
The Feasts of the Lord

Holy Bible: Old Testament : Study iv

Introduction. [study iv]

In this study, we'll have a look at the **Feasts of Israel /of the Lord** [also called Biblical holidays], as **God** prescribes them for the **Church** in our day. In the scripture we see that there are **seven feasts** in **three festive** seasons, appointed by God.

The Passover (consisting of the feasts of: Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits), the **Feast of Pentecost**, and the **Feast of the Tabernacles** (consisting of the feasts of: Trumpets, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles).

We will also have a look at their **historical, prophetic and spiritual meaning** as well as a look **why they are still important** to us today.

Aim of the study:

My aim in discussing the "Feasts of God" is to explain that these holidays are indeed "the feasts of the Lord" which simply means that they belong to God and are His holidays.

Additional information will be given by means of a "picture" a - **schematic presentation model** and **topic-discussions** of the different **feasts**, the meaning of the feasts, and where they "*fit in*" with regards to their **historical background, prophetic and spiritual meaning, as well as the church era applicable.**

We'll also have a look at the different calendars ~ i.e the **Jewish Calendar (Hebrew Months)** as well as the **farming seasons** with regards to the **festive seasons** and other relevant information of the feasts of God as well as those feasts who are **already fulfilled**, and those who are **yet to be fulfilled.**

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Feasts of God

Description of words.

Feasts ~ in Hebrew feasts literally means "appointed times."

[Heb. mo'ed, an assembling, high, dance or pilgrimage]

– NIV Compact dictionary of the Bible

The Seven Feasts of the Lord

It was on **Mount Sinai** that God gave Moses the dates and observances of **the seven feasts**.

"These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons."

[Leviticus 23:4 KJV]

There are seven major feasts of the Bible.

God's Chosen People the Jews have celebrated them since Moses was given the instructions from the Lord. **Here are their names**

1. **Passover** (*Pesach*) - Nisan 14
2. **Unleavened Bread** (*Chag Hamotzi*) - Nisan 15-22
3. **First Fruits** (*Yom habikkurim*) - Nisan 16
4. **Pentecost** (*Shavu'ot*) - Sivan 6
5. **Trumpets** (*Yom Teru'ah*) - Tishri 1
6. **Atonement** (Yom Kippur) - Tishri 10
7. **Tabernacles** (Sukkot) - Tishri 15

The Seven: Feasts of the Lord / Feasts of Israel or

Holidays"**These seven holidays** which God instituted for His chosen nation of Israel are discussed throughout the Bible (in both the Old and New Testaments); however, only in one place (**Leviticus Chapter twenty-three**) **are all seven holidays listed in chronological order**. These holidays are called "**the feasts of the Lord**" which simply means that they belong to God and are His holidays" [bible.gosplecom.net]

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Feasts or sacred festivals.

The **feasts or sacred festivals**, held an important place in Jewish religion. Festivals are regular **religious celebrations remembering God's great acts of salvation in the history of His people.**

God has carefully planned and orchestrated the timing and sequence of each of these **seven feasts** to reveal to us a special story. [NIV Compact dictionary of the Bible]

Purpose of the Feasts

The Feasts and holy days of God are called, in Hebrew, **Ha Moyadim** (ha mow ya dimm) ~ “**the appointed times**”

These feasts [or "holy convocations"] are intended to be **a time of meeting between God and man** for " holy purposes.

The Nature of God ~ The Feasts of the Lord /of Isreal , holidays, or Biblical holy days, **teach us about the nature of God and His plan for mankind.**

God revealed the feasts for a reason and through them **all believers** can be blessed, **Jews and Christians.**

In the New Testament there is a passage found in regards to the holy days **as referred to in Leviticus 23.**

“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.”

[Colossians 2:16-17]

In a nutshell ~ “ these seven feasts of the Lord are **God's appointed times** during which **He will meet with men for holy purposes.** When completed, these seven special feasts/holidays will triumphantly bring and end to this age and usher in a glorious "Golden-Age."

[www.clarion-call.org/yeshua/feasts/chart.htm]

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The “appointed times” in one year

There are **70 specially appointed times** for holy days called "HaMoyadim" according Leviticus 23 [Chuck Missler: The Appointed Times]

1. 52 Sabbaths
2. 7 days of Pesach/Passover (encompassing Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Feast of First Fruits)
3. 1 day for Hag Ha Shavuot (Feast of Pentecost)
4. 1 day for Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets, which is concurrent with Rosh Hashanah ... this and other things will be explained in detail as we study each feast)
5. 1 day for Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
6. 7 days for Sukkot (Feast of Booths/Tabernacle)
8. 1 day for Shmini Atzeret (Eighth Day of Assembly)

$52+7+1+1+1+7+1=70$ [**specially appointed times in one year**]

Cycles of the Feasts.

According to *Chuck Missler* many of these feasts or **festivals were timed** according to **cycles of seven**. The cycle of the week with its climax on the seventh day, provided the cyclical basis for much of Israel's worship; as the **seventh day** was observed, so was **the seventh month** (which contained four of the national festivals), and **the seventh year**, and the fiftieth year (the year of Jubilee), which followed **seven cycles of seven years**.

Since these seven feasts of the Lord are "appointed times" for "holy purposes," they carry with them great sacredness and solemnity

The Calender

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for **seasons**, and for days, and years....” [Genesis 1:14]

This is where the calendar is started and the word ‘seasons’ means the "appointed times" (HaMoyadim)

[Chuck Missler: The Appointed Times]

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The Gregorian Calendar: “The present standardised calendar which is used by the world, is known as the “**Gregorian calendar**” which was decreed by Gregory xiii in 1582” ~[Feasts of God, CLT.Christianlife,1999]

The Solar Calendar: The “**solar calendar**” functions according to the principle that the earth revolves around the sun. It takes the earth a period of 365 and a quarter days to revolve around the sun, which results in every fourth year having **one more day** than the previous 3 years [called a leap year]

“**God’s calendar** is based on the phases of the moon. Each month in a **lunar calendar** begins with a new moon. Pesach falls on the first full moon of Spring. The first three feasts, Pesach, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits fall in March and April. The fourth one, Shavu’ot, *marked the summer harvest* and occurs in late May or early June. The last three feasts, Trumpets, Yom Kippur and Sukkot happen in September and October” ~

“**Two Calendars**” of the Jews [www.hebrew4christians.com/holidays/feasts]

Take note that Israel has two calendars~ their **civil calendar**, begins in **the fall** [Tishri, about **September/October** on our calendar]; the other, their **religious calendar**, begins in **the spring** [Nisan, about **April/May** on our calendar]

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

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Fulfillment of the Feasts.

- **Four of the seven feasts have been literally fulfilled.**
- **There are still three to be fulfilled**

Four of the seven holidays *occur during the springtime*. The first four feasts (**Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Weeks**) have already been fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament.

The final three holidays (**Trumpets, Yom Kippur, and Tabernacles**) *occur during the fall* within a brief fifteen-day period in the Hebrew month of Kislev; Kislev corresponds to the months of *September/October* on the **Gregorian calendar**.

These fall feasts have not yet transpired ~ however, without absolute certainty these events most assuredly will unfold. **As the four spring feasts (holidays) were fulfilled literally and right on schedule in connection with Christ's first coming**, these three **fall feasts** (holidays) will likewise be fulfilled literally and right on schedule in connection to the Lord's second coming. These final three feasts form the basis for what the Bible calls in **Titus 2:13**: "the-blessed-hope."

Schematic Explanation of the Feasts



[www.clarion-call.org/yeshua/feasts/chart.htm]

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The Spring Feasts

Passover (*Pesach*).

Leviticus 23:5 specifies that the festival year **begins** with Passover on “the fourteenth day of the first month” (Nisan 15). **Passover is the Feast of Salvation**. In both testaments, the **blood of the Lamb delivers from slavery – the Jews from Egypt, the Christian from sin**. Think about the tenth plague in Exodus 12:5 when **Egypt’s first born** sons died while the angel of death “**passed over**” the **Jewish homes** with the blood of the lamb on their door posts. In the *B’rit Chadashah*, [New Testament] Jesus serves **as the sacrificial lamb**. It is no coincidence that our Lord Himself was sacrificed on Passover. In Egypt the Jew marked his house with the blood of the lamb. Today the Christian marks his house – his body, “the house of the spirit” with the blood of Christ. Passover, then, represents our salvation.

Unleavened Bread (*Chag HaMotzi*).

Leviticus 23:6 puts the second feast on the next night: “On the fifteenth day of the same month is the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.” **Historically** ~ Leaven or yeast in the Bible symbolized sin and evil. Unleavened bread, eaten over a period of time, symbolized a holy walk, as with the Lord. **Unleavened bread**, in the *B’rit Chadashah* [New Testament] is, of course, **the body of our Lord**. **He is described as “the Bread of Life” (*Lechem haChayim*)**. He was born in Bethlehem, which, **in Hebrew**, means, “**House of Bread**” (*Bet Lechem*).

Additional meaning “The Lord said to His disciples “**Beware of the leaven (false doctrine) of the Pharisees**” (Matthew 16:6; Mark 8:15). In addition, the apostle Paul warned the Church at Corinth that “a little leaven (yeast) leaveneth (ferments) the whole lump” (I Corinthians 5:6). Paul was simply saying that if sin goes unchecked, it will permeate and infect everything and everyone around them.

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The Lord Christ Jesus was crucified on the cross at Golgotha on the day of Passover. [He was then buried in a newly hewn tomb donated by Joseph of Arimathea]

Note, unlike all other corpses, **the body of Jesus (Yeshua) would not decay in the grave.** There would be no decomposition of His body, no, none indeed. God the Father would not "allow" thine Holy One (His Son Jesus) to see corruption (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread proclaims that Christ's physical body would not experience the ravages of death while in the grave; for He was sanctified (set apart) by God the Father.

First Fruits (Yom Habikkurim).

Firstfruits speaks of the Lord's triumphant resurrection; death simply could not hold her foe. On the third day, **Jesus rose victoriously from the grave** ~[Christ is risen]

Historically, First Fruits, the feast for acknowledging the fertility of the land He gave the Israelites. They were to bring the early crops of their spring planting and "wave the sheaf before the Lord."

The modern church has come to call this feast "**Easter**," named after **Ishtar**, the pagan goddess of fertility. We continue to revere objects of fertility such as the rabbit and the egg, but the First Fruits celebration was to be over God's replanting of the earth in the spring.

Today this feasts celebrates the resurrection of the Lord on First Fruits, which indeed occurred (plus, eventually, the resurrection of the entire Church!)

Pentecost (Shavu'ot)

The word Pentecost ~ is a term derived from the Greek "pentekostos", meaning fiftieth. [NIV~ Compact Dictionary of the Bible, 1998]

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Pentecost (Shavu'ot)

This holiday is a celebration of the birthday of the church. Holy Spirit was given the Day of Pentecost....."**and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit**" --Acts 2:1-13. Harvest Offering Fifty Days (hence: Pentecost) after Passover. Leviticus 23:16 says, "Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall **ye number fifty days**; and ye shall **These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations**, offer a new meat offering unto the Lord." In late May or early June, *Shavu'ot marked the summer harvest.* Leviticus 23:17 requires an offering of **two loaves** of bread, baked with leaven. These loaves **symbolize** the church being comprised of both **Jew and Gentile**

A review of the first four feasts reveals that **Jesus/Yeshua was crucified** on Pesach, buried on Unleavened Bread, raised on First Fruits and sent the *Ruach Hakkodesh [Holy Breath]* on Shavu'ot. Because we have not yet seen the fulfillment of feast number five - Trumpets - we remain under the orders of Shavu'ot.

The Fall Feasts

Trumpets (Yom Teru'ah).

Ever since Isaac was spared by virtue of the *ram being caught in the thicket by its horn*, God seems to have enjoyed the trumpet. He used it when *Joshua conquered Jericho*. In Leviticus 25:8-10, he specified its use in having trumpets "**proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof**" (that quotation appears today on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, assuring us that America was founded by Bible readers).

Leviticus 23:24 requires that, "in the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets."

The Feast of Trumpets occurs in September. This jump in time from the Feast of Pentecost in May or June seems to represent the Church Age in God's planning, since the trumpet unquestionably

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represents the Rapture of the Church. Historically ~ The trumpet was the signal for the field workers to come into the Temple. The high priest actually blew the trumpet so that the faithful would stop harvesting to worship. **Now, when the trumpet sounds in accordance with ~ 1 Corinthians 15:51-3, living believers will cease their harvest and rise from the earth. The Church will be taken out of the world.**

Atonement (Yom Kippur).

Leviticus 23:27 provides a day of confession, the highest of holy days. "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." [KJV] **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) points to a great host of people, Jews and Gentiles, who will be saved when Jesus physically returns to earth.**

A Holy Convocation ~ The purpose of the "holy convocation" was to draw the focus of the people to the altar of divine mercy. The Lord called the people of Israel to gather in His presence and give their undivided attention to Him.

Prayer and Fasting ~ The people of Israel were to humble (afflict) their souls (Leviticus 23:27). This was explained by later tradition to indicate fasting and repentance. Israel understood that this was a day for mourning over their sins. The seriousness of this requirement is repeated in Leviticus 23:29: "*If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people*" (Leviticus 23:29).

Offerings ~ Offerings are central to the Day of Atonement; in fact, the Bible devotes an entire chapter (Leviticus 16) to them (also see Numbers 29:7-11). In addition to these, when the Day of Atonement fell on the sabbath, the regular sabbath offerings were offered.

Prohibition from Labor ~ The Day of Atonement was a "sabbath of rest", and the Israelites were forbidden to do any work period. If they disobeyed, they were liable to capital punishment! (Leviticus 23:30)

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Day of Atonement

Historical events and the meaning for us today.

According to David Holt Boshart “The high priest sacrificed a bullock as a sin offering for himself and for his house (Leviticus 16:6). After filling his censer with live coals from the altar, he entered the holy of holies where he placed incense on the coals. Next, he took some of the blood which was taken from the slain bullock and sprinkled it on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant (Leviticus 16:13) and also on the ground in front of the mercy seat, providing atonement for the priesthood (Leviticus 16:14-15). Then he sacrificed a male goat as a sin offering for the people. Some of this blood was then also taken into the holy of holies and sprinkled there on behalf of the people (Leviticus 16:11-15). Next, the high priest took another goat (called the "scapegoat"), laid his hands on its head, confessed over it the sins of Israel, and then released it into the desert where it symbolically carried away the sins of the people (Leviticus 16:8,10). The remains of the sacrificial bullock and male goat were taken outside of the city and subsequently burned; the day finally concluded with some additional sacrifices.

According to Hebrews 9-10, this ritual is a symbol of the atoning work of Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, who did not need to make any sacrifice for Himself but rather shed His own blood for our sins. **As the high priest of the Old Testament entered the holy of holies with the blood of sacrificial animals, Jesus entered heaven itself to appear on our behalf in front of the Father** (Hebrews 9:11,12). Each year the high priest repeated his sin offerings for his own sin as well as for the sins of the people. This ritual was an annual reminder that perfect and permanent atonement had not yet been made; but **Jesus, through His very own blood, accomplished eternal redemption for His people**” (Hebrews 9:12).

- *“Just as the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement was burned outside Israel's camp, Jesus suffered outside the gate of Jerusalem so that He might redeem His people from sin (Hebrews 13:11-12).”* - [www.Christcenteredmall.com]

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Tabernacles (*Sukkot*).

Leviticus 23:34 says, “The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the *feast of tabernacles* for seven days unto the Lord.”

God wanted to celebrate the fact that He provided shelter for the Israelites in the wilderness. Each year on Tabernacles, devout Jews build little shelters or “booths” (*sukkot*) outside their houses and worshipped in them.

Tabernacles represents the Lord’s shelter in the world to come (*olam habah*), His great Tabernacle to exist in Jerusalem during the Kingdom Age. The Lord will establish His Tabernacle in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 37:26), and the world will come every year to appear before the King and worship Him (Zechariah 14:16-17).

The eschatological visions according to *David Holt Boshart*, which speak of the coming of all nations to worship at Jerusalem refer to the Feast of Tabernacles on the occasion of their pilgrimage (Zechariah 14:16-21). “**This feast speaks eloquently of Christ’s millennial Kingdom** - of a new beginning without the ravages of the curse of sin. In that day, the earth will give her full bounty, all animals will be docile (Isaiah 65:25), armies will no longer march, every man will sit under his own fig tree (Micah 4:4), and righteousness will become a reality in the earth”

“Tabernacles speaks of the day when the Son of God will tabernacle among men, wipe away every tear, and bring in the “golden age” which men have dreamed of since time immemorial”

Summary.

The Feasts are in the Bible, and the entire Bible is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness [2Timothy 3:16-17]

Feasts of the Lord: Conclusion

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We can come to the conclusion that these holidays are indeed "the feasts of the Lord" **which simply means that they belong to God and are His holidays** [holy-days], and knowledge of them truly enhances our faith.

To summarize ~ **these seven or feasts** or Holy days of the Lord are **God's appointed times** during which He will meet with men for holy purposes. When completed, these seven special holidays will triumphantly **bring and end to this age and usher in a glorious "Golden Age."**

Fifteen hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, these seven feasts foretold the major redemptive works of His life.

Through these Feasts we understand **how God announced in advance** how His Son would pay the penalty for man's [our] sin. We also see how Jesus fulfilled each of these Feasts **to the very day and hour**, which God's people had observed for hundreds of years.

The feasts of the Lord are not obsolete practices of faith but, **they are in fact genuine shadows or models of God's Truth of what was, what is, and what is to come...**

END

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