

FEASTS OF THE LORD

Leviticus 23 Feasts ordained by YAHWEH

- Passover
- Unleavened Bread
- Firstfruits
- Feasts of Weeks/Shavuot or “Pentecost”
- Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets)
- Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
- Feast of Tabernacles

Calendar “issues”

In Exodus 12:2 Yahweh tells Israel Abib is to be the beginning of months – to remind them of their freedom from slavery. But..by Jesus’ day (and presently), a “civil” calendar was in use that begins with Tishri (fall). Some calendar month names “picked up” Babylonian names, which again shows how the people were affected by the Babylonian captivities.

Seasons

Two of YAHWEH’S feasts were divinely integrated with the agricultural activities of harvest. The crops gathered at the beginning of harvest season were called firstfruits (Exodus 23:16), and the crops gathered at the end were called summer fruit (Amos 8:2). The Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated in two parts – the “waving” of the omer of barley and the “waving” of the two loaves at Shavuot (Pentecost).

- The Feast of Rosh Hashanah or “Trumpets” and The Day of Atonement “Yom Kippur” are not part of this study. For more insight into the Feasts try “The Feasts of Israel-Seasons of The Messiah,” by Bruce Scott, published through The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministries, Inc.

The Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Ingathering celebrated the obvious bounty of the fields – also commemorating the exodus with living in booths or Sukkah and celebrating God’s provision for them. There is another part of Sukkah that revolves around God’s presence tabernacling with them.

Each feast has practical relevancy in worship as well as prophetic relevancy from YAHWEH’S desire to reveal Himself and His plans to His beloved.

Deuteronomy 16:1-17 The three feasts each year (Exodus 23:14 and 15)

- Passover/Unleavened Bread
- Feast of Weeks (Firstfruits/Pentecost or Shavuot – pilgrimage was made at Shavuot)
- Feast of Tabernacles

Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Pesach, Wine, Matsah, and Bitter Herbs)

- Rooted in the exodus (Exodus 12:1-13:10)
- Shows Redemption and a Holy Life (1 Peter 1:15-16, 18 and 19; 1 Corinthians 5:7 and 8)
- Passover is commemorative – YAHWEH “passed over” once (Exodus 12:13)
- When available (Tabernacle or Temple days), special burnt offerings and sacrifices were offered to YAHWEH (Numbers 28:17-25).
- The key elements of the Feast are the unleavened matzah, wine and bitter herbs and making sure all leaven containing products are removed from the home (symbolic of sin).
- The Peschal Lamb has not been sacrificed in almost two thousand years, but faithful Jews are planning for the Third Temple even now, and have been for years..I wonder who will broker the deal to allow them to build on the “Temple Mount”??

Prophetically relevant (Ref: Graph 2 from Michael Scheifler’s work,)

- The timing of Christ’s atoning sacrifice as the Pesach Lamb
- His resurrection on the day of Firstfruits (the omer) offering
- Potentially (according to one’s interpretation of Ezekiel 45), Passover could be celebrated in the Kingdom.

The Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22)

- Shavuot (literally weeks) “The day of the firstfruits” (Numbers 28:26) or Pentecost (Acts 2:1).
- The waving of the omer (Leviticus 23:15 and 16). Denoted the offering for the Firstfruits of Barley Harvest. The Omer is an unleavened grain offering (Jeremiah 2:3 says that Israel is Firstfruits unto Yahweh).
- Waving the two loaves on Pentecost – the Firstfruits of the Wheat Harvest. The two loaves are baked with leaven.
- Not a commemorative holiday but can be seen to be prophetic as well as devotional.
- The whole point is that the fruit of the earth is Yahweh’s.

Prophetically relevant

- The waving of the omer typify our Messiah’s life and resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ’s at his coming,

- Ephesians 1 and 2 describe the fact that in Christ we (Jews and Gentiles) are made one new man IN CHRIST–the ONE offering, and by one spirit which was poured out during this feast. (Acts 2:1-6)

The Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)

Leviticus 23:33-43

Psalm 91:1 and 2

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to YAHWEH, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!"

This Psalm captures the heart of the Feast of Tabernacles – a joyous celebration of YAHWEH'S provision and presence, yesterday, now, and forever.

- Feast of Ingathering and Commemoration
- Numbers 29:12-39 outlines specific sacrifices to be made
- The three requirements were 1) to build and dwell in a sukkah (booth), 2) to use four species of foliage, 3) to rejoice all seven days.

Many “man-made” customs were added – one significant one being the “water libation” that was celebrated in Jesus’ day. This is where he stood and cried, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37 and 38). All that were present understood what he was saying – that he was the Messiah. The Jews of that time understood the water libation ceremony to prefigure the promised outpouring of the spirit, which even the first century Jews were looking forward to. The next few verses confirm it.

John 7:39-41

But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. *Some* of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly is the Prophet." Others were saying, "This is the Christ." Still others were saying, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?"

Future and Fulfillment

The Feast of Tabernacles will be partially fulfilled after the tribulation when Messiah comes to vanquish his foes and reign for 1,000 years. The final fulfillment will come when the Messiah delivers the Kingdom up to the Father as described in 1 Corinthians 15.

Isaiah 4:5 and 6

Then YAHWEH will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy (Hebrew: Huppah). There will be a shelter (Hebrew: Sukkah) to *give* shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.

That “shekinah” glory from the cloud and fire will serve as a canopy (Huppah) and a covering (sukkah) for safety and preservation. This is the glory of YAHWEH again dwelling with His people.

The whole world will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles during the reign of Messiah.

Zechariah 14:16-19

Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no *rain will fall* on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.