

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

Leviticus 23

Following is a brief overview of the seven annual feasts the Lord gave to the nation of Israel to observe. They are both practical and prophetic: practical for the nation of God's chosen people and prophetic in that they foreshadow special events in the life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They also speak of the Church, which He purchased with His own blood. In fact, these feasts give a general prophetic look at the future.

Chapter 23 of the Book of Leviticus gives us God's prophetic calendar. It sets forth both Israel's religious year that begins with the Feast of the Passover (March/April) and their civil year that begins with the Feast of Trumpets (September/October).

They are the "seasons" Paul refers to in **1 Thessalonians 5:1**.

1. FEAST OF PASSOVER Leviticus 23:4-5 / 1 Corinthians 5:7

This feast speaks of Christ dying for us as God's lamb and providing for us deliverance and redemption from our sin. It could be said that this feast is the foundational feast upon which all blessings rest. The religious year for the nation of Israel began with the Feast of the Passover.

2. FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD Leviticus 23:6-8 / 1 Corinthians 5:8

This feast is closely connected with the former feast. It is a feast of seven days and speaks of the life of holiness in those who partake of the Passover meal are expected to manifest. It identifies those who partake in relationship with Christ. In Matthew and Mark these two feasts are so closely related they are referred to as one feast. Leaven is *always* a picture/type of sin or bad doctrine. This feast speaks of having a consistent communion and fellowship with Christ in our Christian walk. (**2 Corinthians 7:1**)

3. FEAST OF FRIST FRIUTS Leviticus 23:10-14; 1 Corinthians 15:23

This feast took place on the "morrow after the Sabbath" or the first day of the week which is our Sunday. It is the day the priest would lift up and wave a loosely bound sheaf of grain before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle or Temple. It speaks of the resurrection of Christ: the first who came out from among the dead never to die again (**Revelation 1:18**). This feast is important for many reasons, but none more important than the fact that it promises there will be a complete harvest to follow in time. The one sheaf offered as a wave sacrifice is a token or promise of a greater harvest to come.

4. FEAST OF PENTECOST Leviticus 23:15-22 / Acts 2

This feast took place fifty days after the feast of first fruits. The Jew was to count seven weeks plus one day for a total of 50 days (hence Pentecost) in order to mark or celebrate this particular feast. This feast day was to fall on "the marrow after the Sabbath" or on Sunday, the first day of the week. This feast denotes the coming of the Holy Spirit to baptize believers into the body of Christ. It homogenized the believers into one body.

At this feast a new offering was to be made. An offering of two loaves containing leaven and was to "baken" in an oven. The leaven in the two loaves spoke of the evil which will exist in the redeemed Church. The fact the bread was "baken in the oven" speaks of the sins of the Church being judged by God, in Christ on Calvary.

This new meal offering speaks of the Church which was to be made up of both Jew and Gentile. It is a picture of Jew and Gentile coming together to make up the body of Christ or the Church.

5. FEAST OF TRUMPETS Leviticus 23-25 / 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

As the feast of Passover marked the beginning of months for the nation in its religious year, the feast of Trumpets marked the beginning of the civil (or new year) for the nation of Israel. In light of two silver trumpets which Moses instructed the children (**Number 10**) to craft, the two trumpets picture at least these two things.

- 1) A trumpet was blown to summons people to hear an important announcement such as the Church Jesus purchased with His blood will hear when He returns and calls his people home or to “come up hither.” According to the Scripture, the rapture of the Church is connected to the sound of a trumpet according to the above scripture and what we find in **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**. The sounding of a trumpet was also used to call soldiers home from the battlefield.
- 2) A trumpet was also blown for re-gathering a people together that had been separated for some reason. The blowing of the trumpet for the nation of Israel will call the Jew to come from the four corners of the Earth and from the graves of the nation where they have been buried for over 2,000 years or since the Diaspora in 70AD.

6. FEAST OF THE DAY OF ATONEMENT Leviticus 23:26-32 / Leviticus 16

This feast follows the feast of Trumpets by ten days. It is a peculiar feast in that it was the only feast of the year wherein the people were expected to “afflict their souls.” They were to manifest a public humiliation for their sins and seek atonement for them. The ten days between the feast of Trumpets and the day of Atonement are known as the ten days of mourning. On the day of the feast they were commanded to fast. It was the only feast where this was expected. The day looks to the day the nation of Israel repents for having rejected the Messiah. They will do so when they look upon Him whom they have pierced, and being back in their own land, accept Him as the Messiah He is...their Messiah.

7. FEASAT OF TABERNACLES Leviticus 23:34-44 / Zachariah 14:16-18

This feast may be the most joyous feast of all. It is to last seven days. This feast was the third falling in the seventh month of their religious year. The purpose of this feast was to remind the children of Israel of their wilderness journey. It speaks of a time when the nation of Israel will safely dwell in their land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This feast also points to the millennial reign of Christ, the eternity that is to follow, and the fact that God Himself will dwell among His people. (**Revelation 21:3**)

Tom Price, 2021