

The Seven Holy Feasts of the LORD!

(Leviticus 23)

by

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The Seven Holy Feasts of the LORD

The “Seven Holy Feasts of the LORD” are recorded in the 23rd chapter of the “Book of Leviticus” in the *Old Testament* of the Holy Bible. The following information is given to show the “prophetic significance” for each of them by way of the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that this material will enlighten, edify, and encourage all who read and study it!

The Primary Meaning For Each of the key words involved with these feast days are as follows:

Seven = Perfection. **Holy** = Separation. **Feast** = Festival. **LORD** = Self-existent One.

The Holy Bible is called the “Word of God” because it is a faithful record of everything God wanted mankind to know as a whole, including those things that are evil and degenerate. The original [autograph] was written by men inspired by “God the Holy Spirit,” the third Personality of the triune Godhead that is known as the “Holy Trinity.” The Holy Bible is free from any error concerning the supernatural, science and history, making it the only source of truth on earth. The substance of the Holy Bible has been preserved for us and is complete! We are not to look for the writing of additional Scripture or the giving of extra-biblical revelation (Ex. 17:14; Dt. 4:2; 5:22; 12:32-13:5; 28:58-62; 31:24-26; Josh. 1:7-8; 8:31-35; Ps. 12:6; 18:30; 19:7-9; 119:140, 142, 151; Prov. 30:5-6; Isa. 40:8; Mt. 4:1-11; 24:35; Lk. 16:29-31; 24:25-27; Jn. 5:39, 46-47; 17:12, 14, 17; 19:24; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:18-20; 9:9-17; 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; Col. 2:9; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; 3:15-16; 1 Jn. 4:1; Rev. 1:1-3, 10-11; 22:6-10, 18-19).

The “Word of God” advises all to:

“Search the Scriptures” (Jn. 5:39, 46-47; Acts 17:10-12).

“Study the Scriptures” (Prov. 15:28; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15).

“Meditate upon the Scriptures” (Ps. 119; 1 Tim. 4:15-16).

The Holy Bible. Nothing More. Nothing Less. Nothing Else.

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(1)

The First Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of the Passover

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Ex. 12:1-28; Lev. 23:4-5; Dt. 16:1-2, 5-7, 12.

Season:	Spring
Number:	First Feast Day.
Event:	The Feast of the Passover.
Purpose:	A memorial to redemption.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	Redemption from bondage in Egypt.

Comments: The first "Passover" took place in Egypt, where the Hebrew people were being held in bondage. Each Hebrew household was told to select a sacrificial, yearling lamb without any blemish exactly four days before the Passover (Ex. 12:3-7). They were to examine the lamb and have it live with them. In the subsequent four days they would come to love their "passover" lamb. The death of the lamb brought both sorrow and salvation when its blood was sprinkled on the crosspiece and the two side posts of the door of the house so the "Angel of Death" would see the blood and pass over.

The penalty for not doing as the LORD instructed on the first "Passover" in Egypt, would be the death of the first born of that household (Ex. 12:12-13, 29-30). ". . . the life of the flesh is in the blood; and . . . it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul (Lev. 17:11). This is why we are told there cannot be any forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). The blood of the animals that were offered as a sacrifice by the people of Israel could "COVER" their sins but it could never "REMOVE" their sins (Heb. 10:4, 11)!

The "passover" lamb was to be eaten with "unleavened bread" and with "bitter herbs." The "unleavened bread" symbolized the absence of sin, and the "bitter herbs" was to remind the Jewish people of the bitterness of their bondage while in Egypt. As a type it shows not only the bitterness of sin, but also of the bitterness which the Lord Jesus Christ had to taste, for sinners, when He was made to be sin for all who would trust Him as their personal Savior.

During the "Passover" ceremony held by the Jewish people there is the breaking of a piece of unleavened bread called "matzah" into three pieces. Then the middle piece is wrapped in a piece of cloth and buried or hidden. This piece of the "matzah" is later "resurrected" [brought forth] during the ceremony. This act is symbolic of the death, burial and resurrection of the Messiah. The reason for this act remains a mystery to the majority of the Jewish people.

The First Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of the Passover

The New Testament References

Scripture: 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.

Season:	Spring
Number:	First Feast Day.
Event:	The Crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Purpose:	A memorial to redemption.
To be observed:	Forever
Significance for the Church:	Redemption from the bondage of sin.

Comments: The Lord Jesus Christ rode into the city of Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey exactly four days before the Passover was to be celebrated (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:1-11; Mk. 11:1-10; Lk. 19:28-40; Jn. 12:12-16). He was the perfect “lamb of God” (Isa. 53:7-8; Jn. 1:29, 35; 1 Cor. 5:7). The blood that the Lord Jesus Christ willingly shed for sinners can be credited to our account as payment in full for all of our sins against God by believing it to be true. Thus, it is necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to be our personal *Passover* sacrificial lamb. His being so allows God to forgive us, remove all our sins, and enables us to be redeemed through Him (Jn. 1:29; Rom. 5:8-9; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 1:14). The “Age of Law” was fulfilled by the death of Lord Jesus Christ. The “Age of Grace” began with the death of the Lord Jesus Christ while still on the cross at Calvary!

God is holy and righteous! He cannot tolerate sin to go unpunished. A sad fact is that every human being falls short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23; 5:12). Mankind is conceived in sin (Ps. 51:5) and lives in sin (Ps. 51:3; Rom. 7:18, 24) and is a slave to sin (Rom. 6:12, 20; 7:18). No man or woman is able to do anything to avoid the judgment of our sin against a holy God. If, however, the judgment and penalty that is warranted for those sins should be paid in full by another, then they could not be charged to us (Jn. 3:16; Heb. 10:12, 14, 17-18). The penalty for sin can only be paid for by someone who has no debt to sin, of their own, to account for. According to the Scriptures there was only one person that was true about and that was the Lord Jesus Christ, the only one not to be conceived in sin and to never have committed a sin against God during His life on earth (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22).

The Second Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Ex. 12:14-20, 34, 39; Lev. 23:6-8; Dt. 16:3-4, 8, 12, 16-17.

Season:	Spring
Number:	Second Feast Day.
Event:	The Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Purpose:	The purging of all leaven.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	Putting away sin.

Comments: “Chag Hamatzot” meaning the “Festival of Unleavened Bread” had been celebrated long before the Jewish exodus out of Egypt (Ex. 23:15). It had become a spring festival during which time the Jewish farmers would celebrate the beginning of the grain harvest, in honor of their God. This is the feast that Moses repeatedly begged Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to go into the wilderness to observe (Ex. 5:1-3; 7:14-16; 8:1, 8, 20, 25-29; 9:1, 13; 10:3-4, 7-11, 24-26). The “Feast of Unleavened Bread” became part of the hasty departure of the Israelites from Egypt, when they “took their dough before it was leavened” (Ex. 12:8, 34, 39). This was done in compliance with their instructions from God,

Prior to their exodus from Egypt, the people of Israel were told to cleanse their houses of all traces of “leaven” and not to eat any bread with “leaven” in it for the seven days following the *Feast of the Passover*. This was to symbolize the removal of sin in their lives and of their holy walk with the LORD. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, it began the first walk of faith with God by the “nation” of Israel. This unleavened bread that is called the “matzah,” or “the bread of affliction” (Dt. 16:3), is both flat and hard. It is made of flour from barley or wheat. The barley was for those too poor to afford wheat which was twice as expensive (2 Ki. 7:1, 16, 18).

The Second Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The New Testament References

Scripture: 1 Cor. 5:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:21.

Season:	Spring
Number:	Second Feast Day.
Event:	Jesus Christ in the grave.
Purpose:	The purging of sin through Christ.
To be observed:	Forever
Significance for the Church:	All in Christ are cleansed of sin.

Comments: Nowhere in Scripture does “leaven” represent good. This is why “leaven,” as a symbolic or typical substance, is always mentioned in the *Old Testament* in an evil sense. The use of the word “leaven” and its symbolic meaning throughout the Scriptures is made clear in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, where we are told that “leaven” represents “malice and wickedness” in contrast with “the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.” The Scriptures consistently typify or compare the presence of evil or impurity with the fermenting process of “leaven” (Ex. 12:15, 19; 13:7; Lev. 2:11; Dt. 16:4; Mt. 16:6, 11-12; Mk. 8:15; Lk. 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:6-9; Gal. 5:9).

The “Parable of the Leaven” in Matthew 13:33, reveals that the “Church” will become infiltrated by “professing Christians,” or “unbelievers,” who will introduce teachings that are both heretical and blasphemous, which will lead to a great apostasy (2 Th. 2:3). Thus, the explanation of the “Parable of the Wheat and the Tares” (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-42). Tares represent the unbeliever and the wheat represents believers. Tares can never become wheat! The same is true in the “Parable of the Good Fish and the Bad Fish” (Mt. 13:47-50). The Lord Jesus reveals that true doctrine would be corrupted by false doctrine, which is why the bad fish would be cast out of the boat.

It is impossible to walk with a holy God when there is sin in our lives. Sin, is symbolized in the Scriptures by “leaven.” Thus, we must, “Purge out, therefore, the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). Sin must be buried. It is for this reason that we must be redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ to walk as a member of the called-out assembly of believers known as “the Church.” This walk begins with the Lord Jesus Christ, who called Himself “The Bread of Life” (Jn. 6:35). We must partake of Him as “unleavened bread,” so that we might be able to walk “in Him” and walk “with Him.” His burial represented the “cleansing” [removal], of the “leaven” [sin], in each believer.

The Third Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of First Fruits

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Ex. 23:16a; Lev. 23:9-14; Num. 28:26a; Dt. 16:12.

Season:	Spring
Number:	Third Feast Day.
Event:	The Feast of First Fruits.
Purpose:	Thanksgiving for the first crop.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	Gathering of the first harvest of the year.

Comments: The first harvest of the year began with the barley crop at the time of the Passover. The barley crop is then followed by the harvesting of grapes, figs, pomegranates and the wheat crop which is offered at the "Feast of Weeks" [Pentecost], seven weeks later. The people of Israel were to observe and celebrate each of the seven holy feasts of the LORD to remind them of the many years they were in slavery and bondage, while in Egypt.

The "Feast of First Fruits" was to be celebrated on the first Sunday following the start of the "Feast of Unleavened Bread," which was for seven days. The "Feast of First Fruits" is the first of three harvest festivals to be celebrated during the year by the nation of Israel. This is why it was called the "Feast of First Fruits." This festival was to be one of thankfulness to the LORD for the fertility of the land He had given them. The Israelites were to bring a sheaf of tied barley stalks to the priest, who would then wave it before the LORD as an offering.

The Third Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of First Fruits

The New Testament References

Scripture: 1 Cor. 15:20-23; Jas. 1:18.

Season:	Spring
Number:	Third Feast Day.
Event:	The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Purpose:	Victory over sin and death.
To be observed:	Forever
Significance for the Church:	Ingathering of the redeemed begins.

Comments: On the first day of the week, which was the Sunday that followed His crucifixion and burial, the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead (Lk. 24:1-7). Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ became the first man to be permanently resurrected from the grave. He is the first-born, or the first fruit, from the dead (Col. 1:18), and is now our great high priest (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14-15; 7:25; 9:24-26). Those who were resurrected from the dead, after His resurrection, during that very same day (Mt. 27:52-53), were part of the first harvest of redeemed people offered unto the LORD in the “Age of Grace,” which began after the Lord Jesus Christ gave up His spirit while on the cross.

The Fourth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Weeks [Pentecost]

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Ex. 34:22a; Lev. 23:15-22;
Num. 28:26b-31; Dt. 16:9-12, 16-17; 2 Chr. 8:13.

Season:	Summer
Number:	Fourth Feast
Event:	The Feast of Weeks [Pentecost].
Purpose:	Thanksgiving for the second harvest.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	Ingathering of the second harvest of the year.

Comments: The “Feast of Weeks” is best known as “Pentecost” which is a Greek word meaning “the holiday of fifty days” because it occurs on the fiftieth day after the “Feast of First Fruits.” This is the sixth day of the third Hebrew month of “Sivan” (Est. 8:9), [May/June]. The purpose of this feast was to thank God for the wheat harvest during the “Age of Law.”

The “Feast of Weeks” [Pentecost] was a celebration of the summer harvest. It was during this second harvest festival when the wave offering of two loaves of wheat bread, was to be made for the people by the priest, before the LORD. The two loaves of wheat bread were to be “baked with leaven” and be of equal size and weight (Lev. 23:17).

At the time of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles, the “Feast of Weeks” [Pentecost], had become more of a celebration of the giving of the “Law” to Moses while on Mount Sinai than as the holy harvest festival it was intended to be. It was also one of the three feast days in which all of the men of Israel were to attend (Dt. 16:16). Thus, more Jews would visit Jerusalem for the “Feast of Weeks” [Pentecost] than for any other feast day, even if they lived in distant parts of the world.

The Fourth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Weeks [Pentecost]

The New Testament References

Scripture: Acts 2; 1 Cor. 16:8.

Season:	Summer
Number:	Fourth Feast
Event:	The Feast of Weeks [Pentecost].
Purpose:	Thanksgiving for the Second Harvest.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for the Church:	The beginning of the "Church Age."

Comments: The "Feast of Weeks" is called the "Day of Pentecost" in the New Testament (Acts 20:16; 1 Cor. 16:8). All who heard the "Good News of Jesus Christ" on this day (Acts 2:5-8, 36), and became believers in Christ, were part of the second harvest (Acts 2:41) in the "Age of Grace." The assembly of people who trust the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior during the "Church Age" is described in several descriptive ways such as: the "Church" (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25), the "Bride" (Rev. 19:7; 22:17), or the "Body" of Christ (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12-14; Eph. 1:22-23). The "Church Age" will end with the "Rapture," and the "Age of Grace" will end with the "2nd Advent" of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The wave offerings unto the LORD for the "Feast of Weeks" [Pentecost] was to be of two loaves of wheat bread that were to be of equal size and weight and baked with "leaven" (Lev. 7:13). Yet, the LORD had previously told the Israelites in Leviticus 2:11, that, "no meal offering. . . shall be made with leaven; for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire." Thus, the question, "why the deviation?" The answer is that the two loaves of wheat bread, baked with "leaven," represented Jews and Gentiles who would come to trust, by faith alone, in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ for their personal salvation. The "leaven" in the wheat loaves represented the sins of each believer, whose sins have now been through the fire of judgment, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was nothing "sweet" about this judgment and for this reason "honey" was not added to the loaves of bread.

The symbol of "wheat" as used in the "Parable of the Wheat and the Tares," made clear that the "wheat" symbolized "saved" people [Christians] and the "tares" were a symbol for "unsaved" people [non Christians] (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43). The Lord Jesus Christ used "leaven" to foretell the "apostasy" of the "Church" (Lk. 13:20-21). The conversion of Cornelius, a gentile, confirmed that the norm for the entire "Age of Grace," was that both Jew and Gentile were to be saved and to receive God the Holy Spirit in the very same way (Acts 10:1-2, 34-48; 11:15-18).

On the "Feast of Weeks" [Pentecost], God the Holy Spirit came upon all believers (Acts 2:1-4), and began seven ministries unique to Him. This is when the promises made by the Lord Jesus Christ of sending a "comforter" were fulfilled (Joel 2:28-29; Lk. 11:13; 24:49; Jn. 7:38-39;

14:15-18a, 25-26; 16:7; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 8:17; 9:17).

Beginning with “Pentecost” and until the end of the “Age of Grace” the Holy Spirit will:

1. **REGENERATE** (Jn. 3:3-8; Ti. 3:5; 1 Jn. 5:1).
2. **IDENTIFY** (Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; Gal. 3:27-28; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:9-12).
3. **INDWELL** (Jn. 4:14; 7:37-39; 14:16-17; Rom. 5:1-5; 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 3:1-2; 4:6-7; 1 Jn. 2:27; 3:23-24; 4:13).
4. **SEAL** all who believe [trust] the Lord Jesus Christ to be their personal Savior. A “seal” signifies, in the symbolism of Scripture:
 1. **A finished transaction** (Neh. 9:38; Est. 8:1-8; Job 9:7; Jer. 32:6-15).
 2. **Ownership** (Jer. 32:6-15; Acts 20:28; 2 Tim. 2:19).
 3. **Security** (Est. 8:8; Dan. 6:17; Eph. 4:30). Salvation is “assured,” to each and every ‘true’ Christian, because of this ministry of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). Thus, once saved - always saved!

The other ministries of the Holy Spirit are:

5. **CONVICTING** the world of sin, righteousness and judgment by way of the Scriptures (Ps. 19; 119; 2 Tim. 3:16-17) and “born from above” Christians (Jn. 3:1-8; 14:6, 26; 16:7-11).
6. **FILLING** those Christians who allow the Holy Spirit to control their thoughts and actions in their daily life. It is a “day by day” dependency upon Him in all things while not yielding to their fleshly desires or carnal nature that would grieve or quench Him (Acts 2:4; 4:29-31; 9:17; Gal. 5:16-26; 6:7-9; Eph. 4:30; 5:1-4, 15-21; Col. 2:6; 3:1-17; 1 Th. 5:19-20, 22).
7. **RESTRAINING** lawlessness, or sin, in the world. This is the only ministry of the seven that will cease with the “Rapture” of the “Church” (2 Th. 2:6-7). The Holy Spirit will continue to perform His other six ministries, as described above, throughout the “Age of Grace” which will end with the “2nd Advent” of the “Messiah” when the “Kingdom Age” begins (Zech. 12:1-14:9; Rev. 19:11-20:6).

The Fifth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Trumpets

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Ex. 23:16b; 34:22b; Lev. 23:23-25; Num. 29:1-6.

Season:	Fall
Number:	Fifth Feast
Event:	The Feast of Trumpets.
Purpose:	Israel Regathered.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	Third and final harvest of the year.

Comments: The Gregorian calendar was established by Pope Gregory VIII in 1582 A.D. It is a "solar" calendar and is used by most nations in the world today. As recorded in the holy Scriptures, God established a "lunar" calendar for the nation of Israel. According to Leviticus 23:5, the first month of the Jewish year is "Nisan." This is now considered the beginning of the "religious" year among the Jewish people and would be March or April in the Gregorian calendar. At the time of Moses the "Feast of Trumpets" was called "the pilgrimage festival of ingathering," namely, "when you gather in your products from the field" (Ex. 23:16b). Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist [the "Identifier"], was of the priestly order of "Abijah" (1Chr. 24:10; Neh. 12:4; Lk. 1:5). It was during the "Feast of Trumpets" in September, 5 B.C. while serving in the Temple in Jerusalem, when Zacharias was told he and his wife would have a son (Lk. 1:8-25, 57-80).

In the time of the "1st Advent" of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Jewish people had come to observe a "civil" year that began in the month of "Tishri" which is September or October in the Gregorian calendar. The first day of this "civil" year is called "Rosh HaShanah" which means the "beginning of the year" or "head of the year." "Rosh HaShanah" is observed as the anniversary of "Creation" as well as the "Day of Judgment" when a man or woman's doings for the past year are judged, and their future destiny decided. **There is no authority found in the Scriptures for this holiday or for a Jewish "civil" calendar year even though it does include the other six festivals that are stipulated in the Old Testament.** In the course of time, "Rosh HaShanah" supplanted the biblical "Feast of Trumpets" (Jer. 8:7, 20). Thus, "Orthodox" and "Conservative" Jews celebrate "Rosh HaShanah" for two days, while "Reform" congregations will do so for one day. The Scriptures specify that the "Feast of Trumpets" is to be observed for one day only!

This third and final harvest of the year was to end the moment the field workers of Israel heard the sound of the "shofar" which was blown by the high priest. It was to be observed in the seventh month or four months after the "Feast of Weeks" [Pentecost] (Jn. 4:34-35). It was a call for the field workers to stop harvesting and to assemble to worship the LORD. This is when the "Feast of Trumpets" began! The field workers knew when the "shofar" would sound and that they were not to return to the fields to harvest any remaining crops when this festival ended. Thus, they would work harder to insure that as little of the crop as possible would be left behind.

The Fifth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Trumpets

The New Testament References

Scripture: Mt. 24:36-42,50-51; 25:6-10; Mk. 13:32-37; Lk. 17:26-30,34-36; Jn. 4:34-35; 14:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Th. 4:13-5:6; 2 Th. 2:1; Rev. 3:3, 10-11; 4:1; 22:12-13, 17, 20.

Season: Fall
Number: Fifth Feast
Event: The “Rapture” of the Church.
Purpose: The Ingathering of the Church.
To be observed: Forever
Significance for the Church: The end of the “Church Age.”

Comments: There has been a great harvest of “saved people” taking place ever since the “Feast of Weeks” [Pentecost] in 30 A.D. The “Feast of Trumpets” is observed four months later (Jn. 4:34-35). This harvest will include Jewish and Gentile “believers” (Jn. 10:11-16) who have been redeemed by trusting in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4) for their salvation by faith alone (Rom. 4:5; Eph. 2:8-9; Col. 1:14). They are known as the “body” (1 Cor. 12:12-14), the “bride” (Rev. 21:9), and the “Church” of Christ (Heb. 12:23)!

The work of the members of this great assembly of “believers” who are alive on the earth will cease immediately upon their hearing the “shofar” from Heaven. This is when they will be snatched-out of the earth by their great high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ to meet Him in the air (1 Th. 4:16-17; Heb. 3:1; 4:15; 5:5-10). They will assemble with those of the “Church” who had preceded them in death and worship their “Savior” in the Temple in Heaven (Rev. 4:2-3,6,10-11).

The Jewish field workers knew when their high priest was to blow the “shofar” and that it would signal their work of harvesting was over for the year. The same will be true of Christians who are aware of the many “signs of the times.” The “sign” that will wake up the “sleeping” bride of the Lord Jesus Christ will be when they witness the massing of armies under the leadership of Russia to invade Israel as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. The troops of this army will come from Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Turkey (Ezek. 38:1-5). It is this event that will wake-up “sleeping” Christians to know when the “Rapture” will take place (Mt. 25:1-13).

The excitement among Christians will increase as they anticipate the appearance of their “Savior” with great joy. They will also know that their time of service during the “Church Age” will soon end. This will cause many to share the “Good News of Jesus Christ” with vigor and strive to not let anyone be “left behind.” The doctrine of the “Rapture” has always caused Christians to be zealous in sharing their faith with others. It is the doctrine of the “Rapture” that motivated the church in Thessalonica to evangelize their city, state and country (1 Th. 1:1-10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:18; 5:11, 23; 2 Th. 3:5). The “Church” was never to look forward to the “2nd Advent!” It was always the “Rapture” that the “bride” of Christ was to eagerly anticipate.

The Sixth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of a Day of Atonement

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Lev. 16; 23:26-32; Num. 29:7-11.

Season:	Fall
Number:	Sixth Feast
Event:	A Day of Atonement.
Purpose:	To Confess the Sins of Israel.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	To Cover the Sins of Israel.

Comments: The “Feast of a Day of Atonement” is to be celebrated ten days after the “Feast of Trumpets” on the tenth day of the month of Tishri [September or October]. It is called “a sabbath of rest” and known today as “Yom Kippur.” The word “Yom” means “day” and “Kippur” means “atonement” or “covering.” The word “atonement” refers to “reconciliation.” Thus, this feast day was to reconcile the people of Israel with the LORD of the holy Scriptures. This feast day is not only the spiritual highlight of the year for the Jewish people but the most solemn holy day of all. In light of that, it is interesting to note that the penalty for violating “Yom Kippur” is simply “excommunication” from fellow Jews while the more severe penalty of “death” is reserved for violating the weekly “sabbath day” (Ex. 35:2; Num. 15:32-36).

The “Feast of a Day of Atonement” is when the people of Israel would assemble for both repentance and forgiveness of their sins under the “Law of Moses.” It was also the one day of the year when the high priest of Israel could enter the “Holy of Holies” that contained the “Ark of the Covenant” that had first been placed in the “Tabernacle” of God when they wandered for forty years in the wilderness (Heb. 9:1-7). Afterward it was placed in the Temple built by King Solomon in the city of Jerusalem. While in the “Holy of Holies” the high priest would beg the LORD for the forgiveness of his own sins and for the sins of all the people of Israel, while sprinkling the mercy seat of God with the blood of sacrificed animals. When the high priest was finished with the sacrifice of atonement, he would “symbolically” place the sins of Israel upon the head of a goat who was then released into the wilderness. Thus, the “scapegoat” would then carry those sins of Israel away - never to return (Lev. 16:1-11, 20-22, 29-34).

What the high priest and the Jewish people did not know is that the sprinkled blood of animals on the “mercy seat” in the Holy of Holies could only COVER their sins, since it did not have the power or ability to REMOVE their sins. “For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:4). This is why the patriarch Abraham was in the “paradise” section of Hades [Sheol] long after his death on earth (Lk. 16:19-31; 23:43). He needed to have his sins “removed” to enable him to go to Heaven (Heb. 9:16-28; 10:7-18). Thus, it would take the shed blood of the “Lamb of God” to accomplish that task for him. After His resurrection from the dead and after He had presented Himself before “God the Father,” the Lord

Jesus Christ returned to the “paradise” section of Hades [Sheol] and led all the saints of the *Old Testament*, who died prior to His sacrifice, into Heaven (Lk. 23:43; Jn. 20:9, 16-17; Eph. 4:7-10).

With the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians and their being taken captive, the Jewish people could no longer offer the sacrifices prescribed for their sins. Thus, they had to substitute the required sacrifices of the “Feast of a Day of Atonement” with prayer, good works, and charitable donations as a way to take away the penalty for their sins. A second Temple was built after the release of the Jewish people from captivity in Babylon and with their return to Jerusalem. All of which is recorded in the *Old Testament* books of “Ezra” and “Nehemiah.” Upon the completion of this Temple, the “Feast of a Day of Atonement” was once again observed as prescribed in the holy Scriptures. This Temple would be plundered and defiled with idolatrous worship by the Syrian king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes from 171 B.C. to 164 B.C. It would first be cleansed and restored by Judas Maccabeus and then by King Herod the Great. This Temple, however, would be totally destroyed by four Roman legions in 70 A.D. Since then, the Jewish people have had to observe the “Feast of a Day of Atonement” in a manner similar to their ancestors when they were captives in Babylon.

The “Feast of a Day of Atonement” will be fulfilled for Israel when her Messiah the Lord Jesus Christ, returns as her King (Zech. 12:10-14:9). It will be upon His “2nd Advent” to earth when the people of Israel will be moved to acknowledge Him as their Messiah. “. . . and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his only son* . . .” (Zech. 12:10). This is the “day of atonement” when the people of Israel will be forgiven and permanently restored to God. “And so all Israel shall be saved . . . when I shall take away their sins” (Rom. 11:26-27).

The Sixth Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of a Day of Atonement

The New Testament References

Scripture: Acts 27:9; Heb. 9:1-7.

Season:	Fall
Number:	Sixth Feast
Event:	The "2nd Advent" of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Purpose:	To Redeem the Nation of Israel.
To be observed:	Forever
Significance for the Church:	None

Comments: The "Feast of the Day of Atonement" has no significance for the "Church" because the "Church" owes no atonement! The reason why is simple. "But Christ . . . by his own blood . . . obtained eternal redemption *for us*" (Heb. 9:11-12). Also, unlike the high priests of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, ". . . 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 did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb. 7:27).

The Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest of the "Church." The one "sacrifice" He made of Himself removes the need of any further "sacrifice" for sin by those who trust Him alone as their personal "Savior" (Col. 1:14; Heb. 10:12, 14, 17-18). He was the perfect "Lamb of God" who could and would take away the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29, 36; 3:15-18; 14:6; 20:30-31).

The Seventh Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Tabernacles [Booths]

The Old Testament References

Scripture: Lev. 23:33-44; Num. 29:12-40;
Dt. 16:13-17; 31:9-13; Ezra 3:4-5; Neh. 8:14-18; Zech. 14:16-19.

Season:	Fall
Number:	Seventh Feast
Event:	The Feast of Tabernacles [Booths].
Purpose:	To Celebrate God's Provision.
To be observed:	Forever in Israel's Generations.
Significance for Israel:	A Memorial to the Lord's Shelter.

Comments: The "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Booths" is to be celebrated for seven days. The English word "tabernacles" is derived from the Latin word "tabernaculum" meaning "a hut, a temporary shelter." This festival is to begin on the fifteenth day of "Tishri" [September/October] which is fifteen days from the start of the "Feast of Trumpets" and five days from the start of the "Feast of a Day of Atonement." It is the last festival of the year that the LORD gave to the nation of Israel to celebrate in "remembrance" (Lev. 23:1-2, 43; Dt. 31:12-13).

The LORD gave this holiday to the people of Israel so they might always remember His faithfulness and provision for their ancestors who lived in temporary housing during their years of wandering after leaving Egypt (Num. 14:33). "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days . . . 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" (Lev. 23:42-43). The unique feature of this festival was for the people of Israel to build a temporary type of dwelling and to live in it as they worshiped the LORD for seven days. It was to be a festival of joy and thanksgiving for past and present provisions from the LORD for all who were within the gates of Israel (Dt. 16:13-15).

This festival was to be observed as the LORD commanded, with the building of and living in temporary housing called "tabernacles" or "booths." During the time of Moses and Joshua, the Israelites did as the LORD commanded but evidently did not afterward (Neh. 8:17b). While they did celebrate this festival, they neglected to build and live in the housing that was to remind them that the LORD was faithful and how He had provided for their ancestors during their years of wandering (2 Chr. 8:13; Ezra 3:4). It took a great revival under the leadership of Ezra, who read from "the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel" for the people of Israel to celebrate this holy festival in the manner specified by the LORD (Neh. 8:1-18).

The Seventh Holy Feast of the LORD

The Feast of Tabernacles [Booths]

The New Testament References

Scripture: Jn. 7:2-15, 28, 37-39.

Season:	Fall
Number:	Seventh Feast
Event:	The Feast of Tabernacles [Booths].
Purpose:	To Commemorate God's Provision.
To be observed:	Forever
Significance for the Church:	None

Comments: The "Feast of Tabernacles" [Booths] was celebrated by the Lord Jesus Christ. It was one of three festivals the men of Israel were told to attend each year (Ex. 23:14-17; 34:23-24; Dt. 16:16; 2 Chr. 8:13). The Temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed by four Roman legions in August, 70 A.D. thus, the last year this festival was celebrated as described in the Law of Moses was in October, 69 A.D. The "Torah" has since become the focal point of worship for religious Jews in their synagogues. A Temple, NOT "authorized" by the Word of the LORD, will be built and used for worship during the 2,520 days that precede the "2nd Advent" of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Temple in which the "Antichrist" will proclaim himself to be "god" at the halfway point of this time called the "Tribulation Years" and begin to persecute the people of Israel (Dan. 9:27; 11:36-37; Mt. 24:15, 21-22; Mk. 13:14, 19-20; 2 Th. 2:4).

The third Temple, that IS "the one authorized" by the Word of the LORD (Ezek. 37:26-28; Amos 9:11; Zech. 6:12-13; Acts 15:14-16) will be built on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem after the "2nd Advent" of the Messiah of Israel, Y'shua of Nazareth, the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk. 1:31-33)! This Temple will be the center of worship during the "Kingdom Age" (Rev. 20:4), when the whole world will come to know the LORD (Isa. 11:1-10). In the "Kingdom Age," representatives from every nation are commanded to attend the "Feast of Tabernacles" so they may worship Him. Those nations that choose not to send representatives for the "Feast of Tabernacles" will be punished for their disobedience in two ways: 1. They will suffer drought from the time of the festival they ignored to the next "Feast of Tabernacles" that they do attend. 2. A plague will kill many of the citizens of the nation that would not obey the Word of the LORD (Zech. 14:16-19).

In this "Age of Grace" we contend daily with the "world" (Rom. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:15-16; 5:19), the "flesh" (Rom. 6:19; 8:3,8,12-13; Gal. 5:17,19-21; Eph. 2:3), and the "devil" (1 Pet. 5:8-9). Those who are born into the "Kingdom Age" will not have to contend with the devil for 1000 years (Rev. 20:1-3) but they will have to contend with the "world" and the desires of the "flesh." A rod is usually a stick made from wood that is used to punish an offender (2 Sam. 7:14; Job 9:34; Prov. 10:13). The Lord Jesus Christ, however, will have a rod made from iron during His reign over the earth (Ps. 2:6-9; Rev. 19:15-16). This would indicate that those who willfully sin and disobey His rule during the "Kingdom Age" will be severely punished (Prov. 9:10; Isa. 11:4).

The Other Five Feast Days of Israel

A sidebar to the **Seven Holy Feasts of the LORD** are the other five festivals celebrated by the nation of Israel. Three of them were given by the “Word of the LORD” and two were not!

The Feast Days of Israel Ordained by the LORD!

1. The English word “sabbath” is from the Hebrew word “shabbath” and the Greek word “sabbaton,” which means “cessation from labor, rest.” The “sabbath day” refers to the seventh day of the week (Gen. 2:1-3). The significance of this day was not revealed to the nation of Israel until they reached Mount Sinai during their exodus from Egypt (Ex. 16:23; Neh. 9:13-14), where it was made part of the law given by the LORD to Moses (Ex. 20:8-11). The “sabbath day” is a “sign” between the LORD and the people of Israel as a perpetual reminder to Israel of their being separated unto God. It was to be observed weekly, with no work to be done on this one day of the week (Amos 8:5). The penalty for breaking the “sabbath day” was death (Ex. 31:13-17).

2. The festival known as “Rosh Chodesh” or “Day of the New Moon” or “Head of the Month” was an important national festival and often called a feast, along with the “sabbath day” (Ps. 81:3-4; Ezek. 46:1, 3-6; Hos. 2:11). It was to be observed and celebrated each month with a new moon (Num. 10:10; 28:11, 14; 29:6). No work was to be done on this day (Amos 8:5). In the Temple, special ceremonies were performed using meat, meal and drink as peace offerings.

This festival is observed today in synagogues where a special prayer is recited on the “sabbath day” before “Rosh Chodesh.” In this prayer God is asked to bless the coming month with life, peace, joy and gladness. Another ceremony is the blessing of the moon where a group of people who are out of doors will recite a prayer of thanks to God and the new moon is greeted with joy. They then wish each other and all of Israel happiness in the month to come. On the day of “Rosh Chodesh” special prayers from the “Psalms” are recited in the synagogue. A portion of the Scriptures is read the same as on the “sabbath day.” In some places this day is celebrated as a half holiday allowing half school days for children and women to forsake certain daily tasks.

3. The “Year of the Jubilee” was to be observed and celebrated every fifty years on the “Feast of a Day of Atonement” (Lev. 25:8-55; 27:16-25; Num. 36:4-13). This year is also called the “year of liberty” (Lev. 25:10; Ezek. 46:17). The “Jubilee Year” was to be one of “freedom” and “grace” for all who suffered. Thus, it brought not only redemption to the captive, and deliverance from want to the poor, but also release to the whole congregation of the LORD from the heavy labors of the land. This year also represented a time of refreshing in which the LORD provided for His people, since it was in this blessed year when every kind of oppression was to cease and every member of the people of Israel were to find their “Redeemer” in the LORD who brought them back to their possession and family. In other words, what anyone had lost during the previous forty-nine years was to be regained by them in the “Year of the Jubilee.”

Within the “Year of the Jubilee” was the “sabbath year.” (Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7). The three names given by Moses to this festival expressed some feature connected with how it was to be observed. They are: 1. The “Sabbath of Rest” since the land was to have a complete rest from cultivation, sowing, pruning and harvesting (Lev. 25:4). 2. The “Year of Rest” since the rest was to extend through the year (Lev. 25:5). 3. The “LORD’s Release” since all debts are remitted (Dt. 15:1-2, 9-15). The spirit of the “sabbath year” was to be the same as that of the weekly “sabbath day.” If this command of the LORD would be obeyed by the people of Israel, then the LORD would bless their land in the sixth year with a crop three times what could normally be expected. This would be enough to supply their needs through the “year of rest,” plus the next year when a new crop would be planted, and the year after that (Lev. 25:20-22).

The nation of Israel NEVER obeyed this command of the LORD prior to her enslavement to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It was during their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, where the people of Israel suffered for their disobedience to the LORD, that the land of Israel gained her required rest in consecutive years (2 Chr. 36:21; Jer. 25:8-11; 27:6-8; 29:10; Dan. 9:2). After their captivity had ended in Babylon, a remnant of Jews returned to their land (Ezra 1:1-3) and observed the “sabbath year.” This is referred to in the extra biblical writings of “1 Maccabees 6:49, 53” and Josephus in his “Book of the Antiquities” (xiii, 8, 1; xiv, 10, 6; xv, 1-2) etc., who affirmed the same for the Samaritans (xi, 8, 6). The will of the LORD will be done! Like it or not.

The rest, which the land was to keep in the seventh year, was given by the LORD to afford the people of Israel a time of true spiritual rest and refreshing. It also allowed a time of relaxation and recreation for laboring men and their animals of burden. The prophetic significance of the “Year of the Jubilee” will be fulfilled with the “2nd Advent” of the Lord Jesus Christ when He will rescue His people from the nations (Ps. 110; Hos. 5:15-6:3; Zech. 12:1-14:15; Mt. 23:39; Acts 3:19-21; Rev. 19:11-21) which will begin the “Kingdom Age.” All who enter into the 1000 year “Kingdom Age” will do so spiritually and financially debt free (Mic. 7:18-20; Mt. 25:31-34).

The Feast Days of Israel NOT Ordained by the LORD!

The following two annual festivals are manmade and not from the Word of the LORD! These are feast days that the Jewish people came to observe after the defeat of two men who were determined to destroy them. The first attempt was in Persia and the second attempt was in Jerusalem. These festivals are to celebrate the deliverance of the people of Israel from them both!

4. A feast called “Purim” meaning “the casting of lots.” It is also known as the “Festival of Lots.” This festival began in Persia where the people of Judah had been taken captive, by King Nebuchadnezzar, and continued to reside. The story of how this festival came to be is recorded in the “Book of Esther.” It tells of the conflict between a man named Haman, an Amalekite (Num. 24:7; 1 Sam. 15:8; Est. 3:1; 9:24), and Mordecai, the Jew. This conflict caused Haman to plan and order the extermination of all the Jewish people. Thus, Haman cast lots to determine the day when this would take place. The defeat of Haman by Mordecai inspired this feast (Est. 9:20-32).

This festival is observed on the 14th and 15th day of “Adar” [February or March]. The “Fast of Esther” is held the day before this festival at which time the “Book of Esther” is read. “Purim” is to be a very festive event for the Jewish people. It is filled with rejoicing and gladness while celebrating their deliverance from Haman. It is usually filled with masquerades and carnivals and the exchanging of gifts. The special food for this occasion is the “Hamantaschen” which is a three-cornered pastry filled with poppy seeds and honey or prune butter. According to tradition the shape of this pastry is symbolic of Haman’s three-cornered hat.

5. “Hanukkah” which means “dedication” was instituted by the elders of Israel and Judas Maccabeus in 165 B.C. The sequence of events which led to the origin of this festival began with a seven year reign of terror and death by the Syrian king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes who came into power after the death of Alexander the Great and the breakup of the empire of Greece. The contempt and hatred for the Jews and their God by this Syrian king was such that he sacrificed a pig on the altar in the Temple and poured its blood on the scrolls of the holy Scriptures. The atrocities suffered by the Jewish people during the reign of this man, when described, would cause strong men to cry. His rule over the Jewish people ended with a rebellion led by Judas Maccabeus and his family! The Temple was then purified and rededicated. All that took place during these days are recorded in the “non canonical,” or “apocryphal,” writings of 1 Maccabees 4:36-61. “And Judas and his brethren and the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their seasons from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month "Chislev", with gladness and joy” (1 Mac. 4:59). All of the events involving the Temple and the Syrian king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, were a fulfillment of a prophesy given several hundred years earlier, by Daniel (Dan. 8:8-22).

To celebrate the purification and rededication of the Temple, an eight-branch candlestick was used. This eight-branch candlestick is called the “menorah.” One branch is lighted on the first night and an additional branch on each succeeding night. There is a ninth light extending from the rear that is used to light the others, and is called the “servant” or “Shammash.” This holiday was called the “Festival of Lights” or the “feast of the dedication,” during the time of the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 10:22), who said that He was the “light of the world” (Jn. 1:6-9; 8:12). This festival is usually celebrated in our month of December and is done in honor of the LORD.

The miracle associated with the festival of “Hanukkah” is that when the Temple had been cleansed there was need of consecrated oil to maintain the eternal flame. An eight day supply of oil was needed to perform this ceremony, but there was only a one day supply of oil available. In answer to the prayers of the people, the one day supply of oil on hand for the ceremony lasted the entire eight days when newly “consecrated” oil became available and could be used. The total destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. by four Roman Legions under the leadership of the Roman general Titus did not cause the people of Israel to cease celebrating this festival. They continue to do so each year by lighting a candle for each of the eight nights of the “Feast of Hanukkah.”