express our joy in Him and His precious, eternal Word. We can have fellowship

with God only in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. What Israel did to these feasts by the time of the coming of their Messiah was to make them cold, formal religious festivals, which is seen in many of our churches today. In the Lord's day, the Jews held the feasts, but the Lord was absent. In our day, many churches hold "worship" services and have everything but the Lord.

There is also special reference made here of the ***"males appearing before the LORD."*** The man is to be the head of the house and the leader in spiritual matters. There were three feasts when all the males were to appear before the LORD in Jerusalem: Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. When it came time to go up to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh, they left their lands and went, and they were not to appear before the Lord ***"empty."*** They were to bring sacrificial gifts. God would take care of their lands and needs if they would put Him first. When we don't put God first, we end up being the loser, because God takes care of those who willingly and cheerfully obey His Word.

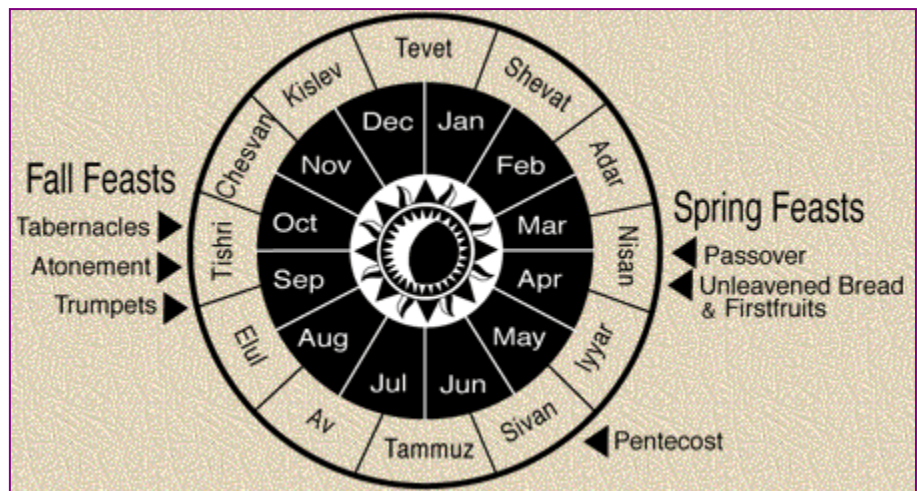
Now, before we get into the study of Israel's feasts beginning with Passover, we should also remember that God gave Israel the Sabbath day as a holy convocation and time of rest. Concerning the Sabbath, Jesus said in Mark 2:27: ***"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."*** It was set apart and blessed as a divine example for the use and benefit of man. And, of course, the Sabbath was included in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8). The following information about the Sabbath is from the *Way of Life Bible Encyclopedia* electronic edition.

*"God first gave the Sabbath as a duty to man in the book of Exodus. It is true that the Sabbath originated at the completion of the creation (Genesis 2:1-3), but that was God's rest, not man's. There is no record in Genesis that God gave the Sabbath to man, and there is no record of men keeping the Sabbath before Israel in the wilderness. Nehemiah 9:13,14 plainly states that the Sabbath was first given to Israel. Seventh-day Adventists teach that men kept the Sabbath from the days of Adam onward, but this is contrary to the Bible's own record. Exodus 31:12-18 says the Sabbath was a special sign between God and Israel. If mankind in general had been given the Sabbath following creation, it could not have been a sign for Israel. The fact is that the Sabbath belongs to the nation Israel and not to any other people. It is also important to note that the Sabbath will be an eternal possession of Israel (Exodus 31:16). This sign will never be annulled or transferred to another people. This explains why the prophets foretell that Israel will keep the Sabbath even after the kingdom of Christ is established on earth (Isaiah 66:23). It also explains why Jesus Christ mentioned the Sabbath in His prophecies of the Tribulation (Matthew 24:20). Practicing Jews in Israel still keep the Sabbath today. In their writings to the churches, the Apostles only mentioned the Sabbath three times. (1) The Sabbath is a symbol of salvation rest in Christ (Hebrews 4). (2) The N.T. believer is not bound to keep the Sabbath (Colossians 2:9-17). (3) The N.T. believer has liberty in the matter of holy days (Romans 14). Those who teach that the Sabbath is binding upon the Christian, are going contrary to what the Apostles taught. Why, then, did Jesus keep the Sabbath? He kept the Sabbath for the same reason He kept all the other Mosaic laws. He also observed the feasts. Jesus did these things because He was born a Jew, born under the law, that He might fulfill it and redeem His people from its penalty and bondage (Galatians 4:4; Romans 9:5)."*

The Sabbath does teach us things appropriate for all people. It acknowledges the moral duty of man to worship His Creator, and it recognizes the basic need of man for a weekly day of rest.

Month	Civil Calendar	Religious Calendar
1	Tishri	Nisan (Aviv- "Spring" in Hebrew)
2	Heshvan or Cheshvan	Iyar
3	Kislev	Sivan
4	Tevet	Tammuz
5	Shevat	Av
6	Adar	Elul
7	Nisan (Aviv or Abib)	Tishri
8	Iyar	Heshvan or Cheshvan
9	Sivan	Kislev
10	Tammuz	Tevet
11	Av	Shevat
12	Elul	Adar

In our study, we also need to understand that Israel has two calendars: one, their *civil calendar*, begins in the fall [Tishri, about September on our calendar]; the other, their *religious calendar*, begins in the spring [Nisan, about April on our calendar]. Religious and civil dating systems were based on both lunar and solar cycles. In the calendar used by Jews today, a day is counted from sunset to sunset, a week comprises 7 days, a month has 29 or 30 days, and a year has 12 lunar months plus approximately 11 days.



In order to bring the calendar in line with the annual solar cycle, a 13th month of 30 days is added in the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th 14th, 17th, and 19th years of a 19-year cycle. Therefore, a leap year may have from 383 to 385 days. The Jewish Era in use today was accepted around the 9th century AD and is based on Biblical calculations placing the creation in 3761 BC.

As we now look at the seven feasts in Leviticus 23:4-44, we would point out that seven is God's number for perfection, holiness, wholeness and completion. The first four feasts, Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, held in the spring, and the late spring or early summer Feast of Weeks or Shavuot, have to do with the first advent of Jesus the Messiah. The long interval between the fourth and fifth feasts [Shavuot & Trumpets], reveal truth of God's dealings with mankind up to and including the present dispensation of the Church. The last three fall feasts, Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles, teach truths concerning a future dispensation and God's future dealings with Israel.

Let's now look at the **Passover Feast**. We see the first feast, which is Passover, as we read in verse 5 of Leviticus 23: *"In the fourteenth day of the first month [Nisan] at even is the LORD's Passover."* Some Bible teachers consider the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread as one feast. That's okay, however,

we can find clear distinctions of purpose in the Scripture's teaching of these two feasts. Consider the following quote from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary on the New Testament*, pp. 258-259:

*"The Synoptic Gospels speak of the meal Jesus ate with His disciples as the Passover meal. But the Gospel of John indicates Jesus died on the Cross at the exact time that lambs were slain in preparation for the nation's Passover meals (John 19:14). This can be explained by the fact that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a seven-day feast following the one-day Feast of the Passover, but sometimes all eight days were called "the Passover" (Luke 2:41; 22:1, Acts 12:3-4), or the seven days were the "Passover Week" (John 19:14). A different explanation is that Jews in the first century followed two calendars in observing the Passover. According to this view Jesus and His disciples observed one date, eating the Passover meal before His crucifixion, whereas most of the nation, including the Pharisees, followed the other calendar in which the Passover lambs were slain on the very day of Jesus' death."*



In the Feast of Passover we find a picture or type of God's plan of salvation for sinners. We see its origin in Exodus 12:1-8 where we find that the Israelites who had been in bondage for over 400 years were delivered by faith in the shed blood and death of a lamb. On that Passover night, while the Israelites ate the lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs, the death angel passed over the houses of the believers who had obeyed God's command to apply the literal blood of a literal lamb to the lintel and doorposts of their houses. The Almighty God spared the lives of Israel's firstborn, but authorized the death-angel to kill all the firstborn of the Egyptians. Sin and death are inseparably linked, for the Bible tells us **"The wages of sin is death..."** (Romans 6:23). Because of God's



unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel), He must provide deliverance of His people from the sentence of death and yet still remain perfectly holy and righteous. The way that God did this was through the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. The first direct reference to the lamb in Scripture is in Genesis 22:8 when Abraham said to Isaac: **"God will provide Himself a lamb."**

**The Passover lamb had to be selected** (Exodus 12:3). This lamb pointed to the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was selected by God to be the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. John the Baptist said of Jesus the Messiah: **"...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29).

**The Passover lamb also had to be spotless.** The Holy Spirit guided the apostle Peter in using the same description of God's Passover Lamb when he wrote: **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot"** (1 Peter 1:18-19). Yeshua [Jesus] was God's perfect Lamb. He knew no sin, but was made to be sin for us that we might be declared righteous in God's sight (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus was God's beloved Son in whom God was **"well pleased"** (Matthew 3:17). The lamb had to be kept up from the 10th to the 14th of the month to test it to make sure there was no blemish in it. Jesus' life was also a period of testing. By His life, He showed that He was God's perfect Lamb and could be the substitutionary atonement for sinners. Even wicked Pilate could find no fault in Him.

**The Passover lamb had to be slain.** The spotless life of our Lord Jesus Christ was not enough to atone for our sin. He had to be slain. He had to shed His blood and die for our sins. We are neither saved by the love of God nor by the life of the Son of God, but by the blood of the Lamb of God. One day we will be able to join in the angelic host around God's throne to sing *"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"* (Revelation 5:12). Certainly, our blessed Redeemer, the Lamb of God, Jesus the Messiah, is worthy of our total surrender and commitment to do His will.

**The Passover lamb had to be a substitute.** The lamb had to die in the place of the sinner. We see this in the very beginning of time when God had to slay an animal to clothe Adam and Eve after their sin. Substitution is a great doctrine in the Scriptures. We read Romans 5:8: *"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* Salvation is a personal matter. When we repented of our sin and believed into the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ and received Him as our one and only Redeemer, we were identifying with our sin-substitute.



**The blood of the lamb also had to be applied.** In both the Old and New Testaments, several passages speak of sprinkling the blood. The lamb must be slain and the blood shed, but it had to be applied personally **by faith**. When the Hebrew children slew the lamb and applied the blood to the door posts and lintel, they went through the door of their houses by faith and waited for God's deliverance. Jesus said in John 10:9: *"I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..."* Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, has shed His precious blood for the sins of the whole world. He has died for all, but His blood and death are only sufficient for those who apply it by faith. The blood was the

Israelite's protection, for God said: *"When I see the blood I will pass over you."* When we, by faith, apply the finished work of Jesus the Messiah through His shed blood and death upon the Cross at Calvary to our hearts, we too have the assurance of eternal salvation and security.

The Passover marked the new beginning on Israel's calendar. God said in Exodus 12:2: *"This month shall be the beginning of months to you."* When a believing sinner can say in sincerity and truth that *"Christ my Passover is sacrificed for me"* (1 Corinthians 5:7-8), he is born again. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature..."* (2 Corinthians 5:17). We have been bought by God, and the price was the precious blood of the Lord Jesus the Messiah, the spotless Lamb of God.

It is from this Feast of Passover that we get our communion service. We can have communion with God through the blood and bodily death of the Passover Lamb, Yeshua the Messiah; and it is because of His bloody death upon the Cross and His bodily resurrection that we too will be delivered from death to come and enjoy the presence of God for eternity. We now have access to God's throne, the Holy of Holies, through the finished work of Messiah Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God. As the songwriter N. B. Herrell put it: *"O, Behold the Man of Sorrows, O, Behold Him in plain view. Lo, He is the mighty Conqueror, since He rent the veil in two."* AMEN!



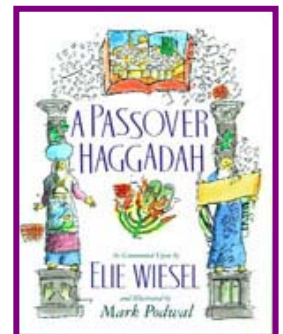
## Passover Today



As we said earlier, Passover is the oldest of all the Jewish holidays and marks the beginning of the religious calendar. The Biblical background is found in Exodus chapters 12, 13 and 14. There is no real Passover today because there is no Temple and no sacrificial system in Israel as of yet, though preparations are being made for these things in the future. There was only one actual Passover—only one occasion when the blood was applied to the door posts and the lintels of believing homes—only once that the Lord’s death-angel went through Egypt to smite the firstborn where the blood was not applied. So, according to Exodus 12:14, every succeeding Passover was to be a memorial of that first Passover. Today, the Passover Feast is a home service by the family, and Father or Papa is in charge. The family, and usually the local synagogue, will hold a Seder service during Passover. The Passover Seder has a theme of redemption and deliverance. *Seder* is the Hebrew word for “order.” The service will follow a certain order as we shall see.

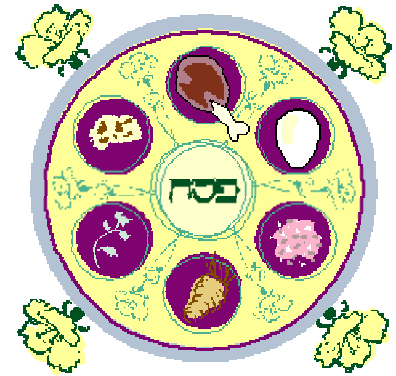
When Moses received the instructions from the Lord, he communicated them to the elders, who in turn communicated them to the heads of the families so that the whole congregation would know what God required to bring about their deliverance. Biblical instruction is a very vital part of a child’s life. It is even more important than ever today as we see the truth of God’s Word distorted and denied. Parents must know the meaning and significance of this important teaching of the Passover Feast to be able to present it to their children. Dad, do your children know what God requires for them to be truly saved and delivered from the wrath to come? Mom and Dad, do you set such an example before your children that they ask you to explain to them the meaning of following Christ? Parents have an important responsibility to lead their family in the ways of the Lord through instruction and by example.

The two main parts of the service are (1) **Seder**—order of service which entails the eating of the meal and the order that will be followed; and (2) **Haggadah**—which is the story that goes along with the meal. The word *Haggadah* means “telling,” and it is the recounting of the story of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The Haggadah is a script of what the leader and participants should say and the order of eating and drinking during each part of the meal as it tells the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The story of redemption that God provided for His people Israel is also the story of every Christian’s redemption through God’s grace by the death, burial and resurrection of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus.



In preparation for Passover, the house has to be purged of all leaven, which is a type of evil or sin. This can be quite a task for the observant Jews. In many of the Orthodox Jewish homes, Mama leaves ten little pieces of leaven around the house purposely. They represent the ten sons of Haman who was going to destroy the Jews. [See the book of Esther]. A search with a candle is conducted throughout the house. As the leaven is found the father or grandfather will carry a wooden spoon and feather and will sweep up the leaven into the spoon. The leaven is then put into a napkin, and these items are taken outside and burned. The house has now been cleansed of leaven.

On the table is a **ceremonial plate** with certain items on it. Originally, there were only three items on the table—(1) **the Passover lamb**, (2) **the bitter herbs**, and (3) **the unleavened bread**. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., some other items were added for symbolism.



First we will mention the **shank bone of the lamb**. Rabbis say this is a picture of the Passover sacrifice. The shank bone is dry and tasteless and does not satisfy the physical appetite; just as Judaism without their Messiah brings no satisfaction to the spiritual appetite and is lifeless. Religion without Christ brings no peace and satisfaction to the sin-sick soul. There has been no acceptable sacrifice since Messiah's death on the Cross of Calvary. Jesus the Messiah was the last Passover Lamb accepted by God. He was the Supreme Sacrifice who died once for all, and God the Father showed His approval by the resurrection of His only begotten Son from the grave three days later. Jesus the Messiah, as the Lamb of God, is our sin-substitute. If you are saved today, it is because you have identified with Christ, the spotless Lamb of God, as your own personal sin-substitute. Blood has to be shed for the remission of sins. Good deeds [*mitzvahs*] are no substitute for the blood sacrifice. Even the average non-Jew thinks he or she can get to Heaven by doing good things. The only deliverance from the bondage of sin is through the blood of the Lamb of God.



Also on the plate we find a **roasted egg**. Some believe this is a good picture of the lamb that had to be "**roasted whole**" with not a bone broken (Exodus 12:46). Some rabbis tell us it is a picture of the hardened heart of Pharaoh who refused to let God's chosen people go until God smote Egypt with the death of the firstborn. Some say it is a symbol of life and freedom. It's like the shell of the egg cracking and the baby chick coming out



to run free, just as the Hebrews were set free from bondage to go to their Promised Land. Still other rabbis point out that it is to remind them of the "voluntary peace offering" that was to be given on the second day of Passover.



There is also a mixture of apples, almonds, cinnamon, and the fruit of the vine on the plate. This mixture is called **charoset**. It represents the mortar the Israelites had to make to build the Egyptian cities. The apples represent the sweetness of a better world. Out of the pressure of their bondage has come sweetness and deliverance. The word *Gethsemane* means "olive press." We are told in the Gospels that our Savior sweat great drops of blood there as He contemplated going to the Cross and becoming sin for us. We have been cursed by sin, but thank God, Jesus the Messiah has taken the curse for us. He allowed that crown of thorns to be beaten down upon His head for us. He allowed those spikes to be driven through His hands and feet for us. He suffered the shame and disgrace of the Cross and the forsaking of His heavenly Father for us. Jesus

became sin for us in order that we might be justified or declared righteous in God's sight (2 Corinthians 5:21). Out of this pressure our Savior experienced at Calvary has come the sweetness of the gift of eternal life and deliverance from the bondage of sin.

Another item we find on the ceremonial plate is **karpas** or fresh greens [usually parsley or celery]. This symbolizes the new life for the Jewish people and also represents the hyssop that was used to apply the blood of the Passover lamb to the lentil and doorposts. If the Jews had failed to apply the blood of the Passover lamb, then death would enter their homes. This involved a decision on the part of the people



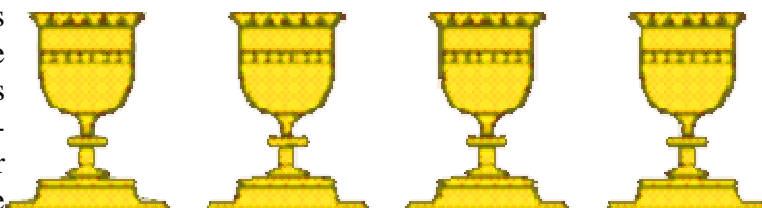
to be obedient to all that God had instructed. Jesus the Messiah has shed His blood for all. He tasted death for every person, but only when a person applies it personally by faith does it effectively cleanse sin. Salvation has always been by God's grace through faith. If I were the firstborn son, I would have made sure that Dad applied plenty of blood so there would be no doubt when the death-angel passed over. God's Word, the Bible, clearly instructs us that repentance of sin and faith in Messiah's shed blood and resurrection are the only means of salvation (Acts 20:21).



On the ceremonial plate we would also have some **maror (bitter herbs)**. The bitter herbs, usually horseradish, speak of the bitterness the Israelites suffered as slaves in Egypt. It also reminds us of the bitterness of sin. Horseradish is not so bad when you first take a bite, but the more you chew it the more bitter it becomes. Sin is not so bad at first, but it becomes bitter, and we try to find a way to be delivered of it. The only way to be delivered from sin is to be washed in the blood of the Lamb of God. Only God can forgive and wash away our sins. We read in 1 John 1:9: ***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*** God can do this on the basis of what His only begotten Son did upon the Cross. It is ***“...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son that cleanseth us from all sin”*** (1 John 1:7).

There is a **dish of saltwater** available to those seated at the table. The saltwater speaks of the tears that were shed and of the sweat that came from the Israelites' years of slavery. It reminds them of the days of hardness. Think of all the tears that have been shed because of the bondage of sin. Sin pays its wages and is a hard taskmaster. The water also reminds them of the Red Sea that was parted for them as they left the land of Egypt and Pharaoh's army behind.

There are **four cups**, or rather, four times when the individuals at the table drink the fruit of the vine from the cup. Some reports indicate that possibly unfermented raisin-wine was the only acceptable beverage for Passover. Today only kosher wine or grape juice is used for Passover. These four cups are called:



1. **The cup of sanctification**
2. **The cup of rejoicing or thanksgiving**
3. **The cup of redemption**
4. **The cup of communion or coming Kingdom**

These cups recall the four expressions of redemption mentioned in the Bible in Exodus 6:6-7. God tells Moses to tell the people of Israel: (1) ***“I will bring you out...”*** (2) ***“I will rid you out of bondage...”*** (3) ***“I will redeem you...”*** and (4) ***“I will take you to Me for a people...”*** This is a beautiful picture of what the Lord has done for us in redeeming us. By His blood, He has purchased us and brought us out of the slave market of sin, set us free from the bondage of sin, and taken us unto Himself by making us His child by faith.



There is also a large cup on the table called the **Cup of Elijah**. It is believed that on Passover night that Elijah will come and announce the coming of the Messiah, hence a place is set for him at the table.

There is a plate or plates on the table containing **matzoth** or unleavened bread. As we have already mentioned, leaven in the Bible speaks of evil and sin. Having been redeemed from Egypt, the Jewish nation was to put away “leaven”—their former manner of life—and live a holy life unto the Lord. To the new nation God said: *“And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy...”* (Leviticus 20:26). *“For such [is Messiah Jesus] an high Priest...who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens”* (Hebrews 7:26). For those who have received the Lamb of God, the Scripture



says that we are to consider ourselves dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. [See Romans chapter 6]. We are not to let sin reign in our body that we should obey it. *“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”* (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8). There is also a **matzah tosh** [Afikomen bag or unity bag], which contains three pieces of



matzah. Each piece of matzah is separated into its own compartment inside of the bag. We will say more about that in a moment when we discuss the service as it takes place in the home.

As the Passover Seder is ready to be observed in the Jewish home, Papa is usually seated and comfortable before anyone else is seated. To begin the service the lady of the house will kindle the candles and say a blessing thanking God, the King of the universe, for sanctifying them and allowing them to kindle the festival light. She thanks God for preserving them and enabling them to reach this season. Jewish women are taught that it was through a woman [Eve] that darkness came into the world since she was deceived by the serpent. Adam knew what he was doing when he went along with Eve and partook of the forbidden fruit. Thus, Jewish women light the candles for all of the Sabbaths and holy days and pray for the restoration of light to the world. We know that through Eve being deceived and Adam’s willingness to go along with her brought sin and death into the world; but it was through another woman, the Virgin Mary, that God brought light into the world through His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus the Messiah, God in the flesh. [See John 1:1-14].



After the lighting of the candles and the blessing, the head of the house takes the first cup, the **cup of sanctification**, and gives thanks by saying the *Kiddush* or blessing. The Kiddush speaks about God’s choosing Israel and setting them apart as His chosen people. Everyone then partakes of the first cup of juice which represents the first “I will” in Exodus 6: *“I will bring you out.”* The host puts on the *kittel* [white coat] and *kipah* [head covering or *yarmulkah*] and there is the ceremonial washing of the hands [*Urchatz*] in the bowl of water. The *kittel* is worn on occasions of solemnity. It may be worn on a wedding day, or for burial, Yom Kippur and on Passover. It is a symbol of purity and freedom, and



on Passover, freedom from human misery. It is white, because that is the color for royalty in Jewish tradition. It is the father who wears it since he is the initiator of the Passover—the story of redemption.

The parsley or celery is now dipped into the salt water and passed around for all to partake. This is a picture of God parting the Red Sea so that Israel could enter the new land. As the wine or grape juice is red and represents the blood of the lamb, the greens also represent the hyssop which was used to place the blood upon the door posts and lintels.

Next, the father takes the middle matzah from the matzah tosh or unity bag, breaks it, wraps one half in a napkin and sets it aside to be hidden away secretly during the meal, and the other half is placed in the matzah dish. This piece of matzah is known as the *Afikomen*, and we will say more about that in a moment. The father now holds up the matzah bag and gives a blessing called the *Maggid*. The blessing says: “*This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt; let those who are hungry, enter and eat thereof, and all who are in distress, come and celebrate the Passover. Now we are here, but next year may we be in the land of Israel...*” This prayer is among the oldest in the Haggadah, from before the destruction of the Temple.



The second cup of juice is poured [but not drunk at this time], and now begins the reciting of a form of thanksgiving called *Haggadah*. This will tell the story of Passover. There are four questions which are to be asked, usually by the youngest member of the family about why this night is different from other nights: (1) **Why do we eat unleavened bread on this night?** (2) **Why do we eat bitter herbs on this night?** (3) **Why do we dip our vegetables twice on this night?** (4) **Why do we eat our meals reclining on this night?**

The father goes on to answer the questions by telling how their forefathers were slaves in Egypt for 400 years. They eat unleavened bread because they left Egypt in a hurry. We eat bitter herbs to remind us of the bitterness of slavery. We dip twice because the karpas reminds us of the hyssop. Salt water represents the tears of the people. The bitter herbs with the charoset represent the bitterness of slavery being sweetened by the hope of freedom. We sit reclining this night because we have been set free and are no longer slaves.

There is also at this time a reciting of the ten plagues that God poured out on Egypt to bring about Israel’s deliverance. As each plague is mentioned, each individual may dip a finger and drop ten drops [reciting a plague with each drop] onto a plate to show the “finger of God” in His judgment. It is also during this time that they may sing a song or chant Psalms 113 & 114.

The second cup, the **cup of rejoicing or thanksgiving**, is raised and the host recites a blessing extolling and blessing God for delivering their ancestors “from bondage to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from darkness to great light, and from servitude to redemption; and therefore let us sing unto Him a new song, Hallelujah!” This cup represents the second of four “I wills” in Exodus 6:6, 7: “***I will rid you out of bondage...***” Everyone raises their cups and recites the blessing: “*Blessed art Thou, O Eternal, our King of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine,*” and then they all partake the cup of rejoicing together. The host then ceremonially washes his hands again. This is the cup referred to in Luke 22:17: “***And He took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves.***”

Now the matzah cakes are broken and served around the table, and a piece of the bitter herbs is dipped into the charoset and given to each person, which reminds them of the bitter bondage. Then all take two pieces of matzah and put some bitter herbs in between the two pieces in a sandwich-like fashion and dip it in the charoset. This comes from Exodus 12:8, which says that “***with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs shall eat it.***” This is the sop which our Lord handed to Judas Iscariot during the Last Passover Supper, “***who when he had received it, went out to betray the Lord***” (John 13:30).

Next is the serving of the meal. There are several courses of good food and much rejoicing around the table. After the meal, the search is made for the Afikomen by the children. Among the Jewish people the Afikomen was a symbol for the Passover lamb, and they eat it in memory of that Passover lamb.

You remember the middle matzah of the three matzoth in the unity bag was broken; one piece was wrapped in a napkin and hidden away and only the father knows where it is. When held up to the light you can see that matzah is pierced and it has stripes. Isaiah 53 tells us: “...with **His stripes we are healed.**” Zechariah 12 tells us: “**They shall look on Him whom they have pierced.**” There is a great picture of the Trinity here, and the Jews do not realize it. The rabbis say that the three matzoth in the unity bag stand for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or for God, the high priest and the people. If they speak of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then the middle one speaks of Isaac the son of Abraham who was offered up as a sacrifice and is a picture of the Messiah. If it stands for God, the high priest and the people, then the middle piece represents the high priest who represents the people before God. Jesus the Messiah is our High Priest who represents us before God, and who has reconciled us to God.



What we have here is a beautiful picture of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The middle matzah is always broken and wrapped in a napkin and hidden away by the father. Our Lord's body was broken for us, wrapped in the burial cloths, and laid in a tomb, and only the Father knew where He was. Jesus said in John 6:35: “**I am the bread of life...**”

The Jewish people can't explain how this Greek word, *Afikomen*, got into their Hebrew service. Its Greek meaning can be understood as “that which is coming,” like dessert; yet in one tense of the word it can mean “he who is coming.” According to Jewish tradition, Messiah will come at Passover to bring a redemption like unto the redemption brought through Moses.

A generation before the Temple was destroyed, One who observed the feast in that upper room, “**took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me’**” (Luke 22:19). The ultimate redemption did come at Passover. It wasn't a redemption from an earthly oppressor and an earthly bondage, but a spiritual deliverance from Satan, sin, and death. “**If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed**” (John 8:36). We too can give thanks because we have been brought from the kingdom darkness into kingdom of the Son who is the light of the world.

When the child finds the Afikomen, he or she is rewarded—usually with money. When we discover the great truth of the resurrected Savior and believe upon Him, we are rewarded with eternal life. “**...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (Romans 6:23). At the table the father holds up the broken Afikomen and invites all to partake. Christ, who has died for the whole world, invites whosoever will to come to Him and receive the gift of eternal life by repentance of sin and faith in His shed blood, death, burial, and resurrection.

A rabbi explained the Afikomen as follows: (1) *It is special—not like any others. It is hidden away and then found.* (2) *It is brought out and displayed for everyone to see.* (3) *It is to be eaten during the meal.* (4) *Once you eat it, it is customary that you eat nothing else; it is the symbol of the Passover lamb, which was eaten last.*

The Jews sing a song during Passover called “Dayenu.” This Hebrew word, *Dayenu*, means “it would have been enough.” Part of the song says this: “*If He had taken us out of Egypt but had not punished them, Dayenu. He killed their firstborn...He split the Red Sea...He supplied our needs...He fed us the Manna...He brought us to Mount Sinai...He gave us the Torah...He brought us to the Promised Land...*” and the refrain of “*Dayenu, Dayenu, Dayenu—it would have been enough!*” How wonderful it is that the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus the Messiah, is enough to save us from our sin and give us eternal life. It has power to cleanse us from all sin. Like the little girl who misquoted Psalm 23 when she said, “The Lord is my Shepherd, He’s all I want.” What a glorious truth in the Afikomen.

Now the third cup, the **cup of redemption**, is filled. This cup represents the third of four “I wills” in Exodus 6: “***I will redeem you...***” It is this cup after supper that Jesus raised and stated: “***This cup is the new testament of My blood, which is shed for you***” (Luke 22:20). Jesus’ blood has redeemed us from our sins. The blessing of the cup is then said and everyone partakes of the third cup.



Now Elijah’s cup is filled and a child is sent to the door to see if Elijah is there, because the Jewish tradition teaches that it is on Passover night that Elijah will come and announce the coming of the Messiah. [A converted Jew the editor knows tells how he used to be scared to death to open the door because he didn’t know what he would do if Elijah were there]. The remainder of the Hallel Psalms (115-118) are now sung. It is here that our Lord’s farewell discourse took place. The father stands and announces that “*all things are ready, and they are waiting.*” After a few moments, the door is closed.

Now the fourth cup is filled which is the **cup of communion or coming Kingdom**. It represents the fourth “I Will” in Exodus 6: “***I will take you to Me for a people.***” To Israel, this cup represents the hope of the Kingdom and Israel’s glory restored. Our Lord told His disciples at the end of His last Passover meal: “***Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God***” (Mark 14:25). The host now gives the final blessing on the fourth cup and all drink the cup together.



What a sad picture of the Jewish families, who, year after year, have been opening the door of their homes in hope that Elijah will come to announce the coming of the Messiah. They may have their stomachs full, but if they don’t know their Messiah by faith, their hearts are still empty. What they need to do is open their hearts’ doors and let Messiah Jesus into their lives by faith. Thank the Lord many have done that.

Just as the candle is used to search the house for leaven, God’s Word is the light that will expose the leaven of sin in our temple of the body where the Holy Spirit dwells. First Corinthians 5:6-8 teaches us to purge out the leaven in our lives and be a new unleavened lump for the Lord so that we can serve the Him in sincerity and in truth. It is very important for us to know what God’s Word is saying to us about redemption from sin through believing in the atoning work of Messiah Jesus on the Cross of Calvary and applying it personally. It is only through that blood that we can be ransomed and set free from the bondage of sin.

If you are wandering from God today and lost in your sin, you can be brought into a right relationship with God [reconciliation] through the power of the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus the Messiah. If you end up in the lake of fire, it will be because you chose to trample underfoot the Son of God and reckoned His blood as something unworthy. [See Hebrews chapter 10]. The foundation of God’s mercy, compassion and grace is found in the blood sacrifice.

There was a great deliverance and departure after the Passover. If you are not saved, you can come to Christ the Redeemer and Lamb of God today by faith and be delivered from the bondage of sin. You can depart from the old life of death and darkness and be on your way to the Promised Land—Heaven.

Christians, let us thank, extol and glorify our great and good God—Yahweh—that “*Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.*” This is the message that both Jew and Gentile need to hear, and may we be faithful in proclaiming it. *Dayenu!*



## **“God's Perfect Lamb”**

by  
Ron Hamilton

**God spoke to Israel, “Bring Me a sacrifice,  
Morning and evening, ev’ry day.  
Offer a spotless lamb, without a blemish.  
This is the command you must obey.”**

**Daily the lambs were brought. Daily the blood was shed,  
Laid on the altar built by man.  
Then at the perfect time, God said to Israel,  
“I will now provide the perfect Lamb.”**

**At God’s appointed time, Jesus, Messiah, came  
To make the sacrifice for all sin.  
No longer bring a lamb, Jesus has paid the price,  
Clap your hands and let your psalms begin!**

### **CHORUS:**

**Sing Hallelujah! Praise to Jehovah!  
Worship the God of Abraham!  
Sing Hallelujah! Praise to Jehovah!  
Once for all is slain God’s perfect Lamb!**

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## Feast of Unleavened Bread



*“And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the **feast of unleavened bread** unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread”* (Leviticus 23:6).

The **Feast of Unleavened Bread**, or *Hag HaMatzot*, began the day following Passover. The fifteenth day began immediately after sunset, so that there was actually no lapse between the first and second feasts. Sometimes confused with Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is directly linked to the Passover, yet it is actually a feast in itself.

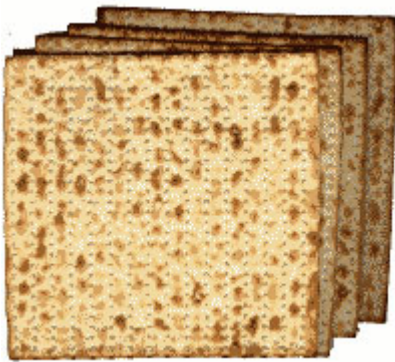
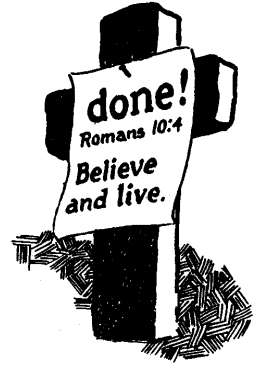
In Biblical days the feast was observed from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Nisan [March/April]. Israelis and Reform Jews today still keep the feast for seven days, while most Jewish people of the dispersion observe the feast for eight days.

During the days of the Temple, special burnt offerings, grain offerings, and sin offerings were presented to the Lord during the days of Unleavened Bread (Numbers 23:17-25), but since the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., these offerings are no longer included in the feast.

The first and last days of the festival were considered holy days in which no work, except that which was necessary for daily sustenance, was to be performed (Exodus 12:16). Not working on these days pictures Israel entering into the reality of what Yahweh had freed them from—slavery. He has freed us from slavery to sin, and we are to walk in that freedom, trusting Him, for holiness, peace and life; allowing Him to make us to be conformed into the image of His only begotten Son, Yeshua. Truly God has provided everything necessary for our redemption. There is nothing we can do to earn it.

Leaven in the Scriptures represents sin and evil. Unleavened bread represents that which is without sin. Only Jesus the Messiah is described in the Bible as One who had no sin. He was the *“righteous branch of David”* who had done no wrong (Isaiah 53:9), and He alone could lay claim to the Messiahship. Even His enemies could not find any fault in Him (John 8:46). Because mankind was dead in trespasses and sins, only someone who was spiritually alive could die for those who were spiritually dead. That is why on Him, Jesus, was *“laid the iniquity of us all”* (Isaiah 53:6).

Because of the sacrificial death of Jesus the Messiah, the sinless Lamb of God, we are freed from sin and death. Redemption's work has been finished (John 19:30). Because of the blood of the Lamb, we can be cleansed from all sin and become unleavened. We now have access into the Holy of Holies, that is, the very Throne of God, through Jesus the Messiah who is our High Priest. *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* (Hebrews 9:22-14).



Matzah is called the bread of affliction. Because of the heat of the racks on which it is baked, there are stripes burned on it, and the matzah is pierced. This reminds the Jewish people of their affliction in the *"iron furnace"* of Egypt. It reminds us that Jesus *"was wounded [pierced] for our transgressions"* and *"with His stripes we are healed"* (Isaiah 53:5). We too are to humble ourselves and submit ourselves to our Father in Heaven. In so doing, we become like the Lord Jesus the Messiah who was afflicted and learned obedience through His suffering. [See Hebrews 5:8]. Jesus is the living Bread of Life from Heaven who was afflicted for us, and this feast presents a picture of the character of the believer's life after he has received Christ. The Israelite was not

saved by putting away the leaven, but he put away the leaven because he was saved. The Israelites, as well as we who are redeemed, have the responsibility to live like a people who have been redeemed by the Lamb of God. We must cultivate fellowship with God in our daily walk, and we can only do that by obediently putting away the leaven or sin out of our lives and becoming a new lump for the Lord. We read in 1 Corinthians 5:6-7: *"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."* We will never experience the full joy of our salvation until we put away the leaven out of our lives. Our fellowship with God is based on practical holiness. Passover presents the doctrine of salvation and Unleavened Bread presents the doctrine of sanctification. These are two doctrines that are not to be separated. As God's children we are called "Saints." That means we are to be separated or set apart for God. As the old preacher said, "You are either a saint or an aint." Dr. Lehman Strauss, in *God's Prophetic Calendar*, points out how the Bible teaches us that there are three stages in the believer's sanctification (pp.41-51):

**1. Positional Sanctification.** When a person repents and believes the gospel message and is truly saved, that person is at once set apart by the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 6:11). Positional sanctification is the standing of every child of God. We have been set apart by God in order that we might live a holy life.

**2. Practical Sanctification.** This is the emphasis of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We should practice what we are positionally. *"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification... For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness"* (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7). It comes to us by means of a learning process. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, and the Word of God is the instrument He uses. *"Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you"* (John 15:3). *"Sanctify them through Thy truth,*

***Thy Word is truth***” (John 17:17). As we obey the Scriptures in our practical living, we are becoming more like Christ and setting ourselves apart to the purpose for which God saved us.

**3. Perfect Sanctification.** Perfect in holiness is the ultimate in sanctification. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord said to His disciples, ***“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect”*** (Matthew 5:48). God only is perfectly holy. Perfection is our goal, and even though we will not attain it in this life, we must strive day by day to improve in practical holiness. There is coming a day when we ***“shall be changed”*** (1 Corinthians 15:51), and ***“when He (Jesus) shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is”*** (1 John 3:2).

As believers we must be aware of the leaven of deceit, hypocrisy, unholy living, moral corruption, and false doctrine. Just as the Israelites were saved by the blood of the lamb and then were to feast on the lamb, we who are saved by the blood of Jesus the Messiah must keep this feast, as Paul says in First Corinthians 5, by feasting on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as food and drink sustain us physically, so Christ sustains us spiritually as we walk in close communion with Him. It means we feed on the Word of God which is both milk and meat (Hebrews 5:12-14). Jesus said: ***“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life”*** (John 6:63). The Word of God has the power to save the sinner, and it has the power to sustain, strengthen, and sanctify the saint. Jeremiah said: ***“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart”*** (Jeremiah 15:16). The Christian who neglects the regular reading and studying of the Bible is not going to grow well spiritually. We must daily feed upon the Word of God if we are going to make progress in our practical sanctification and be more conformed to the image of our Savior the Messiah.

It is also important that we learn those Scriptures which point out the severe penalty for finding leaven in the Israelite’s home. God had said: ***“Whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land”*** (Exodus 12:19). To be cut off could mean either death or severance from the fellowship of God and the people of God, or both. Any form of sin will be forgiven if the sinning person confesses his sin to God. Abraham was a liar, but he was forgiven. Moses was a murderer, but he was forgiven. David was both a murderer and an adulterer, but he was forgiven. Peter denied the Lord, but he was forgiven. These all were saints who sinned but were forgiven. However, there is a sin unto death for the believer who refuses to put evil out of his life (1 John 5:16). Though the true Christian will not lose his eternal life he received when he was born again, it is possible that he may be cut off in this life for living after the flesh (Romans 8:13), for failing to bear fruit (John 15:2), for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-6), for murmuring against God (Numbers 16:41-19), or for practicing moral evil (1 Corinthians 5:1-8).

In light of these great truths, what kind of people ought we to be? We ought to be grateful to our God for all that He has done for us through the death of ***the*** Passover Lamb, His only begotten Son, our Passover who was ***“sacrificed for us.”*** We ought to walk daily by His side and seek and strive to do His will. We can do that if we will feed on the Word of God and confess our sins so that we can be clean vessels fit for the Master’s use. May we purge out the old leaven and be ***“new lumps for the Lord.”*** Yes, our Savior has died as our Passover Lamb, but it wasn’t over. The ***“morrow after the Sabbath”*** [Sunday] was coming. A great day of resurrection is about to take place as Yeshua the Messiah will fulfill the Feast of Firstfruits and come out of that tomb victorious over sin, death, and Hell. Glory to God! We will see in the next study of the Feast of Firstfruits, that His resurrection guarantees our own resurrection. Blessed be His name!



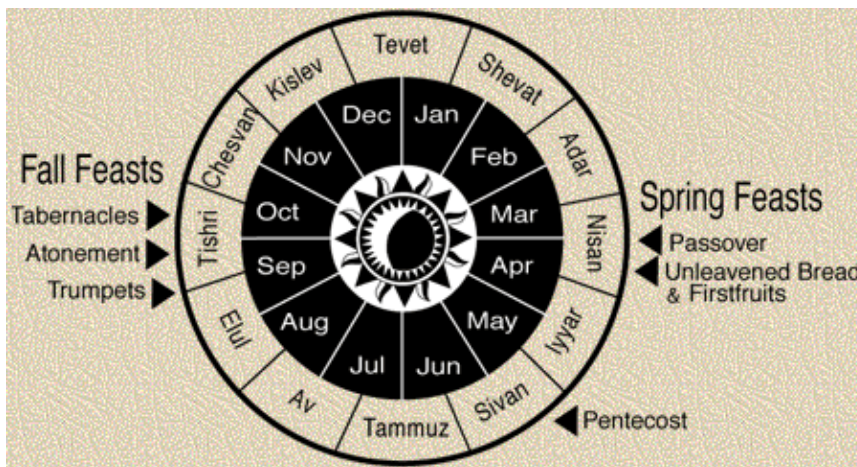


# Firstfruits - God's Guarantee



*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall **bring a sheaf of the firstfruits** of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the **morrow after the Sabbath** the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savor: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:9-14).*

When studied along with the New Testament, these Jewish feasts present God’s prophetic calendar pointing to their broader fulfillment in the Lord Jesus the Messiah. The reality is in Christ, and the Christian can better understand his spiritual heritage by a careful study of the Old Testament.



In the seven feasts in Leviticus 23, we are shown how God laid the foundation for all that was to follow. The slaying of God’s Passover Lamb at Calvary would be a fatal tragedy had He not risen from the dead. The **Feast of Firstfruits** pointed to the next event in God’s prophetic calendar following the death of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, which is His resurrection from death and the tomb.

# The Feasts & Passion Week

Days are Counted From Sundown (of the previous day) to Sundown

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Nisan 10	Nisan 11	Nisan 12	Nisan 13	Nisan 14	Nisan 15	Nisan 16
				Passover		First Fruits
				Jesus died exactly on Passover		Resurrection of Christ
				Passover	Unleavened Bread - 7 Days	

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Nisan 17	Nisan 18	Nisan 19	Nisan 20	Nisan 21	Nisan 22	Nisan 23
Unleavened Bread, continued						

## Summary:

- A. Jesus died at 3:00 as the first Passover lambs were being slain in the Temple area
- B. The veil of the Temple tore while multitudes were in the Temple grounds
- C. Firstfruits is on the day after the Sabbath after the Passover
- D. Christ rose as the priests were waving the first olive clippings of a future harvest
- E. The 7 days of Unleavened Bread represents the results of Christ's redemption: the eternal purity of God's people

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As we have already seen in our study of the feasts thus far that Passover was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan, Unleavened Bread was held from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of that same month, seven full days. Firstfruits began on the seventeenth day of the month, *“on the morrow after the Sabbath.”* There was an obvious overlapping insofar as time is concerned. However, each of the three feasts was designed to teach and emphasize a different doctrinal and practical truth.

One important difference did exist between the Feast of Firstfruits and the two feasts which preceded it. While Passover and Unleavened Bread could be held in the wilderness during the journey from Egypt to Canaan, Firstfruits and the feasts that followed could only be celebrated in the Promised Land after the Israelites had possessed the land (Leviticus 23:10). It would not be observed in the wilderness where grain could not be sown and harvested. Israel had to be in the land possessing their possessions. Many times we Christians do not possess and enjoy all that God has bestowed upon us. I believe it was the late Dr. J. Vernon McGee who said: "You may own a car, but your teenage son or daughter may possess it!"

Stewardship is one lesson we can learn from this Feast of Firstfruits. Canaan was a land of plenty and prosperity, and the Israelites needed to learn how to be good stewards of what God had given them. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the earth and everything therein. ***"The earth is the LORD's and the fulness thereof"*** (Psalm 24:1), and His people are His caretakers or stewards. In this life we own nothing, ***"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"*** (1 Timothy 6:7). God may not take from me what I gather in this life, but one day He will take me from it. What God gave to Israel was not theirs to keep, but its custody was a trust to be held for God.

The first sheaves of the ripe harvest were to be presented to the Lord, which indicated that the entire harvest was His. Before an Israelite was allowed to bake any bread for himself, he had to bring the first sheaf to be presented to the Lord. God is telling Israel and us that the first and best belong to Him. He must have first place in our lives. All that we are and have and ever hope to get belongs to the Lord. We read in Proverbs 3:9: ***"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase."*** The familiar verse of Matthew 6:33 states: ***"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."***

Israel had to possess the land before they could present to the LORD the firstfruits. They could not give to Him what they did not have. The Bible says that God has ***"blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"*** (Ephesians 1:3), but until we make these blessings ours, we have nothing to offer Him. We may take part in religious rituals and still have nothing to offer the Lord. We cannot give back to God that which we have never received ourselves. Remember that God has first claim upon us and all that we possess. Our first and best belong to Him.

The main lesson taught by the Feast of Firstfruits has to do with the security of the believer and his future resurrection. God's prophetic calendar began with the Passover lamb being slain. ***"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you"*** (Exodus 12:2). We saw how this was fulfilled in the death of Jesus the Messiah, the true Passover Lamb who was sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5:7). He is the Bread of Life, the Unleavened Bread who was and is the only-begotten, sinless Son of God.

The next event on God's prophetic calendar logically was Jesus' resurrection from the grave as the Firstfruits. Paul wrote in First Corinthians 15 that Christ arose from the dead, and so all who believe in Christ will be raised. ***"Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming"*** (1 Corinthians 15:23). In the Scripture's declaration of the gospel, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ are mentioned as one unit (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). The message of the gospel follows the order of the first three feasts. Jesus, the Passover Lamb of God, died on the Cross of Calvary at the beginning of Passover, was buried, and Praise God He arose on the morrow after the Passover Sabbath and became the Firstfruits of them that were dead, as it says in 1 Corinthians 15:20:



**"Way to Emmaus" by German painter Robert Zund (1827-1909)**

***“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”***

When the Israelites brought the first sheaf of grain and presented it to the Lord, it was given as a token or a pledge—a **guarantee**—that the remainder of the harvest would follow. When the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead and presented Himself as the Firstfruits, it was the pledge and guarantee that God’s true children [the harvest] would also be raised and brought into the Father’s presence. When God the Father accepted Christ after His resurrection, that acceptance guaranteed the eternal security of all believers. Our eternal security as Christians does not depend upon ourselves, but upon the completed work of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we read of Christ in Romans 4:25: He ***“was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”*** The assurance of that final stage of our redemption is the indwelling of the



Holy Spirit. ***“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body”*** (Romans 8:22-23). While our risen Lord is in Heaven, the Holy Spirit is on earth residing in the body of every true Christian. Christ, the Firstfruits in Heaven, is coming for us; and the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit is in us to secure us until our Lord Jesus the Messiah comes to take us home. We have been ***“sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest [down payment] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession...”*** (Ephesians 1:13-14). We can praise our Lord for those wonderful words spoken by the angel of the Lord to the women who came to the tomb that first resurrection morn: ***“He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place***

***where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you”*** (Matthew 28:6-7).

The moment you and I were saved, we became a kind of firstfruits, meaning that we became the beginning of a harvest. ***“Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures”*** (James 1:18). God saved us so that we could win others to Him in order that they may become the beginning of a harvest. We must ask ourselves as Christians: “What kind of harvest is following us?”

***“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him”*** (Psalm 126:6).





# Shavuot or Pentecost

## Feast of Weeks



*“And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be completed: Even **unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days**; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. Ye shall bring out of your habitations **two wave loaves** of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD. And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offering, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savor unto the LORD. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations”* (Leviticus 23:15-21).

*“And thou shalt observe the **feast of weeks**, of the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end”* (Exodus 34:22).

Three times a year the Israelites were commanded by God to appear before Him in Jerusalem. The occasions were as follows:

1. **Passover** [*Pesach*] which celebrated Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. It was symbolized by the eating of unleavened bread and the offering of the Passover lamb.
2. **Shavuot, or the Feast of Weeks** [*Pentecost*]. It was typified by the offering of two wave loaves made of newly harvested wheat.
3. **The Feast of Tabernacles** [*Sukkot*]. It was symbolized by booths and commemorated Israel’s wandering through the wilderness and final entrance into the Promised Land.

The word *Pentecost* is Greek, meaning “fifty.” It was so designated because it was observed on the fiftieth day after the Passover Sabbath. Fifty is the number for freedom. The season of Jubilee shows us that (Leviticus 25:8-13). There are several names by which this feast is known—Feast of Weeks, Shavuot, Feast of Ingathering—but the most significant one is found in the Jewish liturgy: **“The Season of the Giving of our Torah.”** The Jewish people believe that it was on this feast that Yahweh spoke the Ten Commandments to Israel from Mt. Sinai. Therefore, this feast is considered the birthday of Judaism.



On the day of Shavuot, “*two wave loaves*” were brought to the Lord. These loaves were made of fine flour ground of the new wheat and baked with leaven. Of all the meal offerings, the two wave loaves alone were baked with leaven. Leaven is symbolic of sin. The Passover bread was unleavened because it signified the sinless body of Christ, who without sin, was the spotless Lamb of God who became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). But the two wave loaves in the feast of Shavuot were symbolic of Israel, in whom exists sin. They were also a lesson in something new, which we will see concerns the Church being made up of both Jew and Gentile, and in which there is still sin present.

Passover finds its fulfillment in the death of Christ, “*For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*” (1 Corinthians 5:7). Salvation appears first in God’s calendar because His greatest concern is the redemption of lost humanity. God made a way for us to be redeemed through the bloody death of His Passover Lamb, Jesus the Messiah. The second feast which followed was Unleavened Bread, and it speaks of Christ as the sinless, spotless Lamb of God; and it also speaks of our sanctification. We have been redeemed and set apart by God to be holy people. Holiness is essential in our communion with God. Firstfruits is closely related to the first two feasts. We are to be good stewards of what God has given us because everything is His, but more importantly this feast speaks of our Lord’s glorious resurrection when He arose from the grave victorious on “*the morrow after the Sabbath.*” His resurrection guarantees that the harvest will follow; meaning that our resurrection and eternal security is guaranteed, not because of what we have done, but because of what **HE** has done for us through His finished work of redemption upon the Cross at Calvary.

Now we come to the middle of the seven holy convocations which is the **Feast of Weeks**, also known as *Shavuot* or *Pentecost*. [See Exodus 34:2; Deut. 16:10, 16; 2 Corinthians 8:13]. It was exactly 50 days after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus the Messiah that the Holy Spirit came to baptize believers into the body of Christ. Passover had to come before Firstfruits, and Firstfruits had to come before Pentecost. Our Lord had to die before He could rise from the grave. He had to ascend to Heaven before the Holy Spirit could come to baptize believers and indwell them, for “*The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified*” (John 7:39). The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost marked a new entry on God’s calendar, called “*a new meat (meal) offering unto the LORD*” (Leviticus 23:16). Here we are introduced to something new.



In Acts 2:1 we read that when “*the day of Pentecost was fully come...*,” suggesting the fulfillment of the prophecy in God’s prophetic calendar as He gave it in Leviticus 23. Acts 2:1 is the fulfillment of the type in Shavuot

[Pentecost], because on the fiftieth day after our Lord’s resurrection the Holy Spirit came down from Heaven. On that day He inaugurated a new thing on the earth, called also “*the firstfruits unto the Lord*”

(Leviticus 23:17). The new thing is the Church, and it is obvious that the appearing of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of the type of the presentation of the two wave loaves to the Lord in Leviticus 23:17.

This is a problem with some Christians, particularly those persons who fail to distinguish the difference between Israel and the Church, or others who set the time of the Church's birth at a later period in the book of Acts. However, there is really no excuse for this because of the plain teaching of the Bible. The time period for the Church's beginning was set by God and fixed permanently in His calendar.

The Lord Jesus, the Messiah, is both the founder and the foundation of the Church. He said: ***"I will build My church"*** (Matthew 16:18). The Church is not built upon Peter as Romanism claims. A church that has Peter as its founder and foundation has little or nothing to offer lost sinners. Writing of Moses and Israel under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Paul said: ***"They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ"*** (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). Christ is the founder and foundation of His Church as the Bible so clearly states: ***"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"*** (1 Corinthians 3:11).

One of the main features of the ritual of Shavuot [Pentecost] was the presentation of two loaves to the Lord. The number of loaves represents the two component parts of the Church: (1) **believing Jews** and (2) **believing Gentiles**, both having been reconciled to God in one body through faith in the crucified and risen Son of God (Ephesians 2:13-18). The Feast of Shavuot was a prophecy and a portrait of the Church.

The two loaves show us the loving heart of God in the working of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost [Shavuot or Feast of Weeks] when three thousand souls were saved and added to the church, which is Christ's body (Ephesians 1:22-23). Oh, the marvelous grace of God we see here as He reaches down to save a host of lost sinners who had recently taken part in crucifying His only begotten Son; and He is still calling men and women, boys and girls to repent and believe the gospel message and be saved. So here at Pentecost the Church is born having a membership of about 3000 Jews and some Gentile proselytes. That's why we have two loaves baked with leaven. The Church is made up of both Jews and Gentiles, and the leaven shows that the Church is not without sin. If you are looking for perfection, don't look to the Church, but look to the Lamb of God in whom there is no leaven or sin.

Jesus the Messiah is the ***"Bread of Life"*** to both Jews and Gentiles, and the task for the Church is to carry the gospel to the whole world in this present dispensation. ***"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit"*** (1 Corinthians 12:13). This Feast of Shavuot was pointing to that day, fifty days after the resurrection of the Messiah, when Jews and Gentiles would come together to worship Yahweh through Him.

We see two important things in this present Church Age. First, there is a man in Heaven, the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ ***"who...when he had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"*** (Hebrews 1:3). The Son of God, who became our Passover and Firstfruits, is presently our ***"merciful and faithful high priest"*** (Hebrews 2:17). The other amazing fact is that God the Holy Spirit has come to earth to work in and through every believer in Christ. Before our Lord Jesus Christ died as the Passover and rose as the Firstfruits, He promised His disciples this: ***"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you"*** (John 14:16-17).

Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did not dwell permanently in the believers. He came upon them and was with them anointing and enabling them to do God's work. But today, as our Lord promised His disciples

*“that He may abide with you forever”* (John 14:15), the Holy Spirit’s indwelling is permanent. Every believer has been baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ. Now, every believer is commanded to be *“filled with the Spirit.”* We are to yield ourselves to the indwelling Holy Spirit’s control and let Him lead us and guide us into God’s perfect will and teach us the Word of God.

On the day of Pentecost, the one true and living God, in the presence and power of the blessed Holy Spirit, formed the Church in an intimacy never before known. Every saved person is indwelt with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9), sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:13), and baptized with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). What love and grace God has shown us. He has sent both His Son and His Spirit to save us and bind us to Himself forever. Yes, Shavuot [Pentecost or Feast of Weeks] is a lesson in something new.

The Jewish people today still read the book of Ruth on the day of Shavuot because (1) the setting is the time of wheat harvest, and (2) it presents Ruth, a Gentile woman, who came to know and love the God of Israel. What beautiful types we find in Ruth. Boaz, the friend and husband of Ruth, his Gentile bride, is the kinsman-redeemer and a type of the Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer. The kinsman-redeemer had to meet some requirements:

1. He had to be related by blood to those he redeems (Deuteronomy 24:5; John 1:14; Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 2:14-16).
2. He must be willing to redeem.
3. He must be able to redeem.

Our blessed Lord was made flesh that He might redeem us and set us free from the bondage of sin with His blood in order to adopt us into His family. He not only was willing to redeem us, but He wanted to redeem us because He loved us. He loved us so much that He was willing to become sin for us so that we could be justified in God’s sight. *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (Hebrews 12:2). Praise His marvelous name, He loved us and was a willing Redeemer. He is also able to redeem us. As the late Dr. J. Vernon McGee said: “It’s nice to have poor kinfolk who can sympathize with you, but it’s even better to have kinfolk who can write out a check to bail you out of jail.”

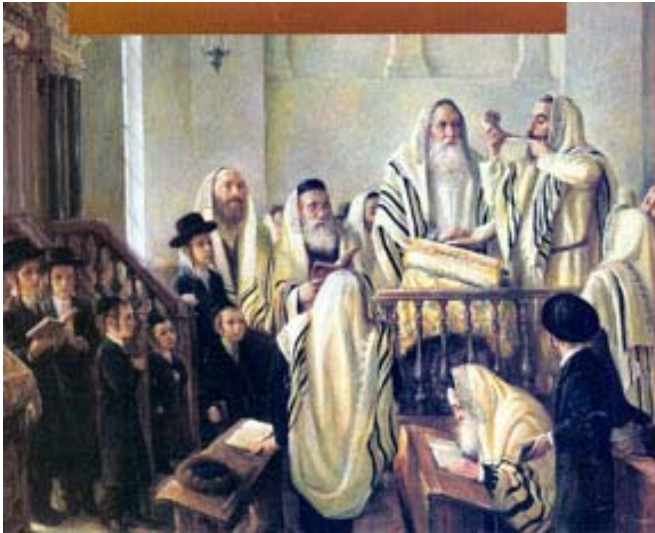
You and I were poor, miserable, wretched and blind in the bondage of sin until we came to know our Kinsman-Redeemer who was willing and able to redeem us and set us free. But to belong to Him, you must do what Ruth did. She personally went down to the threshing floor to claim Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer. For Christ to be your Kinsman-Redeemer, you must claim Him as your personal Redeemer through faith in His redemptive work on the Cross at Calvary, namely His death, burial, and resurrection. What a blessing to know our Kinsman-Redeemer in a real and personal way, to walk with Him by faith, and to be a part of His body, the Church.

Today, saved Jews and Gentiles are united in one Church in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Bread of Life to both Jew and Gentile. We no longer see the individual sheaves, but loaves. The same Holy Spirit who empowered Peter can empower us today to carry the gospel message to a lost and dying world, which is the Church’s responsibility and privilege in this present dispensation. May we praise God for His marvelous and matchless grace in what He has done for us, and what He is going to do through His only begotten Son, Jesus the Messiah and His blessed Holy Spirit.

## *Pentecost / Shavuot Overview Chart*

<b>First Pentecost</b>	<b>Pentecost After Christ</b>
The Commandments Given	The Holy Spirit Given
Fifty days from the crossing of the Red Sea	Fifty days from the resurrection of Christ
Law of Yahweh written in Stone	Law of Yahweh written on our hearts
Three thousand slain	Three thousand receive salvation
The letter of the Law	The Spirit of the Law



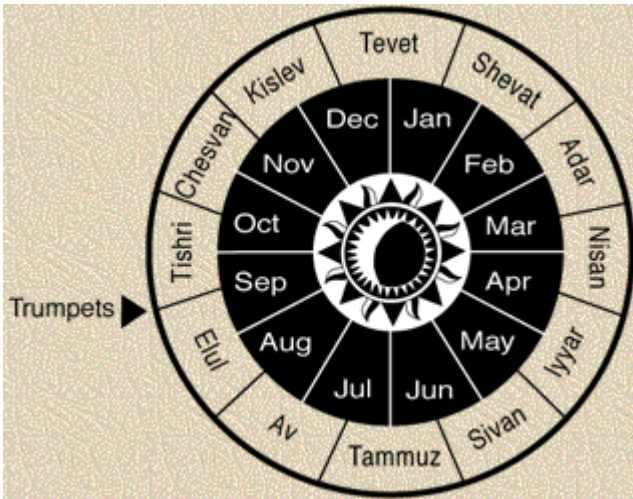


# Feast of Trumpets

## Rosh Hashanah



*“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of **blowing of trumpets**, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein; but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD” (Leviticus 23:23-25).*



The **Feast of Trumpets**, also known as *Rosh Hashanah* was instituted by God and given to the nation of Israel. Together with Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah is part of the high holidays of Judaism. Both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are referred to as the **“Days of Awe”** because the Jewish people believe that it is during this time that an individual’s fate is inscribed on Rosh Hashanah and sealed on Yom Kippur for the coming year. On the Jewish calendar, Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the month Tishri, opens the civil New Year while Nisan 1st begins the religious year. *Rosh Hashanah* means “head” or “beginning of the year.” It is also known as the *“Day of Judgment,”* and the *“Day of Remembrance.”*

On Rosh Hashanah, the shofar reminds the Jewish people of two things. First, it reminds them to offer their lives to God. The account of the offering of Isaac plays a major role on Rosh Hashanah. It is believed that the offering of Isaac occurred on Rosh Hashanah, and Isaac’s willingness to be bound and put to death is seen as the greatest example for Jewish readiness to be sacrificed for their beliefs. It is said among the Jews that when God hears the sound of the shofar, He is moved to leave His seat of judgment and go to His seat of mercy and forgiveness. Second, it reminds them to have faith in the future coming of the Messiah and the re-gathering of Israel back to their homeland (Isaiah 27:13). All of these reminders show why Rosh Hashanah is known as the *“Day of Remembrance.”*





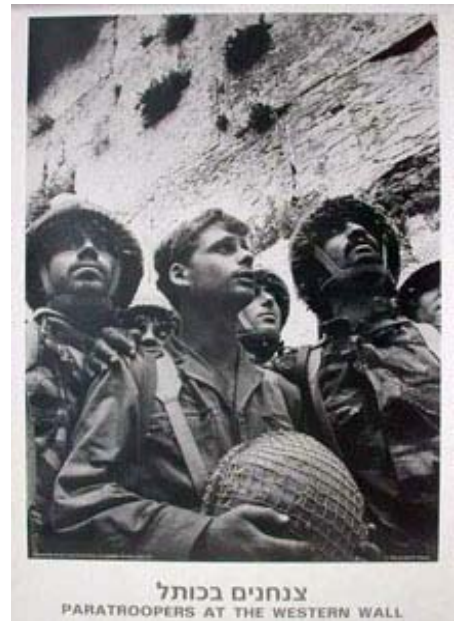
Rosh Hashanah is the only Jewish holiday celebrated on a new moon [the first of the month in the month of Tishri]. Like other major Jewish festivals [except Yom Kippur], this Feast of Trumpets is observed an extra day, even though in Jewish teaching both days are regarded as one long day rather than two separate days. On the first night of the holiday, a piece of hallah [festival bread] is dipped in honey and eaten. This is followed by the dipping of a slice of apple. A blessing is pronounced along with the prayer, “May it be Your will to renew in our behalf a good and sweet year.”

The highlight of the holiday is the blowing of the shofar. A shofar can be made from the horn of any animal except a cow because of its association with the golden calf of Exodus 32. In Temple days, the shofar was made from the horn of a wild goat. Blowing the shofar was looked upon as an act of crying out to God in time of great need. Before the shofar is sounded on Rosh Hashanah, Psalm 47 is recited seven times.



On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, Orthodox Jews go to the nearest body of water and empty their pockets into the water. Some people throw in bread crumbs or stones. This practice is based on Micah 7:18-19 and is said to symbolize the intent of the worshipers to cast away their sins. This ritual is known as *Tashlich*, meaning “you shall cast.” In the 14th century, Jewish people were falsely accused of poisoning the wells of Europe through this ceremony of *Tashlich*, and they were subsequently blamed for causing the “Black Death” or bubonic plague.

On Wednesday, June 7th, 1967, at the height of the Six-Day War, Israeli forces pushed into Jerusalem and recaptured the Temple Mount. At the Western Wall, the last vestige of the walls that once surrounded the ancient Temple, hardened soldiers wept openly in joy. Others gently embraced the rough stones of the wall. The Chief Army Chaplain, Rabbi Schlomo Goren, then performed a very significant act. He sounded the shofar. By blowing the shofar, he symbolically announced to the world Israel’s return to the home of their forefathers. This is the prophetic message of Rosh Hashanah—the future return, restoration, or re-gathering of the people of Israel back to the land God has given to them. In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses delivered his final charge to the people of Israel. They were told that if they disobeyed God’s commands, the result would be global dispersion. A survey of Israel’s history shows that God has been true to His Word. Today, Jewish people can be found in almost every country of the world. In spite of their displacement from the land of promise, God has given the people of Israel His pledge that one day He will bring them back home.



In Deuteronomy 30:1-6, we find three main elements in this passage:

1. Israel's repentance
2. Israel's re-gathering
3. Israel's revival

The order of end-time events in relationship to the nation of Israel can therefore be outlined this way:

- I. A partial return to the land in unbelief.
- II. Israel's repentance brought about by the Tribulation period and the revelation of Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 4:30; Zechariah 12:10).
- III. The Second Come of Jesus Christ (Zechariah 14:3-4).
- IV. The supernatural re-gathering of Israel, accompanied by the sound of the shofar (Matthew 24:31).
- V. The judgment of Israel to purge out those who still refuse to believe in Jesus the Messiah (Ezekiel 20:33-38).
- VI. The return of Israel to the land of promise (Ezekiel 36:24).
- VII. The cleansing of Israel and the gift of a new heart and a new spirit to all Jewish people.
- VIII. Israel will receive and enjoy the Kingdom blessings (Ezekiel 36:33-38; Daniel 9:24; Zechariah 14).

(*The Feasts of Israel* by Bruce Scott, ©Copyright 1997, Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., Belmawr NJ, pp.76-84)

Prophetically, Rosh Hashanah marks another stage in God's plan of salvation for Israel first, but then also for all of humanity. Passover was the beginning of redemption wrought through the blood of the Lamb, foreshadowing the Lord Jesus Christ, "*the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29). Shavuot [Pentecost or Feast of Weeks] is the birthday of Judaism and signifies also the birth of the Church. Then follows a long period between the solemn Holy Days of Pentecost and New Year's Day, typifying Israel's long period of estrangement from God and its life in exile. Then comes the Feast of Trumpets, presenting a call to repentance and an opportunity to be reconciled with God on the Day of Atonement, which follows ten days after the Feast of Trumpets [Rosh Hashanah or New Year's Day] on the Jewish civil calendar. Then comes the Feast of Tabernacles, a time of harvest, symbolic of the completion of the Church through the final ingathering of those who are to be saved—Jews and Gentiles alike—into the Body of Christ (*The Gospel in the Feasts of Israel*, Buksbazen, p. 34).



Now, let's look at some of the late Dr. Lehman Strauss' comments concerning this Feast of Trumpets as it fits into God's prophetic calendar. Viewing God's prophetic calendar from where we are today, it is clear that the prophecies in the first four feasts [Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost] have been fulfilled. History bears out the fact that they speak of a work God has already accomplished for the salvation of both Jew and Gentile.

After the details were given regarding the Feast of Pentecost, God added an important postscript. He said to His people Israel: "*And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and*

*to the stranger: I am the LORD your God*” (Leviticus 23:22). *“The poor and the stranger”* are the Gentiles whom Paul called *“aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise”* (Ephesians 2:12). Following the death and resurrection of Christ [Passover and Firstfruits], and the coming of the Holy Spirit [Pentecost], the Church was formed of believing Jews and Gentiles. All of this is history.

The next event on God’s prophetic calendar is the Feast of Trumpets. [See Scripture in Leviticus 23:23-25]. This is the first of the final three feasts, all looking ahead to a glorious future. In this present dispensation of the Church, we can see on God’s calendar the coming events for both the Church and Israel.

The fourth feast [Pentecost] was celebrated in the late spring/early summer of the year. These last three feasts [Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles] were in the fall of the year. From early in the third month till the first day of the seventh month, there was no holy convocation to be observed. Part of the third month and all of the fourth, fifth, and sixth months together constituted a waiting period. This period of time between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets was the longest period of time between any of the other feasts.

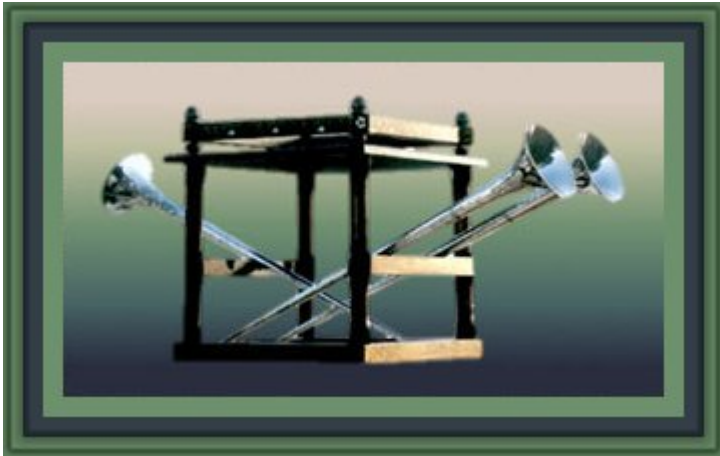
Is there a lesson to be gleaned from the long interval between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets? There is a matter of special significance we need to see here. The seven feasts, in their primary association, were enjoined upon the children of Israel. When reading Leviticus 23, this fact stands forth, even to the casual reader. *“And the Lord spake unto the children of Israel...”* (Leviticus 23:1-2, 9-10, 23-24, 33-34). *“And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD”* (Leviticus 23:44). The Gentile nations had no part in those holy convocations. But as we follow God’s prophetic calendar we are presently in the dispensation of the Church. The gospel must go into all the world, *“to every creature”* (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). Any Jew or Gentile can be saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and thereby become a member of the Church.

What God is doing today during the interval between Pentecost and Trumpets is not a part of Jewish prophecy nationally. The nation of Israel is in a holding pattern, in God’s waiting room, waiting for the sound of the trumpet. There is a bright future for the nation of Israel. However, the waiting period has been a long one, the longest in the history of man. There has been no period in human history, as long as the present one, in which God has not intervened in behalf of the nation Israel. Two thousand years have come and gone, and Israel continues to wait for the sound of the trumpet. Since their rejection of the Messiah, God has remained silent.

God has His reasons for this long interval between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets. Prophetically, there is nothing in the Bible telling us why God has stretched out this long interval, nor precisely how long it will be. But we do know that ours is the dispensation of grace, not one of judgment. Judgment is coming, to be sure, *“But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:8-9).

At the council of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, speaking of the present Church Age, James reminded them *“how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name”* (Acts 15:14). But by no means was there an implication that there was no future for Israel. The holy convocation of trumpets in God’s calendar looks forward to the next event in the prophetic program. James continued his testimony at the council with the following: *“And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is*

*fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up*” (Acts 15:15-16). In his reference to the prophets, James doubtless had in mind the prophecy of Amos who wrote: *“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old”* (Amos 9:11). Micah likewise declared: *“In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be removed”* (Micah 7:11). The prophets were pointing ahead to an event which God had written into His calendar and which He called the Feast of Trumpets. It is inseparably linked with the Second Coming of Christ. In fact, our Lord’s Second Coming is the main truth associated with this fifth feast.



The idea of trumpets originated with God. Today, we have modern means of communications whereby an event taking place in any part of the world can be brought into our living room with sound and sight. Advanced technology has given to the world an audio and visual communication system enabling us to both see and hear what is taking place. In ancient times, God gave to Israel a communication system. He gave instructions to Moses for the making of the trumpet. The first mention of the trumpet in the Bible is connected with the giving of the Ten Commandments at

Sinai (Exodus 19:13-20). The trumpet was used to assemble the people to work, worship, and warfare (Numbers 10:1-10). Through the communication system of trumpet sounds, God made a profound impression upon Israel. It was a vital link in the relationship between Him and His people. When the watchmen at their posts saw an enemy approaching, they blew trumpets to warn the people. When the hour for worship drew near, they sounded the call with trumpets. It was very important that the trumpeters be accurate in sounding every note, *“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?”* (I Corinthians 14:8).

The Israelites, however, did not obey God in spite of the fact that they received a clear and intelligent communication from Him. As a result, God refused to continue communicating with them. Between the Old and New Testaments there were four silent centuries during which there was no word from God. Then God sent His Son, whom they rejected and crucified. Today, during the Church Age, Israel has been temporarily set aside while God works through the Church. So it is not mere chance that, since Christ came to His own and His own rejected Him, the Temple has been destroyed and the Jewish people have been scattered into many parts of the earth. [See John 1:1-11].

The many pogroms and persecutions against the children of Israel are not by chance or accident. God is sovereign and in control of His world and the people in it. The present rejection of Israel by God is a divinely-executed punitive and corrective measure. God has warned Israel that failure to obey Him would result in hardship for them. Moses wrote: *“Because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God...the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other”* (Deuteronomy 28:62-64).

While God is punishing Israel for their willful disobedience, He will by no means permit their complete and final destruction. Israel’s present rejection is a temporary one. Our God made reference to both Israel’s present rejection and prospective restoration when He said: *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold,*

*your house is left unto you desolate, For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord*” (Matthew 23:37-39). Their rejection is limited “*till*” Messiah comes again and they shall say: “*Blessed is He that cometh.*” The word *till* is a time word which places a definite limitation on how long the nation will remain scattered. There are those who believe and teach that there is no political or spiritual future for Israel, but they are wrong.

The apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, followed up our Lord’s teaching on Israel’s present rejection and prospective restoration when he wrote: “*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” (Romans 11:25). Here Paul uses the time word “*until.*” The present blindness is only “*in part,*” that is, not all Jews are cut off from the possibility of being saved during the present period of God’s rejection of the nation. We saw in the Feast of Pentecost how that individual Jews as well as individual Gentiles have the same privilege and possibility of being saved during the Church Age. Nor is the blindness permanent. It is only “*until*” the times of the Gentiles run their course. As Luke stated: “*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24).

And then Paul added: “*And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins*” (Romans 11:26-27). Many who have read this passage have found it difficult to understand. In using the words “*all Israel,*” did Paul mean that every Jew would be saved? When would this salvation occur? What are the requirements for their salvation? What did Paul mean by the word *saved*? When Paul said: “*All Israel shall be saved,*” he did not mean that every Jew living when Christ returns to earth after the Tribulation will be regenerated or born again. The word *saved* sometimes means “delivered” and is so used in both Testaments. When the Lord delivered Israel from the bondage of Egypt, “*Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD*” (Exodus 14:13). After the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea we read: “*Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians*” (Exodus 14:30). Both the noun *salvation* and verb *saved* are used in the sense of deliverance. When Peter walked on the water and began to sink, he cried: “*Lord save me*” (Matthew 14:30). Then, he was asking the Lord to deliver him, to rescue him from drowning. It is that kind of deliverance Paul had in mind when he said: “*All Israel shall be saved.*” Our Lord predicted that salvation in His Olivet discourse when He said: “*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*” (Matthew 24:13). All Jews who survive to the end of the Great Tribulation will experience a deliverance. Paul was not saying that all Jews who ever lived will be saved.

When will this deliverance occur? It will occur at the end of the Tribulation. “*As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer*” (Romans 11:26). The Deliverer, of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes to earth the second time. Many Jews will perish during the judgments of the Great Tribulation, but a surviving remnant will be saved. [Read Jeremiah chapters 30 & 31].

What are the requirements for the salvation of the remnant? They will accept the Deliverer as their Messiah and Redeemer (Isaiah 53:4-6; Zechariah 12:10), and He “*shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*” and “*shall take away their sins*” (Romans 11:26-27). For that remnant in Israel, the deliverance will be both physical and spiritual as well as political. Israel’s salvation will be the fulfillment of God’s promise which He gave to His prophets (Isaiah 27:9; 59:20-21; Jeremiah 31:31-35). God Himself will accomplish this as the result of the unconditional covenant He made, a covenant based upon His sovereignty alone.

The chronological harmony of the feasts now becomes clearer. When the Church Age [Pentecost] comes to its end, the Feast of Trumpets will begin. According to God's prophetic calendar, the next event that will link Pentecost to Trumpets is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. His coming will be in two phases:

1. The **pre-tribulation appearing** in the air at which time He will remove His Church from the earth.
2. His **post-tribulation appearing** on the earth when Israel will be re-gathered, restored permanently to the land, and reborn spiritually.

The next trumpet sound will terminate the present dispensation with the rapture of the Church. *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"* (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). The first trumpet sound from heaven will signal Christ's special relationship with His Church. It is called *"the last trump"* (1 Corinthians 15:51-52), meaning the last trumpet sound of this present dispensation of the Church. The Church's battle against the gates of hell will cease, and all the redeemed in Christ will be with Him forever.



But what is Israel's future? When our Lord predicted the Tribulation to befall the nation, He followed it with the prophecy: *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken: And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other"* (Matthew 24:29-31). In that day of Israel's awakening, the Jewish remnant of the last days will hear the trumpet sound and respond to it. God will not remain silent forever. His scattered people will be re-gathered.

Our Lord's prophecy in Matthew 24:31 is no new thing to the Jew who has read his *Tanakh* [Jewish Bible]. The prophet Isaiah wrote: *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem"* (Isaiah 27:12-13). The prophet Joel wrote of *"that day"* when God will gather His people together at the sound of the trumpet. [Read Joel 2:15-21.]

The full and final answer to the Feast of Trumpets may not be far removed from the present. What a glorious day for that nation, who has been in the slumber of spiritual death, when they behold their Messiah! They will, with genuine repentance and remorse, receive Him to rule over them.

I am sure that the great heart of God, Who knows precisely when He will send forth the sound of the trumpet, first to gather His Church to Himself, and then to gather His beloved Israel to their land, awaits the completion of His redeeming work through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. What a day when the final triumph will be heralded and the Feast of Trumpets will have come! This will begin the most joyous of all the seasons of the year and of all the holy convocations. Once again we have seen in God's calendar its prophetic implications (*God's Prophetic Calendar*, Strauss, pp. 81-91).

For those who are not saved, time is running out. ***“Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation”*** (2 Corinthians 6:2). ***“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”*** (Acts 16:31).



## Messianic Significance of Rosh Hashanah

(The following information is from [BiblicalHolidays.com](http://BiblicalHolidays.com))

The blowing of trumpets is a sign of the return of Christ and memorial of God’s grace to Abraham when He substituted a ram to be sacrificed instead of Isaac (Genesis 22). Isaac is a type of foreshadowing of Christ. Just as Abraham offered his son on the altar, God offered His son on Calvary’s altar. Hebrews 11:17-19 says: ***“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”*** Both Isaac’s and Christ’s births were miracles. Both were obedient to the point of sacrifice. Trumpets were used in giving signals of war. Jesus is the commander of the army of God. The Jewish people were looking for a deliverer who would defeat the Roman army. Jesus came, the first time, to defeat the work of Satan and the sin in men’s hearts. ***“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it”*** (Colossians 2:15).

In the same way this feast speaks to the Christian about spiritual warfare. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ***“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”*** Jesus is our armor because He defeated Satan. When we put on Christ we will triumph over evil forces (Ephesians 6:11-13).

The Feast of Trumpets can be a very special time for believers in Christ. Our sins are not forgiven just when we ***“believe.”*** James 2:19 says: ***“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”*** To be forgiven, we must have a repentant heart. We must come in submission to our Heavenly father, asking for forgiveness, knowing that He will forgive us, as a father forgives his child. That forgiveness which we seek has been guaranteed–bought-and-paid-for by Jesus’ atoning sacrifice on the tree.

### The Wedding

***“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”*** (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

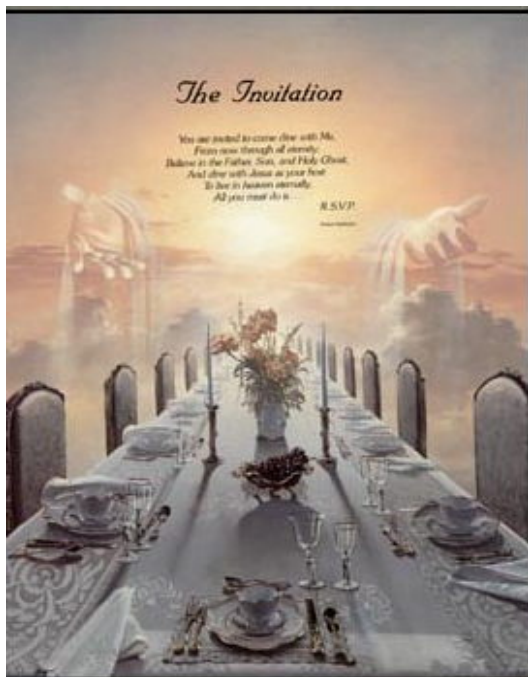
It is possible that Rosh Hashanah will be fulfilled when the Messiah comes on the clouds, the dead in Christ rise to meet the Lord in the air, and those who are alive are changed in an instant in the blinking of an eye to an eternal, immortal body. All of those whose names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life have open and shut cases and are righteous, not by their own deeds, but by the blood of the Lamb.

An inexpensive booklet with illustrations titled *Unlocking Prophecy: Jesus Fulfills the Seven Feasts of Israel* is available. This popular theory purports that Jesus will fulfill the fall holidays by coming on the

Feast of Trumpets to catch away His Bride, the Church, to celebrate the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven, then return to earth seven years later on the Day of Atonement to establish His Kingdom beginning on the Feast of Tabernacles. A portion from the booklet *Unlocking Prophecy: Jesus Fulfills the Seven Feasts of Israel* follows:

*Rabbis have taught that after being resurrected on the Feast of Trumpets, the righteous would enter the chupah, or wedding canopy to spend seven years while the “day of trouble” [Tribulation], the seven years of judgment occurs on earth. By examining an ancient Jewish wedding, we can more clearly see the picture of the union of the Church (the bride) with the Messiah.*

*When a man in ancient Israel married, he went to the bride’s house with a “bride price” and made a contract (covenant) with the girl’s father. If the father accepted the man and his bride price, the man would pour a glass of wine. If the girl drank it, it would indicate that she accepted the man’s proposal and they were betrothed. The man would go away and prepare a wedding chamber for his bride. When the man’s father deemed that the wedding chamber was ready, usually one to two years later, the man would return to the bride’s house and “steal” her away “like a thief in the night” at an hour when no one would suspect. He would take her to the wedding chamber for seven days. During this time, the groom’s father would hold a party to announce the marriage. At the end of the seventh day, the married couple would emerge from the chamber and partake of the marriage supper.*



*The ancient Jewish wedding is a picture of Jesus the Bridegroom and His bride, the church. The contract (covenant) was sealed at the Last Supper when Jesus shared the covenant cup with His disciples. “**And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many**” (Mark 14:24). Jesus, in speaking to the Disciples after the last supper said the same words that any Jewish man would tell his betrothed. “**In my father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also**” (John 14:2, 3). And, of course, Jesus paid the “bride price” with His life. The marriage of the church to Jesus is described in several Bible texts. “**Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints**” (Rev. 19:7-8). Thus, the Jewish wedding ceremony is another beautiful*

*shadow of Christ’s return.*

## **Teshuvah and Days of Awe**

The forty-day season called *Teshuvah* (return or repentance) starts thirty days before the Feast of Trumpets, and is a shadow of God’s prophetic plan. The entire ten days from the first day of the Feast of Trumpets through the Day of Atonement are known as the Days of Repentance or Days of Awe. The days between may be a picture of the tribulation. The days between the Feast of the Trumpets and Day of Atonement reflect the seven-year period of Jacob’s Trouble. “**Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it**” (Jeremiah 30:7). One theory divides the days as follows:

- I. The thirty days of the month of Elul—the Church
- II. The Day of the Feast of Trumpets—the Rapture
- III. The days between the Feast of Trumpets and Day of Atonement—Tribulation
- IV. The Day of Atonement—the Second Coming

For thirty days the shofar is blown every morning in the Synagogue to remind the people that the holy days are approaching, in order that they may prepare themselves. Their preparation consists of confessing their sins and seeking forgiveness along with a change in life, if needed. The Jews’ earnest prayer is that their names may be written in the Book of Life. This might represent the period before the rapture—calling people to repentance. One’s name is written in the Book of Life only when he or she has a repentant heart and comes in submission to our Heavenly Father, asking for forgiveness through Jesus’ death and resurrection.

### Coronation of Y’shua, Our King

Jewish eschatology teaches that on the Day of Atonement after six thousand years are complete, the Day of the Lord will come. On that day the shofar will sound, the righteous will be resurrected and will attend the coronation of the King. According to Jewish eschatology, the gates of Heaven are opened on Rosh Hashanah and closed on Yom Kippur. Note the two words here that relate to Rosh Hashanah: **open door** (as the gates of heaven are opened on Rosh Hashanah) and **crown** (as in a coronation). Daniel 7:9-14 speaks of the Messiah returning to reign as king: *“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit... thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened [The Day of Judgment]. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man [Jesus] came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”*

In Revelation, chapters 8 through 10, the seven trumpets and the *“Mystery of God”* are revealed at the final blast: *“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets”* (Rev.10:5-7).

This Feast of Trumpets reminds us that we should have joyful expectations (Titus 2:13) and be patiently waiting in obedience (1 Corinthians 1:7, 1 Timothy 6:14) for the coming of our Lord. We can use the feast of Rosh Hashanah to teach our children about repentance, faith, renewing our heart toward God, and looking forward to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus the Messiah!





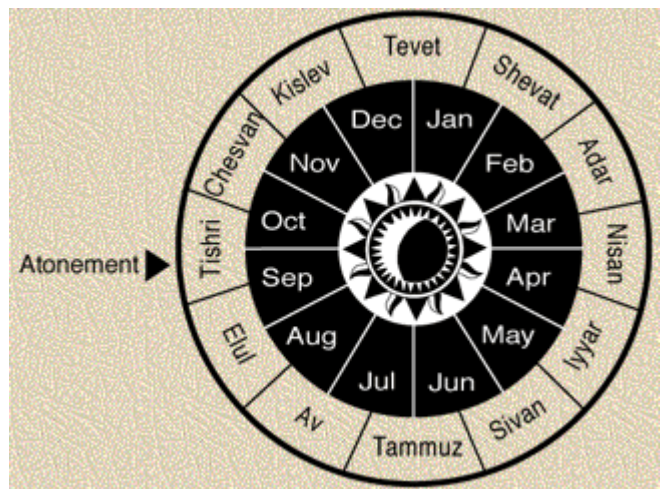
# Feast of Atonement

## Yom Kippur



*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a **day of atonement**: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath” (Leviticus 23:26-32).*

Between the Feast of Trumpets [Rosh Hashanah] and Yom Kippur are ten days called **“The Awesome Days.”** During that time Jewish people are to search their hearts and seek to be reconciled with God and their neighbors. God instructed the children of Israel to observe the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month. **Yom Kippur**, or the **Day of Atonement**, begins at sundown at the end of the ninth day of Tishri, the seventh month of the Jewish religious year. Yom Kippur is a solemn fast day, and for twenty-four hours from sundown to sundown, Jewish people assemble in synagogues and places of prayer to seek atonement with God and forgiveness for all their sins. It is **“The Day”** of judgment and reckoning. This is considered to be the time when the final verdict is made for each human life for the coming year. In the synagogue, the Yom Kippur service begins in the evening with special prayers called *Kol Nidre*, meaning “all my vows.” As a recognition of human frailty, this prayer asks for the annulment of all vows which the people were unable to keep. Ten times on Yom Kippur worshipers rehearse a long list of sins recorded in the holiday prayer book. As they repeat the string of iniquities, they beat their breasts with their hands. They are to **“afflict their souls”** as instructed in Leviticus. In some communities, the rabbi, cantor and others may wear a *kittel*, or special white garment, reminiscent of the garment the



priest would have worn in Temple times. The congregation recites prayers of confession as a group because all Israel is responsible together. Yom Kippur is about repentance and confession. During the afternoon service, the book of Jonah is read in its entirety. Jonah is a story of judgment, repentance and forgiveness.



Rosh Hashanah opens the solemn period of repentance preparation for Yom Kippur. Since the Jewish people have no Temple, priest, or sacrifice, the rabbis have provided substitutes for the atoning sacrifice. Some of these include repentance, which involves reparation of wrong; prayer, charity and fasting. Another substitute is the practice of *kapparot* [a propitiatory or atoning sacrifice] using a chicken. While many modern Jewish people consider the practice of *kapparot* barbaric, some Jewish communities still observe the ritual. A chicken is slain by a rabbi, then the owner of the chicken takes it by the legs and swings it around over his head, while reciting a prayer to God that all his sins during the year be transferred to the chicken. [In some communities the chicken has been replaced with money earmarked for charity.] This practice arose as a substitute for the “scapegoat” described in the Torah, which also symbolically received the sins of the people and carried them out of the camp. Of course, there is no Biblical basis for these sacrifices of roosters and hens, but they are an expression of a deep sense of need for atonement through the shedding of blood.

The last three feasts in God’s prophetic calendar, Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles, all look into the future from our present position in the Church Age. At the sound of the first trumpet [“the last trump” for the Church], the Church will be caught up to be with the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16). The next trumpet sound after the rapture of the Church will be the voice of God calling Jews back to their own land. ***“Immediately after the tribulation...He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”*** (Matthew 24:29-31). In that day no man or nation will be able to prevent the Jewish people from coming into their rightful place and possession. God’s unconditional covenant with Abraham, which He later confirmed with Isaac and Jacob, will be finalized.

Israel’s greatest need is a spiritual one. Possessing the land and having protection from their enemies cannot solve the nation’s biggest problem—cleansing from sin. An awareness of their unfaithfulness and rejection of their Messiah demands that they deal with the sin question.

The word *atonement* is an Old Testament term used forty-eight times in the book of Leviticus. It appears once in the KJV translation of the New Testament: ***“And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement”*** (Romans 5:11). The word used most often in the New Testament, which is similar to the word *atonement* is the word *reconciliation*. When a sinner becomes reconciled to God, there is “at-one-ment,” the two being brought together in harmony. Our harmony and peace with God have been made possible only through the sacrificial death and shedding of the blood of Jesus the Messiah. ***“And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death”*** (Colossians 1:21-22). Sin can only be atoned for by blood: ***“...and without shedding of blood is no remission”*** (Hebrews 9:22). The Day of Atonement was established by God for the people of Israel to provide an atonement [literally

“a covering”] for sin. Sin had to be dealt with before Israel could worship and approach Yahweh, who is holy.

To fully appreciate the importance of this day, we would need to study Leviticus 16, the chapter that is the heart of the sacrificial system for Israel. In this one chapter, the word *atonement* appears 15 times. In this same chapter, the word *blood* is mentioned 9 times. That reminds us of the old song which says: “*Down at the cross where my Savior died, down where from cleansing from sin I cried, there to my heart was the blood applied, Glory to His name.*” Looking at Leviticus 16 shows us what actually took place in Israel on the great Day of Atonement. It was a unique day in Israel because it was the one day in the year when the holiness of God was vindicated and atonement provided for the sins of the people. The chapter begins with a reference to the death of Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of Aaron who were struck down by God for offering “*strange fire*” before God, something which He had not prescribed in His instructions to Moses. There is a great deal of strange fire being offered today in the name of religion, but it is not according to the teachings of the Word of God.

We see in this chapter that the priest was God’s representative who stood between God and the people, and it was essential that he qualify at all times for his sacred ministry. On the Day of Atonement, the priest must bring a sacrifice to atone for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. The LORD had given specific instructions for him to follow when appearing before Him. Before he could represent the people of Israel before God, he first had to be acceptable to God by having his own sins atoned by the blood of the sacrifice. The blood represented forgiveness and gift of new life, which God alone was able to provide. As the High Priest presented the blood of the bull, he was identifying with his sin-substitute. We too must identify with our sin-substitute if we are going to be able to stand before a holy God. Our great High Priest, the mediator of the new covenant, needed no sacrifice for Himself before He could represent us. He was the One “*who had no sin*” (1 Peter 2:22) because “*in Him is no sin*” (1 John 3:5). “*But into the second [Holy of Holies] went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.*”



*But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us”* (Hebrews 9:7, 9, 11-12). We read in Hebrews 7:26-27: “*For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this He [Jesus the Messiah] did once, when He offered up Himself.*”

The Day of Atonement was an awesome experience for Israel’s high priest. After the high priest had offered a sacrifice for himself and his family, he had to offer a sacrifice for the sins of the people. The Day of the Atonement for Israel is described for us in several verses in Leviticus 16: “*And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat*

*into the wilderness. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness”* (Leviticus 16:5, 7-10, 21-22).



One goat was designated *“for the LORD,”* and the other for the *“scapegoat.”* The goat for the LORD was slain and presented for a sin offering, and the sprinkling of its blood signified the means of reconciliation with God. While the atonement was the aim and purpose of the sin offering, it never did take away sin. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word, *kaphar*, means “to cover.” Atonement would cover a person’s sins making it possible for him to approach a holy God. Since sin separates man from God, the atoning sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was God’s solution to this basic problem. The ceremony was not complete until the high

priest returned to the second goat which remained alive. As the Israelite watched his sins being carried away into the wilderness, he knew that God not only forgave his sins, but removed them from him. David knew the full meaning of atonement when he wrote in Psalm 103:12: *“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.”* We can imagine the excitement of the Israelites when they saw their sins being carried away into the wilderness.

Finally, the people had a solemn responsibility to afflict or humble themselves and do no work on that day. They needed to realize that they could do nothing for their atonement; only God could forgive sin and accept the priest’s sacrifice. Salvation is never by man’s works. Salvation is God’s work. The people simply interrupted their busy lives for one day in humiliation of soul to accept by faith the forgiveness God provided for them. They had to put their faith in the blood that was shed for their sins. They had to take God at His Word.

There is a lesson here for all Christians. We sin in thought, word, and deed. Even as we grow in Christlikeness, we become aware of the problem of sin in our lives. So there is the need for us to draw daily from the power of Christ’s atonement to overcome *“the sin which doth so easily beset us”* (Hebrews 12:1). As the songwriter Philip P. Bliss put it: *“Guilty, vile and helpless we, Spotless Lamb of God was He; Full atonement can it be? Hallelujah, what a Savior.”*

God does not redeem us because we are holy, *“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). He saved us as sinners that He might make us holy. God is holy. Our High Priest, Jesus the Messiah, is holy. The Spirit of God who indwells us is holy. The Scriptures are holy. After we become God’s child, we are to live a life of practical holiness by walking in obedience to God’s Word.

Every Israelite had to know his standing before the Lord, so when the Day of Atonement approached, each one was challenged to examine himself for personal sins. The basic lesson was the need for contrition, confession, and forgiveness. So the tenth day of the seventh month became the most important day of the year in their religious calendar. It was a day of fasting, prayer, and deep soul-searching.

One of the great tragedies in the nation of Israel today is the continuing attempt to have a Day of Atonement without a blood sacrifice for the sin offering. They go through the formalities without the blood sacrifice. Though a few practice the ritual of *kapparot* mentioned earlier, this ritual is unbiblical,

and the blood of a chicken is no substitute for the blood of the Lamb. The precious blood of Jesus the Messiah, the spotless, sinless Lamb of God, shed on the Cross at Golgatha's hill, was the last blood sacrifice that was accepted by Yahweh. It was the supreme sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Liberalism in Judaism, like liberalism in many churches today, questions whether blood is necessary for salvation and forgiveness of sins. The question is not debatable. The case is settled and closed as far as God and His eternal Word are concerned. God's plan for reconciling the sinner to Himself requires that each of us identify with the death of a substitute, the only means of reconciliation. We know that our Lord Jesus is that Substitute.

For 2,000 years, Israel as a nation has rejected her Messiah, ***“the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world”*** (John 1:29). So what hope is there for the Jewish nation? The prophecy of the Bible clearly states that there is a future Day of Atonement for Israel. We said earlier that a future trumpet will sound to gather Israel back to the land. Isaiah and Joel wrote about it. Our Lord spoke of it in Matthew 24. Now, what chronologically follows the Feast of Trumpets?—The Day of Atonement. The prophet Zechariah wrote of that Day of Atonement: ***“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. And the land shall mourn...”*** (Zechariah 12:9-11a). Israel's deliverance from sin will be accomplished by the Holy Spirit, leading the Israelites to repentant faith in Jesus as their Messiah. Genuine repentance and sorrow for sin is always the result of the work of the Holy Spirit.

We read in Zechariah 13:1: ***“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”*** The day our Lord Jesus died on the Cross, the fountain was opened for any and all to receive cleansing from sin. The future fulfillment for Israel's great Day of Atonement will be a most glorious day. All iniquity will be removed from the land. The fountain of Israel's future cleansing remains open today for sinners to experience cleansing and forgiveness of sins as they receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior by grace through faith. People today are still saved by faith in His blood.

Israel's future will be glorious when she repents and mourns over her Messiah and is cleansed in the fountain of His blood. Then the breach will be finally healed. The sad thing is that they must go through the Great Tribulation, and two-thirds of them will not make it. Though many have repented and believed into their Messiah, multitudes have not, and it is imperative that God's people do all they can to reach them with the saving gospel of grace.

Using Yom Kippur as a ***type***, God presented a picture of His Son—the ultimate atonement, accomplished through the ultimate High Priest, at a price of ultimate sacrifice. Yom Kippur bears significance to the Messiah's first coming as well as His Second Coming. The final atonement for Israel has been accomplished, but its efficacy has not yet been applied. Israel's High Priest, Messiah Jesus, is prophetically still in the Holy of Holies with His own blood being presented before God as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2).



When Jesus returns, however, it will not be to obtain atonement for sin. It will be to provide salvation for Israel and for all those who eagerly await Him. We read in Hebrews 2:28: ***“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”*** Just as the people of Israel anxiously awaited the reappearance of the high priest from the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement, signifying that God was satisfied with the atoning sacrifice; so too will Jesus appear in the heavens, having satisfied God’s righteous demands for a perfect, once-for-all cleansing from sin. Israel will be washed clean, given a new heart, and will receive God’s indwelling Holy Spirit as Ezekiel said: ***“For I will take you from among the heathen [Gentiles], and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them”*** (Ezekiel 26:24-27).

Have you been washed in the blood of the Lamb? Have you been forgiven and cleansed from sin? Are you reconciled to God? Have you been given a new heart? If not, repent of your sin and believe into the Lord Jesus Christ by receiving the gospel message of grace into your heart. Trust in the shed blood of Jesus the Messiah alone to redeem you and set you free from the bondage of sin. If you will come to Him in child-like faith, ***“He will in no wise cast you out”*** (John 6:37).

Those of us who are redeemed by the blood need to go to that fountain daily for cleansing when we fail our Lord in thought, word or deed. We still do battle with our old flesh which is so susceptible to ***“the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life.”*** May we keep short accounts with our Lord so that we might stay in fellowship with Him and allow His Holy Spirit to lead us into God’s perfect will.



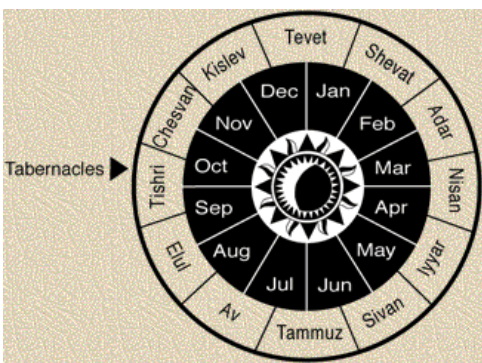


# Sukkot

## Feast of Tabernacles



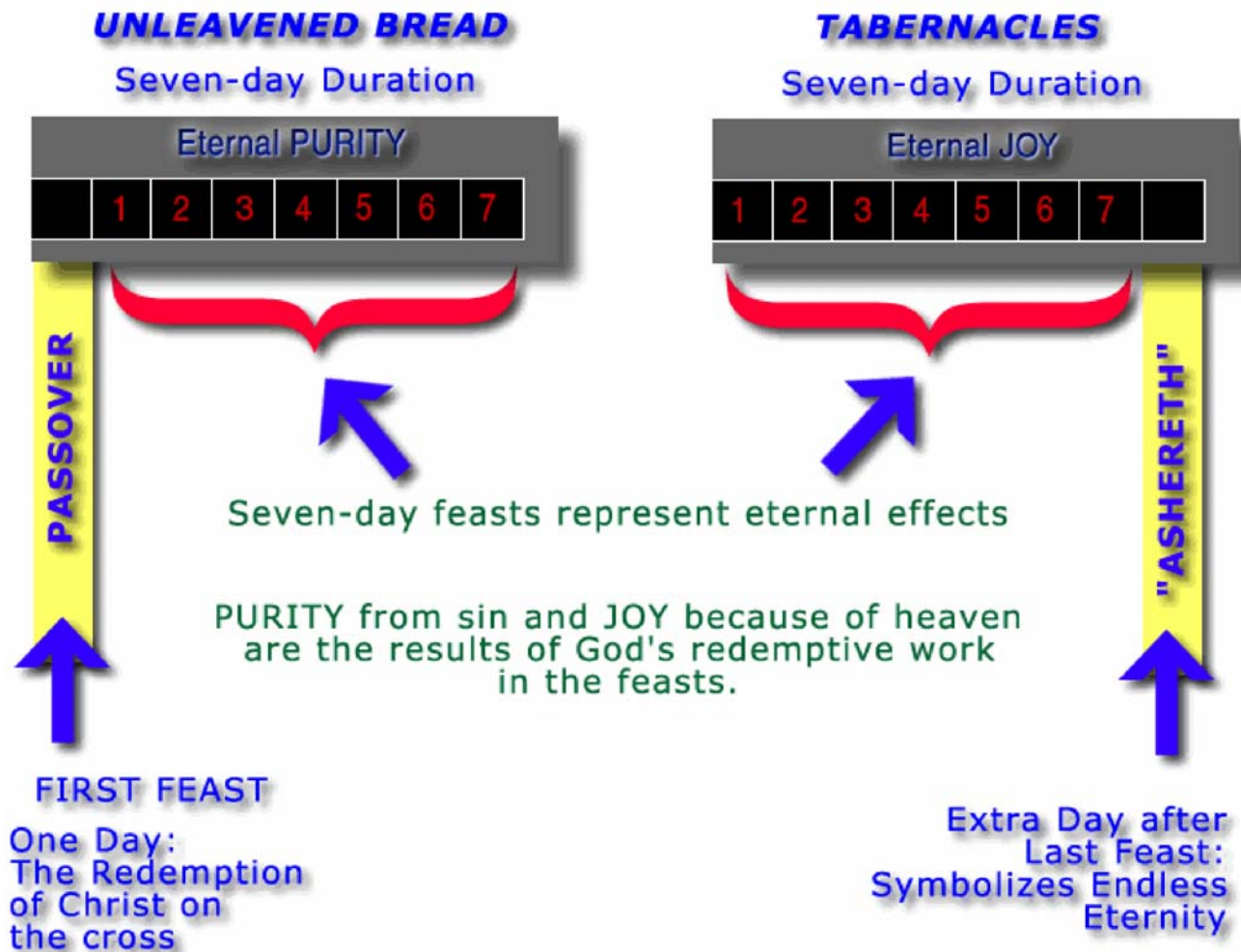
*“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, **The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.** On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the Sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD” (Leviticus 23:33-44).*



The **Feast of Tabernacles** or **Sukkot**, comes on the fifteenth day of Tishri, the seventh month on the Jewish religious calendar, and it continues for seven days. The month, Tishri, coincides with the end of September or early October. The feast is also called **“Booths”** because the people left their dwellings to camp out in tent-like huts for seven days. *“Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths”* (Leviticus 23:42). This feast is one of the three in which God commanded the Israelite men to assemble at Jerusalem and present their sacrifice and offerings to the Lord: *“They shall not appear before the LORD empty”* (Deuteronomy 16:16).

The feast is primarily agricultural in character and a joyous occasion. It compares in some ways to our American Thanksgiving celebration. The harvest has been gathered in and hearts are filled with praise for God's bounties. That is why this feast is also called "*The Feast of Ingathering,*" or "*Israel's Thanksgiving Festival*" – "*the feast,*" as John 7:37 calls it.

## First and Last Feasts of Israel



Passover, then 7 days of Unleavened Bread    7 Days of Tabernacles, then "Ashereth"

The Feast of Tabernacles also commemorates God's mighty deliverance of His people from Egypt and their forty years of wilderness wandering, when they dwelt in tents and tabernacles. For the last 3,500 years, Jewish people have been observing Sukkot by building little tabernacles or booths with walls of plaited branches and thatch for roofs, all of which give shade by day but permit the stars to gaze down by night upon the children of Israel as they faithfully fulfill the ancient command, "*Ye shall dwell in booths seven days.*"





In ancient times there was a controversy between the Sadducees and the Pharisees concerning the booths. The Sadducees held that the “*boughs of goodly trees*” pertained to the building of the booths. The Pharisees, on the other hand, contended that the branches were meant to be carried in the hands of the people celebrating. This they called the *lulav*. A compromise was reached. The booths of branches satisfied the Sadducees. In addition, the people used *lulavs* in their celebration. A *lulav* is made of branches of palms, myrtles, and willows, all fastened with a golden thread. These *lulavs* were then waved in the Temple during certain parts of the service. Also, every Jewish person came to the Temple holding an *etrog*, or citrus fruit, symbolic of the fruit of the Promised Land. The *booths*, the *lulav*, and *etrog* are basic symbols of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Seventy bullocks for a sin offering were offered during the seven-day feast. The rabbis explain that this number of seventy bullocks was a sacrifice on behalf of the seventy nations of the world, looking toward their conversion to the God of Israel and their gathering under the *Shekinah* glory.

The Feast of Tabernacles, like the other feasts of Israel, focuses the attention of God’s people on both the past and on the future. It was the seventh and final feast of the seventh month and lasted for seven days, completing the sacred cycle of the Lord’s appointed times. This feast brought to completion God’s clear purposes and plans in redemption for both the Church and Israel. Man’s day will have run its course and God’s redeemed ones will be gathered to Himself. Just as this feast marked the final gathering of “*the fruit of the land*” (Leviticus 23:39), so there will be a final gathering of all mankind, both the “*wheat*” and the “*tares*,” which are the children of Christ’s kingdom and the children of the wicked one. The prophetic message of the Feast of Tabernacles is that there is a shelter in the Tabernacle of God under the wings of the *Shekinah* glory, for the Jewish people first, and also for the Gentiles.

There were two outstanding features which characterized the Temple service of this feast:

1. The pouring of water in the Temple.
2. The brilliant illuminations of the Temple.

A specially appointed priest was sent to the Pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher to bring water from the pool, which was poured together with wine at the foot of the altar. The significance of the pouring of the water was symbolic of prayer for abundant rain which Israel needed for her daily bread. Even today in the synagogue much prayer for rain is offered at this time. Secondly, the ritual of the pouring of the water was also Messianic in its hope. It looked toward the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, not only upon Israel, but also on the believers of the nations under the reign of the Messiah King. The ritual of water pouring lasted six days, climaxing on the seventh day, which concluded the Feast of Tabernacles. This seventh day was called *Hoshanah Rabbah*, “**The Day of the Great Hosanna.**” It has special Messianic significance. The pouring of the water from the golden pitcher took place amidst the blasting of the trumpets by the priests and singing of sacred music by the Levites, while the people, waving their *lulavs*, chanted the Hallel Psalms 113-118.



The closing words of Psalm 118 are these:

<sup>25</sup> *Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.*

<sup>26</sup> *Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed You out of the house of the LORD.*

<sup>27</sup> *God is the LORD, which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*

<sup>28</sup> *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee.*

<sup>29</sup> *O give thanks unto the LORD; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever.*

From the words *save now* [Hebrew, *Hoshanah*], this day became known as the “**Great Hosanna.**” It was a prayer for the speedy salvation through the Messiah. This is why our Savior was greeted at His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem just prior to His crucifixion with the waving of palm branches and the words, “*Hosanna to the Son of David,*” meaning, “Save us now Son of David.” They thought He was coming then to establish the Kingdom. It was while all this was going on, the pouring of the water into the altar basin, the blasting of the trumpets, the singing of the Psalms, when the Messianic fervor was at its highest pitch, that the Lord Jesus stood in the Temple crying out: “*Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand. In the last day, that great day of the feast [“Great Hosanna”], Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*” (John 7:2, 37-38). The Messianic claim of our Savior was clearly understood by all. Here Jesus was claiming to be the answer to the fervent hope and prayer of many generations. Could He, “*the carpenter’s son of Nazareth,*” be the long expected Messiah? So there was division among the Jews. Jesus is still the great divider of men today. Folks are either for Him or against Him. As that old song chorus reads: “*What will you do with Jesus, Neutral you cannot be. One day your heart will be asking, ‘What will He do with me?’*” A song written by Ron Hamilton puts it this way:

### **“What Will You Do with Jesus”**

**What will you do with Jesus, He Who redeemed your soul? What will you do with Jesus, He Who can make you whole? Sovereign of all the ages, Savior of Calvary, What will you do with Jesus? He longs to set you free.**

**What will you do with Jesus, He who became your sin? What will you do with Jesus, He who can cleanse within? Giver of life eternal, Victor of Hell’s domain, What will you do with Jesus? Gladly He bore your pain.**

**What will you do with Jesus, Conquering Lord of all? What will you do with Jesus? Come while you hear His call! Follow His steps to Calvary, Humbly before Him bow. What will you do with Jesus? Call on His mercy now.**

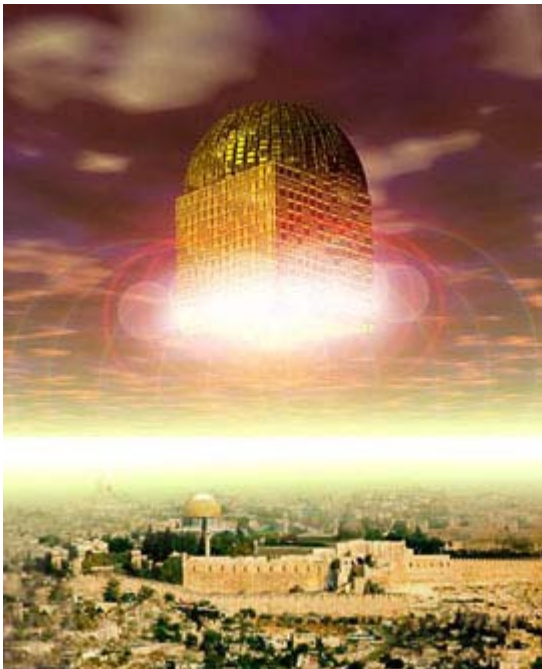
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On the last day of the feast, “Day of Great Hosanna,” the Jewish people observe the custom of striking the branches of the willow three times. Upon the completion of a Messianic prayer for God to grant eternal salvation by Messiah, the willow branches are struck three times on the benches or chairs of the synagogue hoping that with each falling leaf a sin falls away from the one who prays. Most of them don’t realize yet that only Yeshua [Jesus], the true Messiah, is able to bring forgiveness of sins.

Another central feature of the feast was the illuminations of the Temple in Jerusalem. The festive pilgrims came to the Temple bearing lights and torches while in the Temple itself the golden candlesticks were lighted, transforming the Temple area into one brilliant focus of light which illuminated most of Jerusalem. We read what our Lord says amidst all this splendor and brilliant lights of the Temple: ***“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”*** (John 8:12).

So we can see that this feast is about (1) A harvest of thanksgiving; (2) A national commemoration of redemption; and (3) Faith’s leap into the future, when Yahweh shall gather the nations in the Messianic Kingdom of His blessed Son, Jesus the Messiah. ***“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, and LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain”*** (Zechariah 14:16-17). Those who refuse to come to the feast to worship will be judged.

Presently, God lets His ***“sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust”*** (Matthew 5:45). But the time is coming, when in the Millennial Kingdom, those who refuse to worship the King will get no rain. The apostle John, looking toward the greater Feast of Ingathering, wrote: ***“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, And cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation [Hosanna] to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb”*** (Revelation 7:9-10). God has written into His calendar a time when at the mention of the name of Jesus, ***“every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father”*** (Philippians 2:9-11).



The Scriptures tell us of the day when man’s rebellion against God will end, and the redeemed will enter Christ’s glorious Kingdom. ***“And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away”*** (Isaiah 35:10). We read these words in Revelation 21:1-3: ***“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.”***

When this last great Feast of Tabernacles is prophetically fulfilled, then holiness will shine forth at last, for ***“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts”*** (Zechariah 14:20-21).

We close our study of this seventh feast with these words from the late Dr. Lehman Strauss: “*The greatest fact of the **past** is that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on this earth for a period of thirty-three years. In the wisdom and plan of God the Father, He appeared on planet earth, and this is precisely where He should have been at that time, for then ‘He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself’ (Hebrews 9:26).*

*The greatest fact of the **present** is that the same Lord Jesus Christ appears in Heaven, highly exalted by God the Father. In the wisdom and plan of God, Heaven is precisely where He should be now. He entered ‘into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us’ (Hebrews 9:24).*

*The greatest fact of the **future** is that this same Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth. When He comes, in the wisdom and plan of God, the earth is precisely where He should be. ‘And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation’ (Hebrews 9:28).*

*The King is coming! ‘And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever’ (Revelation 11:15). What a Kingdom! What a King! How blessed will be that day when believing Israel and believing Gentiles bow before God’s beloved Son!” (God’s Prophetic Calendar, pp. 131-132).*

***“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:5-6).***



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