

The Feasts of Jehovah as outlined in Leviticus 23

Brief Outline:

Months of the Jewish religious calendar: Nissan - first month, Sivan – third month, Tishri – seventh month. Each month began on a new moon.

Sabbath: Every 7 days (starting on the 7th of the month?)

Why: Because just as God rested on the seventh day He prepared a day of rest for man.

How it was celebrated: Day spent in community listening to the word of God and with family

Prohibition: Labour and commerce.

Fulfilment: God has prepared a rest for his people and his creation. All these feasts speak of the plan to reach that rest.

Passover (Pesach): Nissan 14 (or Abib 14 – eaving)

Why: New beginning – celebrated redemption for bondage in Egypt

How celebrated: Each household had the seder supper

Offerings: Passover lambs were slain

Prohibition: No servile work done (Num. 28:18)

Fulfilment: Christ sacrificed to provide protection from Gods judgement for sin. (1 Cor 5:7)

Notable Occurrences: 2 Chron.35:18,19 – kept in the day of Josiah

Unleavened Bread: Nissan 15 to 21

Why: to keep their homes pure (no leaven) so they could commune with the Lord

How celebrated: they ate unleavened bread every day for 7 days

Offerings: every day: burnt offering (2 bullocks, one ram, 7 lambs), new meal offering; sin offering (atonement – 1 goat) plus continual offering, meal offering and drink offerings **Prohibition:** No leaven of any type in the house; no servile work

Fulfilment: After we receive Christ we began to live separated holy lives so we could commune with the Lord

First Fruits: likely Nissan 16?

Why: The Lord was to receive the first portion from the land

How celebrated: The sheaf was waved by the priest before the Lord

Offerings: burnt offering (2 bullocks, one ram, 7 lambs), new meal offering; (atonement – 1 goat – not specifically a sin offering) plus continual offering, meal offering and drink offerings

Prohibition: Must celebrate in the land of Canaan; not to eat parched corn or green ears or bread until the offering of first fruits,

Fulfilment: The Lord was raised out from among the dead. The church which will be raised again by the same power.

Notable Occurrences: Possible first commemoration – Joshua 5:10-11

Feast of Weeks: Sivan 7 or 8 (50 days after the feast of firstfruits)

Why: reminded them of God's faithful provision having met their needs for another year.

How celebrated: 2 baked loaves with leaven waved before the Lord with burnt offering and with 2 lambs as a peace offering

Offerings; Burnt offering (7 lambs, 1 bullock and 2 rams) and meal and drink offerings and sin offering (1 goat) plus peace offering (2 lambs)

Prohibition: do no servile work

Fulfilment: 50 days after the Lord's resurrection the Spirit came upon the disciples and the church was formed.

Notable Occurrences: Acts 2:1 when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples

Trumpets (Rosh Hoshannah – beginning of civil New Year): Tishri 1

Why: It was to call to remembrance events that were going to happen (Day of Atonement)

How celebrated: Trumpets were blown throughout the day

Offerings: offering made by fire

Prohibition: No servile work

Prophetic Interpretations: Israel – trumpets will call to reassemble the Jewish people; for church trumpet will sound to call us to be with the Lord

Atonement (Yom Kippur): Tishri 10

Why: To cover sin nature by the sin-offering and to remove past sins by the scape goat.

How celebrated: Sorrowing over sin (man's side), confessing it and participating in the sacrifices.

Offerings: burnt offering (ram), sin offering for priest (bullock), sin offerings (2 goats for the people) – see Lev 16 for the complex instructions.

Prohibition: People must afflict their souls – merriment and joy prohibited.

Prophetic Interpretations: Church in heaven rejoicing; Israel wailing because of what they had done to Christ and seeking forgiveness.

Tabernacles (Sukkoth): Tishri 15 – 22 (when corn and wine had been gathered in)

Why: To remember their wilderness journey and how the Lord provided; to be thankful for present harvest

How celebrated: Building booths and dwelling in them

Offerings: Burnt offerings were given – note decreasing number of bullocks (13 down to 7 per day, plus 2 rams and 14 lambs)

Prohibition: First day and Eighth day - no servile work (possibly all days)

Prophetic Interpretations: Church with Christ and Israel upon earth will be blessed in during the Lord's millennial reign. The eighth day reminds us, that after the Millennium, God will reign over the new heaven and new earth (1 Cor. 15:28).

Notable Occurrences: Ezra 3:4; John 7- the Lord spoke loudly at the last great day of the feast

Other feasts and celebrations: Jubilee – celebrated every 50th year beginning on the Day of Atonement, Purim – feast established in days of Esther in the land of Persia) Adar (12th mo.) 14,15 see Esth. 9:21 Hanukka (celebrates a Jewish uprising in 166 BC) – in Chislew (9th mo) 25 to Tebeth (10th mo) 2 or 3.