

# Leviticus 23 Commentary

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[Another Overview Chart of Leviticus](#) - Charles Swindoll

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## LEVITICUS THE BOOK OF SANCTIFICATION AND WORSHIP

[Adapted and modified from C. Swindoll](#)

Leviticus 1-17	Leviticus 18-27
<b>The Way to God Access</b>	<b>The Walk with God Lifestyle</b>
<b>The Approach:</b> Offerings	Practical Guidelines
<b>The Representative:</b> Priest	Chronological Observances
<b>The Laws:</b> Cleansing Physically & Spiritually	Severe Consequences Verbal promises
<b>Ritual for Worship</b> Worshipping a Holy God	<b>Practical for Walking</b> Living a Holy Life
<b>Location:</b> Mt Sinai for one full year	
<b>Theme:</b> How sinful humanity can approach and worship a holy God	
<b>Key Verses:</b> Lev 17:11, 19:2, 20:7-8	
<b>Christ in Leviticus:</b> In every sacrifice, every ritual, every feast	
<b>Time:</b> about 1446BC	

**Key words:**

**Holy** - 90x/76v (with forms of the root for holy 152x) more than in any OT book (Lev 2:3, 10; 5:15f; 6:16f, 25-27, 29f; 7:1, 6; 8:9; 10:3, 10, 12f, 17; 11:44-45; 14:13; 16:2-4, 16f, 20, 23f, 27, 32f; 19:2, 8, 24; 20:3, 7, 26; 21:6-8, 22; 22:2-4, 6f, 10, 14-16, 32; 23:2-4, 7f, 20f, 24, 27, 35-37; 24:9; 25:12; 27:9f, 14, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32f);

**Atonement** - 51x/45v - (Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7f; 14:18-21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10f, 16-18, 24, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:27f; 25:9)

**Offering** - 326x/199v (Lev 1:2-4, 6, 9f, 13f, 17; 2:1-16; 3:1-3, 5-9, 11f, 14, 16; 4:3, 7f, 10, 14, 18, 20f, 23-26, 28-35; 5:6-8, 15f, 18f; 6:5f, 9f, 12, 14f, 17f, 20f, 23, 25, 30; 7:1f, 5, 7-11, 13-16, 18, 20f, 25, 29f, 32-35, 37f; 8:2, 14, 18, 21, 27-29, 31; 9:2-4, 7f, 10, 12-18, 21f, 24; 10:12-17, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:10, 12-14, 17, 19-22, 24f, 28, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15, 24f, 27; 17:4f, 8; 19:5, 21f, 24; 21:6, 21; 22:12, 18, 21-23, 25, 27; 23:8, 12-14, 25, 27, 36-38; 24:7, 9; 27:9, 11)

**Tent of meeting** - 43x/41v (Lev 1:1, 3, 5; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4f, 7, 14, 16, 18; 6:16, 26, 30; 8:3f, 31, 33, 35; 9:5, 23; 10:7, 9; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7, 16f, 20, 23, 33; 17:4ff, 9; 19:21; 24:3)

**Law** - 16x/16v; (Lev 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1, 7, 11, 37; 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57; 15:32)

**Sacrifice** - 41x/34v; (Lev 3:1, 3, 6, 9; 4:10, 26, 31, 35; 7:11-13, 15-18, 20f, 29, 32, 34, 37; 9:4, 18; 10:14; 17:5, 7f; 19:5; 22:21, 24, 27, 29; 23:19, 37)

**Anoint** - 17x/15v; (Lev 4:3, 5, 16; 6:20, 22; 7:36; 8:2, 10-12, 30; 10:7; 16:32; 21:10, 12)

**Sin** - 111x/90v (Lev 4:2f, 8, 14, 20-29, 32-35; 5:1, 5-13, 15-18; 6:2-4, 17, 25f, 30; 7:7, 37f; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16-19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15f, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:17, 22; 20:20; 21:21; 22:9; 23:19; 24:15; 25:1, 27; 26:18, 21, 24, 28, 46; 27:34)

**Iniquity** - 10x/8v (Lev 7:18; 16:21f; 19:8; 26:39-41, 43)

**Death** - 17/16v (Lev 16:1; 19:20; 20:2, 4, 9-11, 15f, 27; 24:16f, 21; 27:29)

**Die** - 15x/15v (Lev 7:24; 8:35; 10:2, 6f, 9; 11:39; 15:31; 16:1f, 13; 17:15; 20:20; 22:8f)

**Blood** - 86x/65v (Lev 1:5, 11, 15; 3:2, 8, 13, 17; 4:5-7, 16-18, 25, 30, 34; 5:9; 6:27, 30; 7:2, 14, 26f, 33; 8:15, 19, 23f, 30; 9:9, 12, 18; 10:18; 12:4f, 7; 14:6, 14, 17, 25, 28, 51f; 15:19, 25; 16:14f, 18f, 27; 17:4, 6, 10-12; 18:6, 12f, 17; 19:26; 20:18f; 25:49)

**Sabbath** - 13x/10v (Lev 16:31; 23:3, 11, 15f, 32; 24:8; 25:2, 4, 6)

**The LORD spoke to Moses** - 28x/28v - (Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1)

**Jubilee** - 20x/18v (Lev 25:10-13, 15, 28, 30f, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27:17-18, 21, 23-24)

**Consecrate** - 24x/23v - (Lev 6:18, 27; 7:35; 8:10-12, 15, 30; 11:44; 12:4; 16:19; 20:7; 21:8, 10; 25:10; 27:14-19, 22, 2)

**Covenant** - 10x/8v (Lev 2:13; 24:8; 26:9, 15, 25, 42, 44f)

**Fat** - 52x/33v (Lev 3:3f, 9f, 14-17; 4:8f, 19, 26, 31, 35; 6:12; 7:3f, 23-25, 30f, 33; 8:16, 25f; 9:10, 19f, 24; 10:15; 16:25; 17:6)

**Leviticus 23:1 The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying**

- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Leviticus 23 begins with instruction on the appointed times (Lev 23:2) and closes in a similar fashion (Lev 23:44).

**Bush** - The present chapter partakes in great measure of the character of the nineteenth, containing a republication of certain laws. The inspired historian having previously given full details of the statutes relative to holy persons, holy things, and holy places, now enters upon the consideration of holy times. The laws relative to the annual fast, the feast of trumpets, and the three great annual festivals, are here all brought together in one view, in their chronological order, along with the law of the Sabbath; and additions to the ceremonies, as before prescribed, are interspersed. These festivals constituted a very peculiar feature of the Hebrew polity.

Their influence, involving as they did the meeting of the mass of the male population in one place three times every year, cannot be too highly estimated. The journey itself, taking place at the finest season of the year, would naturally be deemed rather a recreative excursion than a hardship, in a country so small as that which the Hebrews were destined to occupy. One grand design of these reunions appears to have been to counteract the dividing tendency of the separation into clans or tribes. By being thus brought into contact on an equal footing, they were reminded of their common origin, and of their common objects. The fact was brought home vividly to their thoughts that they were the sons of the same father, worshippers of the same God, and heirs of the same promises. The beginnings also of idolatry were likely to be checked by the frequent renewal of these acts of worship and homage. Persons of distant towns and different tribes met together on terms of brotherhood and fellowship; and old relations were renewed, and new ones formed.

Several sections are devoted by Michaelis to the statement of the political and other advantages resulting from these festivals. Among other considerations, he observes, that if any of the tribes happened to be jealous of each other, or, as was sometimes the case, involved in civil war, still their meeting together in one place for the purposes of religion and sociality, had a tendency to prevent their being completely alienated, and forming themselves into two or more unconnected states; and even though this had at any time happened, it gave them an opportunity of again cementing their differences, and re-uniting. This is so correctly true, that the separation of the ten tribes from the tribe of Judah, under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, could never have been permanent, had not the latter abrogated one part of the Law of Moses relative to festivals.

Another effect of these meetings regarded the internal commerce of the Israelites. From the annual conventions of the whole people of any country for religious purposes, there generally arise, without any direct intention on their part, annual fairs, and internal commerce. Such festivals have always been attended with this effect. The famous old fair near Hebron arose from the congregation of pilgrims to the terebinth-tree of Abraham. The yearly fairs among the Germans had a similar origin. Among the Mohammedans similar festivals have always had the same results. Witness the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which, in spite of many adverse circumstances, has given birth to one of the greatest markets in the world. Now the very same effects and to a still higher degree, must, even without any intention on the part of the legislator, have resulted from the high festivals of the Hebrews, to which the whole people were bound to assemble; and more particularly as far as regards internal trade. Let us only figure to ourselves what would necessarily follow from such festivals being established. Every man would bring along with him every portable article which he could spare, and which he wished to turn into money; and as several individuals would go from the same place, they would contrive various expedients to render their goods portable; and this would be the more readily suggested by the habit of taking things, some of them needing carriage, to Jerusalem, as dues and offerings. Nor are means of conveyance expensive in the East, as they consist not, as with us, of wagons and horses, but of asses and camels—beasts which are highly serviceable in promoting the internal traffic of Syria and Arabia. There could never be any want of buyers, where the whole people were convened; and the wholesale merchants would soon find it for their advantage to attend, and purchase the commodities offered for sale by private individuals, especially manufactured goods. Whoever wished to purchase any particular articles would await the festivals in order to have a choice; and this, too, would lead great merchants to attend with all manner of goods for sale, for which they could hope to find purchasers. However, therefore, Moses may have desired to discourage the Israelites from engaging in foreign commerce, his measures were, in this instance at least, and whether intended or not, highly favorable to the internal intercourse and traffic of the country.

For a more extended view of the happy effects, political, social, and economical, of these festivals, see Michaelis' Comment, on Laws of Moses, vol. III §197–201.

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This introductory "**formula**" is found some 30 times in the book of Leviticus.

Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 11:1, 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:1, 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1

### Key Words in this chapter - Leviticus 23

**Appointed times** - Lev 23:2, Lev 23:4, 23:37, 44

**Holy convocations** - 11x in 11v - Lev 23:2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 21, 24, 27, 35, 36, 37 **Note:** This phrase occurs six times in Nu 28-29, twice in Ex. 12:16, and nowhere else)

**Work** - 11x/10v - Lev 23:3, 7, 8, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36

**Laborious** - 6x/6v - Lev 23:7, 8, 21, 25, 35, 36

**Rest** - 4x/4v - Lev 23:3, Lev 24:24, Lev 23:32, Lev 23:39

**Perpetual statute** - 4x/4v - Lev 23:14, 21, 31, 41 - This phrase only occurs 15x/15v in the Bible. The other 11 uses of **perpetual statute** - Ex 27:21, Ex 29:9, Ex 30:21, Lev 3:17, Lev 10:9, Lev 24:3, Nu 10:8, Nu 15:15, Nu

18:23, Nu 19:10, Nu 19:21

**Dwelling places** - Lev 23:14, 17, 21, 31 - This phrase signifies the feasts are to take place in the homes and not just in the sanctuary.

**Leviticus 23:2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations--My appointed times are these:**

- Lev 23:4,37 Ex 23:14-17 Isa 1:13,14 33:20 La 1:4 Ho 2:11 Na 1:15 John 5:1 Col 2:16-17
- **proclaim:** Ex 32:5 Nu 10:2,3,10 2Ki 10:20 2Chr 30:5 Ps 81:3 Joe 1:14 2:15 Jonah 3:5-9
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

KJV - Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts (moed) of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts (moed).

Calendar of Jewish Feasts  
THE LORD'S APPOINTED TIMES  
(Source: [Rose Guide to the Tabernacle](#)  
Excellent Teaching Resource)

## THE LORD'S APPOINTED TIMES

Israel was unique in that her holy celebrations were divinely established by God Himself. They were practical in nature, in that they brought the Israelites together for rest, worship, praise, and thanksgiving; and prophetic in nature, in that they were a "shadow" (Col. 2:17) of God's divine plan of redemption.

**The LORD's appointed times** - Don't miss this point - these festival times were God's idea, God's agenda, His "appointment calendar" so to speak. He is explicitly describing how He is to be worshiped in these festivals, all of which were practical in nature, in that they brought the Israelites together for rest, worship, praise, and thanksgiving; and prophetic in nature, in that they were a "shadow" (Col 2:17) of God's divine plan of redemption. They all pointed a "divine finger" to the Messiah, the Christ, the Holy One of Israel!

**THOUGHT** - While there are appointed times, the time is always appropriate for offerings to God. The writer of Hebrews says "Through Him (JESUS) then, let us **continually** (THE "APPOINTED" TIME!) offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. 16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." (Hebrews 13:15-16+)

The KJV has "**the feasts**" and is probably more accurate translation than NAS as the Lxx has **heorte** which means feast, festival, holy day (Jn 5:1; Acts 18:21; Col 2:16)

**Bush** - *Concerning the feasts of the Lord* (Lev 23:2KJV). Heb. מועדי יהוה moëdē Yehovah, (as to) the feasts of Jehovah. The original word מועד moëd, from יעד yâad, to fix by **appointment**, literally implies merely a set time (**ED**: THUS NAS = "**appointed times**"), a stated season, for any purpose whatever, but is applied here and often elsewhere to the solemn feasts of the Israelites, which were **appointed** by God, and fixed to certain seasons of the year. It is sometimes rendered in the Gr. by εορτη, a feast, and sometimes by πανηγυρις, a general assembly, of which the former occurs, Col. 2:16, 'Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day (εορτη), or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days;' and the other Heb. 12:23, 'But ye are come—to the general assembly (πανηγυρις) and church of the first-born.' Perhaps a more suitable rendering of the term would be 'solemnities.'

**which you shall proclaim as holy convocations--** "The Hebrew may be rendered more literally, 'which ye shall call (as) callings of holiness;' i. e. assemblages of the people which should be convened for holy or sacred purposes at set times by public proclamation, and generally by the sound of a trumpet, Num. 10:8–10." (Bush)

[Click for more discussion](#) of Holy Convocation below

**My appointed times are these** - "Or, my assemblies, appointed in honor of my name, and to be observed in obedience to my command; viz. the sabbath, the passover, pentecost, the beginning of the new year, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles; all which are embraced under the general name מועד moëd, and none besides." (Bush)

**Matthew Henry** makes the point that the appointed times or feasts were...

1. Many and returned frequently, which was intended to preserve in them a deep sense of God and religion,

and to prevent their inclining to the superstitions of the heathen. God kept them fully employed in his service, that they might not have time to hearken to the temptations of the idolatrous neighborhood they lived in.

2. They were most of them times of joy and rejoicing. The weekly sabbath is so, and all their yearly solemnities, except the day of atonement.

Seven days were days of strict rest and [holy convocations](#); the first day and the seventh of the **feast of unleavened bread**, the day of **Pentecost**, the day of the **feast of trumpets**, the first day and the eighth of the **feast of tabernacles**, and the **day of atonement**: here were six for joy and one only for holy mourning.

**Appointed times** (04150) (**moed** from the verb **ya'ad** meaning to appoint or fix) can refer to either a time or place of meeting (eg, in "tent of meeting" the word for "meeting" in Lev 1:1 is moed). Appointed sign, appointed time, appointed season, place of assembly, set feast. An appointed meeting time in general (Gen. 18:14; Ex. 13:10). **Moed** often designates a determined time or place without any regard for the purpose. Since the Jewish festivals occurred at regular intervals, this word becomes closely identified with them. Thus **moed** is a common term for the worshipping assembly of God's people. A specific appointed time, usually for a sacred feast or festival (Hos. 9:5; 12:9).

**Moed** as in the present context is used of those places where God's people were to focus on God and their relationship with Him, which would include: the tent of meeting (Ex. 33:7); the Temple (Lam. 2:6); the synagogues (Ps. 74:8).

**Note how the NAS translates moed as referring to time or place** - appointed(3), appointed feast(3), appointed feasts(11), appointed festival(2), appointed meeting place(1), appointed place(1), appointed sign(1), appointed time(21), appointed times(8), appointment(1), assembly(2), definite time(1), feasts(2), festal assemblies(1), fixed festivals(3), meeting(147), meeting place(1), meeting places(1), season(4), seasons(3), set time(1), time(3), times(1), times appointed(1).

**Moed** - 213x in **NAS** - Note that most of the uses of Moed (about 137 verses) are in the phrase **'tent of meeting'** ('ohel moed = the tented part of the tabernacle which God had appointed as the place to meet His people) -

Ge 1:14; 17:21; 18:14; 21:2; Ex 9:5; 13:10; 23:15; 27:21; 28:43; 29:4, 10f, 30, 32, 42, 44; 30:16, 18, 20, 26, 36; 31:7; 33:7; 34:18; 35:21; 38:8, 30; 39:32, 40; 40:2, 6f, 12, 22, 24, 26, 29f, 32, 34f; Lev 1:1, 3, 5; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4f, 7, 14, 16, 18; 6:16, 26, 30; 8:3f, 31, 33, 35; 9:5, 23; 10:7, 9; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7, 16f, 20, 23, 33; 17:4ff, 9; 19:21; 23:2, 4, 37, 44; 24:3; Num 1:1; 2:2, 17; 3:7f, 25, 38; 4:3f, 15, 23, 25, 28, 30f, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 47; 6:10, 13, 18; 7:5, 89; 8:9, 15, 19, 22, 24, 26; 9:2f, 7, 13; 10:3, 10; 11:16; 12:4; 14:10; 15:3; 16:2, 18f, 42f, 50; 17:4; 18:4, 6, 21f, 31; 19:4; 20:6; 25:6; 27:2; 28:2; 29:39; 31:54; Deut 16:6; 31:10, 14; Josh 8:14; 18:1; 19:51; Jdg 20:38; 1 Sam 2:22; 9:24; 13:8, 11; 20:35; 2 Sam 20:5; 24:15; 1Kgs 8:4; 2Kgs 4:16f; 1Chr 6:32; 9:21; 23:31f; 2Chr 1:3, 6, 13; 2:4; 5:5; 8:13; 30:22; 31:3; Ezra 3:5; Neh 10:33; Job 30:23; Ps 74:4, 8; 75:2; 102:13; 104:19; Isa 1:14; 14:13; 33:20; Jer 8:7; 46:17; Lam 1:4, 15; 2:6f, 22; Ezek 36:38; 44:24; 45:17; 46:9, 11; Dan 8:19; 11:27, 29, 35; 12:7; Hos 2:9, 11; 9:5; 12:9; Hab 2:3; Zeph 3:18; Zech 8:19

**Vine on moed (מוֹעֵד)** - "appointed place of meeting; meeting." **Moed** keeps its basic meaning of "appointed," but varies as to what is agreed upon or appointed according to the context: the time, the place, or the meeting itself. The usage of the verb in Amos 3:3 is illuminating: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Whether they have agreed on a time or a place of meeting, or on the meeting itself, is ambiguous.

**The meaning of moed is fixed within the context of Israel's religion** First, the festivals came to be known as the "appointed times" or the set feasts. These festivals were clearly prescribed in the Pentateuch. The word refers to any "festival" or "pilgrimage festival," such as Passover (Lev. 23:15ff.), the feast of first fruits (Lev. 23:15ff.), the feast of tabernacles (Lev. 23:33ff.), or the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27). God condemned the people for observing the moed ritualistically: (read Isa. 1:14-note). **The word moed also signifies a "fixed place."** This usage is not frequent: (see Isa. 14:13, Job 30:23).

**In both meanings of moed—"fixed time" and "fixed place"—a common denominator is the "meeting" of two or more parties at a certain place and time—hence the usage of moed as "meeting."** However, in view of the similarity in meaning between "appointed place" or "appointed time" and "meeting," translators have a real difficulty in giving a proper translation in each context. For instance, "He hath called an assembly [moed] against me" (Lam. 1:15) could be read: "He has called an appointed time against me" (nasb) or "He summoned an army against me" (niv).

The phrase, "tabernacle of the congregation," is a translation of the Hebrew **ohel moed** ("tent of meeting"). The phrase occurs 139 times. It signifies that the Lord has an "appointed place" by which His presence is represented and through which Israel was assured that their God was with them. The fact that the tent was called the "tent of meeting" signifies that Israel's God was **among His people** and that **He was to be approached at a certain time and place** that were **"fixed"** (yaad) in the Pentateuch. In the kjv, this phrase is translated as "tabernacle of the congregation" (Ex 28:43) because translators realized that the noun edah

("congregation") is derived from the same root as moed. The translators of the Septuagint had a similar difficulty. They noticed the relation of moed to the root ud ("to testify") and translated the phrase ohel hamoed as "tabernacle of the testimony." This phrase was picked up by the New Testament in Rev. 15:5. Of the three meanings, the appointed "time" is most basic. The phrase "tent of meeting" lays stress on the "place of meeting." The "meeting" itself is generally associated with "time" or "place." The Septuagint has the following translations of **moed**: **kairos** (time), **heorte** ("feast; festival"). The English translators give these senses: "congregation" (kjv, rsv, nasb, niv); "appointed time" (nasb); "appointed feast" (rsv, nasb); "set time" (rsv, nasb, niv). ([Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words](#))

**Convocation** (04744) (**miqra'** from the verb **qara'** meaning to call out loudly, to summon to a specific task) is a call, a summons, an assembly of persons "convoked" (called together), a collected body of people called together for a "religious" purpose, such as a public worship service. In Neh 8:8 **miqra'** refers to a public **reading** from the Scripture. In Nu 10:2 **miqra'** referred to the action of publicly calling with the goal being to bring the community together. Here the Sabbath is referred to as a "convocation."

[Click for more discussion](#) of Holy Convocation below

**Miqra' - 22x in NAS** - Ex 12:16; Lev 23:2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 21, 24, 27, 35, 36, 37; Nu 10:2; 28:18, 25, 26; 29:1, 7, 12; Neh 8:8; Isa 1:13; 4:5.

**NAS** renders **miqra'** - assemblies(2), assembly(2), convocation(14), convocations(3), reading(1), summoning(1).

These **holy convocations** degenerated over time into unholy convocations that were even detestable to Jehovah...

Isaiah 1:13 Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination (toebah-word study) to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of **assemblies**-- I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly.

Summary of The Seven Feasts (Source: [The Fall Feasts](#))

## THREE MANDATORY FEASTS

Jehovah specified 3 annual feasts for which attendance by Jewish males was mandatory:

1. **Passover** (Pesach)/Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot) - **SPRING**
2. **Pentecost** (Shavuot) - **SPRING**
3. **Tabernacles/Booths** (Sukkot) - **FALL**

Exodus 23:14+ "**Three times a year** you shall celebrate a feast to Me. 15 "You shall observe the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**; (Luke writes "Now the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**, which is called the **Passover**, was approaching." Lk 22:1+) for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. 16 "Also you shall observe the **Feast of the Harvest** (Pentecost) of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the **Feast of the Ingathering** at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. 17 "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

**Freeman** - It is curious to notice how, at a time considerably later than the origin of these public festivals, the exact day of their occurrence was made known. In these days of almanacs and of exact astronomical calculations, we can hardly appreciate the difficulties they encountered in finding the right time. **The first appearance of the new moon was the starting-point.** To ascertain this the Sanhedrin took the deposition of two impartial witnesses as to the time they had seen it. They next spread the intelligence through the country by means of beacons. A person with a bundle of brushwood or straw went, to the top of Mount Olivet, where he kindled his torch and waved it back and forth till he was answered by fires of a similar nature from the surrounding hills. From these, in like manner, the intelligence was spread to others until the whole land was notified. After a time the Samaritans imitated the signs, thus making great confusion. This made it necessary to send messengers all over the country. These, however, did not go abroad at every new moon, but only seven times during the year. In this way the time for these three great feasts **Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles** as well as for other important occasions, was published to

the people. See citation from Maimonides in BROWN S Antiquities of the Jews, vol. i, p. 424. These three festivals were preceded by a **season of preparation**, called **peres**, which lasted fifteen days. During this time each person was expected to meditate on the solemnity of the feast, and to undergo whatever legal purifications might be necessary. This is referred to in John 11:55 ( Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to **purify themselves**.). Roads, bridges, streets, and public water-tanks were repaired for the convenience of travelers. **All the males of Israel were expected to attend, excepting the aged, the infirm, and infants who could not walk alone.** They were commanded to bring offerings with them. [Manners and Customs 1875](#))

**Scofield** - The feasts of the LORD. These were seven great religious festivals which were to be observed by Israel every year. The first three verses of this chapter do not relate to the feasts, but separate the Sabbath from the feasts. Israel's religious calendar began in Nisan (in the spring); their civil year, in Tishri (in the autumn). The seven festivals of the Hebrews were included within the first seven months of the religious calendar: the first three feasts (Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits) took place in the first month, Nisan; the last three (Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles), in the seventh month, Tishri. Between the first and last three was the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) which followed fifty days after the offering of the firstfruits.

#### VIDEOS RELATED TO THE FEASTS:

- [Jesus in the Feasts of Israel - Day of Discovery](#)
- [Jesus in the Feasts of Israel - PASSOVER - Day of Discovery](#)
- [Jesus in the Feasts of Israel - FEAST OF WEEKS - Day of Discovery](#)
- [Jesus in the Feasts of Israel - FEAST OF WEEKS - Day of Discovery](#)

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#### G Campbell Morgan - The set feasts of the Lord. Lev. 23.2

This is a wonderful chapter, as it shows how the whole year, that is, the passing of time, was for this people marked by great religious festivals, which were at once national signs and symbols of the relation of the people to God, and means of keeping ever before them the real secrets of strength. Eight set feasts are named. The first was the Sabbath. It was to be a perpetually recurring feast every seventh day, thus persistently reminding them of these relationships between God and the national life. Then seven were established which created the calendar. First came Passover, which merged into Unleavened Bread. With these the year commenced, reminding them of their redemption from slavery and their separation to God. Then came the Feast of First-fruits, and seven weeks later the Feast of Pentecost, reminding them of their dependence upon God for sustenance, and of their responsibility to Him for the culture of the land. The seventh month was most sacred of all, for therein three connected Feasts were observed, those of Trumpets, of Atonement, of Tabernacles. The Trumpets called them to cease from servile work in order to worship. Atonement reminded them of the way of access to God by sacrifices and the putting away of sin. Tabernacles was the feast of joy in which they remembered their deliverance, His guidance of them, and His law for them. Thus by these set feasts the year was made sacred, and their symbolism emphasized the sanctity of the secular in the Kingdom of God

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#### QUESTION - [What are the Lord's appointed times \(Leviticus 23\)?](#)

**ANSWER** - In Leviticus 23:1–2, the Lord told Moses, “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: These are my appointed times, the times of the LORD that you will proclaim as sacred assemblies” (CSB). “Appointed times” were the holy days, feasts, and festivals that God required the people of Israel to set aside as consecrated to the Lord and to observe faithfully throughout the year.

Part of ancient Israel's commitment to worship and holy living involved the proper observance of sacred days and annual religious gatherings. The appointed times corresponded with the Jewish calendar and were tied to lunar and solar cycles.

The Lord called these solemn observances “my appointed times,” indicating that the focus of the gatherings would be on Him. They included the weekly Sabbath and the monthly new moon festival. The annual spring festivals were the Lord's Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Firstfruits, and the Feast of Weeks, which was called Pentecost in the New Testament. The fall festivals consisted of the Feast of Trumpets or New Year's Day, the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, and the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths.

The **Sabbath** (Leviticus 23:3) was an important religious celebration for the Hebrews because it was observed every week as a sign of Israel's covenant relationship with God (Exodus 31:12–17). On the Sabbath, the Israelites were forbidden to do any work at all, whether plowing or reaping (Exodus 34:21), baking or food preparation (Exodus 16:23), lighting a fire (Exodus 35:3), or gathering wood (Numbers 15:32–36). *Sabbath* comes from a Hebrew word that means “to rest, to cease from labor.” The Sabbath remembered God's rest on the seventh day following the six days of creation (Exodus 20:11) as well as God's deliverance from



slavery in Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15).

The [new moon observance](#) marked the first day of every new month. During the new moon festivals, several different sacrifices were offered (Numbers 28:11–15), trumpets were blown (Numbers 10:10), all labor and trade were suspended (Nehemiah 10:31), and feasts were enjoyed (1 Samuel 20:5).

The appointed time of the [Passover](#) (Leviticus 23:4–5) was at the beginning of the bright season of the year when the moon was full in the first month of spring. The name *Passover* originates from the Hebrew term *pesach*, meaning “to leave or spare by passing over.” This great festival commemorated Israel’s salvation and deliverance from Egypt. Along with the Feast of Weeks and Tabernacles, it was one of three annual pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16) in which all Jewish males were required to travel to Jerusalem to worship.

The seven-day [Feast of Unleavened Bread](#) (Leviticus 23:6–8) immediately followed Passover and was always celebrated as an extension of the Passover feast. During this week, the Israelites ate only unleavened bread to commemorate Israel’s hurried departure from Egypt. On the second day, Israel incorporated the [Feast of Firstfruits](#) (Leviticus 23:9–14) when the priest presented the first sheaves of grain from the spring harvest as a wave offering to the Lord. The Jews could not partake of their crops until the first fruits had been given. This act symbolized that the first and the best of everything belongs to God and that Israel would put the Lord first in every part of life. It was also an expression of thanksgiving for God’s gift of the harvest and for supplying their daily bread.

The next appointed time on the Jewish calendar was the [Feast of Weeks](#) (Leviticus 15–22; Deuteronomy 16:9–10), which fell in late spring, on the fiftieth day (or a full seven weeks) after the Feast of Firstfruits. In the New Testament, this commemoration is called “Pentecost” (Acts 2:1), from the Greek word meaning “fifty.” As one of the harvest feasts, the Feast of Weeks involved offering the first loaves of bread made from the wheat harvest to the Lord. On this day, the Israelites also read from the book of Ruth and the Psalms.

The [Feast of Trumpets](#) (Leviticus 23:23–25; Numbers 29:1–6) or Rosh Hashanah (New Year’s Day), which was observed in the fall, marked the start of a new agricultural and civil year in Israel. This appointed time was announced with the blast of trumpets, commencing ten days of solemn dedication and repentance before the Lord.

The [Day of Atonement](#) (Leviticus 23:26–32; Numbers 29:7–11) or Yom Kippur was the highest and holiest day of the Lord’s appointed times, falling ten days after the Feast of Trumpets. This day called for solemn fasting, deep repentance, and sacrifice. Only on this day, once a year, could the high priest enter the holy of holies in the tabernacle or temple and make an atoning blood sacrifice for the sins of all the people of Israel. As a complete Sabbath, no work was done on the Day of Atonement.

Five days later, Israel celebrated its most joyous appointed time of the year with the fall harvest festival (Sukkot), also known as the [Feast of Tabernacles](#) (Leviticus 23:33–36, 40, 42–43; Numbers 29:12–40) or Feast of Booths. During this week-long celebration, the Jewish people built small, makeshift shelters where they lived and ate their meals as a reminder of God’s provision and care during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness when they lived and worshiped in temporary tents.

The Lord’s appointed times were celebrations of God’s divine protection and provision. Each one recognized different aspects of God’s work of salvation in the lives of His people. Ultimately, these holy days, feasts, and festivals found their fulfillment in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Israel’s Messiah, Jesus Christ. Together, these observances prophetically convey the message of the cross, the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and the glorious promise of His second coming. As we gain a richer, fuller understanding of the Lord’s appointed times, we are rewarded with a more complete and unified picture of God’s plan of salvation as presented throughout the whole of Scripture. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### **QUESTION - [How did Jesus fulfill the meanings of the Jewish feasts?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The way in which Jesus fulfilled the Jewish feasts is a fascinating study. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Jewish prophet Amos records that God declared He would do nothing without first revealing it to His servants, the prophets (Amos 3:7). From the Old Covenant to the New, Genesis to Revelation, God provides picture after picture of His entire plan for mankind and one of the most startling prophetic pictures is outlined for us in the Jewish feasts of Leviticus 23.

The Hebrew word for “feasts” (*moadim*) literally means “appointed times.” God has carefully planned and orchestrated the timing and sequence of each of these seven feasts to reveal to us a special story. The seven annual feasts of Israel were spread over seven months of the Jewish calendar, at set times appointed by God. They are still celebrated by observant Jews today. But for both Jews and non-Jews who have placed their faith in Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, these special days demonstrate the work of redemption through God’s Son.

The first four of the seven feasts occur during the springtime (Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Weeks), and they all

have already been fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament. The final three holidays (Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles) occur during the fall, all within a short fifteen-day period.

Many Bible scholars and commentators believe that these fall feasts have not yet been fulfilled by Jesus. However, the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) for all believers in Jesus Christ is that they most assuredly will be fulfilled. As the four spring feasts were fulfilled literally and right on the actual feast day in connection with Christ's first coming, these three fall feasts, it is believed by many, will likewise be fulfilled literally in connection to the Lord's second coming.

In a nutshell, here is the prophetic significance of each of the seven Levitical feasts of Israel:

1) [Passover](#) (Leviticus 23:5) – Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified during the time that the Passover was observed (Mark 14:12). Christ is a "lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:19) because His life was completely free from sin (Hebrews 4:15). As the first Passover marked the Hebrews' release from Egyptian slavery, so the death of Christ marks our release from the slavery of sin (Romans 8:2).

2) [Unleavened Bread](#) (Leviticus 23:6) – Pointed to the Messiah's sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus' body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) [First Fruits](#) (Leviticus 23:10) – Pointed to the Messiah's resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in 1 Corinthians 15:20 as the "first fruits from the dead."

4) [Weeks or Pentecost](#) (Leviticus 23:16) – Occurred fifty days after the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and pointed to the great harvest of souls and the gift of the Holy Spirit for both Jew and Gentile, who would be brought into the kingdom of God during the Church Age (see [Acts 2](#)). The Church was actually established on this day when God poured out His Holy Spirit and 3,000 Jews responded to Peter's great sermon and his first proclamation of the gospel.

5) [Trumpets](#) (Leviticus 23:24) – The first of the fall feasts. Many believe this day points to the Rapture of the Church when the Messiah Jesus will appear in the heavens as He comes for His bride, the Church. The Rapture is always associated in Scripture with the blowing of a loud trumpet (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:52).

6) [Day of Atonement](#) (Leviticus 23:27) – Many believe this prophetically points to the day of the Second Coming of Jesus when He will return to earth. That will be the Day of Atonement for the Jewish remnant when they "look upon Him whom they have pierced," repent of their sins, and receive Him as their Messiah (Zechariah 12:10 and Romans 11:1-6, 25-36).

7) [Tabernacles or Booths](#) (Leviticus 23:34) – Many scholars believe that this feast day points to the Lord's promise that He will once again "tabernacle" with His people when He returns to reign over all the world (Micah 4:1-7).

Should Christians celebrate these Levitical feast days of Israel today? Whether or not a Christian celebrates the Jewish feast days would be a matter of conscience for the individual Christian. Colossians 2:16-17 tells us, "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ." Christians are not bound to observe the Jewish feasts the way an Old Testament Jew was, but we should not criticize another believer who does or does not observe these special days and feasts (Romans 14:5).

While it is not required for Christians to celebrate the Jewish feast days, it is beneficial to study them. Certainly, it could be beneficial to celebrate these days if it leads one to a greater understanding and appreciation for Christ's death and resurrection and the future promise of His coming. As Christians, if we choose to celebrate these special days, we should put Christ in the center of the celebration, as the One who came to fulfill the prophetic significance of each of them. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **QUESTION - [What are the different Jewish festivals in the Bible?](#)**

**ANSWER** - There are seven Jewish festivals or feasts outlined in the Bible. While they are mentioned throughout Scripture, we find instructions for all seven laid out in Leviticus 23. Leviticus 23:2 refers to the seven Jewish festivals, literally "appointed times," also called "holy convocations." These were days appointed and ordained by God to be kept to the honor of His name. These times of celebration are important not only to Israel, but also to the overall message of the Bible, because each one foreshadows or symbolizes an aspect of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The [book of Leviticus](#) contains God's instructions to His chosen nation, Israel, on how they were to worship Him. It contains detailed instructions about the duties of the priests as well as instructions on observing and obeying God's Law and the sacrificial system. God designated seven specific feasts that Israel was to celebrate each year. Each one of these Jewish festivals is significant both in

regards to the Lord's provision for His people and in regards to the foreshadowing of the coming Messiah and His work in redeeming people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. While Christians are no longer under any obligation to observe any of the Old Testament feasts (Colossians 2:16), we should understand their significance and importance, nonetheless.

The feasts often began and ended with a "Sabbath rest," and the Jews were commanded to not do any customary work on those days. Both the normal weekly Sabbath and the special Sabbaths that were to be observed as part of the Jewish feasts point us to the ultimate [Sabbath rest](#), which is found only in Jesus Christ. It is a rest that Christians experience through faith in the finished work of Christ upon the cross.

Beginning in the spring, the seven Jewish feasts are Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The Jewish feasts are closely related to Israel's spring and fall harvests and agricultural seasons. They were to remind the Israelites each year of God's ongoing protection and provision. But, even more importantly, they foreshadowed the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Not only did they play significant roles in Christ's earthly ministry but they also symbolize the complete redemptive story of Christ, beginning with His death on the cross as the Passover Lamb and ending with His second coming after which He will "tabernacle" or dwell with His people forever.

Here is a brief summary of the spiritual significance of each of the seven Jewish festivals or feasts. It is interesting to note that the first three occur back to back, almost simultaneously. The Feast of Unleavened Bread starts the very day after Passover is celebrated. Then, on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Firstfruits begins.

**Passover** reminds us of redemption from sin. It was the time when Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was offered as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. It is on that basis alone that God can justify the ungodly sinner. Just as the blood of a lamb sprinkled on the doorpost of Jewish homes caused the Spirit of the Lord to pass over those homes during the last plague on Egypt (Exodus 12), so those covered by the blood of the Lamb will escape the spiritual death and judgment God will visit upon all who reject Him. Of all the Jewish festivals, Passover is of the greatest importance because the Lord's Supper was a Passover meal (Matthew 26:17–27). In passing the elements and telling the disciples to eat of His body, Jesus was presenting Himself as the ultimate Passover Lamb.

[The Feast of Unleavened Bread](#) followed immediately after Passover and lasted one week, during which time the Israelites ate no bread with yeast in remembrance of their haste in preparing for their exodus from Egypt. In the New Testament, yeast is often associated with evil (1 Corinthians 5:6–8; Galatians 5:9), and, just as Israel was to remove yeast from their bread, so are Christians to purge evil from their lives and live a new life in godliness and righteousness. Christ as our Passover Lamb cleanses us from sin and evil, and by His power and that of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we are freed from sin to leave our old lives behind, just as the Israelites did.

[The Feast of Firstfruits](#) took place at the beginning of the harvest and signified Israel's gratitude to and dependence upon God. According to Leviticus 23:9–14, an Israelite would bring a sheaf of the first grain of the harvest to the priest, who would wave it before the Lord as an offering. Deuteronomy 26:1–11 states that, when the Israelites brought the first fruits of their harvest before the priest, they were to acknowledge that God had delivered them from Egypt and had given them the Promised Land. This reminds us of Christ's resurrection as He was the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Just as Christ was the first to rise from the dead and receive a glorified body, so shall all those who are born again follow Him, being resurrected to inherit an "incorruptible body" (1 Corinthians 15:35–49).

[The Feast of Weeks \(Pentecost\)](#) occurred 50 days after the Firstfruits festival and celebrated the end of the grain harvest (the Greek word *Pentecost* means "fiftieth"). The primary focus of the festival was gratitude to God for the harvest. This feast reminds us of the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to send "another helper" ([John 14:16](#)) who would indwell believers and empower them for ministry. The coming of the Holy Spirit 50 days after Jesus' resurrection was the guarantee ([Ephesians 1:13–14](#)) that the promise of salvation and future resurrection will come to pass. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in every born-again believer is what seals us in Christ and bears witness with our spirit that we are indeed "joint heirs with Christ" ([Romans 8:16–17](#)).

After the spring feasts conclude with the Feast of Weeks, there is a period of time before the fall feasts begin. This time is spiritually symbolic of the church age in which we live today. Christ's sacrifice and resurrection are past, we have received the promised Holy Spirit, and now we await His second coming. Just as the spring feasts pointed toward the Messiah's ministry at His first coming, the fall feasts point toward what will happen at His [second coming](#).

[The Feast of Trumpets](#) was commanded to be held on the first day of the seventh month and was to be a "day of trumpet blast" ([Numbers 29:1](#)) to commemorate the end of the agricultural and festival year. The trumpet blasts were meant to signal to Israel that they were entering a sacred season. The agricultural year was coming to a close; there was to be a reckoning with the sins of the people on the Day of Atonement. The Feast of Trumpets signifies Christ's second coming. We see trumpets associated with the second coming in verses like [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#), "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first." Of course, the sounding of the trumpet also

indicates the pouring out of God's wrath on the earth in the book of Revelation. Certainly, this feast points toward the coming Day of the Lord.

**The Day of Atonement** occurs just ten days after the Feast of Trumpets. The Day of Atonement was the day the high priest went into the Holy of Holies each year to make an offering for the sins of Israel. This feast is symbolic of the time when God will again turn His attention back to the nation of Israel after "the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and . . . all Israel will be saved" ([Romans 11:25–26](#)). The Jewish remnant who survive the Great Tribulation will recognize Jesus as their Messiah as God releases them from their spiritual blindness and they come to faith in Christ.

**The Feast of Tabernacles (Booths)** is the seventh and final feast of the Lord and took place five days after the Day of Atonement. For seven days, the Israelites presented offerings to the Lord, during which time they lived in huts made from palm branches. Living in the booths recalled the sojourn of the Israelites prior to their taking the land of Canaan ([Leviticus 23:43](#)). This feast signifies the future time when Christ rules and reigns on earth. For the rest of eternity, people from every tribe, tongue, and nation will "tabernacle" or dwell with Christ in the New Jerusalem ([Revelation 21:9–27](#)).

While the four spring feasts look back at what Christ accomplished at His first coming, the three fall feasts point us toward the glory of His second coming. The first is the source of our hope in Christ—His finished work of atonement for sins—and the second is the promise of what is to come—eternity with Christ. Understanding the significance of these God-appointed Jewish festivals helps us to better see and understand the complete picture and plan of redemption found in Scripture. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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### James Smith - THE MEMORIAL FEASTS - SEVEN EXPERIENCES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE Leviticus 23

These seven feasts were seasons, or joyful solemnities, appointed by the Lord. They were holy memorial gatherings or convocations, through which as a means of grace God blessed His people. They have a deep and powerful prophetic voice. Each feast seems to point out some definite experience on the part of His people, and to denote some fresh manifestation of the riches of His grace and purpose toward them. They may also have a dispensational bearing, representing, as I think they do, the different epochs in the history of His ancient people and of the Church of God. Take a glance at them in this connection—

1. PASSOVER. This suggests the day of Jesus Christ's humiliation and death.
2. UNLEAVENED BREAD may indicate the present-day experience of God's people as separated ones.
3. FIRSTFRUITS may point to the first resurrection at the coming of the Lord, as predicted in 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
4. FEAST OF WEEKS, or ingathering: the restoration of the Jews, when all Israel shall be saved.
5. TRUMPETS: the publishing by the Jews of the Gospel of the kingdom.
6. ATONEMENTS: the final adjustment of all things to God in righteousness.
7. TABERNACLES: "God in the midst of them," as when they abode in tents in the wilderness—the millennial reign. Peace on earth and good will among men.

These holy appointments by God are worthy of our closest study, as revealing the Divine programme with regard to "things to come." But we wish to view these feasts in what some might call a more practical light, as touching our individual experience. The—

**1. Feast of Passover, or saved by the blood** (Lev 23:5). It is the Lord's Passover because He passed over them who were sheltered by the sprinkled blood of the lamb in Egypt. Ye have not been redeemed with silver or gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish (1 Peter 1:18, 19). As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come.

**2. Feast of Unleavened Bread, or cleansed by the Word** (Lev 23:6.) This feast was held just the day after the Passover, teaching us that there is a very close relationship between redemption and cleansing. The leaven of sin and hypocrisy must be excluded from the bread of those redeemed to God by the Blood of Christ. Desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow; the reading of trashy, unwholesome literature hinders the growth of many a child of God. Let not such a thing be seen in all thy quarters (Exod. 13:6, 7).

**3. Feast of Firstfruits, or consecrated to God** (Lev 23:10–12), The first sheaf of the harvest presented to Jehovah is an emphatic type of Christ (1 Cor. 15:23), who was the corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died that He might bring forth much fruit (John 12:24). If the firstfruit be holy the lump is also holy (Rom. 11:16). The redeemed from among men are the firstfruits unto God (Rev 14:4) The sheaf and the lamb were offered together (v. 12) We a kind of firstfruits, are represented, "risen together" with Christ the Lamb of God. The sheaf represented the firstfruits of a new life, offered to God in the power of a blameless Lamb Being made alive unto God, the sheaf of our whole nature should be presented to Him as the firstfruits of a harvest of praise and honour yet to come through our faithful life for God.

**4. Feast of Weeks, or the filling of the Holy Spirit**(Lev 23:15–22). It is called the “feast of weeks” because it was held seven weeks after the Passover. It was also called Pentecost, because it was held on the fiftieth day. On this day the Holy Spirit was poured out (Acts 2:1–4). It was the harvest or ingathering feast. This was beautifully fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, for we read that “the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls “Just as Pentecost followed the offering of the firstfruits, so the filling of the Holy Spirit follows the yielding up of ourselves unto God, then comes the harvesting or ingathering of precious souls. This is God’s order, and there is no other successful way As a corn of wheat we must also fall and die to sin and self if we would bring forth much fruit unto God It would also seem from what is here stated that we are not to expect that the world will be converted or gathered in during this dispensation, for He says, “Thou shalt not make a clean riddance of the corners of thy field” (v. 22), although the time will come when every knee shall bow to Him.

**5. Feast of Trumpets, or the publishing of the Gospel** (Lev 23:23–25). When a man has been filled with the Holy Ghost he will soon take to trumpeting the Gospel. The blowing of the trumpet was as holy a work as offering a sacrifice. It is “an holy convocation.” A dead man cannot blow a trumpet, no matter how costly the instrument may be, it takes the breath of a living man to make it effectual. The spiritually dead may preach the Gospel, but there is no joyful sound from Heaven to the souls of men. The trumpet is there, but the living and life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit is absent. Alas, that so many should be content with the form without the power. Those who know the joyful sound walk in the light of His countenance (Psa. 89:15).

**6. Feast of Atonements, or the final salvation** (Lev 23:26–32). In the Hebrew the word rendered “atonement” is in the plural. This solemn season was a memorial, not only of atonement made for the people, but also for the vessels, &c., of the sanctuary. Coming as it does between the feast of trumpets and the feast of tabernacles, we are led to believe that it has reference to our perfect redemption at the resurrection of the body, the vessel of the Spirit. Even we ourselves, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:22–24). We have not yet entered into this salvation, but we hope for it. The feast of atonements appointed by God makes it sure.

**7. Feast of Tabernacles, or walking with God** (Lev 23:33–43). This feast was “a solemn assembly,” commemorating the time when they dwelt in booths in the wilderness, and when God dwelt in the midst of them in the cloudy pillar. Times when they literally walked with God Has all this not a voice for us, reminding us that after the resurrection or the changing of the body (of those who are alive when the Lord comes) will come our “for ever with the Lord? “They shall walk with Me in white. Shall not that saying, then, come to pass which is written, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them?” (Rev. 21:3). Then the fruit of that handful of corn in the earth shall shake like Lebanon (Psa. 72:16–19).

It is to us sublimely touching that it was on the last day of this feast that Jesus stood, and cried, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink” This spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive (John 7). To think that these seven feasts practically ended with this loving, gracious, heart-rending cry of our soul-pitying Saviour gives awful emphasis to the two great truths they contain.

1. THIRSTY ones should come to Him and drink.
2. BELIEVING ones should receive the Holy Spirit.

Christ is God’s great perfect feast for sinners and for saints.

**Leviticus 23:3 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.**

- Lev 19:3 Ex 16:23,29 Ex 20:8-11 Ex 23:12 Ex 31:15 Ex 34:21 Ex 35:2,3 Dt 5:13 Isa 56:2,6 58:13 Lk 13:14 23:56 Ac 15:21 Rev 1:10
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE SABBATH

**See commentary on Exodus for related discussions of the Sabbath** (“+” sign is link to commentary):

- Ex 16:23,29+ Ex 20:8-11+ Ex 23:12+ Ex 31:15+ Ex 34:21+ Ex 35:2,3+

**For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest-** Note that **complete rest** is in essence reiterated by the command that **they shall not do any work**.

**Bush** - "Heb. שבת שבתון shabbath shabbathon, a sabbath of sabbatism; a highly emphatic phrase denoting the greatest degree of

consecration to purposes of rest. Although the main scope of the chapter has relation to other sacred seasons, yet as the Sabbath was ever to be esteemed the grand solemnity, which was never to be supplanted or eclipsed by any other, therefore it is introduced here by way of preface to the others. See Note on Gen. 2:3." (Bush)

**A holy convocation** ([Click for more discussion](#) of Holy Convocation below) "That is, a time of holy convocation; from which it appears that meetings for public worship are an essential part of the due observance of the day, and that they cannot be neglected or omitted without going contrary to one main design of the institution." (Bush)

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**You shall not do any work** - " On other holy days they were forbidden to do any servile work, v. 7, but on **thesabbath**, and the **day of atonement**, (which is also called a sabbath,) they were **todo no work at all**, not even the dressing of meat." (Bush)

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

**It is a sabbath to the LORD** - Yes the Sabbath is to be for the glory of the LORD but is also His gift for our good! As Jesus declared "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.." (Mk 2:27+)

**THOUGHT** - Dearly beloved, are you remembering His Sabbath? Are you keeping His Sabbath holy? Are you experiencing His day of rest for your soul? You are under grace, not law, and the Sabbath is given as a gift and not for guilt.

"Rest and relaxation are not optional to healthy living. Rest was never meant to be a luxury but a necessity for growth, maturity, and health. You do not rest because your work is done; you rest because God commanded it and created you to have a need for it. The **Sabbath was made for you** because God knows that your physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being demands periodic breaks. The Sabbath is not just a psychological convenience; it is a spiritual and biological necessity. "Remember the Sabbath" is more than just a lifestyle suggestion; it is a commandment (**ED**: see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)). To forget it is dangerous—personally, morally, and spiritually. Your body will last longer and function better if you take time to rest (**ED**: SPECIFICALLY TO REST IN THE LORD! Psalm 37:7±). **And in the long run you'll accomplish far more by resting.** Bottom Line The old adage is true: **If you don't "come apart," you will come apart.**" (Stand Firm Day by Day)

**ILLUSTRATION** - Our great-grandparents called it the Holy Sabbath; our grandparents called it the Sabbath; our parents called it Sunday; we call it the weekend. We have forgotten to observe the Sabbath, and we are paying the price. Sleep scientists" are warning that people are not getting enough rest, and our health and safety are suffering as a result. William Dement, founder and director of the Stanford University Sleep Research Center, estimates that people sleep about one-and-a-half hours less per night than the average from a century ago. The consequences? One report found that driver fatigue was involved in over half of all American vehicle accidents. Larger accidents, such as the Exxon Valdez disaster, have also been linked to sleep deprivation. In laboratory experiments, prolonged stress without rest apparently caused the immune systems of the rats to fail. Also, recent theories propose that the REM stage of sleep is necessary to learning and memory, meaning that less sleep affects our cognitive functions as well as our physical well-being. The need for rest should come as no surprise to Christians, for we know that our Creator made us that way! That's why in the Law God made every seventh day a Sabbath, and every seventh year a Sabbath year.

**in all your dwellings** - " Heb. בכל משוּבתיכם bekol meshubothekem, in all your dwelling-places; by which is meant not so much in their private habitations as in the various places of their residence over the country. Gr. εν πανσ κατοικι μων, in all your inhabiting, i. e. in every place that you may inhabit. The great feasts were to be kept in one place where the sanctuary was established; but the sabbaths in this respect differed from them. They were to be observed all over the land wherever they dwelt, particularly in the synagogues in every city, Acts 15, 21." (Bush)

Before all the annual feasts are described, God first reminds the people of the weekly Sabbath festival. One man who dishonored the Sabbath by working was punished with death...

Nu 15:32 Now while the sons of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the **Sabbath** day (~ "work") 33 And those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation; 34 and they put him in custody because it had not been declared what should be done to him. 35 Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." 36 So all the congregation brought him outside the camp, and stoned him

to death with stones, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**Henry Morris** - The weekly day of rest, commemorating God's completed work of creation (Exodus 20:8-11), was even more sacred than the seven annual feasts. No "servile" work could be done in the latter (Leviticus 23:8,21,25,35,36), but no work at all could be performed on the sabbath. Also, no work could be performed on the great day of atonement (Leviticus 23:28). ([Leviticus - Defender's Study Bible - type "Lev 23", etc in "all these words"](#))

Shortly after deliverance of Israel from Egypt, but before the formal giving of the Law at Mt Sinai, God instructed the people regarding the Sabbath principle. In the following passages we see that a central tenet was "Trust in the Lord to provide when He says He will provide." Notice how quickly they disobeyed (reflecting their lack of faith or trust).

Ex 16:22+ Now it came about on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23 then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning." 24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul, nor was there any worm in it. 25 And Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. 26 "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none." 27 And it came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. 28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "**How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?** 29 "**See, the LORD has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.**" 30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

**Sabbath** (07676)(sabbat) comes from the verb **shabath** (07673) meaning to desist (from exertion), cease (see this use of the verb in Ge 8:22, Jer 31:36), rest (first used of God resting in Creation - Ge 2:2-3), repose, cease from labor. So here the noun form **sabbat** means intermission, the Sabbath (day), the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week, the sacred 7th year, a sabbatical year.

It was not until the giving of the Law at Mt Sinai that the keeping of the Sabbath became a part of the law and a sign of God's covenant relationship with His people (Ex 20:8-11 Ex 31:12-17).

**Sabbath** = A covenant sign indicative of Jehovah's authority. When Israel kept the Sabbath, they showed the pagan nations (the Gentiles had no Sabbath statute - see Ps 147:19-20) that they were a distinctive people and were subject to their God. Keeping Sabbath was in a sense a way of demonstrating Israel's trust in God, trusting that He would honor their labors with fruit. We may plant the seeds and water them, but it is God who gives the increase (1Co 3:6).

**Shabbat - 88x in NAS** - Ex 16:23, 25f, 29; 20:8, 10f; 31:13ff; 35:2f; Lev 16:31; 19:3, 30; 23:3, 11, 15f, 32, 38; 24:8; 25:2, 4, 6, 8; 26:2, 34f, 43; Num 15:32; 28:9f; Dt 5:12, 14f; 2Kgs 4:23; 11:5, 7, 9; 16:18; 1Chr 9:32; 23:31; 2Chr 2:4; 8:13; 23:4, 8; 31:3; 36:21; Neh 9:14; 10:31, 33; 13:15ff, 21f; Isa 1:13; 56:2, 4, 6; 58:13; 66:23; Jer 17:21f, 24, 27; Lam 2:6; Ezek 20:12f, 16, 20f, 24; 22:8, 26; 23:38; 44:24; 45:17; 46:1, 3f, 12; Hos 2:11; Amos 8:5. **Translated in NAS:** every sabbath(2), sabbath(73), sabbaths(32).

**Sabbath = rest for man:** Ex 31:15 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a **sabbath** of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the **sabbath** day shall surely be put to death.

**Comment:** On the Sabbath Israel was commanded to imitate the Creator, Who Himself rested from His work of creation on the seventh day (Ge 2:1-3; Ex 20:11),

**Wiersbe:** Based on Genesis 2:1–3, the weekly Sabbath reminded the Jews that Jehovah God was the Creator and they were but stewards of His generous gifts... Although believers today aren't commanded to "remember the Sabbath Day" (Ro 14:1-12-note; Col 2:16-17-note), the principle of resting one day in seven is a good one. (**Ed:** Are you resting in Jesus beloved? cp Mt 11:28-30-note). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Sabbath = rest for animals:** Ex 23:12 "Six days you are to do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor in order that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave, as well as your stranger, may refresh themselves.

**Vine:** The "sabbath" was the covenant sign of God's lordship over the creation. By observing the "sabbath," Israel confessed that they were God's redeemed people, subject to His lordship to obey the whole of His law. They were His stewards to show mercy with kindness and liberality to all (Ex. 23:12;

Lev. 25). By “resting,” man witnessed his trust in God to give fruit to his labor; he entered into God’s “rest.” Thus “rest” and the “sabbath” were eschatological in perspective, looking to the accomplishment of God’s ultimate purpose through the redemption of His people, to whom the “sabbath” was a covenant sign. The prophets rebuked Israel for their neglect of the sabbath (Isa. 1:13; Jer. 17:21-27; Ezek. 20:12-24; Amos 8:5). They also proclaimed “sabbath” observance as a blessing in the messianic age and a sign of its fullness (Isa. 56:2-4; 58:13; 66:23; Ezek. 44:24; 45:17; 46:1, 3-4, 12). The length of the Babylonian Captivity was determined by the extent of Israel’s abuse of the sabbatical year (2Chr 36:21; cf. Lev. 26:34- 35).

**Sabbath = rest for the land:** Lev 25:4 but during the seventh year the land shall have a **sabbath** rest, a **sabbath** to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard.

**Comment:** This demonstrates God's concern for His creation! **Sabbatical Year** was the year when land not tilled (Lev 25:4ff.). In a very real sense the land of Palestine needed a rest from the sin of the sons of Israel. The length of the Babylonian captivity was determined by the extent of Israel's abuse of the Sabbatical year (2Chr 36:21 [cf. Lev 26:33, 34, 35]). After they had learned their lesson of 70 years of exile, God allowed them to return to the land of Israel.

**Wiersbe:** Other peoples might work on the seventh day and treat it like any other day, but the Israelites rested on the seventh day and thereby gave witness that they belonged to the Lord (Neh. 13:15–22; Isa. 58:13–14). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Sabbath = A Sign:** Ex 31:17 “It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.”

Mark 2:27+ **Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath-**

This statement is found only in Mark's version. What is Jesus saying? He is saying that God made the Sabbath to give men a time to rest. By the addition of all their minute rules and regulations ([see here](#)), the Jewish "sages" had in effect made the Sabbath the "master" over men. The Jews instead of enjoying the Sabbath as a day of rest, now had to work even harder than ever to make sure they did not break any of the many Sabbath regulations. They had to be cautious about what they did, where they went, how far they went, and on and on. It must have been a heavy mental burden on all who tried to comply with the non-Biblical regulations. In short Jesus is saying the Sabbath was made to be a **blessing** for man, but the plethora of non-Biblical rules had turned the day into an **onerous burden**. It is interesting that in our modern culture many often dread Monday, but given the burden of the Sabbath, one cannot help but believe most of Jews would say "T.G.I.M" (Thank God it's Monday!)

**Lenski** has an excellent comment - The principle back of all that God ordered in his law regarding the Sabbath was that it might be a blessing for man. This day afforded man physical rest and, still more important, time to attend to his spiritual needs. But the Jews had inverted this. They treated man as if he had been created for the purpose of keeping the Sabbath laws. The Sabbath had to be kept, no matter how man fared, whereas God intended that man should be blessed—by the Sabbath, of course, but, if necessary, even at the expense of the Sabbath. (ISMG)

**Kistemaker** adds that "The sabbath was instituted to be a blessing for man: to keep him healthy, to make him happy, and to render him holy. Man was not created to be the sabbath's slave." (BNTC)

The Jews themselves recognized the burden of the Sabbath writing “the rules about the Sabbath...are as mountains hanging by a hair, for [teaching of] Scripture [thereon] is scanty and the rules many” (m. Hag. 1:8)."

**Wenham** makes an interesting comment regarding the recurrence of the idea of "**seven**"...

Keil points out that the sabbatical principle informs all the Pentateuchal laws about the festivals. There are **seven** festivals in the year: Passover, unleavened bread, weeks, solemn rest day, day of atonement, booths, day after booths. During these festivals there were **seven** days of rest, first and **seventh** unleavened bread, weeks, solemn rest day, day of atonement, first of booths, first day after booths. The majority of these festivals occur in the **seventh** month of the year. Every **seventh** year is a sabbatical year (Ex. 21:2ff.; Lev. 25:2ff.; Deut. 15:1ff.). After forty-nine (7 × 7) years there was a super-sabbatical year, the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:8ff.). Through this elaborate system of casts and sabbatical years the importance of the Sabbath was underlined. Through sheer familiarity the weekly Sabbath could come to be taken for granted. But these festivals and sabbatical years constituted major interruptions to daily living and introduced an element of variety into the



rhythm of life. In this way they constantly reminded the Israelite what God had done for him, and that in observing the Sabbath he was imitating his Creator, who rested on the seventh day. (NICOT)

**Victor Hamilton** explains the theological significance of **sabbat**...

In the **first** place Ex 20:8ff. connects observance of the Sabbath with the fact that God himself rested on the seventh day after six days of work (Gen 2:2–3). Everything God made, as recorded in Genesis, he called good. Only the Sabbath, however, he sanctified, indicating perhaps that the climax of creation was not the creation of man, as is often stated, but the day of rest, the seventh day. The Sabbath is thus an invitation to rejoice in God's creation, and recognize God's sovereignty over our time.

**Secondly**, we observe in Dt 5:15 that a different reason is given for observing the Sabbath. "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out with a mighty hand. ...; therefore, Yahweh your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." Exodus then connects the Sabbath with creation described in Genesis and Deuteronomy connects the Sabbath with deliverance from Egypt described in Exodus. Thus every Sabbath, Israel is to remember that God is an emancipator, a liberator. The early Christians were on target, it seems, when they connected the day of rest with the remembrance of Christ's resurrection. He is the one who gives freedom. Actually there is no real conflict between Deuteronomy and Exodus at this point. Whereas Deuteronomy has in view the people of the Covenant, the Exodus verses place the emphasis on the God of the covenant (AI, p. 481).

**Thirdly**, the Sabbath is a social or humanitarian ordinance which affords dependent laborers a day of rest: Ex 20:10, Deut 5:14–15 and Ex 23:12, "That your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien may be refreshed." Here then this commandment takes a step in the direction of making all men equal before God. As the Sabbath recalls the liberation from Egypt so it in turn must become an agent of freedom by setting the dependents in society free. Is it possible to connect this with the fact that in 1Co 16:2 it is recorded that on the first day of the week there is a collection of money for the poor in Jerusalem?

**Fourthly**, the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant and in this way the Sabbath reaches into the future. The Sabbath now joins the signs of the rainbow and circumcision. The pertinent texts are Ex 31:13, 17 and Ezek 20:12, 20. This accounts for the reason that the penalty for profaning the Sabbath is death (Ex 31:14; Nu 15:32–36; Jer 17:19–27). As long as Israel observes the Sabbath she affirms her loyalty to Yahweh and guarantees his saving presence. For the Christian believer these promises are fulfilled in a person, Christ. Through him we enter into God's own rest (Heb 4:1–11). (Online - [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#)).

**Bruce Scott**...

In Jewish tradition, the Sabbath is believed to be a gift from God's treasury. Exalted and elevated, it is the day held to be the foundation and epitome of Jewish faith. It is revered and almost worshiped. The Sabbath is so important that it is looked on as being the primary instrument by which the Jewish people have been sustained and preserved throughout the ages. As one Jewish thinker said, "More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews."... The purpose of the Sabbath was threefold.

**First**, the Sabbath was to be a day of rest and refreshment for the Israelites, their servants, their livestock, and any visitors staying with them (Dt. 5:13–14). For six days they were to labor, but on the seventh day they were to have a complete rest or cessation from work. In so doing, observant Jews identified with their God, who also worked for six days and rested on the seventh.

**Second**, the Sabbath was to be a sign between the Lord and Israel (Ex. 31:13). Similar to the sign of circumcision, the Sabbath was to be kept throughout their generations as a sign of the covenant between God and Israel. The penalty for not keeping the Sabbath was the same as that for failure to practice circumcision. Non-observers were cut off from the covenant people. God gave the sign of the Sabbath so that Israel would know that He, the Lord, sanctified them.

**Third**, the Sabbath was to be a day of remembering their physical redemption (Dt. 5:15). The people of Israel were not to forget that they had been slaves in Egypt and that God had delivered them with great power and might. Resting on the seventh day therefore involved more than just physical refreshment. God did not rest on the seventh day because He was fatigued. Rather, the idea of resting spoke more of cessation. The Israelites were to cease whatever work they were engaged in during the week. They were to detach themselves from the material, temporal, and mundane and focus on the spiritual, eternal, and heavenly facets of life. They were to refresh the inner man as well as the outer. They were to reflect on their relationship with God, putting aside

their own desires and putting God's desires first (Isa. 58:13–14). By keeping the Sabbath in this way, the Israelites marked out a distinction or division between themselves and the godless world system around them. This is what God intended for Israel when He instituted the Sabbath.

Rabbinical Judaism, however, has added more to the meaning and purpose of the Sabbath. It teaches that the seventh day of rest was not a result of God's ceasing from His work of creation. Rather, God's work was actually finished with the creation of the Sabbath on the seventh day. Jewish tradition also teaches that the Sabbath is equal in itself to all the other commandments found in the Bible. Therefore, keeping the Sabbath is like keeping all of the biblical commands at the same time. Furthermore, whenever observant Jews keep the Sabbath, they believe they are endowed with an additional soul for the duration of the day of rest. At the conclusion of the Sabbath, that extra soul leaves. This additional soul is given so that they may experience and enjoy the spiritual delights of the Sabbath in all of their fullness. ([The Feasts of Israel- Seasons of the Messiah by Bruce Scott](#))

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**Question.org** has a discussion addressing the question "Does obeying the Law bring salvation" - It is difficult for a person who hasn't been reared in legalism to understand Paul's meaning when he speaks of the law "arousing sinful passions" and causing sin to "spring to life" (Romans 7:5-9). However, when someone has no other basis for forgiveness than keeping the law, they begin to view the law itself as the source of salvation. This, in turn, introduces such an emphasis on rules that rebellion is the natural result. A Jewish survivor of German concentration camps, **Israel Shahak**, described the extent to which Orthodox Judaism strives to avoid violations of the law: "The following example illustrates even better the level of absurdity reached by this system. One of the prototypes of work forbidden on the Sabbath is harvesting. This is stretched, by analogy, to a ban on breaking a branch off a tree. Hence, riding a horse (or any other animal) is forbidden, as a hedge against the temptation to break a branch off a tree for flogging the beast. It is useless to argue that you have a ready-made whip, or that you intend to ride where there are no trees. What is forbidden remains forbidden for ever. It can, however, be stretched and made stricter: in modern times, riding a bicycle on the Sabbath has been forbidden, because it is analogous to riding a horse." (**See continuation of Shahak's comments below**) Dependency upon the law for righteousness and security before God results in rules so complicated and impossible to fulfill that they make life impossible. This results not only in hostility towards the law, but a desire to find ways to circumvent it.<sup>2</sup> Fully aware of the law's function and effect, Paul realized it was not the law, but faith that brings salvation. (Romans 4:9-16). But what is the basis of this saving faith? **Assurance of salvation can't be based on the law, as the law only magnifies consciousness of sin** Any attempt to achieve assurance on the basis of the law will produce greater guilt. (This is why children of legalistic Christians, Muslims, or Jews often become self-righteous bigots who project their own sinfulness on everyone else or rebels who reject all morality and tradition.) Faith in the law as a means of forgiveness for sin leads only to a cycle of desperate legalism leading either to self-righteous arrogance or despairing rebellion. **The Jewish Bible offers a basis for faith outside of the law. It points to a Messiah who will bear the sins of His people** (Genesis 22:1-8; Exodus 12:3-7; Psalm 22; Isaiah 53:1-12). The church was founded on the confidence that Jesus was the Lamb of God ( John 1:29 ) 3, bearer of a gospel that offers forgiveness of sin (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 15:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 1 John 2:2; Revelation 5:12). Unlike faith in the Law alone, faith in Jesus as the Messiah confirms the authority of the Law while offering deliverance from its condemnation, offering both Jews and Gentiles forgiveness and peace with God.

**Shahak continues:** "My final example illustrates how the same methods are used also in purely theoretical cases, having no conceivable application in reality. During the existence of the Temple, the High Priest was only allowed to marry a virgin. Although during virtually the whole of the Talmudic period there was no longer a Temple or a High Priest, the Talmud devotes one of its more involved (and bizarre) discussions to the precise definition of the term 'virgin' fit to marry a High Priest. What about a woman whose hymen had been broken by accident? Does it make any difference whether the accident occurred before or after the age of three? By the impact of metal or of wood? Was she climbing a tree? And if so, was she climbing up or down? Did it happen naturally or unnaturally? All this and much else besides is discussed in lengthy detail. And every scholar in classical Judaism had to master hundreds of such problems. Great scholars were measured by their ability to develop these problems still further, for as shown by the examples there is always scope for further development if only in one direction and such development did actually continue after the final redaction of the Talmud." (Israel Shahak, Jewish History, Jewish Religion (pp. 40-41)) **Israel Shahak offers examples of the kinds of subterfuges that orthodox Jews have used to "keep the law" in a way that allowed them a degree of normalcy in daily life:** "Milking on the Sabbath. This has been forbidden in post-talmudic times, through the process of increasing religious severity mentioned above. The ban could easily be kept in the diaspora, since Jews who had cows of their own were usually rich enough to have non-Jewish servants, who could be ordered (using one of the subterfuges described below) to do the milking. The early Jewish colonists in Palestine employed Arabs for this and other purposes, but with the forcible imposition of the Zionist policy of exclusive Jewish labour there was need for a dispensation. (This was particularly important before the introduction of mechanised milking in the late 1950s.) Here too there was a difference between Zionist and non-Zionist rabbis. According to the former, the forbidden milking becomes permitted provided the milk is not white but dyed blue. This blue Saturday milk is then used exclusively

for making cheese, and the dye is washed off into the whey. Non-Zionist rabbis have devised a much subtler scheme (which I personally witnessed operating in a religious kibbutz in 1952). They discovered an old provision which allows the udders of a cow to be emptied on the Sabbath, purely for relieving the suffering caused to the animal by bloated udders, and on the strict condition that the milk runs to waste on the ground. Now, this is what is actually done: on Saturday morning, a pious kibbutznik goes to the cowshed and places pails under the cows. (There is no ban on such work in the whole of the talmudic literature.) He then goes to the synagogue to pray. Then comes his colleague, whose 'honest intention' is to relieve the animals' pain and let their milk run to the floor. But if, by chance, a pail happens to be standing there, is he under any obligation to remove it? Of course not. He simply 'ignores' the pails, fulfills his mission of mercy and goes to the synagogue. Finally a third pious colleague goes into the cowshed and discovers, to his great surprise, the pails full of milk. So he puts them in cold storage and follows his comrades to the synagogue. Now all is well, and there is no need to waste money on blue dye. **"Similar dispensations were issued by Zionist rabbis in respect of the ban (based on Leviticus 19:19) against sowing two different species of crop in the same field.** Modern agronomy has however shown that in some cases (especially in growing fodder) mixed sowing is the most profitable. The rabbis invented a dispensation according to which one man sows the field lengthwise with one kind of seed, and later that day his comrade, who 'does not know' about the former, sows another kind of seed crosswise. However, this method was felt to be too wasteful of labour, and a better one was devised: one man makes a heap of one kind of seed in a public place and carefully covers it with a sack or piece of board. The second kind of seed is then put on top of the cover. Later, another man comes and exclaims, in front of witnesses, 'I need this sack (or board)' and removes it, so that the seeds mix 'naturally.' Finally, a third man comes along and is told, 'Take this and sow the field,' which he proceeds to do." ([Can Assurance of Salvation Be Found in Obeying the Old Testament Law- - Questions.org](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the Sabbath day? from "Got Questions?"](#)
- [How is Jesus our Sabbath Rest?](#)
- [Does God require Sabbath-keeping of Christians?](#)
- [What day is the Sabbath, Saturday or Sunday?](#)
- The Topic Concordance [Sabbath](#)
- American Church Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- American Tract Society [Sabbath](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Sabbath Day's Journey Sabbath](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Sabbath Sabbath](#)

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#### H A Ironside - Leviticus 23:3

The sabbath of old and the Lord's day now speak of rest; the one of rest after labor, the other of rest before service. People often ask, "Who changed the sabbath?" Properly speaking, the sabbath has never been changed. The sabbath belongs to the old covenant, and is Israel's memorial day. But Scripture tells us that after the death and resurrection of Christ "the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law" (Hebrews 7:12). Under the new dispensation we see the first day of the week taking the place of the seventh day sabbath, and the church has recognized this change from the beginning of the Christian era. We may safely say that the guidance of the Holy Spirit led believers to give special recognition to the memorial day of Christ's resurrection, "This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). This is the day of verses 22 and 23, when the rejected stone was made "the chief cornerstone," when God raised Christ from the dead.

The day of resurrection!  
Earth tell it out abroad;  
The Passover of gladness,  
The Passover of God.  
From death to life eternal,  
From earth unto the sky,  
Our Christ hath brought us over,  
With hymns of victory.  
—John of Damascus

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## William MacDonald - Notes on Leviticus 23

The religious calendar of Israel now becomes the subject of God's legislation.

The seventh day, or sabbath (Lev 23:3), was to be a day of rest from labor. This was the only weekly holy day.

The Passover (Lev 23:5) was held on the 14th day of the first month, Nisan (or Abib). It commemorated Israel's redemption from slavery in Egypt. The Passover lamb was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God, our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7), whose blood was shed to redeem us from slavery to sin.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:6) occurred in connection with the Passover. It extended over a period of seven days, beginning with the day after Passover—i.e., from the 15th of Nisan to the 21st. The names of these two feasts are often used interchangeably. During this time the Jews were required to put away all leaven from their households. In Scripture, leaven speaks of sin. The feast pictures a life from which the leaven of malice and wickedness has been put away, and a life which is characterized by the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8). Even today the Jews eat unleavened bread during this feast. The bread is called matzo. The preparation of matzo involves piercing the bread, and in the process of baking it becomes striped. This unleavened bread may speak of the sinless Messiah. He was pierced for us, and by His stripes we are healed.

The presentation of a wave sheaf of barley took place on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (the day after the sabbath—i.e., the first day of the week). This is known as the Feast of Firstfruits (Lev 23:10). It marked the beginning of the barley harvest, the first grain of the year. A sheaf of barley was waved before the Lord in thanksgiving for the harvest. A burnt offering and a meal offering were also presented. This first harvest was viewed as the promise of the larger harvest to come. This pictures Christ in resurrection—"Christ . . . , the firstfruits of those who are asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20 NASB). His resurrection is the guarantee that all who put their faith in Him will also gain immortality through resurrection.

The Feast of Weeks, Shavout, or Pentecost (a Greek word meaning "fifty") was held fifty days after the Passover Sabbath. It was a harvest festival thanking God for the beginning of the wheat harvest. The firstfruits of the wheat harvest were presented at this time (Lev 23:17), along with a burnt offering, meal offering, drink offering, and peace offering. According to Jewish tradition, Moses received the Law on this day of the year. The Feast is typical of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, when the church was brought into existence. The wave offering consisted of two loaves of bread made from the freshly reaped wheat. (This was the only offering that was made with leaven.) These loaves represent, in type, the Jews and the Gentiles made into "one new man in Christ" (Eph. 2:15).

After Pentecost there was a long interval, about four months, before there was another feast. This span of time may picture the present church age, in which we eagerly await the return of our Savior.

The Feast of Trumpets (Lev 23:23-25) took place on the first day of the seventh month. The blowing of trumpets called the sons of Israel together for a very solemn assembly. At this time there was a period of 10 days for self-examination and repentance, leading up to the Day of Atonement. It typifies the time when Israel will be regathered to the land prior to her national repentance. This was the first day of the civil year, today called Rosh Hashanah. Some see this feast as picturing another gathering as well—that is, the gathering of the saints to meet the Lord in the air at the Rapture.

The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur (Lev 23:26-32), occurring on the tenth day of the seventh month, has been described in detail in chapter 16. It prefigures the national repentance of Israel, when a believing remnant will turn to the Messiah and be forgiven (Zech. 12:10; 13:1). In almost every verse dealing with the Day of Atonement, God repeats the command to do no work. The only person who was to be active on this day was the high priest. The Lord reinforced the charge by threatening to destroy any person who violated it. This is because the salvation which our High Priest obtained for us was "not on the basis of deeds which we have done" (Titus 3:5). There can be no human works involved in the business of removing our sins. Christ's work and His alone is the source of eternal salvation. To "afflict your souls" (Lev 23:27, 29) means to fast. Even today Jews observe the day as a time for fasting and prayer. Although the Day of Atonement is listed among the feasts of Jehovah, it was actually a time for fasting rather than feasting. However, after the sin question was settled, there came a time of rejoicing in the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles, Succoth (Lev 23:33-44), began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. For seven days the Israelites dwelt in booths (Lev 23:42). It pictured the final rest and final harvest, when Israel will be dwelling securely in the land, during the Millennium. This feast is also called the Feast of Ingathering (Exod. 23:16). It was associated with harvesting. In fact several of the feasts mentioned in this chapter have to do with harvesting.

"The Jewish people built booth-like structures and lived in them during this feast as a reminder of the temporary dwellings the Israelites had in the wilderness. Even today many Jewish people build open-roofed, three-sided huts for this festival. They decorate them with tree boughs and autumn fruits to remind them of harvest.

"Everyone who was able came up to Jerusalem for this harvest festival every year. The Temple worship for the holiday included the ritual pouring of water from the Pool of Siloam, symbolic of the prayers for the winter rains. It was at this time that Jesus cried out, '... If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink' (John 7:37-38).

"After Israel's final day of atonement, the Feast of Booths will be celebrated again in Jerusalem (Zech. 14:16)."51

One of the things the Lord sought to teach His people through the feasts was the close association between the spiritual and the physical aspects of life. Times of bounty and blessing were to be times of rejoicing before the Lord. The Lord was portrayed to them as the One who abundantly provided for their daily needs. Their response as a nation to His goodness found expression in the festivals connected with the harvest.

Notice the repetition of the commandment that the Israelites were to do no servile work on these solemn occasions (Lev 23:3, 7, 8, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36).

**Leviticus 23:4 'These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them.'**

- Lev 23:2,37 Ex 23:14
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Exodus 23:14+ "Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me.

### ISRAEL'S ANNUAL FEASTS "SACRED TIME OUTS"

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

**Appointed times of the LORD** - "Here again the feasts are called the feasts of the Lord, because he appointed them. Jeroboam's feast, which he devised of his own heart (1Ki 12:33), was an affront to God, and a reproach upon the people."

**Appointed times** ([04150](#)) see notes above on [moed](#)

**Kevin Williams** comments that...These **appointed times** of the Lord are important for many reasons. To begin with, they are part of a national system of "time-outs." Together, they provide weekly, monthly, and yearly occasions to rest from the routines and common work of daily life. The Provider of Israel designed these "**time-outs**" and appointed times for rest, reflection, and worship. They are sacred convocations that call the people of God together not only in the grandeur and majesty of the temple, but also in the quiet shelter and simplicity of every home of the land. Together, these appointed times form a **system of remembrance**. The **appointed times of the Lord** give every household, whether rich occasions are used to retell stories of Jewish life and origins, these holidays provide a panorama of history that has strong implications for all the families of the earth. **Seen individually and together, these feasts paint a compelling picture of the past, present, and future work of a Messiah Who is the source of life and hope and peace for all the nations of the world.** (The Holidays of God - Radio Bible Class)

#### The Spring Feasts consisted of...

- 1) [Passover](#) (Pesach) (See Study of NT word for **Passover** ([3957](#)) pascha)
- 2) [Unleavened Bread](#) (Chag HaMatzot)
- 3) [Firstfruits](#) (HaBikkurim)
- 4) [Pentecost](#) (Shavuot)

#### The Fall Feasts consisted of...

- 5) [Trumpets](#) (Rosh Hashanah)
- 6) [Atonement](#) (Yom Kippur)
- 7) [Tabernacles](#) (Sukkot)

These **seven** (the number of "completion") annual holidays are honored by Orthodox, Conservative, Reformed Jewish communities

the world over. The second group of **Fall Feasts** are separated from the **Spring Feasts** by a four-month period. The first four feasts foreshadow truths concerning this present Gospel age. The last three foreshadow blessings in store for Israel. The first four are historic; the last three, prophetic.

See also Discovery House Booklets

- [The Holidays Of God: The Fall Feasts](#)
- [The Holidays Of God: The Spring Feasts](#)

**Henry Morris** describes the prophetic significance of the feasts...

Many commentators, ancient and modern, have noted that these seven annual "feasts [or religious festivals] of Jehovah" not only had spiritual value to the Israelites who observed them, but also gave prophetic witness to God's great redemptive work.

**(1) Feast of the Passover** (Leviticus 23:5) testifies of the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God. "Christ our Passover... sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

**(2) Feast of the Unleavened Bread** (Leviticus 23:6-8) speaks of the Lord's supper which would be instituted by Him on the night of the Passover and would serve to remind His followers to walk in communion with Him. "Therefore let us keep the feast,... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Corinthians 5:8).

**(3) Feast of Firstfruits** (Leviticus 23:9-14) foreshadows the coming resurrection and restoration. "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Corinthians 15:23).

**(4) Feast of Pentecost** (Leviticus 23:15-22) was fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Spirit on the first body of Christian believers after Christ's ascension, testifying to the world "that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

**(5) Feast of Trumpets** (Leviticus 23:23-25) is separated by a long period of time from the first four festivals and promises that someday "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven... with the trump of God," when "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:52).

**(6) Day of Atonement** (Leviticus 23:26-32) testifies of the certain judgments to come--on Israel, on the nations, on believers and on the lost--when complete separation between unforgiven sinners and perfected saints will be established forever (note the two goats in Leviticus 16, the chapter giving the details of this observance).

**(7) Feast of Tabernacles** (Leviticus 23:33-43) speaks of the coming eternal rest in the Holy City when "the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people" (Revelation 21:3). ([Defender's Study Bible Note on Leviticus 23:4](#))

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**Another resource** - The links to the Jewish holidays below add some not in the classic "7" and are very interesting as they emphasize the Jewish perspective more than other resources. Each of the holidays below include Scripture, modern Jewish practices and Messianic implications.

- [Jewish Holidays - main page](#)

Holiday	2018	2019
<a href="#">Purim</a>	March 3	March 21
Pesach ( <a href="#">Passover</a> )	March 31	April 20
<a href="#">Unleavened Bread</a>	April 1-7	April 21-27
<a href="#">First Fruits</a>	April 7	April 21
Yom HaShoah ( <a href="#">Holocaust Remembrance Day</a> )	April 12	May 2
Yom Ha-Atzma'ut ( <a href="#">Independence Day</a> )	April 19	May 9
Yom Yerushalim ( <a href="#">Jerusalem Day</a> )	May 13	June 2
Shavuot ( <a href="#">Weeks</a> )	May 20-21	June 9-10

[Tisha B'Av](#)

July 22 August 11

[Rosh HaShanah](#) (Feast of Trumpets)

Sept 10-11 Sept 21-22

Yom Kipper ([Day of Atonement](#))

Sept 19 Sept 30

Sukkot ([Tabernacles](#))

Sept 24-30 October 5-11

[Simchat Torah](#)

October 2 October 13

[Hanukkah](#) (Feast of Dedication)

Dec 3-10 Dec 13-20

### THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL

THESE FEASTS HAVE BEEN FULFILLED IN MESSIAH'S FIRST COMING

THESE FEASTS WILL BE FULFILLED IN MESSIAH'S SECOND COMING

#### SPRING FEASTS

#### FALL FEASTS

1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach)				3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost		7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot)		
<b>Passover Pesach</b>	<b>Unleavened Bread</b>	<b>First Fruits (Habikkurim) (Reshit Katzir)</b>	<b>Feast of Weeks Festival of the Harvest of the First Fruits (Shavuot) (Picture)</b>	<b>Feast of Trumpets</b>	<b>Day of Atonement</b>	<b>Feast of Booths</b>		
Lamb's blood on Door Ex 12:6-7+	Purging Leaven (Sin)	Wave Offering (Promise of Harvest to come) (Usually Barley)	Wave Offering of two loaves of leavened bread (promise of harvest to come)	Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation	Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30+	Celebrates harvest, memorial of God's care in wilderness		
1st Month, 14th Day Lev 23:5	1st Month, 15th Day Lev 23:6-8 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)	Day after Sabbath Lev 23:9-14	50 Days after first fruits Lev 23:14-21	7th Month, 1st Day Lev 23:23-25 (A Sabbath)	7th Month, 10th Day Lev 23:26-32 (A Sabbath)	7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)		
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed	Clean out the old leaven... just as you are in fact unleavened	Christ has been raised... the first fruits	Promise of the Spirit, Mystery of Church - Jews and Gentiles in one body	Regathering of Israel before final day of atonement Jeremiah 32:37-41+	Israel repents and looks to Christ in one day Zech 3:9-10 Zech 12:10+ Zech 13:1+ Zech 14:9+	All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16- 19+		

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1 Cor 5:7+	1 Cor 5:7-8+	1 Cor 15:20-23+	Acts 2:1-4, 5-47+ 1 Cor 12:13+ Eph 2:11-12+	Ezekiel 36:24+	Ezekiel 36:25-27+ Heb 9-10 Ro 11:25-29+	Ezekiel 36:28+
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Source: [Believer's Study Bible](#)

**LEVITICUS 23:4** - God provides rhythms for our lives: wakefulness and sleep each day, work and rest each week. One way he shaped the Jews into a "holy nation" was by giving them an annual pattern of festivals. The early Christians celebrated the Feasts of the Nativity (Christmas) and the Resurrection (Easter). Advent and Lent were later added as periods of preparation, and still later came the Feasts (and seasons) of Epiphany and Pentecost.

My worship life is set within an annual cycle that reflects the story of Christ: birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and empowerment. My devotions, regular in time and place, become enriched by the dynamic rhythms of anticipation and celebration, of repentance and grace, of longing and joy. Such patterns remind us that our lives are shaped by his life, our stories by his story.

**REFLECT:** How might the Christian calendar provide a rhythm to your spiritual life in the coming year? Bobby Gross

### Cyril Hocking - THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

ALL THE FEASTS of this chapter, except the day of atonement, were to be joyous: on that occasion "ye shall afflict your souls", as the removal of their sin was being emphasised, v. 27. All the feasts pointed forward. They are:

1. Passover, v. 5. It was a constant reminder of redemption; Israel had been brought out of bondage. Here, it is to Christ our Passover, who was to be sacrificed for us, we are pointed. It is with the Lamb all commences. Following immediately was
2. Unleavened bread, vv. 6–8. All leaven was "put away" from the house for seven days. Deliverance from bondage is to issue in holiness. Today, God's people are to put away the leaven of evil from their lives, 1 Cor. 5:7–8. The demand is for a holy life in keeping with the sacrifice of Christ.
3. Firstfruits, vv. 9–14. This could only be observed in the land. Bringing the first fruits spoke of gratitude, and a realization that all belonged to God. It was the guarantee that later there would be the full reaping. The resurrection of Christ is before us, "the firstfruits of them that are asleep", 1 Cor. 15:20, 23 R.V.; cf. John 14:19. He will soon raise the remainder.
4. Weeks, vv. 15–22. This was held on the fiftieth day after firstfruits, in Greek known as Pentecost, see Acts 2:1 R.V. marg. Two leavened wave-loaves were offered. It was at Pentecost that the Church was born, the Spirit was poured forth, and Jew and Gentile were brought together in one body.
5. Trumpets, vv. 23–25. At the sound of trumpets the people came together, and offered special sacrifices. We listen for the trumpet sound gathering the church when the Lord returns, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord", 1 Thess. 4:17. When the Son of Man later returns in glory Israel will be gathered, "with a great sound of a trumpet", Matt. 24:31.
6. Atonement, vv. 26–32. Here Israel mourned for her sins, as they are to do uniquely when "they look upon me whom they pierced", Zech. 12:10. But this leads to joy in the
7. Feast of Tabernacles, vv. 33–36, 39–43. Joy at last replaces all sorrow. The Lord reigns over the whole earth, Zech. 14:16. All these feasts speak of Christ, and God's programme through Him.

**Leviticus 23:5 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover.**

- Ex 12:2-14, 18 Ex 13:3-10 Ex 23:15 Nu 9:2-7 Nu 28:16 Dt 16:1-8 Jos 5:10 2Chr 35:18,19 Mt 26:17 Mk 14:12 Lk 22:7 1Co 5:7,8
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**THE LORD'S PASSOVER:  
FEAST OF DELIVERANCE  
(Pesach)  
Leviticus 23:5ff**

**In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover**- This is the first of the 7 major feasts of Israel and one of 4 Spring feasts.

**Bush** comments that "Although moons, which began with the new moon, cannot, with perfect accuracy, be accommodated to our



months, the first month of the Hebrew year must always have fallen within the month of April. The Passover, it is well known, was kept in remembrance of the exodus from Egypt. The etymology of the term, and the occasion and circumstances of the institution have already been dwelt upon in our Notes on Ex. 12. We shall consequently be spared the necessity of any thing more than a general sketch of the observance of this feast. On the eve of the 14th day of the month (Abib or Nisan) all leaven was removed from their dwellings, so that nothing might be seen of it during the week; a circumstance respecting which the Jews are very scrupulous even at this day. Previously to the commencement of the feast, on the tenth, the master of a family set apart a ram or a goat of a year old, usually the former, which he slew on the fourteenth, 'between the two evenings,' before the altar; but in Egypt, where the event occurred which the Passover celebrated, the blood was sprinkled on the post of the door. The ram or kid was roasted whole, with two spits thrust through it, the one lengthwise, the other transversely, crossing the longitudinal one near the fore legs, so that the animal was, in a manner, crucified. The oven in which it was roasted was the circular pit in the floor [ground], which is still commonly used in the East. The restriction that it was to be roasted, not boiled or eaten raw, is thought to be levelled at some idolatrous forms of sacrifice-feasting. Thus roasted, the Paschal Lamb was served up with a salad of wild and bitter herbs, and with the flesh of other sacrifices (peace-offerings), which are mentioned in Deut. 16:2-6. Not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty persons were admitted to these sacred feasts, which were, at first, eaten in Egypt with loins girt about, with sandals on the feet, and with all the preparations for an immediate journey. But this does not appear to have been the case at any subsequent period. The command, however, not to break a bone of the offering, which was given in consequence of the people going in such haste (as they might otherwise have been delayed), was ever after observed among the Jews. In later times the celebration became encumbered with a number of involved ceremonies, very different from the simplicity and haste of the original institution. As these derive no authority from the law, we shall only state such of them as serve to illustrate the account of that celebration of the Passover by Jesus Christ, which to the Christian is not less interesting than the original institution was to the Jew. The master of the family, after the Paschal supper was prepared, broke the bread, having first blessed it, and distributed it to all who were seated around him, so that each one might receive a part; and each was at liberty to dip it, before eating, into a vessel of sauce. There were four cups of wine ordinarily drunk at this supper, two before and two after meat. With the second, the two first hymns of what was called the lesser Hallel, being Psalms 113 and 114, were sung or chanted. The third cup, being the first after supper, was called the cup of blessing, because over it they blessed God, or said grace after meat. This was followed by a fourth and last cup, over which they completed the hymn of praise, formed by the remainder of the lesser Hallel, and thus the feast concluded. But it is said that a fifth cup of wine might be drunk by those who wished to repeat the great Hallel, which is generally understood to be Psalm 136. The wine was red, mixed with water. The Passover was immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted seven days, so that the two together seemed to make one feast of eight days, and were, in fact, popularly so considered, the names being often interchanged, so that the Passover day was sometimes considered as the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and, on the other hand, the whole was often called the Passover Feast. The first and last days of these seven were to be kept as Sabbaths, save that only servile labor was interdicted, which allowed food to be cooked. But no suspension of labor was required on the intermediate five days, which were distinguished chiefly by the abstinence from leavened bread, and by the unusual number of offerings at the tabernacle or temple, and of sacrifices for sin. The sixteenth of Abib, or the second day of Unleavened Bread, was distinguished by the offering of a barley sheaf, as an introduction to the barley-harvest which was ripe about this time, accompanied by a particular sacrifice, described in v. 9-14.

**When and why is Passover celebrated?** The 14th of Nisan (meaning uncertain but some mentioned include "their flight," "month of flowers" Assyrian - nisannu = "beginning"). Nisan is the first month of the sacred year and seventh of the civil year, answering nearly to our March-April. It was originally called Abib (sprouting or budding), but began to be called Nisan after the Babylonian captivity. Passover is a God's appointed celebration so that His people would remember how He delivered their ancestors from the idols and slave-yards of Egypt. Today on the 14th of Nisan, observant Jewish fathers tell their children how the God of their fathers delivered their ancestors from economic bondage and spiritual darkness. Before the beginning of the 10th plague, Moses instructed every Israelite home to sacrifice a blemish free lamb, collect its blood (Life is in the blood) and with a hyssop brush paint the lamb's blood on the lintel and door posts of their houses (Ex 12:22). Only where there was blood on the doorway did the death angel "pass over" and spare the life of the firstborn in that home (Ex 12:23). At a Passover Seder, which later became known by His followers as "the table of Communion," Jesus held up the elements of wine and matzah and applied them to Himself. During the meal He broke unleavened bread with His disciples, and then held that broken matzah in His hands, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (Lk. 22:19). Then after the meal He held up a cup of wine and with the same force of personal application to Himself, said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Lk 22:20). The Passover celebration served to anticipated Messiah's ultimate deliverance of an body of people willing to trust in His sacrificial death for their redemption.

**Related Resource:**

- See commentary on Luke 22:15-22
- **Related commentary in Exodus** (indicated by the "+") Ex 12:2-14,18+ Ex 13:3-10+ Ex 23:15+

**What is the prophetic significance of the Passover?** One element of mystery is found in a Passover

tradition involving the "[afikomen](#)." On every Passover table there is a cloth bag called a "matzah tosh." The bag is either square or round and lies flat on the table. Within the matzah tosh are three pieces of matzah bread, each separated in its own pocket. In this way they are hidden from view, but the celebrants know they are there. During the Seder, the middle matzah is removed from its place, broken in half, and one portion is wrapped in a linen cloth. This wrapped piece of matzah is called the "[afikomen](#)." Afikomen is not a Hebrew word, but a Greek word that means "**the coming one**." The afikomen is removed from the table and hidden. Later in the meal, it becomes a children's game to search for the hidden afikomen. The child who finds it brings it back to the table where "Papa" must ransom it back. Once it is paid for, the afikomen is unwrapped and shared by all as the last food eaten so its flavor will stay on the tongue and its memory stay in the mind the rest of the evening. The rabbis cannot agree on the significance of this unusual observance, or its origins. Some believe the three pieces of matzah in the matzah tosh represent three crowns of learning. Jews and Gentiles who believe in Jesus have seen in the afikomen a striking picture of the trinity (tri-unity), so that in the three folds of the matzah tosh there is a picture of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The middle matzah represented by the Son is broken, wrapped in linen, hidden, and ransomed (the price paid), and then brought back for the family to accept and enjoy seems too deliberate to easily dismiss. While the symbolism of this ritual remains a mystery to those who have not accepted the Messiah, through messianic eyes the meaning seems clear and powerful. When Jesus said of the unleavened bread, "Take, eat; this is My body," He was not instituting an empty ritual. He was identifying Himself personally with both the matzah and the Passover lamb, bringing to mind the words of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 53:4-7) Today when Christians share in the bread of Communion, they are carrying out the fulfilled picture of the Passover.

Another important element in a traditional Jewish Passover observance is wine. During a typical Passover Seder, four cups are shared, each with its own significant picture in the ritual. The first cup is called the "cup of sanctification," which sets the feast apart from any commonplace meal. The second cup is the "cup of plagues," remembering the calamities visited upon the Egyptians. The third cup is called the "cup of redemption," recognizing and memorializing the Hebrews' release from captivity. The fourth cup is called the "cup of praise," during which the family recites Psalms 113–118, traditionally considered the praise Psalms. The **third cup**, the "**cup of redemption**," the "[Kiddush cup](#)," in the modern Seder comes after the eating of the [afikomen](#). Because of the ritualistic order of the meal and the rich significance of this observance, some Christian theologians believe that this is the cup Jesus lifted, blessed, and declared, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

**Passover** ([06453](#))(**pesach/pesah**) is a masculine noun thought by some writers (Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon) to have its origin from **pacach/pasah** which apparently means to pass over; to spare (Ex 12:13, 23, 27 - "Jehovah will pass" = pasah). **Pesach/pesah** virtually always refers to the Passover, either the feast or the Passover animal. Note that the Passover is combined with the Feast of Unleavened Bread by Luke who writes "the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**...is called the **Passover**, was approaching." (Lk 22:1+) **Rooker** adds that "These two ceremonies were apparently combined at the beginning, for the Passover lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread (Ex 12:8)." (New American Commentary).

#### Related Resources:

- Commentary on Mark 14:1ff
- Commentary on John 2:13, 23
- [Yeshua and the Feast of Unleavened Bread](#)
- [Passover - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia \(see intro for etymology\)](#)
- [Feasts of Israel - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary - scroll down for "Passover"](#)
- [Passover](#) - Wikipedia
- American Tract Society [Passover](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Passover](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Passover](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Passover](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Passover](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Passover](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Passover](#) [Passover \(I.\)](#) [Passover \(II. in Relation to Lord's Supper\)](#)

**Van Gemeren** rightly states that "The etymology of the root נִפַּח (pesah) is **much disputed**, and some very tenuous links have

been established with the Akk. pašāu, to appease, and the Arab. fasaa, be/become wide (New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis 3:642).

**Rooker** - The verbal root of the noun translated "Passover" occurs only four times in the Old Testament (Ex 12:13, 23, 27; Isa 31:5). The root has been variously explained: "to have compassion," "to protect," "to skip over." In Isa 31:5 the verb is parallel to the verb "to rescue," which would harmonize well with the first or second options and would indicate that what was critical during the tenth plague was not the death angel's "passing over" Israelites' homes as much as the fact that God was displaying his compassion in protecting his people. (New American Commentary).

**Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament** gives the basic meaning of **pesach/pesah** as "a sparing, immunity from penalty and calamity, hence—(1) a sacrifice offered on account of the sparing of the people, the paschal lamb, of which it is said, Ex. 12:27 ("this is a sacrifice of sparing [prop. of passing over] unto Jehovah, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians,").

**Swanson** has this analysis of this Hebrew word **pesach/pesah**

1. Passover sacrifice, i.e., the ceremonial offering of small mammals (sheep or goats) one year old, of very high quality (Ex 12:21+);
2. Passover Feast, i.e., a festival celebrating deliverance from Egypt (Ex 34:25);
3. Passover meal, i.e., a meal eaten as a part of the festival of Passover, eaten as a remembrance of hasty deliverance (Ex 12:11) (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew Old Testament)

**Pesach - 46v in the NAS** -Ex 12:11, 21, 27, 43, 48; 34:25 - commentary; Lev 23:5; Num 9:2, 4ff, 10, 12ff; 28:16; 33:3; Deut 16:1f, 5f; Josh 5:10f; 2 Kgs 23:21, 22, 23; 2 Chr 30:1f, 5, 15, 17f; 35:1, 6ff, 11, 13, 16ff; Ezra 6:19f; Ezek 45:21

**Passover** (Ex 12:1-14; Lev 23:5; Nu 9:1-14; 28:16; Dt 16:1-7) On the 14th day of the 1st month (Nisan), this festival commemorated God's deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. Passover speaks of the substitutionary death of the Lamb of God. Christ died on the day of Passover. Paul gives the clear prophetic fulfillment of the OT shadow (Col 2:16-17, Heb 10:1) in a strong command to the church at Corinth...

**Clean out** (**aoist imperative** = command - Do this now! Don't delay!) the old leaven (**Remember the context** is sin in the church in the form of incest! Read 1Cor 5:1-6), that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For **Christ our Passover** also has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1Cor 5-8)

**Criswell**: As the firstborn of the Israelites were saved from the stroke of the angel of death at the first Passover by the blood of a lamb (cf. Ex 12:21-23), so salvation is now offered through the blood of Christ, Who died at Passover as the Passover Lamb (cf. 1Pe 1:18, 19).

**Wiersbe** - The innocent lamb died for the firstborn; because the blood of the lamb was applied to the door by faith, the firstborn sons were safe. This was "the Lord's Passover" and the only means of deliverance that He provided that awesome night when the death angel visited Egypt. To reject the blood of the lamb was to accept judgment and death. The lamb typified Jesus Christ, who shed His blood on the cross for a world of lost sinners (John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:19-20). "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). Since the Passover lamb had to be perfect, it was chosen on the tenth day of the month and watched carefully until it was slain on the fourteenth day of the month. Jesus Christ "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), "did no sin" (1 Peter 2:22), and "in Him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). (Be Holy - [Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Freeman** - The first of the three great feasts, is usually called the Passover, in commemoration of the passing over of the houses of the Israelites by the destroying angel, at the time when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. The ancient Jewish canons distinguish between what they term - the Egyptian Passover and the Permanent Passover; the former signifying the feast in its original form, and the latter representing it as modified in the subsequent years of the history of the people. The essential parts of the feast, were however, the same. It took place during the month Abib, or, as it was subsequently called, Nisan, corresponding very nearly with April of our calendar. See note on Dt 16:1. (**NOTE: Abib** means a green ear. This denotes the condition of the barley in Palestine and Egypt during this month. It was the first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year, and was in later times called Nisan. See Neh.2:1; Esther 3:7. It corresponded nearly to our month of April.) While it lasted great care was taken to abstain from leaven. A he-lamb or kid of the first year was selected by the head of the family and was slain, its blood being sprinkled originally on the door-posts, and subsequently on the bottom of the altar. The animal was then roasted whole with fire, and eaten with unleavened bread and a salad of bitter herbs. It could not be boiled, nor must a bone of it be broken. When they first ate it in Egypt the Israelites had

their loins girt and their shoes on, all ready for a journey, and they partook of it standing, as if in haste to be away. In after years this position was changed to sitting or reclining. Not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty, persons were admitted to one of these feasts. Stanley (in his *History of the Jewish Church*, vol. i, p. 559, Am. ed.) gives a deeply interesting account, from his personal observation, of the modern observance of the Passover by the Samaritan\*-- For the mode of observing the Passover in our Lord's time, see notes on Mt 26:19-20. It is supposed by some writers that, aside from the general design of the Passover, as already stated, there was in some of its ceremonies an intentional Divine rebuke of the idolatry of heathen nations, and especially of that of the Egyptians. One of their deities was represented by a human body with a ram's head. To have a lamb slain, and its blood sprinkled on the door posts, was an act of contempt against this deity. Some heathen people ate raw flesh in connection with their festivities. The Passover lamb was to be cooked. This cooking was by roasting, for the Egyptians and Syrians some times boiled the flesh of their sacrificial victims in water, and sometimes in milk. It was to be roasted with fire, for the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and ancient Persians are said to have roasted their sacrifices in the sun. It was to be roasted whole, even to the intestines, for the heathen were in the habit of looking into these for omens, and sometimes even ate them raw. ([Manners and Customs 1875](#))

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#### QUESTION - [What is Passover?](#)

**ANSWER** - Passover (*Pesach* in Hebrew) is a Jewish festival celebrating the exodus from Egypt and the Israelites' freedom from slavery to the Egyptians. The Feast of Passover, along with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, was the first of the festivals to be commanded by God for Israel to observe (see Exodus 12:1-51). Commemorations today involve a special meal called the Seder, featuring unleavened bread and other food items symbolic of various aspects of the exodus.

Passover is one of the most widely celebrated Jewish holidays. Along with *Shavuot* (the [Feast of Weeks](#) or Pentecost) and *Sukkot* (the [Feast of Tabernacles](#)), Passover is one of the three "pilgrimage" festivals in Scripture, during which the Jews were commanded to travel to Jerusalem and observe the feasts together. Passover takes place in the spring, during the Hebrew month of Nisan. In Western countries, Passover is celebrated in early- to mid-April and is always close to Easter.

The [book of Exodus](#) tells of the origin of Passover. God promised to redeem His people from the bondage of Pharaoh (Exodus 6:6). God sent Moses to the Egyptian king with the command that Pharaoh "let my people go" (Exodus 8:1). When Pharaoh refused, God brought ten plagues on the land of Egypt. The tenth and worst of the plagues was the death of all the firstborn in Egypt.

The night of the first Passover was the night of the tenth plague. On that fateful night, God told the Israelites to sacrifice a spotless lamb and mark their doorposts and lintels with its blood (Exodus 12:21-22). Then, when the Lord passed through the nation, He would "pass over" the households that showed the blood (Ex 12:23). In a very real way, the blood of the lamb saved the Israelites from death, as it kept the destroyer from entering their homes. The Israelites were saved from the plague, and their firstborn children stayed alive. From then on, every firstborn son of the Israelites belonged to the Lord and had to be redeemed with a sacrifice (Exodus 13:1-2, 12; cf. Luke 2:22-24).

The children of Israel in Egypt followed God's command and kept the first Passover. However, none of the Egyptians did so. All through Egypt, behind the unmarked, bloodless doorways of the Egyptians, the firstborn children died at midnight (Exodus 12:21-29). "There was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead" (verse 30). This dire judgment finally changed the Egyptian king's heart, and he released the Israelite slaves (Ex 12:31-32).

Along with the instruction to apply the Passover lamb's blood to their doorposts and lintels, God instituted a commemorative meal: fire-roasted lamb, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8). The Lord told the Israelites to "observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever" (Exodus 12:24ESV), even when in a foreign land.

To this day, Jews all over the world celebrate the Passover in obedience to this command. Passover and the story of the exodus have great significance for Christians also, as Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, including the symbolism of the Passover (Matthew 5:17). Jesus is our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7; Revelation 5:12). He was killed at Passover time, and the Last Supper was a Passover meal (Luke 22:7-8). By (spiritually) applying His blood to our lives by faith, we trust Christ to save us from death. The Israelites who, in faith, applied the blood of the Paschal lamb to their homes become a model for us. It was not the Israelites' ancestry or good standing or amiable nature that saved them; it was only the blood of the lamb that made them exempt from death (see John 1:29 and Revelation 5:9-10). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What is the Passover Lamb? How is Jesus our Passover Lamb?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Passover lamb was the animal God directed the Israelites to use as a sacrifice in Egypt on the night God struck down the firstborn sons of every household (Exodus 12:29). This was the final [plague](#) God issued against Pharaoh, and it led to Pharaoh releasing the Israelites from slavery (Exodus 11:1). After that fateful night, God instructed the Israelites to observe the Passover Feast as a lasting memorial (Exodus 12:14).

God instructed every household of the Israelite people to select a year-old male lamb without defect (Exodus 12:5; cf. Leviticus 22:20-21). The head of the household was to slaughter the lamb at twilight, taking care that none of its bones were broken, and apply some of its blood to the tops and sides of the doorframe of the house. The lamb was to be roasted and eaten (Exodus 12:7-8). God also gave specific instructions as to how the Israelites were to eat the lamb, "with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand" (Exodus 12:11). In other words, they had to be ready to travel.

God said that when He saw the lamb's blood on the doorframe of a house, He would "pass over" that home and not permit "the destroyer" (Exodus 12:23) to enter. Any home without the blood of the lamb would have their firstborn son struck down that night (Exodus 12:12-13).

The New Testament establishes a relationship between this prototypical Passover lamb and the consummate Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7). The prophet John the Baptist recognized Jesus as "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29), and the apostle Peter links the lamb without defect (Exodus 12:5) with Christ, whom he calls a "lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:19). Jesus is qualified to be called One "without blemish" because His life was completely free from sin (Hebrews 4:15). In Revelation, John the apostle sees Jesus as "a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain" (Revelation 5:6). Jesus was crucified during the time that the Passover was observed (Mark 14:12). (**ED**: NOTE LUKE CONNECTS PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD IN Lk 22:1+).

The Bible says believers have symbolically applied the sacrificial blood of Christ to their hearts and thus have escaped eternal death (Hebrews 9:12, 14). Just as the Passover lamb's applied blood caused the "destroyer" to pass over each household, Christ's applied blood causes God's judgment to pass over sinners and gives life to believers (Romans 6:23).

As the first Passover marked the Hebrews' release from Egyptian slavery, so the death of Christ marks our release from the slavery of sin (Romans 8:2). As the first Passover was to be held in remembrance as an annual feast, so Christians are to memorialize the Lord's death in communion until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:26).

The Old Testament Passover lamb, although a reality in that time, was a mere foreshadowing of the better and final Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. Through His sinless life and sacrificial death, Jesus became the only One capable of giving people a way to escape death and a sure hope of eternal life (1 Peter 1:20-21). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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### **QUESTION - [What is the Haggadah / Aggadah?](#)**

The *Haggadah* is a book containing the liturgy that Jews read during [the Seder](#) on the first night of Passover. The word *Haggadah* means "telling," which comes from this biblical command: "On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt'" (Exodus 13:8).

The [festival of Passover](#), also known as Pesach, begins at sunset on the 14th of Nisan (usually in March or April) and marks the beginning of a seven-day celebration that includes the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The *Haggadah* is the printed order of service, readings, and songs used by those attending the Seder. There are minor differences in the *Haggadah* when the Passover Seder is observed by Sephardic (Spanish-Portuguese), Ashkenazi (Eastern European) and Misrahi (North African/Middle Eastern) Jews.

*Haggadah* is sometimes confused with *Aggadah*, which is the name of a collection of texts from [the Talmud](#) or other rabbinical literature. The texts of the *Aggadah* include folklore, parables, historical anecdotes, moral exhortations, and practical advice that illustrate the meaning or purpose of laws, customs, or biblical passages. Some use the terms *Haggadah* and *Aggadah* interchangeably.

Unlike most Christian holy days, which are observed in churches, Passover, since the destruction of the temple, has been celebrated in individual homes with family and friends. It is customary to invite guests, especially newcomers to the community, to share the Seder meal. In most Jewish homes, the Seder meal is an elaborate feast, with games for the children and plenty of time to tell the story of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. A Seder meal can last three to four hours.

The order of the Seder, as presented in the *Haggadah* begins with the *Kiddush* (or *Kadesh* or *Kadeish*), the benediction that proclaims the holiness of the holiday. This is done over a cup of wine, the first of the four cups drunk while reclining at the Seder table. When drinking the four cups and eating the *matzah* ("unleavened bread"), Jews recline at the table to accentuate the fact that they are free people. In ancient times only free people had the luxury of reclining while eating. The *Kiddush* is traditionally led by the father of the house, but all Seder participants participate by reciting the *Kiddush* and drinking at least a majority of a cup of wine.

The benediction is followed by the *Ur'chatz*, the washing of hands to symbolize purification. The Seder leader calls out, "*Ur'chatz*," and each one presents his or her hands for ritual cleansing. Hands are washed in the usual, ritually prescribed manner before any meal, but without the customary blessing.

Following the *Haggadah*, the next step in the Seder is the dipping of the *Karpas*, the appetizer. A small piece of onion or boiled

potato is dipped into saltwater and eaten, after the leader recites the blessing over the vegetables. The salt water is said to represent the tears of the Jews in bondage in Egypt.

Succeeding the *Karpas* is the breaking of the *Yachatz*. Three matzahs are stacked on the Seder table, and the middle of the three is broken in half. The larger piece is hidden, to be used later as the *afikoman*, the “dessert” after the meal. The smaller piece is returned to its place between the other two matzahs. This broken middle matzah symbolizes humility and will be eaten later as the “bread of poverty.”

Now, according to the *Haggadah*, is the time for the *Magid*. This begins with the *Ha Lachma Anya*, an invitation of the poor to join the Seder. Then the story of Passover and the deliverance from slavery to freedom is told. The matzahs are uncovered and referred to as the “bread of affliction.” At this point, the four questions (*Mah Nishtanah*) are asked. It is customary for the youngest child present to recite the four questions: Why do we eat only matzah? Why do we eat only bitter herbs? Why do we dip our herbs twice? Why are we relaxing and leaning on cushions as if we were kings? The answers include a brief review of history, a description of the suffering imposed upon the Israelites, a listing of the plagues visited on the Egyptians, and an enumeration of the miracles performed by the Almighty for the redemption of His people.

At this part in the Seder, the *Haggadah* states that songs of praise are to be sung, including the song “*Dayenu*,” which proclaims that, had God performed only one of His many deeds on behalf of His people, it would have been enough to obligate us to give thanks. A long blessing is recited, followed by the drinking of the second cup of wine.

Next is the *Rohtzah*. The hands are washed again, this time with the customary blessings, as is usually done before eating bread. This is followed by the *Motzi Matzah* (“blessings over the matzah”). Two blessings are recited: the standard blessing before eating bread, which includes the words *who brings forth* (*motzi* in Hebrew), and then the blessing regarding the commandment to eat *matzah*.

Following the *Motzi Matzah*, the *Maror* (bitter herbs) are eaten. The blessing for the eating of the *Maror* is recited, and then it is dipped into the *charoset* and eaten. The *charoset* is a paste made of apples, nuts, and wine. At this point, according to the *Haggadah*, a sandwich (*Koreich*) is made of two pieces of the bottom matzah and the bitter herbs dipped in the *charoset*, and the sandwich is eaten. This is followed by the *Shulchan Orech*, the full Seder meal. Traditionally, the meal begins with the charred egg dipped in salt water.

After the meal, the *Tzafun* occurs. The *afikoman*, which was hidden earlier in the Seder, is taken out and eaten. This symbolizes the Paschal lamb, which in ancient times was eaten at the end of the meal. After the consumption of the *afikoman*, the *Haggadah* forbids any other food to be eaten for the rest of the night—and no more intoxicating beverages, except for the remaining two cups of wine.

Next in the order of the *Haggadah* comes the *Bareich*, the blessings after the meal. These include the *Kos Shlishi* (“the third cup of wine”) and the *Kos shel Eliyahu ha-Navi* (“the cup of Elijah the Prophet”). In many traditions, the front door of the house is opened at this point, which is an invitation to the prophet Elijah, the harbinger of the coming of *Moshiach*, the righteous Messiah. At this point, the *Hallel* (“songs of praise”) is recited, recognizing the Almighty and His unique guidance of the Jewish people. After reciting the *Hallel*, a blessing over wine is recited, and the fourth cup is drunk.

The *Haggadah* has the Seder conclude with a prayer (the *Nirtzah*). This prayer expresses a desire that the service be accepted by God and a hope for the coming of the Messiah: “*L’shanah haba’ah b’Yerushalayim!*” (“next year in Jerusalem!”). Jews in Israel, and especially those in Jerusalem, change the wording slightly: “*L’shanah haba’ah b’Yerushalayim hab’nuyah!*” (“next year in the rebuilt Jerusalem!”) ANSWER - [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### QUESTION - [How do the elements of the Passover Seder point to Christ?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Seder is the traditional dinner that Jews partake of as part of [Passover](#). The annual Passover commemoration is celebrated by nearly the entire Jewish community, bonding families and communities to their Jewish roots. Each year Jewish people, religious and nonreligious, celebrate the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by gathering and experiencing the Passover Seder.

The Hebrew word *Seder* means “order.” The Passover meal has a specific order in which food is eaten, prayers are recited, and songs are sung. Each item on the Passover plate has a specific historical meaning related to the exodus of the Jews from Egypt and their freedom from slavery. But 1 Corinthians 5:7 identifies Jesus Christ as our Passover; thus, the Seder carries a New Testament meaning related to Jesus the Messiah.

In the Seder, there are several strong symbols of Christ. One is the shank bone of [alamb](#), which reminds the participants of the feast of God’s salvation. During the tenth plague, God instructed the Israelites to daub their doorposts and lintels with the blood of a spotless lamb so that the Lord would “pass over” their homes and preserve the lives within (Exodus 12:1–13). This is a symbol of

salvation in Egypt, but it is also a picture of Jesus who was and is the “Lamb of God” (John 1:29). His sacrifice preserves the lives of all who believe. The instructions for the original Passover specified that the lamb’s bones could not be broken (Exodus 12:46), another foreshadowing of Christ’s death (John 19:33).

Another symbol of Christ on the Seder plate is the *matzoh*, or unleavened bread. As the Jewish people left Egypt, they were in great haste and therefore had no time to allow their bread to rise. From then on, Passover was followed by the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread (Deuteronomy 16:3). There are some fascinating things about the *matzoh* that provide a remarkable picture of the Messiah:

For example, the *matzoh* is placed in a bag called an *echad*, which means “one” in Hebrew. But this one bag has three chambers. One piece of *matzoh* is placed into each chamber of the bag. The *matzoh* placed in the first chamber is never touched, never used, never seen. The second *matzoh* in the bag is broken in half at the beginning of the Seder; half of the broken *matzoh* is placed back in the *echad*, and the other half, called the *Afikomen*, is placed in a linen cloth. The third *matzoh* in the bag is used to eat the elements on the Seder plate.

The word *echad* is used in Genesis 2:24 (the man and his wife will become “*echad*,” or “one” flesh). The word also appears in Numbers 13:23 when the spies returned from Canaan with an *echad* cluster of grapes. In both cases, the word *echad* refers to a complex unity of one. Many Jews consider the three *matzohs* to represent Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But they cannot explain why they break “Isaac” in half or why they place half of the middle *matzoh* back in the *echad* and keep the other half out, wrapped in a cloth.

The meaning of the Seder’s ritual of the *matzohs* is understood with clues from the New Testament. The Trinity is pictured in the *matzohs*. The first *matzoh* that remains in the bag throughout the Seder represents *Ha Av*, the Father whom no man sees. The third *matzoh* represents the *Ruach Ha Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. And the second *matzoh*, the broken one, represents *Ha Ben*, the Son. The reason the middle *matzoh* is broken is to picture the broken body of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:24). The half put back in the *echad* represents Jesus’ divine nature; the other half, wrapped in a linen cloth and separated from the *echad* represents Jesus’ humanity as He remained on earth.

The linen cloth that wraps half of the second piece of *matzoh* suggests Jesus’ burial cloth. During the Seder, this linen cloth with the *Afikomen* inside is hidden, and after the dinner the children present look for it. Once the *Afikomen* is found, it is held as a ransom. Again, we see that these rituals point to Christ: He was fully God yet fully human; He was broken for us; He was buried, sought for, and resurrected; and His life was given a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus is the completion of the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31, and the Passover Seder rituals bear that out.

Also, the *matzoh* used for the Passover Seder must be prepared a certain way. Of course, it must be unleavened—leaven is often equated with sin in the Scriptures, and Jesus is sinless. Second, the *matzoh* must be striped—Jesus’ “stripes” (His wounds) are what heal us spiritually (Isaiah 53:5). And, third, the *matzoh* must be pierced—Jesus was nailed to the cross (Psalm 22:16).

The other elements of the Seder plate are traditional reminders of the Israelite enslavement to the Egyptians. They are as follows:

Vegetable (*Karpas*) – This element, usually parsley, is dipped in salt water and eaten. The *karpas* pictures the [hyssop](#) that was used to apply the blood of the Passover lamb to homes of the Israelites in Egypt. In the New Testament, hyssop was used to give the Lamb of God vinegar when Jesus said He thirsted (John 19:29). The salt water represents the tears shed during the bitter years of slavery and the Red Sea that God split during the exodus.

Bitter Herbs (*Maror*) – The eating of “bitter herbs” is commanded in Exodus 12:8. In modern times, this is usually horseradish, one of the bitterest herbs. The *maror* reminds the Jews that they were unable to offer sacrifice and worship to God, and that was bitterer than the slavery of Egypt.

Charoset (*haroseth*) – Charoset is a mixture of apples, nuts, wine, and spices. It represents the mortar the Israelites used in the constructing buildings during their slavery to the Egyptians. Of all the elements of the Seder, charoset alone is sweet, and this is a reminder of the hope of redemption.

Hard-boiled or Roasted Egg (*Baytzah*) – Traditionally, hard-boiled eggs were eaten by mourners, and the egg is eaten during the Seder to remind participants that they are always in mourning for the loss of their temple. The fact that the egg is roasted evokes the roasting of the sacrifice on the altar of the temple.

There are also four cups of wine used at various points during the Seder. Each of these glasses of wine has a name: the first glass is the “cup of sanctification.” The second is the “cup of judgment.” The third is the “cup of redemption.” And the fourth is the “cup of praise.” At the [Last Supper](#), Jesus took the first cup and promised His disciples that the next time He drank the fruit of the vine with them would be in the kingdom (Luke 22:17). Later in the Seder, Jesus took the third cup—the cup of redemption—and used that cup

as a symbol of the New Covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20). Thus Jesus fulfilled the Passover symbolism and infused the whole feast with a new meaning.

In Exodus 6:6, the Lord God promised His people that He would save them from slavery: "I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment." The phrase "with an outstretched arm" is repeated throughout the Old Testament in connection with Passover remembrances: Deuteronomy 4:34; 7:19; 9:29; 26:8; 2 Kings 17:36; Psalm 136:12; Jeremiah 32:21. Can it be coincidence that, in the New Testament, the Messiah had both of His arms outstretched as He freed us from sin and brought us salvation? [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### Related Resources:

- [If Jesus was crucified on the Day of Preparation, why had He already eaten the Passover meal? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [If Jesus is our atonement, why did He die at Passover instead of the Day of Atonement? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [Should Christians celebrate Passover? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
- [What is the meaning and importance of the Last Supper? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

## Feast of the Passover

### R A Torrey

- Ordained by God Exodus 12:1,2
- Commenced the fourteenth of the first month at even Ex 12:2,6,18 ; Lev 23:5 ; Numbers 9:3
- Lasted seven days Exodus 12:15 ; Leviticus 23:6

#### CALLED THE

- Passover Numbers 9:5 ; John 2:23
- Jew's Passover John 2:13 ; 11:55
- Lord's Passover Exodus 12:11,27
- Feast of unleavened bread Mark 14:1 ; Luke 22:1
- Days of unleavened bread Acts 12:3 ; 20:6
- All males to appear at Exodus 23:17 ; Deuteronomy 16:16
- Paschal lamb eaten first day of Exodus 12:6,8
- Unleavened bread eaten at Exodus 12:15 ; Deuteronomy 16:3

#### LEAVEN

- Not to be in their houses during Exodus 12:19
- Not to be in any of their quarters Exodus 13:7 ; Deuteronomy 16:4
- Nothing with, to be eaten Exodus 12:20
- Punishment for eating Exodus 12:15,19
- First and last days of, holy convocations Exodus 12:16 ; Numbers 28:18,25
- Sacrifices during Leviticus 23:8 ; Numbers 28:19-24
- The first sheaf of barley harvest offered the day after the Sabbath in Leviticus 23:10-14

#### TO COMMEMORATE THE

- Passing over the first-born Exodus 12:12,13
- Deliverance of Israel from bondage of Egypt Exodus 12:17,42 ; 13:9 ; Deut 16:3
- To be perpetually observed during the Mosaic age Exodus 12:14 ; 13:10
- Children to be taught the nature and design of Exodus 12:26,27 ; 13:8
- Purification necessary to the due observance of 2 Chronicles 30:15-19 ; John 11:55
- Might be kept in 2nd month by those unclean At appointed time Nu 9:6-11 ; 2Chr 30:2,3,15
- No uncircumcised person to keep Exodus 12:43,45
- Strangers and servants when circumcised might keep Exodus 12:44,48



- Neglect of, punished with death Numbers 9:13
- Improper keeping of, punished 2 Chronicles 30:18,20

## REMARKABLE CELEBRATIONS OF

- On leaving Egypt Exodus 12:28,50
- In the wilderness of Sinai Numbers 9:3-5
- On entering the land of promise Joshua 5:10,11
- In Hezekiah's reign 2 Chronicles 30:1
- In Josiah's reign 2 Kings 23:22,23 ; 2 Chronicles 35:1,18
- After the captivity Ezra 6:19,20
- Before the death of Christ Luke 22:15
- Moses kept through faith Hebrews 11:28
- Christ always observed Matthew 26:17-20 ; Luke 22:15 ; John 2:13,23
- The people of Jerusalem lent their rooms to strangers for Luke 22:11,12
- The Lord's Supper instituted at Matthew 26:26-28
- Custom of releasing a prisoner at Matthew 27:15 ; Luke 23:16,17
- The Sabbath in, a high day John 19:31
- The day before the Sabbath in, called the preparation John 19:14,31
- Illustrative of redemption through Christ 1 Corinthians 5:7,8

**Leviticus 23:6 'Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.'**

- See "+" for comments - Ex 12:15,16+ Ex 13:6,7+ Ex 34:18+ Nu 28:17,18 Dt 16:8 Acts 12:3,4
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

### (Chag HaMatzot)

#### Leviticus 23:6-8

**Then** - time phrase marks sequence, in this case the day after the Passover. **Passover** occurred on a Friday, **Feast of Unleavened Bread** on Saturday and **Feast of First Fruits** (our "Easter") on Sunday. As noted earlier, the term Passover is used interchangeably with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. However, technically, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on Nisan 15, one day after the Passover celebration. "They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians." (Nu 33:3) As they left Egypt, the Jews took their bread in mixing bowls, without allowing time for leaven (yeast) to form or bread to rise. When the order came to leave, they left with flat bread and all! This act of leaving Egypt with unleavened bread has led to one of the most colorful traditions of the Passover season. In anticipation of the days of unleavened bread, Jewish mothers do their "spring cleaning." With great care they sweep and search and scrub their homes to remove every bit of leaven. Floors are swept, pots are boiled, cupboards are emptied—all in an effort to remove any trace of leaven. Then just before Passover, bonfires are lit in empty lots and fields all over Israel to destroy any of the bread and crumbs that have been found (compare Paul's charge in 1Cor 5:7-8). In Paul's eyes, and in the understanding of other rabbis, leaven is an illustration of sin. The Feast of Unleavened Bread therefore speaks of the need for God's people to live new lives marked by a break from the bondage experienced in the kingdom of sin and darkness. Keep in mind, however, is the messianic significance Jesus claimed for the matzah of Passover. When He broke the unleavened bread of the Seder and said, "This is My body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me," He was saying that the matzah of the Passover had a meaning that is realized fully in Him. Some who believe in Jesus see a mysterious and ironic picture of Him that has unintentionally shown up in the way unleavened bread is made. By rabbinic decree, matzah must be **striped, pierced, and burned** in such a way as to appear **bruised!** (Read Isaiah 53:5, Zech 12:10) As someone has well said "These so called co-incidences are really "God-incidences!"

**Feast of Unleavened Bread** (Ex 12:15-20; 13:3-10; Lev 23:6-8; Nu 28:17-25; Dt 16:3, 4, 8) This feast is seven days long, beginning on the fifteenth of Nisan and continuing through the twenty-first. It marked the beginning of the barley harvest and immediately followed Passover and lasted until the 21st day of the month. Unleavened Bread speaks of the holy walk of the believer (1Cor 5:6-8).

**Rooker** - The unleavened bread reminded the Israelites of the haste in which they left the land of Egypt. They were forced to begin their journey before the dough could rise. During this seven-day period only bread without yeast could be eaten. (The New American Commentary page 285)

**K. Arthur** - When you think of leaven, you think of sin and how a little leaven leavens the whole lump. There is no leaven put in the dough to make it rise because God wanted to show us a picture. The blood of Jesus was shed for us and that blood, and when we apply it in faith to the door of our hearts then we are no longer slaves to sin for the Son has set us free. Therefore I no longer have to practice sin. I can keep the feast of unleavened bread. (Leviticus Lectures)

**Feast** (02282)(**chaq/chag/hag/haq**) means festival and usually refers to the various feasts on the Jewish calendar. "Holiday," i.e. a day or season of religious joy. The term moed "appointed time," is also used for "feast," but is a broader term including Sabbaths, new moons, etc. "The use of this noun is limited mainly to the three pilgrim-feasts. Four times it is used for each of the three in a single context (Ex 23:15–16; 34:18–22; Deut 16:16; 2Chr 8:13). Otherwise the noun applies most often (twenty times) to the Feast of Booths (Ingathering), secondly (eleven times) to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (or Passover) and once to the Feast of Weeks (Deut 16:10)." (TWOT)

**Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **chaq** with the Greek word **heorte** = "a day or series of days marked by a periodic celebration or observance, festival, celebration."

**Vine** - This word refers especially to a "feast observed by a pilgrimage." That is its meaning in its first biblical occurrence, as Moses declared to Pharaoh (Ex 10:9). Haq/chaq usually represents Israel's three annual "pilgrimage feasts," which were celebrated with processions and dances. These special feasts are distinguished from the sacred seasons ("festal assemblies"—Ezek 45:17), the new moon festivals, and the Sabbaths (Hos 2:11). (In a unique use of haq/chaq) Aaron proclaimed a "feast to the Lord" at the foot of Mt. Sinai. This "feast" involved no pilgrimage but was celebrated with burnt offerings, communal meals, singing, and dancing. The whole matter was displeasing to God (Ex 32:5-7).

**Chaq - 55v in NAS** -- feast(52), feasts(5), festival(1), festival sacrifice(1), festivals(3). Ex 10:9; 12:14; 13:6; 23:15f, 18; 32:5; 34:18, 22, 25; Lev 23:6, 34, 39, 41; Num 28:17; 29:12; Deut 16:10, 13f, 16; 31:10; Jdg 21:19; 1Kgs 8:2, 65; 12:32f; 2Chr 5:3; 7:8f; 8:13; 30:13, 21; 35:17; Ezra 3:4; 6:22; Neh 8:14, 18; Ps 81:3; 118:27; Isa 29:1; 30:29; Ezek 45:17, 21, 23, 25; 46:11; Hos 2:11; 9:5; Amos 5:21; 8:10; Nah 1:15; Zech 14:16, 18f; Mal 2:3

**Unleavened bread** is eaten for seven days (Lev. 23:6; Nu 28:17). While the Passover is a separate festival, observed on the fourteenth of Nisan, the meal was eaten after sundown on the fifteenth of Nisan. The term "**Passover**," is applied to the entire eight days (cf. Lk 22:1, Lev. 23:6; Nu 28:17). As noted above Luke 22:1 associates Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover.

**Wenham** - The first and the last days of this feast were, like the first and last days of the main autumn festival, the feast of booths, rest days when "no heavy work" could be done (Lev 23:7, 8, 35, 36). (NICOT)

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the significance of unleavened bread?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Bible tells us that the Israelites were to eat only unleavened bread every year during Passover as a commemoration of the Exodus from Egyptian bondage. Since the children of Israel left Egypt hastily, they did not have time for the bread to rise, so it was made on that very first Passover without leaven, also known as yeast. In describing this bread and why it was eaten, the Bible informs us of the following: "Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste—so that all the days of your life you may remember the time of your departure from Egypt" (Deuteronomy 16:3). Further commands regarding the eating of unleavened bread are found in Exodus 12:8; 29:2; and Numbers 9:11. To this day, in Jewish homes, the Passover celebration includes unleavened bread.

According to the Hebrew lexicon, the term *unleavened bread* is derived from the word *matzoh*, which means "bread or cake without leaven." The lexicon also states that *matzoh* is in turn derived from a word which means "to drain out or suck." In referring to this second Hebrew word, the lexicon states, "In the sense of greedily devouring for sweetness." So it is quite possible that unleavened bread, while it may have been heavy and flat, may also have been sweet to the taste.

In the Bible, leaven is almost always symbolic of sin. Like leaven that permeates the whole lump of dough, sin will spread in a person, a church, or a nation, eventually overwhelming and bringing its participants into its bondage and eventually to death (Galatians 5:9). Romans 6:23 tell us that "the wages of sin is death," which is God's judgment for sin, and this is the reason that Christ died—to provide a way out of this judgment for sin if man will repent of his sins, accept Christ as his Passover sacrifice, and have his heart changed so that he can conform his life to what God commands. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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## QUESTION - [What does leaven symbolize in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Bible mentions leaven, or yeast, in several contexts. In some contexts, the reference to leaven is obviously literal; in other contexts, *leaven* takes on symbolic connotations.

Leaven causes dough to rise, but the process takes time. The Israelites, when God freed them from captivity in Egypt, had no time to spare, so, in their haste, they baked and ate flat (unleavened) bread for their journey: "With the dough the Israelites had brought from Egypt, they baked loaves of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves" (Exodus 12:39).

To commemorate of His deliverance from Egypt, God instructed the Israelites to celebrate a week of feasting following the [Passover Day](#) (the 14th day of the 1st month on the Jewish calendar). This was called the "Feast of Unleavened Bread." During that time the Israelites were commanded to remove all leaven from their houses and eat no bread that contained leaven (Exodus 12:15; 13:6–7).

Elsewhere in the Mosaic Law, leaven represents sin or corruption. The law forbade [grain offerings](#) made with leaven (Leviticus 2:11). In fact, no yeast was allowed to be burned on the altar in any sacrifice. The grain offering for Aaron and his sons (the priests) was also not to contain leaven and was to be eaten in a holy place (Leviticus 6:17).

Leaven is also mentioned in the New Testament. In Matthew 16:6–12, Jesus compared the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees and Herodians to [leaven](#). The Pharisees had come to Jesus to test Him (verse 1), but Jesus perceived their true intent and the state of their hearts. He later warned His disciples against being taken in by their teachings (verse 12), which He compared to leaven. A small portion of the "leaven" of falsehood can permeate a person's heart and mind. In Luke 12:1 Jesus specifies that the leaven of the Pharisees is "hypocrisy." Having a show of piety, without true holiness, is like leaven in that it gradually increases and spreads corruption, puffing up a person with vanity. Lies and hypocrisy can poison one's whole character.

Paul warned the church at Corinth against tolerating sin in their midst, using leaven as a metaphor (1 Corinthians 5:1–8). There was a man in the church who was guilty of sexual immorality. Paul told them to remove the man from their fellowship because, like leaven, his influence would permeate the whole church. "Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?" Paul asks (1Cor 5:6). Then he points them to the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread: "Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1Cor 5:7).

In one of Jesus' parables of the kingdom of heaven, He uses leaven in a different sense: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough" (Matthew 13:33). In this case, leaven is not used as a symbol of evil; rather, leaven is a symbol of the kingdom, which will gradually and secretly permeate society. Just as a woman uses the smallest bit of leaven in the dough, so the gospel starts with small beginnings. Just as the leaven quietly works its way through the whole batch, the gospel will have a profound impact on all sectors of society. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Leviticus 23:7 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.**

- Nu 28:18-25
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Numbers 28:18-25+'On the first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. 19 'You shall present an offering by fire, a burnt offering to the LORD: two bulls and one ram and seven male lambs one year old, having them without defect. 20 'For their grain offering, you shall offer fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for a bull and two-tenths for the ram. 21 'A tenth of an ephah you shall offer for each of the seven lambs; 22 and one male goat for a sin offering to make atonement for you. 23 'You shall present these besides the burnt offering of the morning, which is for a continual burnt offering. 24 'After this manner you shall present daily, for seven days, the food of the offering by fire, of a soothing aroma to the LORD; it shall be presented with its drink offering in addition to the continual burnt offering. 25 'On the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work.

**Holy convocation** - Set aside this day. [Click for more discussion](#) of Holy Convocation below

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**Laborious work** - see note below on Lev 23:8

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

**Ryrie** writes that laborious work is "Defined in a later period as building, weaving, reaping, threshing, grinding, and so on."

**Leviticus 23:8 'But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.'**"

- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Laborious work** - It is not clearly stipulated as to what is "**laborious.**" (see Ryrie's note above) Some think it alludes to Ex 20:9+, which would be fairly restrictive.

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

**Seventh day is a holy convocation** - The opening and closing days of this feast are like the first and seventh days of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Autumn. Ordinary labor like farming or trading stopped and a holy convention was held. [Click for more discussion](#) of Holy Convocation below

**Wiersbe** has this practical application regarding the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**...For seven days following Passover, the Jews ate only unleavened bread with their meals, and they carefully cleansed all the yeast out of their homes (Ex 12:15–20). In many places in Scripture, leaven depicts sin. Thus the putting away of leaven illustrates the cleansing of one's life after he or she has been saved through faith in the blood (2Cor. 6:14–7:1). We must get rid of the "old life" leaven (1 Cor. 5:7). Those things belong to our unconverted days and have no place in our new Christian walk (1Pe 4:1–5). We must also put away "the leaven of malice and wickedness" (1 Cor. 5:8; Eph. 4:31–32), the leaven of hypocrisy (Luke 12:1), and the leaven of false doctrine (Gal. 5:7–9). The "leaven of Herod" (Mark 8:15) represents the attitude of pride and worldliness that was evident in that evil king's life. And the "leaven ... of the Sadducees" was unbelief (Matt. 16:6). The people weren't saved from death and bondage by getting rid of leaven but by applying the blood of the lamb by faith. People today think they'll be saved because they reform or get rid of a bad habit, but good as doing these things are, they can never do what only the blood of Christ can do. Salvation is through the blood of Christ alone, the sinless Lamb of God, but "let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19, NKJV). The Christian life is not a famine or a funeral; it's a feast. "Therefore let us keep the feast ... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8). Sin can be secretly introduced into our lives and quietly grow so that it pollutes the inner person. One "toxic" Christian in a church body can defile the whole body if given enough time. One false doctrine, if allowed to grow, will destroy an entire ministry. (Be Holy - [Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Leviticus 23:9 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,**

- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This divine "**formula**" is found some 30 times in the book of Leviticus.

Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 11:1, 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:1, 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1

**Leviticus 23:10 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest.**

- **When:** Lev 14:34
- **shall:** Lev 2:12-16 Ex 22:29 Ex 23:16,19 34:22,26 Nu 15:2,18-21 28:26 Dt 16:9 Jos 3:15

- Pr 3:9,10 Eze 44:30 Ro 11:16 1Co 15:20-23 Jas 1:18 Rev 14:4
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Exodus 23:16; 19+ "Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. 19 "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. "You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

Offering of the first fruits  
Illustration from a Bible card

## FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

(HaBikkurim)

Leviticus 23:10-14

**Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest-**

"The actual observance of this law was to be deferred till they had arrived in the land of Canaan, and had become permanently fixed in their settlements; for during their sojourn in the wilderness they could neither sow nor reap." (Bush)

**then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest-** "A sheaf of the new corn was brought to the priest who was to wave it up, in token of his presenting it to the God of heaven, and to wave it to and fro before the Lord, as the Lord of the whole earth, and the bountiful giver of all its fruits and favors. This offering of the sheaf of the first fruits did as it were sanctify to him all the rest of the harvest. Besides, it served as a type of Christ, who, as risen from the dead, is the (first fruits of them that slept.' 1 Cor. 15:20." (Bush)

**Feast of Firstfruits** marked the beginning of the barley harvest, immediately followed Passover and lasted until the 21st day of the month. First Fruits symbolized the consecration of the entire harvest to God and was an earnest, or pledge (guarantee) of the full harvest yet to be gathered.

**Sheaf** - The grain is not stated but this would be at the time of the barley harvest (which preceded the wheat harvest), so it is most likely a sheaf of barley.

**Firstfruits** speaks of Christ's resurrection as the **First fruits** of the resurrection of all believers (1 Cor 15:20-23). Christ rose on the day of the First fruits which we commonly call Easter. I usually encounter a confused response when I greet a fellow believer with the words "*Blessed Feast of Firstfruits*" instead of "*Happy Easter!*" Sadly very few Christians know that **Easter Sunday** is really the **Feast of First fruits**. But now you have no excuse because you have just been edified.

**"Firstfruits"** in the NT also refers to the earliest converts as the firstfruits of the Spirit (Ro 8:23+); to the Jews as precursors of the Christian church (Ro 11:16+); to individual believers (Ro 16:5+); to Christ as the firstfruits of resurrection (1Cor 15:20); to believers born again by the Word of God (Jas 1:18+); and to the group that had been redeemed as firstfruits (Rev 14:4+).

The **Feast of First fruits** occurred on our **Sunday**, the "day after the Sabbath" (Lev 23:11), the first day of the week, even as Christ was raised on the first day of the week. Like the **Feast of First fruits**, the resurrection of Christ anticipates the harvest (of more "fruit) which is to follow, the resurrection of the saints, **each in his own order** (1 Cor 15:23). When the priest on the day of Christ's resurrection waved the sheaf of first fruits in the Temple, it was before a torn veil and was a mere **shadow**, (OT [types](#) and shadows and Messianic prophecies) for when the **substance** (Christ) comes the **shadow** passes away (Col 2:16-17+). Joseph of Arimathea's empty tomb (Lk 24:1-3+) proclaimed that the great First fruit sheaf (Christ) had been "reaped and waved" in the heavenly Temple. In summary, the Feast of First fruits **has been fulfilled in Christ**.

**Josephus** says that the sheaf was of barley and that until this ceremony had been performed, no harvest work was to be done (Ant. 3.10.5).

**First-fruits** ([07225](#))(reshith) - see word study

**Ryrie** - First Fruits symbolized the consecration of the entire harvest to God and was an earnest, or pledge, of the full harvest yet to be gathered. See notes on 1Cor 15:20; Jas 1:18; Rev. 14:4, as well as other NT uses in Ro 8:23; Ro 11:16; 1Cor. 16:15.

**Scofield** - The Feast of Firstfruits, Lev 23:10-14 is typical of resurrection first, of Christ, then of those who are His at His coming (1Cor 15:23; 1Th 4:13-18).

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18+ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

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#### QUESTION - [What was the Feast of Firstfruits?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Feast of Firstfruits was a festival commanded by the Lord that took place within the Passover celebration. One of [seven feasts of the Lord](#), the Feast of Firstfruits was celebrated on the sixteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan, two days after the Passover festival began (roughly late March to early April). The Feast of Firstfruits served as a reminder to the Israelites of God's provision in the Promised Land. Ultimately, the Israelites were to acknowledge that God had rescued them from slavery in Egypt and provided them a place to live and grow crops (Deuteronomy 26:1–11).

As its name suggests, the Feast of Firstfruits required the Israelites to bring "a sheaf of the first grain" they harvested each year to the priest (Leviticus 23:10). A sheaf is a bundle or a cluster of harvested grains. The priest would then take the sheaf and wave it before the Lord the day after the Sabbath. On the same day, all the Israelites were to sacrifice a year-old lamb without defect as a burnt offering and give a [food offering](#) of grain, oil, and wine (Leviticus 23:11–13). The Israelites were not allowed to eat any of the crop until the day the first portion was brought before the priest. The firstfruits belonged to God, and the people of Israel acknowledged God as the source of their crops and their provision overall ([Leviticus 23:14](#)).

Seven weeks after the Feast of Firstfruits, the Israelites celebrated the [Feast of Weeks](#), one of the three "solemn feasts" that required all Jewish males to travel to Jerusalem (Exodus 23:14–17; 34:22–23; Deuteronomy 16:16). What's interesting about these three major feasts is that each required the "firstfruits" to be offered at the temple, but for different crops. The [Feast of Tabernacles](#) involved offering the first of the olive and grape harvests. The Feast of Weeks involved offering the first of the wheat harvest. And the Feast of Firstfruits (within [Passover](#)) specifically involved offering the first of the barley harvest.

Because barley is a lighter grain that ripens more quickly than wheat, it was the "first of the first fruit" offerings in the Jewish calendar. In other words, the Feast of Firstfruits marked the first harvest of the year, heightening the symbolism that reminded the Israelites of God's provision. The first thing the Israelites did after a long and laborious season of growing crops was express their thankfulness to God for meeting their needs. And because ancient Israel was an agriculturally based society, the Israelites were acknowledging God's provision for both their food and their income.

Like the other Jewish feasts in the Old Testament, the Feast of Firstfruits prophetically foreshadowed the coming Messiah and His ministry. In 1 Corinthians 15:20, Paul refers to Christ and His resurrection as "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Just as the first portion of the harvest in the Old Testament anticipated the full harvest still to come, Jesus' resurrection anticipated the full resurrection to come for all those who are in Christ. His resurrection signals the very beginning of a brand-new creation promised in the Old Testament (Isaiah 43:18–19; 65:17). Similarly, in Romans 8:23, Paul says that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the "firstfruits" of the redemption God will bring to His creation.

For the ancient Israelites, the Feast of Firstfruits during Passover was an opportunity to show thanksgiving to God for all the ways He provided for them. For believers today, it is a foreshadowing and reminder of what Christ has done in redeeming creation and what He will finally do when He returns. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### QUESTION - [What is the first resurrection? What is the second resurrection?](#)

**ANSWER** - Daniel 12:2 summarizes the two very different fates facing mankind: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Everyone will be raised from the dead, but not everyone will share the same destiny. The New Testament reveals the further detail of separate resurrections for the just and the unjust.

*The first resurrection, then, is the raising of all believers*

Revelation 20:4-6 mentions a "**first resurrection**" and identifies those involved as "blessed and holy." The second death (the lake of

fire, Revelation 20:14) has no power over these individuals. The first resurrection, then, is the raising of all believers. It corresponds with Jesus' teaching of the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14) and the "resurrection of life" (John 5:29).

#### **The first resurrection takes place in various stages.**

1. Jesus Christ Himself (the "first fruits," 1 Corinthians 15:20), paved the way for the resurrection of all who believe in Him.
2. There will be the resurrection of "the dead in Christ" at the Lord's return (1 Thessalonians 4:16)
3. and the resurrection of the martyrs at the end of the tribulation (Revelation 20:4+).
4. The Old Testament saints will also be raised at the end of the tribulation, and they are also part of the first resurrection.

Revelation 20:12-13+ identifies those comprising the **second resurrection** as the wicked judged by God at the [great white throne judgment](#) prior to being cast into the lake of fire. The second resurrection, then, is the raising of all unbelievers; the second resurrection is connected to the second death. It corresponds with Jesus' teaching of the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29).

The event which divides the first and second resurrections seems to be the millennial kingdom. The last of the righteous are raised to reign "with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4+), but the "rest of the dead [that is, the wicked] lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5+).

What great rejoicing will attend the first resurrection! What great anguish at the second! What a responsibility we have to share the Gospel! "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire" (Jude 23). [GotQuestions.org](#)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [When will the Resurrection take place? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **Question: [What was the first fruits offering? Should Christians give a first fruits offering today?](#)**

**Answer:** Firstfruits was a Jewish feast held in the early spring at the beginning of the grain harvest. It was observed on Nissan 16, which was the third day after Passover and the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Firstfruits was a time of thanksgiving for God's provision.

Leviticus 23:9-14 institutes the firstfruits offering. The people were to bring a sheaf of grain to the priest, who would wave it before the Lord. A burnt offering, a meal offering, and a drink offering were also required at that time. Deuteronomy 26:1-10 gives even more detail on the procedure of firstfruits.

No grain was to be harvested at all until the firstfruits offering was brought to the Lord (Leviticus 23:14). The offering was made in remembrance of Israel's sojourn in Egypt, the Lord's deliverance from slavery, and their possession of "a land that floweth with milk and honey." The day of the firstfruits offering was also used to calculate the proper time of the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15-16).

In the New Testament, the firstfruits offering is mentioned seven times, always symbolically. Paul calls Epaphroditus and the household of Stephanas "the firstfruits of Achaia" (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:15). His meaning is that, just as the firstfruits offering was the first portion of a larger harvest, these individuals were the first of many converts in that region. James calls believers "a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18). Just like the sheaf of grain was set apart for the Lord, so are believers set apart for God's glory.

The firstfruits offering found its fulfillment in Jesus. "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). Jesus' resurrection has paved the way for our resurrection. Significantly, if Jesus was killed at Passover, then His resurrection on the third day would have fallen on Nissan 16—the Feast of Firstfruits.

The firstfruits offering is never directly applied to Christian giving in the New Testament. However, Paul taught the Corinthian believers to set aside a collection "on the first day of the week" (1 Corinthians 16:2). And, just as the offering of firstfruits was an occasion of thanksgiving, so the Christian is to give with gladness.

In summary, firstfruits symbolizes God's harvest of souls, it illustrates giving to God from a grateful heart, and it sets a pattern of giving back to Him the first (and the best) of what He has given us. Not being under the Old Testament Law, the Christian is under no further obligation than to give cheerfully and liberally (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). ([Gotquestions.org](#))

This was a most interesting service in the Jewish Church, and full of gospel mercies; when the Lord appointed “a sheaf of the first-fruits” of their harvest to be brought before him, and waved towards heaven, as a token that all fruits were of the Lord, and that he was both the giver and proprietor of all. And it refers to the person of Christ, both in his death and resurrection. For “a lamb of the first year,” without blemish, was to be offered as a burnt-offering with it, to testify that the death of Jesus sanctifies and sweetens all; and Christ himself in his resurrection is the “first-fruits of them that slept.” My soul! dost thou observe this Jewish service in a gospel dress? Surely the service is a reasonable service, and, if possible, more heightened now than then. When this law was given, the Israelite had no power to perform it; neither indeed was it intended to be observed, until the people arrived in Canaan. There was neither tilling of land, nor sowing of seed, in the wilderness; for the people were victualled by the immediate bounty of heaven; and we are told, that they ate the manna until that they came to Canaan. But when they were settled in the land which the Lord had promised them, and God gave them “fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness,” surely it was meet thus to acknowledge God in his providences, as the providence of God had owned and blessed them. What sayest thou to it, my soul? Here was Jesus in the sheaf of the first-fruits. Here was the Father’s blessing, acknowledged in the gift of Jesus. Here was Jesus represented in the Lamb, which accompanied the service. Here was the waving it towards heaven, and a prohibition not to eat bread nor parched corn, nor green ears, until God’s portion had been first offered! O my soul, wilt thou not learn hence to view Jesus in every one of thy blessings, and to bless thy God and Father for a sanctified use of every thing in Jesus? Help me, Lord, I pray thee, in my heart, in my house, in the field, in the city, in the Church, in the closet, in the world, in the family, to be for ever waving before my God “the sheaf of the first-fruits” in all his bounties. In Jesus I have all; in Jesus would I enjoy all; and then shall I most assuredly have that sweet promise for ever fulfilling in my heart: “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9, 10.)

**Leviticus 23:11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.**

- Lev 9:21 10:14 Ex 29:24+
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WAVE OFFERING OF FIRSTFRUITS

The **feast of first fruits** celebrated for Israel the new harvest in the land and their deliverance from Egypt. This foreshadows the resurrection of Christ: (1Cor 15:20, 23). The feast occurred on the “day after the Sabbath” (Lev 23:11), the first day of the week, even as Christ was raised on the first day of the week. Like the feast of first fruits, the resurrection of Christ anticipates the harvest which is to follow, the resurrection of the saints. When the priest on the day of Christ’s resurrection **waved the sheaf of first fruits in the Temple**, it was before a torn veil and was but an antiquated form, for the substance had come and the shadow had passed away. Joseph’s empty tomb proclaimed that the great first fruit sheaf had been reaped and waved in the heavenly Temple. This feast of first fruits has been completely fulfilled in Christ. The first sheaf at the Passover was presented by the congregation before the commencement of the grain harvest (Lev 23:10–11). Josephus says that the sheaf was of barley and that until this ceremony had been performed, no harvest work was to be done (Ant. 3.10.5).

The **feast of the wave loaves** (Lev 23:15), coming exactly 50 days after the feast of first fruits, without question foreshadowed the day of Pentecost at which time the two loaves, typical of Gentiles and Israel, are united into one body, the church (Ep 2:14). It does not have special Christological significance, however, except as a result of the work of Christ.

**On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it-** The Passover on which Jesus was crucified was on a Friday so Saturday would have been the Sabbath and the day after the Sabbath would have been our Sunday. So the priest waved the sheaf (of barley) before Jehovah on the day that Yeshua was raised from the dead as the “First fruits of those who are asleep (= dead, sleep used only of death of believers)” (1 Cor 15:20).

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### Additional Note - First Fruits -

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf (Heb = [omer](#)) of the first fruits (Heb = [reshith](#)) of your harvest to the priest. 11 ‘He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for (PURPOSE) you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it (USUALLY BARLEY - THE FIRST TO RIPEN). 12 ‘Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering ([olah](#)) to the LORD. 13 ‘Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an



ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine. 14 (ONLY AFTER THE WAVE OFFERING 'Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. (Lev 23:9-14)

The day following the first day of Unleavened Bread is called **Reshit Katzir** "the beginning of the harvest" or **Yom HaBikkurim**, "**the Day of Firstfruits**." In ancient times, on this day a sheaf ([omer](#)) of barley (the first grain crop to ripen) was waved before the Lord in a prescribed ceremony to mark the start of the counting of the [omer](#), which initiated the 49 day countdown to the jubilee harvest festival of Shavuot.

At this appointed time Israel was to acknowledge in their hearts and confess before witnesses that the fruits of their labor were a grace-gift from the Almighty, Who is the source of all material and spiritual wealth, and that they no longer lived as slaves in bondage but as free citizens in God's kingdom. First fruits was also a type or shadow of the Messiah, and was fulfilled with the resurrection of Jesus. Paul writes "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep....But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, Testament refers to the resurrected Jesus as the firstfruits of those who will be resurrected (1 Cor. 15:20,23). In Paul's teaching we see the resurrection of Jesus is linked to the historic Feast of Firstfruits. The Gospels tell us that "After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb" (Mt. 28:1). Keep in mind that according to Leviticus 23:11, the Feast of Firstfruits was to be observed on the first day after the Sabbath of Passover. Firsthand reports about the resurrection tell us that Jesus rose from the grave on Sunday, the first day of the week after the seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus rose from the dead not on just any day. The reality as it played out was not coincidentally on the first day of the week; rather the Messiah rose according to God's intentional design in order to fulfill the holy Torah. He rose on HaBikkurim—the Feast of Firstfruits. His resurrection was a promise of the life and everlasting freedom that would come to all who believed in Him. Of the Feast of Firstfruits Alfred Edersheim says, "Each family, and every individual separately acknowledged, by the yearly presentation of the firstfruits, a living relationship between them and God, in virtue of which they gratefully received at His hands all they had or enjoyed, and solemnly dedicated both it and themselves to the Lord." How much more, then, is this true for those who confess Jesus as Messiah! Those who believe in Jesus can gratefully see Him as the **resurrected Firstfruit of the eternal harvest that God** has promised to those who trust Him, and rest assured that because He rose from the dead, they too will one day rise from the dead as a firstfruits offering to Jehovah. Now if that doesn't make you shout "Hallelujah! Thank You Jesus!" nothing will!

**Leviticus 23:12 'Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the LORD.**

- Lev 1:10 - " a male without defect"
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **BURNT OFFERING OF MALE WITHOUT DEFECT**

**Now on the day when you wave the sheaf** - The first grain to ripen was barley, so this sheaf was of stalks of barley waved north, south, east, then west symbolizing that it was dedicated to the Lord.

**You shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the LORD**- Clearly this is a foreshadowing of the perfect, blemish-free Male, Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God Who alone is able to take away the sins of the world (Jn 1:29+).

Hebrews 10:10-12+ By this will we have been sanctified (perfect tense = once for all time. Positionally "perfect" in Christ FOREVER!) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

**Without defect** (without blemish, perfect, integrity) ([08549](#))([tamim](#) from the verb **tamam** = to be complete, entire or whole (literal sense in Lev 3:9, Ezek 15:5), refers to an action which is completed) has both physical (without defect) and spiritual (blameless, devout, upright) significance. **Tamim** has the fundamental idea of completeness or wholeness. **Tamim** deals primarily with a state of moral or ceremonial purity (e.g., animal sacrifices - 51x tamim refers to unblemished animals - Passover lamb in Ex 12:5 picturing of course Christ sinless perfection - 1 Cor 5:7, "knew no sin" = 2 Cor 5:21+). Tamim can mean blameless, complete, whole, full, perfect. Tamim can refer to the "entirety" of a period of time (7 complete Sabbaths = Lev 23:15; full year = Lev

25:30). Joshua 10:13 records the miracle of the sun standing still for a "*whole* (tamim) day," allowing Joshua to extract vengeance on the Amorite coalition that had attacked him.

**Without defect** in **Numbers 28-29** - 16x in 16v - Num. 28:3; Num. 28:9; Num. 28:11; Num. 28:19; Num. 28:27; Num. 28:31; Num. 29:2; Num. 29:8; Num. 29:13; Num. 29:17; Num. 29:20; Num. 29:23; Num. 29:26; Num. 29:29; Num. 29:32; Num. 29:36

**COMMENT** - All of the uses of **without defect** (tamim) are translated in the Septuagint with the adjective **amomos** ([see word study](#)) (from **a** = without, not + **momos** = spot, blemish in physical sense or moral sense). It was used literally of the absence of defects in the sacrificial animals in in the Old Testament (where it is used 76x mostly in Leviticus and Numbers - e.g. Ex 29:1, 38 Lev 1:3, 10, 3:1,6,9,4:3, 14, 23, 28, 32, 5:15, 18, 6:6, 9:2f, 12:6, 14:10, 22:19, 21, 23:12, 18, Nu 6:14, 7:88; 15:24; 19:2; 28:3, 9, 11, 19, 27, 31; 29:2, 8, 13, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32, 36). Keeping in mind that **all of the OT SACRIFICES pointed to the MESSIAH**, it is not surprising that this same adjective **amomos** is used to describe the spotless Lamb of God...

1 Peter 1:18-19+ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb **unblemished** ([amomos](#)) and spotless (aspilos) the blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9:14+ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself **without blemish** ([amomos](#)) to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

**What is surprising** is that this same adjective **amomos** is used to describes **SINNERS**, specifically **SINNERS** who are saved by grace through faith in Christ and who now stand **blameless** before the Holy Father in Heaven.

Ephesians 1:4+ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and **blameless** (amomos) before Him. In love

Colossians 1:22+ yet He (CHRIST) has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and **blameless** (amomos) and beyond reproach—

Jude 1:24+ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory **blameless** (amomos) with great joy,

**THOUGHT** - How wonderful and glorious is our eternally secure POSITION in Christ the sinless Lamb of God. But O how this incredible truth should motivate us to be diligent to PRACTICE our POSITION so that enabled by the Spirit of Christ (Php 2:13NLT+), we work out our salvation (Php 2:12+) (aka progressive sanctification)! Who you are now and forever is **BLAMELESS**. This begs the practical question - are you (**AM I**) living like a **BLAMELESS** one beloved? We can be if we depend on His Holy Word and His Holy Spirit. There is no other way. And as live out our **POSITION** in Christ, we will be giving a proper opinion of our Father Who art in Heaven (Mt 5:16+)! And we will one day hear "Well done, My good and faithful servant!" (Mt 25:21)

How incredibly incomprehensible that sinners such as we can be described with the **same adjective** (amomos) used to describe our incomparable, sinless Lord! O the wonder of the "cleansing power" of the Lamb's precious blood, which washes us **Whiter than the Snow** (Isa 1:18+). **Hallelujah**. Thank You Jesus! Amen!

**Burnt offering** (05930) see ['olah](#)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is a burnt offering?](#)
- [What were the various sacrifices in the Old Testament?](#)
- [Why did the sacrificial system require a blood sacrifice?](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Burnt Offering](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Burnt Offerings](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Burnt-Offering](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Burnt-Offering](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Burnt Offering](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Burnt-offerings](#)

- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Burnt-Offering \(2\)](#) [Burnt-Offering, Altar Of. \(2\)](#) [Burnt-Offering, Altar Of.](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Burnt Offering](#)

## Torrey Topical Textbook

### Burnt Offering

**THIS PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT SUMMARY SINCE IT BASED ENTIRELY ON SCRIPTURE.**

- To be offered only to the Lord Judges 13:16
- Specially acceptable Genesis 8:21 ; Leviticus 1:9,13,17
- The most ancient of all sacrifices Genesis 4:4 ; 8:20; 22:2,13 ; Job 1:5
- Offered by the Jews before the law Exodus 10:25 ; 24:5
- **TO BE TAKEN FROM**
  - The flock or herd Leviticus 1:2
  - The fowls Leviticus 1:14
- Was an atonement for sin Leviticus 9:7
- Guilt transferred to, by imposition of hands Leviticus 1:4 ; Numbers 8:12
- **REQUIRED TO BE**
  - Killed, if a beast, by the person who brought it Leviticus 1:5,11
  - Killed, if a bird, by the priest Leviticus 1:15
  - For the people at large, killed and prepared by the Levites Ezekiel 44:11
  - A male without blemish Leviticus 1:3 ; 22:19
  - Voluntary Leviticus 1:3 ; 22:18,19
  - Presented at the door of the tabernacle Leviticus 1:3 ; Deuteronomy 12:6,11,14
  - Offered by priests only Leviticus 1:9 ; Ezekiel 44:15
  - Offered in righteousness Psalm 51:19
  - Entirely burned Leviticus 1:8,9,12,13 ; 6:9
- Blood of, sprinkled round about upon the altar Leviticus 1:5,11
- If a bird, the blood was wrung out at the side of the altar Leviticus 1:15
- Ashes of, collected at foot of the altar, and conveyed Without the camp Leviticus 6:11
- Skin of, given to the priests for clothing Leviticus 7:8 ; Genesis 3:21
- **WAS OFFERED**
  - Every morning and evening Exodus 29:38-42
  - Every sabbath day Numbers 28:9,10
  - The first day of every month Numbers 28:11
  - The seven days of unleavened bread Numbers 28:19,24
  - The day of atonement Leviticus 16:3,5 ; Numbers 29:8
  - At consecration of Levites Numbers 8:12
  - At consecration priests Leviticus 9:2,12-14
  - At consecration of kings 1 Chronicles 29:21-23
  - At purification of women Leviticus 12:6
  - For Nazarites after defilement, or at the end of their vow Numbers 6:11,14
  - For the healed leper Leviticus 14:13,19,20
  - At dedication of sacred places Numbers 7:15 ; 1 Kings 8:64
  - After great mercies 1 Samuel 6:14 ; 2 Samuel 24:22,25
  - Before going to war 1 Samuel 7:9
  - With sounds of trumpets at feasts Numbers 10:10
- The fat, &c of all peace offerings laid on, and consumed with The daily Leviticus 3:5; 6:12
- Of the wicked, not accepted by God Isaiah 1:10,11 ; Jeremiah 6:19,20 ; Amos 5:22
- Obedience better than 1 Samuel 15:22 ; Jeremiah 7:21-23
- Knowledge of God better than Hosea 6:6
- Love of God better than Mark 12:33
- Abraham tried by the command to offer Isaac as Genesis 22:1-24
- Incapable of removing sin, and reconciling to God Psalm 40:6 ; 50:8 ; Hebrews 10:6
- The most costly, no adequate tribute to God Isaiah 40:16 ; Psalm 50:9-13

- Guilt of unauthorised persons offering 1 Samuel 13:12,13
- Guilt of offering, except in the place appointed Leviticus 17:8,9
- Of human victims execrated Deuteronomy 12:31 ; 2 Kings 3:27 ; Jeremiah 7:31 ; 19:5
- **ILLUSTRATIVE OF**
  - The offering of Christ Ephesians 5:2 ; Hebrews 10:8-10
  - Devotedness to God Romans 12:1

**Leviticus 23:13 'Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine.**

- **grain:** Lev 14:10 Nu 15:3-12
- **drink:** Ex 29:40,41+ Ex 30:9+ Nu 28:10 Joel 1:9,13 2:14
- **fourth:** Ex 30:24 Eze 4:11 45:24 46:14
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD**

The Grain Offering was described in Leviticus 2:14-16-note

Also if you bring a grain offering of early ripened things to the LORD, you shall bring fresh heads of grain roasted in the fire, grits of new growth, for the grain offering of your early ripened things. 15'You shall then put oil on it and lay incense on it; it is a grain offering. 16'And the priest shall offer up in smoke its memorial portion, part of its grits and its oil with all its incense as an offering by fire to the LORD.

**Offering by fire (0801)**(**ishsheh** from **esh** = a fire) means an offering made by fire. It refers to any offering or portion of an offering that is wholly or partially consumed by fire -- burnt offering (Lev 1:9, 13); the cereal/grain offering (Lev 2:3); peace offering (Lev 3:3); the guilt offering (Lev 7:5); the consecration offering (Lev 8:28) Clearly this offering stresses the death of the sacrifice. Notice all uses except Josh 13:14 and 1Sa 2:28 are in the Pentateuch. All of these offerings were the Lord's (Nu 28:2), and the phrase "to the Lord" is explicitly stated most of the time. The first use is in Ex 29:18 in Yahweh's instruction to Moses regarding the ordination of priests "And you shall offer up in smoke the whole ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD: it is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD." The phrase "soothing aroma" is usually associated with the offerings by fire, this phrase signifying that Jehovah had accepted the offerer's offering. **Baker** adds that **ishsheh** "describes how the various offerings were presented to the Lord; that is, they were offerings made by means of fire. This practice gave rise to referring to all the offerings the priests presented as *fire offerings*; hence, some consider this term a general term that applied to all the sacrifices of the Israelites (Dt. 18:1; 1Sa 2:28). The fire was actually not offered. Instead, it was the means by which the various offerings were presented to God. The fire caused the offering to go up in smoke, a fact indicated by the causative form of the Hebrew verb, and that created a pleasant aroma to the Lord. The fire also purified what was offered. In this sense, the offerings could be called *fire offerings* or offerings made by fire. The Levites were put in charge of all the offerings by fire to the Lord (Josh. 13:14). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament)

**for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine-** Notice that the importance of the offerings is that they were commanded by Yahweh, they were to be at very specific times (God's way) and were to be done for God's good pleasure (**soothing aroma**). God commands and here demands His portion. Indeed, we are all debtors to His mercy and still owe Him His offerings, albeit now under grace not law!

### **A Debtor to Mercy**

**Augustus Toplady and Bob Kauflin**

A debtor to mercy alone  
 Of covenant mercy I sing  
 I come with Your righteousness on  
 My humble offering to bring  
 The judgments of Your holy law  
 With me can have nothing to do  
 My Savior's obedience and blood  
 Hide all my transgressions

From view

The work which Your goodness began  
The arm of Your strength will complete  
Your promise is yes and amen  
And never was forfeited yet  
The future or things that are now  
No power below or above  
Can make You Your purpose forego  
Or sever my soul from Your love

My name from the palms of Your hands  
Eternity will not erase  
Impressed on Your heart it remains  
In marks of indelible grace  
Yes I, to the end will endure  
Until I bow down at Your throne  
Forever and always secure  
Forever and always secure  
Forever and always secure  
A debtor to mercy alone

Jensen comments that "By bringing the offerings to God the people were symbolically yielding themselves to Him." (EvBC-Nu)

**THOUGHT:** New Testament believers do well to remember that all these OT "**soothing aromas**" pointed to Christ Who "loved you and gave Himself up for us, **an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.**" (Ephesians 5:2+) This is the only "**soothing aroma**" that God will fully accept and which will truly propitiate Him (see [propitiation](#)). And now because Christ was a "fragrant aroma" believers have the incredible privilege to be pleasing aromas (albeit to some an aroma of death) in this crooked and perverse generation. Thus Paul writes

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and **manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him** in every place. 15 For **we are a fragrance of Christ to God** among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And **who is adequate for these things?** (ANSWER? ONLY CHRIST!) (2 Cor 2:14-17) (DO YOU/I MANIFEST HIS SWEET AROMA IN OUR SPHERES OF INFLUENCE?)

**Allen** adds that "There is a sense in which these sacrifices bring pleasure to the Lord. Yet as we reflect on them, we realize that it is not the sacrifice that brings him pleasure; it is the offerers who obey him in these demands who please him! This is the clear teaching of Psalm 40:6–8 and Micah 6:6–8. The acrid odor of the burning flesh and attendant grain, oil, and wine are the physical symbols of the spiritual reality; obedient people bring pleasure to the Lord. To bring oneself as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1–2) is not a distinctly NT teaching, as often averred. It is the clearer statement of that which had always been the major issue in sacrifice from Abel until Christ (see the words of Ps 40:6–8 quoted in Heb 10:5–7). God looks first on the one who brings the sacrifice (notice the word order in Gen 4:4–5) and then on the sacrifice that person brings. But when all is as it should be, person and sacrifice, then there is a "pleasing aroma" that ascends to the Lord." (EBC)

Romans 12:1-2+ Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, **to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.** 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Soothing** (sweet) ([05207](#))([nihoah](#) rom **nuach** = to rest) means a quieting, soothing, tranquilizing. In 20 of the 43 uses of nichoach, this noun (usually with the sense of an adjective) is used with the phrase "**burnt offering.**" Almost all uses describe the odor of a sacrifice as pleasing or acceptable to God. Sadly, we see this word used to describe Israel's offering to idols (Ezek 6:13+, Ezek 15:19, Ezek 20:28), which is in stark contrast with Jehovah's assessment of His rebellious people in Ezek 20:14 where they are described as a soothing aroma! - "As a **soothing aroma** I shall accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples (Gentiles) and gather you from the lands where you are scattered (A prophecy that is unfulfilled, but which will be when Messiah

returns and all Israel is saved - Ro 11:26-27<sup>+</sup>); and I shall prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations." The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **nihoah** with the noun **euodia** = fragrance, sweet odor, aroma, used to describe the sacrifices that were pleasing to God. It is used figuratively in 2Cor 2:15 of those who serve God sacrificially, of a gift given sacrificially (Phil 4:18<sup>+</sup>) and of Christ's sacrifice of Himself (Eph 5:2<sup>+</sup>)

**Aroma** (fragrance) (07381)(**reah** from **ruach** = breath, wind) means scent or odor. **Reah** refers to the "scent or smell" of a person or thing as when Isaac smelled Jacob's garments and concluded (falsely) that they had the aroma of Esau (Ge 27:27 where reah is used 3x). In Lev 26:31 God is warning if Israel disobeyed (see Lev 26:14-16) "I will not smell your soothing **aromas**." In Ezekiel 6:13 God said He would punish Judah because "they offered soothing **aroma** (reah) to all their idols." In Ezekiel 16:19 God accused Judah of making and offering sacrifices to idolatrous images (Ezek 16:17-18) = "offer before them [their idols] for a soothing aroma." (cp similar accusation in Ezek 20:28) The first use is the **soothing aroma** (reah) given off by Noah's burnt offerings (Ge 8:20-21) where "soothing" (hannihoah) reflects a play on the name "Noah" which means "rest"! An interesting cluster of uses of reah is found in the intimate love story described in Song of Solomon, where pleasant smells play a major role in the intimate relationship (Song 1:3, 12; Song 2:13; Song 4:10-11; Song 7:8, 13)

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### **Gotquestions** - "What is a grain offering?"

**Answer:** A grain offering is a type of sacrifice described in the Old Testament (Leviticus 2) that the Israelites offered to God. A grain offering would have most likely been one of wheat or barley, depending on what was available. While other sacrifices had very specific instructions from God as to how they were to be offered, the rules governing grain offerings had some flexibility.

A **grain offering** could be given to God either uncooked or cooked in an oven or pan (Leviticus 2:1; 4—5). The requirements for the grain offering were that it had to be finely ground and have oil and salt in it (Leviticus 2:1, 4, 13). It could not have any yeast (also called leaven) or honey in it (Leviticus 2:11). When a person brought a grain offering to the priests, a small portion of it was offered to God, with some frankincense, on the altar. The rest of the grain offering went to the priests (Leviticus 2:10). No specific amount of grain was required for an offering; people were free to give what they had.

The **grain offering** is described as "a most holy part of the food offerings presented to the Lord" (Leviticus 2:10b). Grain offerings would often be presented after a burnt offering, which was an animal sacrifice God required for the atonement of sin. Blood had to be shed for the remission of sins to take place, so a grain offering would not serve the same purpose as a burnt offering. Instead, the purpose of a grain offering was to worship God and acknowledge His provision. The burnt offering, which had strict regulations and could have nothing added to it, aptly represents the fact that we take no part in our atonement for sin. The grain offering, however, could be somewhat "personalized" in its presentation. It was to be given out of a person's free will, just as our worship is our free will offering to God today.

It's interesting to note that during the Israelites' forty years of wilderness wandering grain would have been quite scarce. This made **grain offerings** more costly and precious for the people to offer to God. Giving a grain offering in those circumstances represented the Israelites' complete dependence on God to provide for their needs each day. Jesus fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17), and we no longer have to do sacrifices as they did in the Old Testament. **But, if the grain offering is similar to our offering of worship, it's interesting to consider: how much does our worship today cost us?**

**Leviticus 23:14 'Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.**

- **eat:** Lev 19:23-25 25:2,3 Ge 4:4,5 Jos 5:11,12
- **it shall be:** Lev 3:17 10:11 Dt 16:12 Ne 9:14 Ps 19:8
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. - Bush on you shall eat**

**neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth.** - This is a precept which would naturally commend itself to the better feelings of every pious and reflecting mind. Nothing could be more appropriate than thus to testify a grateful sense of the source from whence the crowning blessings of life proceeded. As God was the bountiful donor of the blessings of the harvest, it was an ordinance which would find a response in every right heart, that he should first be honored with its fruits before his creatures should have appropriated any part of them to their own tree. This universal dictate of a grateful bosom found a fitting expression in the customs of the ancient Romans, of whom Pliny says, 'Ne gustabant quidem novas fruges, aut vina, antequam sacerdotes primitias libassent,' they did not so much as taste of their corn or wine, till the priests had offered the first fruits."

**Offering (07133)**(**qorban/korban** from **qarab** signifies coming into near, intimate proximity of another [in Leviticus into intimate proximity with Jehovah!]) - Does this root verb not help us discern the picture of "offering?") is a masculine noun which means that which is brought near (the altar), thus referring to an offering. Thus quoban/korban was a general term used for all Israelite sacrifices, offerings, or oblations. It is used in a variety of offerings in Leviticus.

#### Related Resources:

- NT study in commentary on Luke = **Corban** (Qorban) ([2878](#)) [korban](#)
- [What does Corban mean in Mark 7:11?](#)
- Commentary on Mark 7:11

**Leviticus 23:15 'You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths.**

- Lev 23:10,11 Lev 25:8 Ex 34:22 Dt 16:9,10
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **FEAST OF WEEKS HARVEST OF PENTECOST**

**You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths** - "From the day of waving the sheaf they were to count seven sabbaths or weeks complete, or forty-nine days, and then was to be celebrated the second or great harvest-festival, called Pentecost, from the Gr. πεντηκοστή, fifty, from its beginning fifty days after the waving of the sheaf of the first fruits. The Feast of Pentecost, here instituted, is called by various names in the sacred writings, as 'the feast of weeks,' Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10, 16, because of its being celebrated a week of weeks, or seven-weeks, after the feast of unleavened bread; the 'feast of harvest,' Ex. 23:16; and also the 'day of first fruits,' Num. 16:26; for this was properly the harvest-festival at which the Israelites were to offer thanksgivings to God for the bounties of the harvest, and to present to him the first fruits thereof in bread baked of the new corn. It seems, in fact, that the barley harvest commenced about the Passover, and the wheat harvest ended at the Pentecost in Palestine, where, as in Egypt, the barley is ripe considerably earlier than the wheat. This festival lasted for seven days, during which many holocausts and offerings for sin were sacrificed. In later times many Jews from foreign countries came to Jerusalem on this joyful occasion. Even at that time, and still more since then, a greater degree of relative importance seems to have been attached to this festival than appears to have been designed by the law. It was discovered that the date, fifty days after the Passover, coincided with the delivery of the law from Mount Sinai, which was fifty days after the departure from Egypt, and consequently after the first Passover. Hence, by degrees, instead of resting on the ground on which Moses placed it, the festival was turned into a commemoration of that great event." (Bush)

**Feast of Weeks** (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Lev 23:15-21; Nu 28:26-31; Dt 16:9-12) took place 50 days after the barley harvest, and involved new grain offerings to the Lord. Pentecost speaks of the descent of the Holy Spirit after Christ's ascension and signals the bringing together of Jews and Gentiles into one new body the Church.

**Pentecost** is also called the **feast of weeks** (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10,16; 2Chr 8:13), the **feast of harvest** (Ex. 23:16), and the **day of firstfruits** (Nu 28:26; cp Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:17)

**Freeman** - The **Feast of Harvest** is sometime called the **Feast of Weeks**, because of the seven weeks; by which its time was determined. Dt 16:9, 10. It is also called the Day of First-fruits, (Nu 28:26) because on that day the first loaves made from the wheat harvest were offered to the Lord. Its later name was **Pentecost**, because it occurred fifty days after Passover. These fifty days begin with the offering of the first sheaf of the barley harvest during Passover week, (Lev. 23:10,) and ended with the Feast of Harvest. This feast took place after the corn harvest, and before the vintage. Its design was primarily to give an expression of gratitude to God for the harvest which had been gathered; but the Jews assert, that in addition to this, it was intended to celebrate the giving of the law on Sinai, which took place fifty days after the Passover. Maimonides says that the reason why the feast occupied but one

day was because that was all the time occupied in giving the law. On this day the people rested from all labor. Two loaves, made of the new wheat, were offered before the Lord. These were leavened, in distinction to the Passover bread, which was unleavened. Lev. 23:17. The Jews say that this was because the Passover was a memorial of the haste in which they departed from Egypt, when they had not time to get their bread leavened; while the Feast of Harvest was a token of thankfulness to God for their ordinary food. In addition to this offering of the loaves, every person was required to bring in a basket a portion of the first-fruits of the earth, and offer it unto the Lord. Dt. 26:1-10. At the same time there was a burnt offering of seven young lambs, one young bullock, and two rams. A kid was given as a sin-offering, and two young lambs for a peace offering. Lev. 23:18, 19. ([Manners and Customs 1875](#))

## Related Resource

- Acts 2:1-4 Commentary

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## QUESTION - [What is the Feast of Weeks?](#)

**ANSWER** - Described in Leviticus 23, The Feast of Weeks is the second of the three “solemn feasts” that all Jewish males were required to travel to Jerusalem to attend (Exodus 23:14–17; 34:22–23; Deuteronomy 16:16). This important feast gets its name from the fact that it starts seven full weeks, or exactly 50 days, after the Feast of Firstfruits. Since it takes place exactly 50 days after the previous feast, this feast is also known as “Pentecost” (Acts 2:1), which means “fifty.”

Each of three “solemn feasts”—Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles—required that all able-bodied Jewish males travel to Jerusalem to attend the feast and offer sacrifices. All three of these feasts required that “firstfruit” offerings be made at the temple as a way of expressing thanksgiving for God’s provision. The Feast of Firstfruits celebrated at the time of the Passover included the first fruits of the barley harvest. The Feast of Weeks was in celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Tabernacles involved offerings of the first fruits of the olive and grape harvests.

Since the Feast of Weeks was one of the “harvest feasts,” the Jews were commanded to “present an offering of new grain to the Lord” (Leviticus 23:16). This offering was to be “two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah” which were made “of fine flour . . . baked with leaven.” The offerings were to be made of the first fruits of that harvest (Leviticus 23:17). Along with the “wave offerings” they were also to offer seven first-year lambs that were without blemish along with one young bull and two rams. Additional offerings are also prescribed in Leviticus and the other passages that outline how this feast was to be observed. Another important requirement of this feast is that, when the Jews harvested their fields, they were required to leave the corners of the field untouched and not gather “any gleanings” from the harvest as a way of providing for the poor and strangers (Leviticus 23:22).

To the Jews, this time of celebration is known as Shavuot, which is the Hebrew word meaning “weeks.” This is one of three separate names that are used in Scripture to refer to this important Jewish feast. Each name emphasizes an important aspect of the feast as well as its religious and cultural significance to both Jews and Christians. Besides being called the Feast of Weeks in Leviticus 23, this special feast celebration is called the “Day of the Firstfruits” in Numbers 28:26 and the “Feast of Harvest” in Exodus 23:16.

The Feast of Weeks takes place exactly 50 days after the Feast of Firstfruits. It normally occurs in late spring, either the last part of May or the beginning of June. Unlike other feasts that began on a specific day of the Hebrew calendar, this one is calculated as being “fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath” (Leviticus 23:15–16; Deuteronomy 16:9–10).

Like other Jewish feasts, the Feast of Weeks is important in that it foreshadows the coming Messiah and His ministry. Each and every one of the seven Jewish Feasts signifies an important aspect of God’s plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Jesus was crucified as the “Passover Lamb” and rose from the grave at the Feast of Firstfruits. Following His resurrection, Jesus spent the next 40 days teaching His disciples before ascending to heaven (Acts 1). Fifty days after His resurrection and after ascending to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as promised (John 14:16–17) to indwell the disciples and empower them for ministry. The promised Holy Spirit arrived on the Day of Pentecost, which is another name for the Feast of Weeks.

The spiritual significances of the Feast of Weeks are many. Some see the two loaves of leavened bread that were to be a wave offering as foreshadowing the time when the Messiah would make both Jew and Gentile to be one in Him (Ephesians 2:14–15). This is also the only feast where leavened bread is used. Leaven in Scripture is often used symbolically of sin, and the leavened bread used in the Feast of Weeks is thought to be representative of the fact that there is still sin within the church (body of Christ) and will be until Christ returns again.

On the Day of Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks, the “firstfruits” of the church were gathered by Christ as some 3,000 people heard Peter present the gospel after the Holy Spirit had empowered and indwelt the disciples as promised. With the promised indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the first fruits of God’s spiritual harvest under the New Covenant began. Today that harvest continues as people



continue to be saved, but there is also another coming harvest whereby God will again turn His attention back to Israel so that "all of Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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## **Give Thanks!**

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. — 1 Thessalonians 5:18

At harvesttime it's natural to thank God for the bounty of His blessings. The Feast of Weeks in ancient Israel, established in Leviticus 23, was a week of joyous celebration and feasting in gratitude for the harvest (Dt. 16:9-12). Even today as farmers gather their crops, many give thanks to the Lord for the abundance of their harvest.

But what if untimely and persistent rain keeps the farmer from getting his machines into the fields and harvesting the ripe grain? What if a sudden hailstorm flattens the corn? Or a summer drought dries up the fields?

The apostle Paul wrote, "In everything give thanks" (1 Th. 5:18). That may sound unrealistic. But think about it. The Jews were instructed to celebrate the Feast of Weeks whether the crops came in or not. Likewise, we are to give thanks to the Lord "in everything." After all, our praise is to God, not to a barn full of hay or a crib full of corn.

Yes, we can give thanks. We can do so whether the day goes smoothly or we meet aggravating problems. We can be grateful if we're rich or poor, when we're feeling well or if our health fails. In every circumstance, we can affirm God's goodness and discover reasons to give thanks to Him. After all, our gratitude is to Him and for Him. By: David C. Egner (Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Consider what the Lord has done  
For you and those you love;  
Then give Him thanks with hearts of praise  
For blessings from above.  
—Sper

We don't need more to be thankful for, we need to be more thankful.

**Leviticus 23:16 'You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD.**

- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

This shadow is fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4-note.

"And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

**Fifty days** - The Lord "came down" at Sinai on the 50th day after the first Passover (Ex 12:6; 19:1,11), just as the Holy Spirit came down fifty days after Christ's crucifixion (Acts 1:3,4; 2:1-4)

**Guzik** comments that "Jewish tradition also taught that Pentecost marked the day when the Law was given to Israel. The Jews sometimes called Pentecost *shimchath torah*, or "Joy of the Law." On the Old Testament Day of Pentecost Israel received the **Law**; on the New Testament Day of Pentecost the Church received the **Spirit of Grace** in fullness." ([Acts 2 Commentary](#))

**Scofield** - The Feast of Weeks, a harvest feast known as Pentecost, Lev 23:15 - 22. The antitype is the descent of the Holy Spirit to form the Church. For this reason yeast is present, because there is evil in the Church (Mt 13:33; Acts 5:1-10; 15:1). Observe, it is now loaves; not a sheaf of separate growths loosely bound together, but a real union of particles making one homogeneous body. The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost united the separate disciples into one organism (1Cor 10:16-17; 12:12-13,20). Pentecost took place fifty days after the offering of the firstfruits, coming at about the beginning of summer.

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## **Empty-Handed**

They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. —Deuteronomy 16:16

Today's Scripture : Leviticus 23:16-22

As the first green heads of grain formed on the spring barley in Israel, workers would tie a ribbon around each budding stem to set them apart from the still immature barley. When this marked grain ripened, it was harvested for the temple in Jerusalem because God had commanded that when they came to the feast, they should "not appear before the Lord empty-handed" (Deut. 16:16).

In the Jewish calendar, today is the Day of Firstfruits. And though most Christians don't observe this Jewish holiday, it's a good reminder to ask ourselves: "What do I have to give to the Lord?" It can be easy to fret over what we think we must do to please Him so that we are not empty-handed. Some of us are so busy doing things to please the Lord that we forget to rest in what Christ has already accomplished.

Paul refers to the risen Messiah as "the firstfruits" (1 Cor. 15:20). This means that Jesus has gone ahead of us and stands before God to satisfy our required offering.

Believers also are called firstfruits. "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

Because Jesus is our firstfruits, we have infinite value and will never come before Him empty-handed. By: Kevin Williams (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

For Further Study

Interested in learning more about biblical holidays?

Check out [The Holidays Of God](#) by RBC staff writer Kevin Williams

When you give yourself to God, all other giving becomes natural.

**Leviticus 23:17 'You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD.**

- **two wave:** Nu 28:26)
- **leaven:** Lev 7:13 Mt 13:33
- **firstfruits:** Lev 23:10 Ex 22:29 23:16,19 34:22,26 Nu 15:17,19-21 Dt 26:1,2 Pr 3:9,10 Ro 8:23 1Co 15:20 Jas 1:18 Rev 14:4
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD.** - **Bush on bring in from your dwelling places** - "That is, not out of their houses, but out of some one or more of the several places or regions where they abode, as explained above, in the Note on Lev 23:3. It cannot be supposed to mean that each locality where Israelites resided furnished two wave loaves, for there were to be but two for the whole nation; but the leading idea is, that the flour was to be supplied from some place in the country, and was then offered in the name of the whole congregation, together with the seven lambs, the young bullock, the two rams, the kid, and the two lambs; all which were no doubt furnished at the common charges of the whole people. As the loaves were not to be burnt on the altar, they were allowed to be made of leaven, without contradicting Lev 2:11, 12.

**Scofield** - The wave loaves were offered fifty days after the wave sheaf. This is precisely the period between the resurrection of Christ and the formation of the Church at Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4; 1Cor 12:12-13). See Church (Mat 16:18; Heb 12:23, note). With the wave sheaf no yeast was offered, for there was no evil in Christ; but the wave loaves, typifying the Church, are "baked with yeast," for in the Church there is still evil.

**First-fruits** ([01061](#))(**bikkurim** from **bakar** = to bear new fruit, to constitute as first-born) means the first-fruits of the crop. This Hebrew word occurs only in the masculine plural (cf "-im" ending) and refers especially to the first products of grain and fruit, (bread, Ex 23:16; grapes, Nu 13:20; figs, Nah 3:12), a portion of which were to be given to the Lord as a thank offering and for the support of the priesthood (cf Lev 2:14; Nu 18:12-13). The first use in Exodus refers to the "Feast of the Harvest of the first-fruits."

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **bikkurim** in most of the OT uses with the noun **protogenema** which means means first-fruits.

**Bikkurim** is translated in **NAS** as early ripened things(2), **first fruits**(12), first ripe(1), first ripe fruits(1), ripe fruit(1).

**Bikkurim** - 15v - Ex 23:16, 19; 34:22, 26; Lev 2:14; 23:17, 20; Nu 13:20; 18:13; 28:26; 2Kgs 4:42; Neh 10:35;

## The New Harvest

They are the firstfruits to the Lord. —Leviticus 23:17

Today's Scripture: Acts 2:1-8

I was visiting a friend in a Midwest farming community during harvest season. Huge combines churned through his fields, depositing soybeans into waiting wagons. My friend leaped onto one of the wagons to check out his "firstfruits." What he saw was encouraging. Despite the worst corn crop in 40 years, the soybeans gave him reason to thank God for a good harvest.

Pentecost, which we remember today, has its roots in an agricultural setting. Fifty days after Passover, Jewish farmers celebrated the Feast of Weeks (Lev. 23:15-22), in which they recognized the hand of God who gave the crops.

Centuries later, the Lord chose the Day of Pentecost to celebrate a new harvest. Fifty days from Passover, the Holy Spirit came on a small group of believers and moved through Jerusalem, bringing in a different kind of crop. These firstfruits were men, women, and children added to the church (Acts 2:38-46).

Pentecost's historical farming connection reminds us that a world of lost souls is ready for harvest (John 4:35). As believers in Christ, we are God's fruit, but we are commanded to be His farmers as well.

Are we helping to bring in the new harvest? By: Mart DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

There's surely somewhere a lowly place  
In earth's harvest fields so wide,  
Where I may labor through life's short day  
For Jesus, the crucified.  
—Gabriel

Without the Holy Spirit there would be no harvest.

**Leviticus 23:18 'Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD.'**

- **lambs:** Lev 23:12,13 Nu 28:27-31 Mal 1:13,14
- **their:** Nu 15:4-12
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD - Seven one year old male lambs without defect** - Just think of how costly this would have been in an agrarian society that depended heavily on the animals that were raised. One wonders if the "seven" might not have some symbolism (completeness), but we have to be very careful when invoking "numerology," unless the context or cross references give us clear guidance in interpretation, lest our interpretation become too "fanciful." See [comments above](#) on **soothing aroma**.

**Without defect** (without blemish, perfect, integrity) ([08549](#)) see note above on [tamim](#)

**Drink offering** (libation) ([05262](#)) (**necek** from **nasak** = to pour out - see [note on root](#)) refers most often to a libation and only rarely referred to a cast idol.

Click for much more detailed discussion of drink offering by Mark Wilson (TWOT).

[Wikipedia](#) - A **libation** is a ritual pouring of a liquid, or grains such as rice, as an offering to a deity or spirit, or in memory of the dead. It was common in many religions of antiquity and continues to be offered in cultures today.

**Articles on Drink Offering:**

- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Drink-Offering](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Drink Offering](#)
- Girdlestone [Drink Offering](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Drink-Offering](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Drink Offering](#)

**Leviticus 23:19 'You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings.**

- **one male goat:** Lev 4:23-28 16:15 Nu 15:24 28:30 Ro 8:3 2Co 5:21
- **lambs:** Lev 3:1-17 Lev 7:11-18
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings.**

**Leviticus 23:20 'The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the Lord for the priest.**

- **wave them:** Lev 23:17 7:29,30 Ex 29:24 Lk 2:14 Eph 2:14
- **holy to:** Lev 7:31-34 Lev 8:29 10:14,15 Nu 18:8-12 Dt 18:4 1Co 9:11
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the Lord for the priest.**

**Leviticus 23:21 'On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.**

- **proclamation:** Lev 23:2,4 Ex 12:16 Dt 16:11 Isa 11:10
- **statute:** Lev 23:14 Ge 17:7 Ex 12:17 Nu 18:23
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations. - Bush on no laborious work**

- This the Jews understood of every kind of labor except that which pertained to the preparation of food. It properly denotes that more laborious kind of service which we understand by drudgery, such as ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, gathering the vintage, &c.

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

**Leviticus 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleanings of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.'**

- Lev 19:9,10 Dt 16:11-14 Dt 24:19-21 Ru 2:3-7,15,16-23 Job 31:16-21 Ps 41:1-3 Ps 112:9 Pr 11:24,25 Isa 58:7,8,10 Lk 11:41 2Co 9:5-12
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries\

**LAWS ON REAPING GOD'S WELFARE PROGRAM**

**When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God - A wonderful example of Old Testament "Social Security!"**

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### **John Butler - WELFARE PROGRAM Leviticus 23:22**

“When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger; I am the LORD you God” (Leviticus 23:22).

Our government has an elaborate welfare program supposedly for the poor. But these programs are inefficient, biased, legislated to gain votes for those in office, corrupt, and they promote laziness. God had a welfare program for Israel which did not require a lot of bureaucracy and did not corrupt society but promoted the best of character.

#### **FIRST—THE CHARITY IN THE PROGRAM**

“When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of they field.” This sounds on the surface like sloppy harvesting, but it was charity instead. The Israelite farmer was not to harvest all his grain. He was to leave the corners of the field and that which fell on the ground for the poor to glean. The book of Ruth illustrates well these gleaning practices involved in this welfare plan of God. In leaving some of the field and that which fell to the ground, God promoted the spirit of charity amongst the farmers. Yes, they could have gained a bit extra by harvesting everything clean, but we have to pay taxes to support the welfare program of our government. The Israelite farmers got off easy compared to us. Theirs was an act of charity. Hardly can taxes be called charity.

#### **SECOND—THE CHARACTER IN THE PROGRAM**

“Thou shall leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger.” The character in the program was the character promoted in those who did the gleaning. The harvesters were not to gather the grain and then give it to the poor and strangers. They left it in the field where those such as the poor could go get it if they needed it. Today’s welfare program does not require the welfare recipient to do anything like work. But God’s program did. If you were lazy and would not work, you went hungry because you would not work in the fields in gleaning the crops during harvest. It promotes poor character to just give lazy people welfare. In Israel, if they needed welfare, thy had to work for it. That would help their character. But our welfare program encourages sloth.

#### **THIRD—THE CONSECRATION IN THE PROGRAM**

“I am the LORD your God.” This last sentence in our verse underscores the authority behind the welfare orders. They came from God. To fulfill these orders meant you had to be consecrated to God. Whether you were the farmer or the gleaner, to obey this order required consecration to the Lord. Israel’s welfare program promoted recognition and consecration to God. Our welfare program promotes laziness and other poor habits such as immorality, it certainly does not promote consecration to God. It may bring some votes to the supporting politician, but it will not bring any votes for God. God’s welfare program is much, much better than man’s alternative.

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### **Leave a Little Behind**

Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you. Leviticus 23:22

Today's Scripture & Insight : Leviticus 23:15–22

Pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and occasionally a half-dollar. That’s what you’d find on the nightstand beside his bed. He’d empty his pockets each evening and leave the contents there, for he knew eventually they’d come to visit—they being his grandchildren. Over the years the kids learned to visit his nightstand as soon as they arrived. He could have put all that spare change in a coin bank or even stored it away in a savings account. But he didn’t. He delighted in leaving it there for the little ones, the precious guests in his home.

A similar mindset is what’s expressed in Leviticus 23 when it comes to bringing in the harvest from the land. God, via Moses, told the people something quite counterintuitive: not to “reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest” (v. 22). Essentially, He said, “Leave a little behind.” This instruction reminded the people that God was behind the harvest in the first place, and that He used His people to provide for those of little account (the strangers in the land).

Such thinking is definitely not the norm in our world. But it’s exactly the kind of mindset that will characterize the grateful sons and daughters of God. He delights in a generous heart. And that often comes through you and me. By: John Blase (Reprinted by

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What's your first reaction to the thought of "leaving a little behind"? What's one way you could practice such thankful generosity toward the poor or the strangers in your life?

Loving God, thank You for Your provision in my life. Give me eyes to see ways in which I can share with others, especially those poor and in need.

### Leviticus 23:23 Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### [Happy New Year!](#)

Rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful. —Joel 2:13

Today's Scripture : Joel 2:12-17

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is regarded as the anniversary of the day that God created the world. The celebration begins with a blast of the shofar (ram's horn) to announce that the God who created the world is still the One ruling it. The blowing of the horn also begins a 10-day period of self-examination and repentance leading to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:23-32; Numbers 29:1-6).

The prophet Joel urged people not to just go through the motions of repentance, but to turn from their sins and obey God (Joel 2:13). In his day, tearing garments was a sign of sorrow for sin. It made a good show, but it didn't impress God. He was more concerned with their hearts.

Especially interesting is the basis for Joel's appeal. It wasn't only to avoid God's wrath, but also to enjoy God's grace, compassion, and love. Sometimes we think of God as being heavy-handed with punishment and tight-fisted with mercy. The words of Joel remind us that the opposite is true. The Lord is slow to punish and eager to forgive.

There's no better way to celebrate God's creation than to let Him re-create your heart through faith in Jesus the Messiah and turn your desires toward Him. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When I tried to cover my sin,  
My guilt I could not shake;  
But when I sought Your mercy, Lord,  
My sin I did forsake.  
—Hess

Confession is the key that opens the door to forgiveness.

### Leviticus 23:24 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

- **Seventh:** Nu 10:10 Nu 29:1-6 1Chr 15:28 2Chr 5:13 Ezra 3:6 Ps 81:1-4 Ps 98:6 Isa 27:13 1Co 15:52 1Th 4:16
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Shofar - Symbol of Rosh Hashanah or Yom Teruah

## FEAST OF TRUMPETS ROSH HASHANAH

**HCSB** - "Tell the Israelites: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you are to have a day of complete rest, commemoration and jubilation-- a sacred assembly.

**NET** "Tell the Israelites, 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you must have a complete rest, a memorial announced by loud horn blasts, a holy assembly.

**NJB** 'Speak to the Israelites and say: "The first day of the seventh month will be a day of rest for you, of remembrance and acclamation, a sacred assembly.

**Young's Literal** 'Speak unto the sons of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first of the month, ye have a Sabbath, a memorial of shouting, a holy convocation;

**In the seventh month on the first of the month** - First of **Tishri**. The seventh month marked the end of Israel's agricultural year and beginning of a new one (for it was the time they had "gathered in the crops of the land" - Lev 23:39). It was a time when physical work was considerably lessened, so that it provided a good time for some "work" on their spirituality! Have you set aside some times to "cease striving" (Ps 46:10-**Spurgeon**) and to focus on God through His Word? And the 3 Fall festivals were in some ways also more solemn than the feasts in the Spring. In fact in modern Judaism, the time of the 3 Fall feasts is known as "High Holidays" or "High Holy Days" or more properly as "Days of Awe" (Yamin Noraim)

**Mitch Glaser** - The restrictions were not as stringent as those on the weekly Sabbath or the Day of Atonement, but regular duties and everyday jobs could not be carried out. The preoccupations of daily life receded into the background as all thoughts turned to the days ahead, to the coming Day of Atonement.

**Rest** (**07677**)(**shabbathon** from **shabath** = to cease, desist, rest) most often meant a time to rest, a special holiday, a day of rest, a Sabbath feast. Every used of **shabbathon** is translated in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** with the noun **anapausis**, which means a ceasing from activity (an interruption) or a resting from labor or carrying burdens (used by Jesus in Mt 11:29).

**Shabbathon** - 10v - translated in **NAS** as complete rest(4), rest(4), sabbath observance(1), sabbatical(1), solemn rest(1).

Exodus 16:23 then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a **sabbath observance** (Shabbathon), a holy sabbath (shabbath) to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning."

Exodus 31:15 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath (shabbath) of **complete rest**, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 35:2 "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy day, a sabbath (shabbath) of **complete rest** to the LORD; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

Leviticus 16:31 "It is to be a sabbath (shabbath) of **solemn rest** for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute.

Leviticus 23:3 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath (shabbath) of **complete rest**, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a sabbath (shabbath) to the LORD in all your dwellings.

24 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have **arest**, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

32 "It is to be a sabbath (shabbath) of complete **rest** to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your sabbath (shabbath)."

39 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a **rest** on the first day and a **rest** on the eighth day.

Leviticus 25:4 but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath (shabbath)**rest**, a sabbath (shabbath) to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard.

5 'Your harvest's after growth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a **sabbatical** year.

**'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation - Bush on a reminder by blowing** - "Heb. זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה zikron teruâh, which the Chal. renders a memorial of shouting. As the word in the original for memorial has the sense of celebrating or commemorating with praise, the import of the language undoubtedly is, 'A festival for commemorating or praising God with the sound of trumpets.' It was observed with great solemnity, the trumpets sounding from sun-rise to sun-set. The priest who sounded the first trumpet, began with the usual prayer, 'Blessed be God who hath sanctified us by his precepts,' &c., subjoining, 'Blessed be God who hath hitherto preserved us in life, and brought us unto this time.' After this the people repeated with a loud voice the following words from Ps. 88:15: 'Blessed is the people who know the

joyful sound,' &c. As the feast of new moons was the sanctifying of each month, so the feast of trumpets was the sanctifying of each year, and a reminding of the Israelites that all their times were in God's hand. How rational and dignified was this conduct throughout the land of Judea, when compared with the general practice of other nations! For, instead of making the new year a day of devotion, it is commonly a day of idleness and dissipation. At the present day, as we are told by Calmet, Leo of Modena, Buxtorf, and Basnage, the Jews are accustomed on this evening to wish one another a good year, to make better cheer than ordinary, and to sound the trumpet thirty times successively. During this feast, which lasts, it seems, the first two days of the year, business is suspended, and they hold, by tradition, that on this day God particularly judges the actions of the foregoing year, and disposes the events of the year following. Wherefore, on the first days of the foregoing month, or eight days at least before the feast of trumpets, they generally apply themselves to works of penitence, and the evening before the feast many of them receive 39 lashes by way of discipline. On the first evening of the year, and which precedes the first day of Tizri (for their evening precedes their morning,) as they return from the synagogue they say to one another, 'May you be written in a good year;' to which the other answers, 'And you also.' On their return home, they serve up at table honey and unleavened bread, and whatever may signify a plentiful and happy year. Some of them, on the morning of these two feasts, go to the synagogue clothed in white, in token of purity and penitence. Among the G. r. man Jews, some wear the habit which they have appointed for their burial, and this is done as a mortification. On this day they repeat in the synagogues several appropriate prayers and benedictions. They take the Pentateuch very solemnly from its chest, and call upon five persons to read the portion which describes the sacrifice that was appointed for that day; then they twenty times sound a horn, sometimes very slowly, and at other times quickly, to remind them, as they explain it, of the judgments of God, to intimidate sinners, and induce them to repent. After prayers they return to their houses, to take some refreshment, and spend the rest of the day in hearing sermons, and in other exercises of devotion. The two days of the feast being observed exactly in the same manner, a more particular description of the latter would be unnecessary. It may, however, be remarked, with respect to their preparation for the feast, that many of the Jews plunge themselves in cold water, confessing, as they descend into it, their numerous sins, and beating their breasts; and they plunge themselves over the head, that they may appear entirely clean before God, for they think that, on this day, God assembles his council, or his angels, and that he opens his book to judge all men. Three sorts of books, they imagine, are opened; viz. the book of life for the just; the book of death for the wicked; and the book of a middle state, for such as are neither very good nor very bad. In the two books of life and death they conceive there are two kinds of pages, one for this life, and the other for the next; for it often happens that the wicked are not punished in this life according to their demerits, whereas the just suffer severely, as if they had incurred the displeasure of God. This conduct of the Almighty is the reason why no one can be sure of his state, but is uncertain whether he be worthy to be loved or hated. With respect to the middle class, they think that they are not written down any where, for God delays it till the day of annual expiation, which is the tenth day after, to see if they will reform; and then their sentence is fixed either for life or death. Such are the ceremonies with which the modern Jews are said to observe the feast of trumpets; but it should ever be recollected, that these ceremonies are far from being universal; for in countries where superstition prevails, they insensibly become tinged with it, and in countries where a more rational mode of thinking is general, they as naturally adopt a more rational ritual.

**Reminder** (memorial) ([02146](#))(**zikkaron** from **zakar** = to remember) means a memorial, a remembrance (with an implication of honor, worship, and celebration), a record, a reminder. That by which the memory of a person or thing is preserved. Something that keeps remembrance vivid. A **memorial** is a monument, statue, holiday, or ritual that serves as a remembrance or reminder of a person or an event. The Feast of the Passover was a memorial of God's sparing the firstborn of the Israelites in Egypt and of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Ex. 12:14). Twelve stones served to remind Israel of God's bringing them into the Promised Land (Josh 4:7, cp Josh 4:9) The two engraved stones upon the shoulder pieces of the high priest's ephod were stones of memorial (Ex. 28:12 cp names engraved upon the jewels of breastplate Ex 28:29). In Numbers 5:15, the sacrifice in the case of jealousy was called a memorial because it brought iniquity to remembrance! Zikkaron also referred to a record as a memorial or thing to be remembered (Ex. 17:14; Mal. 3:16).

**Another** Hebrew word for **Memorial** ([0234](#)) = **azkarah**

**Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **azkarah** with the noun **mnemosunon** - a memorial (that by which the memory of any person or thing is preserved) and so a remembrance. It also speaks of something that is done that causes someone not to be forgotten (**I wonder how often in the day I "forget" God?**) (Mt 26:13) **Mnemosunon** is also used of prayers recorded or kept in mind by God. "Your (Peter, context - Acts 10:1-3) prayers and alms have ascended as a **memorial** before God" (Acts 10.4) **Vine** adds that **mnemosunon** "denotes "a memorial," that which keeps alive the memory of someone or something (from **mnemon**, "mindful"), Matthew 26:13; Mark 14:9; Acts 10:4. ([Memorial - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#))

**THOUGHT** - Note that in many of the uses, this reminder does not refer simply to a recollection of something, but to a recollection or recall which affects one's present feelings, thoughts and actions! As an aside how often do you (I) pause to "count" (recollect) our blessings (those things in our life where we experienced the Lord's hand in a powerful way, be it a deliverance from danger or distress or a sense of His comforting presence and power? O dear God, help our short memories of Your abundant



lovingkindnesses, goodness and graces in and through Christ. Amen

**Zikkaron** - 22v - translated in **NAS** - memorable sayings(1), memorial(12), records(1), remembrance(4), reminder(5), sign(1).

Exodus 12:14 'Now this day (Passover) will be a **memorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.

Exodus 13:9 "And it (observance of the feast of unleavened bread - it was not actual hand or forehead reminders -- although such was the case in De 6:8, 11:18) shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a **reminder** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) on your forehead, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt.

Exodus 17:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this in a book as **amemorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

Exodus 28:12 "You shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of **memorial** for the sons of Israel, and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for a **memorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten).

29 "Aaron shall carry the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment over his heart when he enters the holy place, for a **memorial** before the LORD continually.

Exodus 30:16 "You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a **memorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

Exodus 39:7 And he placed them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as **memorial** stones for the sons of Israel, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Leviticus 23:24 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a **reminder** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

Numbers 5:15 the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring as an offering for her one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall not pour oil on it nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of **memorial** (zikkaron), a reminder (zakar) of iniquity.

18 'The priest shall then have the woman stand before the LORD and let the hair of the woman's head go loose, and place the grain offering of **memorial** in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy, and in the hand of the priest is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse.

Numbers 10:10 "Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a **reminder** of you before your God. I am the LORD your God."

Numbers 16:40 as a **reminder** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) to the sons of Israel that no layman who is not of the descendants of Aaron should come near to burn incense before the LORD; so that he will not become like Korah and his company-- just as the LORD had spoken to him through Moses.

Numbers 31:54 So Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it to the tent of meeting as a **memorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) for the sons of Israel before the LORD.

Joshua 4:7 then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a **memorial** to the sons of Israel forever."

Nehemiah 2:20 So I answered them and said to them, "The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or **memorial** (**Lxx = mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) in Jerusalem."

Esther 6:1 During that night the king could not sleep so he gave an order to bring the book of **records**, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

Job 13:12 "Your **memorable** sayings are proverbs of ashes, Your defenses are defenses of clay.

Ecclesiastes 1:11 There is no **remembrance** (Lxx = mneme = memory, recollection) of earlier things (context of Eccl 1:3-11 focuses on human achievement = earlier things); And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no **remembrance** Among those who will come later still.

Ecclesiastes 2:16 For there is no lasting **remembrance** (Lxx = mneme = memory, recollection) of the wise man as with the fool, inasmuch as in the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die!

**Comment:** This raw truth should make us all the more diligent to redeem the time and store up for ourselves treasures in heaven rather than treasures on earth, for the world is passing away and even its lusts (strong desires).

Isaiah 57:8 "Behind the door and the doorpost You have set up your **sign** (Lxx = mnemosunon = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten); Indeed, far removed from Me, you have uncovered yourself, And have gone up and made your bed wide. And you have made an agreement for yourself with them, You have loved their bed, You have looked on their manhood.

Zechariah 6:14 "Now the crown will become a **reminder** in the temple of the LORD to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen the son of Zephaniah.

Malachi 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of **remembrance** (Lxx = **mnemosunon** = a memorial, of what is done that causes someone to not be forgotten) was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name.

**Memorial** - That which preserves the memory of something; any thing that serves to keep in memory. A monument is a memorial of a deceased person, or of an event. The Lord's supper is a memorial of the death and sufferings of Christ. Any note or hint to assist the memory. (Webster-1828) Manser adds that a memorial is "An object, institution or custom established or founded as a reminder of an important person or event held to be worth remembering in the life of the community." (Dictionary of Bible Themes)

**Blowing [of trumpets]** (see word study on "blowing" below) - **NET Note** - Although the term for "**horn**" does not occur here, allowing for the possibility that vocal "shouts" of acclamation are envisioned... the "blast" of the shofar (a trumpet made from a ram's "horn") is most likely what is intended. On this occasion, the loud blasts on the horn announced the coming of the new year on the first day of the seventh month.

## HOLY CONVOCATION

**Holy convocation** - Not just any assembly but a holy (qodesh; Lxx **-hagios**) assembly, one set apart from what is profane and common.

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**Convocation** (04744)(**miqra'**) is an assembly of persons. Convocation is from Latin com = together and vocare = to call.

This instruction in Lev 23:24 is amplified in the book of Numbers...

Now in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall also have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for blowing trumpets (Heb = = blowing, no definite word for "trumpets" in Hebrew. Lxx has "*hemera onmasia*" = "a day of shouting"). 2 'And you shall offer a burnt offering as a soothing aroma to the LORD: one bull, one ram, [and] seven male lambs one year old without defect; 3 also their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths [of an] [ephah] for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, 4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs. 5 'And [offer] one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you, 6 besides the burnt offering of the new moon, and its grain offering, and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their libations, according to their ordinance, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD. (Nu 29:1-6)

"Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and **on the first [days] of your months, you**

**shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings**, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the LORD your God.” (Nu 10:10)

**Comment:** Note that the beginning of every month was signaled by the blowing of a trumpet. And why? The text says so that they might be remembered before God!

**Dennis Cole** explains the phrase **"as a reminder of you before your God"**: Whole burnt offerings for consecrative atonement and peace offerings for community celebration were accompanied by the long blast of the silver trumpets during the pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Pentecost (Shavuoth), and tabernacles (Booths), and during the monthly New Moon rites. In the context of battle, **the trumpets served as a prayer** by which the covenant relationship between God and Israel was invoked, and thus they reminded soldiers that God remembers and delivers his people. (The battle context is echoed in the war of Abijah vs. Jeroboam I [2Chr 13:12–18]. Victory came as they relied on the Lord for the victory rather than on their military prowess.) The covenant themes of remembrance, deliverance, and blessing provide continuity with other portions of the Pentateuch. These themes appear from Noah (Gen 8:1; 9:1–17), to Abraham (Ge 19:29), to Rachel (Ge 30:22), to the Israelites in Egypt (Ex 2:24), and even into the realm of exile (Lev 26:40–45). The connection between festival rejoicing and battling against one’s enemies echoes the words of the covenant reiteration in Ex 34:22–24. The concluding phrase of the Sinai cycles, “I am Yahweh your God,” sets forth in profoundly plain terms the sovereignty of God over the nation. As Harrison notes, “He is the supreme Lord and ruler of His people Israel. The nation is the visible expression of His existence, personality, and saving power. Without Him they are meaningless, but they have been chosen specifically out of His abundant love to be a witness to the surrounding nations because of their constitution as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod 19:6).” (New American Commentary - Numbers)

**Josephus** describes the **trumpets** that Moses instructed Israel to blow...

He (Moses) also invented a kind of trumpet, making it of silver, and it is as follows: it had a length a little short of a cubit; it is a narrow tube, a little thicker than a flute, and having a width sufficient for the mouthpiece for the reception of breath, terminating in a bell very similarly to trumpets. It is called asosra in the tongue of the Hebrews. (Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary, Volume 3: Judean Antiquities Books 1-4)

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**Question:** [What is a holy convocation?](#)

**Answer:** A convocation is a summoned assembly. The holy convocations commanded in the Mosaic Law were held on special religious days that required a gathering of God’s people. Some translations call the holy convocations in the Law “sacred assemblies.”

Some **examples of holy convocations** in the Bible are **Sabbaths** (Leviticus 23:2–3); **Pentecost** (Leviticus 23:21); **Passover** (Exodus 12:16; Leviticus 23:7); and the **Feasts of Weeks, Tabernacles, and Trumpets** (Numbers 28:26; 29:1; Leviticus 23:35–36; 23:24). The **Feast of Unleavened Bread** called for two holy convocations, one on the first day and the other on the seventh day (Ex 34:18). Every year on the tenth day of the seventh month was the Day of Atonement; Israel was commanded to fast on this day and to gather at the tabernacle or temple. This was called the “holy convocation” (Leviticus 23:27; Numbers 29:7ESV).

Today, the word convocation used in religious contexts is often associated with the gathering of a synod, a council that meets for the purpose of deciding upon doctrines or the application of doctrines within an organization. A convocation can be an ecclesiastical meeting of importance, an academic meeting led by a university, a gathering of alumni at a college, a meeting of governing officials to fill a chancellorship or other high office, or simply a graduation ceremony. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**A reminder by blowing of trumpets** (Literally = “a memorial of shouting”) - As noted **"of trumpets"** is added by the translators. However, the **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates the Hebrew text with the noun **salpigx** which is the Greek word for a *trumpet*. This same Greek word is first used Exodus 19, the blowing of this **trumpet** being associated with “thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain (Mt Sinai) and a very loud **trumpet** sound.” (Ex 19:16, cp Ex 19:19, 20:18) The Hebrew word for **"trumpet"** in Ex 19:16 is **shophar** (07782). Therefore it would be reasonable to translate Lev 23:34 by adding the phrase **"of trumpets"** which is most likely an allusion to the blowing of the shophar . There is however one **caveat** -- There is another word translated **"trumpet"** = **hasosra** [026809 - [click for all uses](#)] and it is also translated in the Lxx with **salpigx**. However, this Hebrew word is not used in Exodus or Leviticus so it is probably not the trumpet intended in Lev 23:24. The only use of the Hebrew word for **shophar** in Leviticus is found in Leviticus 25:9 in a reference to the Day of Atonement in the context of the [Year of Jubilee](#).

You shall **then** (Don't miss this **"expression of time"** - Always ask "When is then?" Answer - Read Lev 25:8) sound a **ram's horn (shophar; Lxx = salpigx** = Greek for trumpet) abroad on the tenth day of the seventh

month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land.

**Blowing** (0929)(**teruah** from **rua** = to shout, raise a sound, cry out) refers to a shout or blast denoting war, alarm or joy.

**William White** - There are four distinct senses in which (**teruah**) is used. It is used for "**signal**" (Lev 25:9), the "**sound of the trumpet**" for the blowing of the shofar on the day of atonement. It is used for "**alarm**" as in case of attack (Joshua 6:5; Jeremiah 4:19). In addition, it is used for the **trumpet in the tumult of the battle**, (Amos 2:2). Lastly, the noun is used for the exultation of **praise** to God, (Psalm 150:3). (Online - [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#)).

**Baker** on **teruah** - A feminine noun indicating a shout of joy; a shout of alarm, a battle cry. It refers to a loud, sharp shout or cry in general, but it often indicates a shout of joy or victory (1 Sam. 4:5, 6); a great shout anticipating a coming event (Josh. 6:5, 20). It can refer to the noise or signal put out by an instrument (Lev. 23:24; 25:9). Amos used the word to refer to war cries (Amos 1:14; 2:2; cf. Job 39:25; Zeph. 1:16). The Lord puts shouts of joy into His people (Job 8:21; 33:26). ([The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament](#))

**Teruah** - 32v translated in NAS as - alarm(5), battle cry(2), blowing(1), blowing trumpets(1), joy(1), joyful sound(1), resounding(1), shout(10), shout of alarm(1), shout of joy(1), shouted(1), shouting(4), shouts of joy(1), signal(1), trumpet blast(1), war cries(2), war cry(1).

Leviticus 23:24 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

Numbers 10:5 "But when you **blow** (**Lxx = salpizo** = blow a trumpet) an alarm, the camps that are pitched on the east side shall set out. 6 "When you **blow** an alarm the second time, the camps that are pitched on the south side shall set out; an alarm is to be blown for them to set out.

Numbers 23:21 "He has not observed misfortune in Jacob; Nor has He seen trouble in Israel; The LORD his God is with him, And the **shout** of a king is among them.

Numbers 29:1 'Now in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall also have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for **blowing trumpets**.

Numbers 31:6 Moses sent them, a thousand from each tribe, to the war, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war with them, and the holy vessels and the trumpets for the **alarm** (**Lxx = onmasia** = signal, shouting) in his hand.

Joshua 6:5 "It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great **shout** (**Lxx = anakrazo** = cry out, Mk 1:23, Lk 23:18); and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead."

Joshua 6:20 So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets; and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great **shout** (**Lxx = alalage** = loud noise or sound) and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city.

1 Samuel 4:5 As the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great **shout** (**Lxx = phone** = sound), so that the earth resounded. 6 When the Philistines heard the noise of the **shout**, they said, "What does the noise of this great **shout** in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they understood that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp.

2 Samuel 6:15 So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

1 Chronicles 15:28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with **shouting** (**Lxx = krauge** = several voices speaking loudly, shouting), and with sound of the horn, with trumpets, with loud-sounding cymbals, with harps and lyres.

2 Chronicles 13:12 "Now behold, God is with us at our head and His priests with the **signal** (**Lxx = onmasia** = signal, shouting) trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O sons of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you will not succeed."

2 Chronicles 15:14 Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with **shouting** (**Lxx = phone** = sound), with trumpets and with horns.

Ezra 3:11 They sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, saying, "For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever." And all the people shouted with a great **shout** (**Lxx = phone** = sound) when they

praised the LORD because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12 Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many **shouted** aloud for joy,<sup>13</sup> so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the **shout** of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud **shout**, and the sound was heard far away.

Job 8:21 "He will yet fill your mouth with laughter And your lips with **shouting**.

Job 33:26 Then he will pray to God, and He will accept him, That he may see His face with **joy**, And He may restore His righteousness to man.

Job 39:25 "As often as the trumpet sounds he says, 'Aha!' And he scents the battle from afar, And the thunder of the captains and the **war cry**.

Psalms 27:6 And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me, And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with **shouts of joy** (**Lxx = alagmos** =shouting); I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

Psalms 33:3 Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a **shout of joy** (**Lxx = alagmos** =shouting).

Psalms 47:5 God has ascended with a **shout** (**Lxx = alagmos** =shouting), The LORD, with the sound of a trumpet.

Psalms 89:15 How blessed are the people who know the **joyful sound** (**Lxx = alagmos** =shouting)! O LORD, they walk in the light of Your countenance.

Psalms 150:5 Praise Him with loud cymbals; Praise Him with **resounding** (**Lxx = alagmos** = shouting) cymbals.

Jeremiah 4:19 My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart! My heart is pounding in me; I cannot be silent, Because you have heard, O my soul, The sound of the trumpet, The **alarm** (**Lxx = krauge** = several voices speaking loudly) of war.

Jeremiah 20:16 But let that man be like the cities Which the LORD overthrew without relenting, And let him hear an outcry in the morning And a **shout of alarm** (**Lxx = alagmos** =shouting) at noon;

Jeremiah 49:2 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "That I will cause a **trumpet blast** (**Lxx = akoutizo** = cause to hear) of war to be heard Against Rabbah of the sons of Ammon; And it will become a desolate heap, And her towns will be set on fire. Then Israel will take possession of his possessors," Says the LORD.

Ezekiel 21:22 "Into his right hand came the divination, 'Jerusalem,' to set battering rams, to open the mouth for slaughter, to lift up the voice with a **battle cry**, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build a siege wall.

Amos 1:14 "So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah And it will consume her citadels Amid **war cries** (**Lxx = krauge** = several voices speaking loudly) on the day of battle, And a storm on the day of tempest.

Amos 2:2 "So I will send fire upon Moab And it will consume the citadels of Kerioth; And Moab will die amid tumult, With **war cries** (**Lxx = krauge** = several voices speaking loudly) and the sound of a trumpet.

Zephaniah 1:16 A day of trumpet and **battle cry** (**Lxx = krauge** = several voices speaking loudly) Against the fortified cities And the high corner towers.

**Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah = "Head of the Year")** (Lev 23:23-25; Nu 29:1-6) - Note that neither the name "Feast of Trumpets" nor "Rosh Hashanah" are found in Scripture, in contrast to other fall feasts such as "Day of Atonement" and "Feast of Tabernacles. The name originates from the instruction "a reminder by blowing" with the word "*trumpets*" (or shofar) being implied (as explained above).

- [Shofar - The 1901 Jewish Encyclopedia](#)
- [Shofar—Call to Action - High Holidays](#)
- [Shophar - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)
- [Shofar - Wikipedia](#)

**Mitch Glaser**, a Jewish believer, and president of Chosen People Ministry, explains that "When the [Month of Tishri](#) arrives, the feast of **Rosh Hashanah** begins the sober countdown to **Yom Kippur** known as the **Ten Days of Awe**. During these days, the Jewish people are commanded by the rabbis to begin the process of repentance: "The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel:

Remake yourselves by repentance during the ten days between New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement, and on the Day of Atonement I will hold you guiltless, regarding you as a newly made creature" (Pesikta Rabbati 40:5)... The **Ten Days of Repentance** conclude on the tenth of Tishri (Yom Kippur). A moving confession of sins (the Viddui) is recited ten times on the Day of Atonement to coincide with the tradition that the Temple high priest pronounced the name of God ten times when he invoked divine pardon (Yoma 39b). Yom Kippur also recalls the Ten Commandments, which, according to Jewish tradition, are personified and serve as advocates before the supreme judge on behalf of the children of Israel. Judaism teaches that on the first day of Tishri, the New Year, a heavenly judgment takes place; the sentence for the coming year hangs in the balance during the next ten days and is finally sealed on the Day of Atonement. During these ten days, the religious often fast in contrition until noon, except on the Sabbath and on the eve of Yom Kippur, days on which fasting is prohibited. ([The Fall Feasts Of Israel- Mitch Glaser, Zhava Glaser](#))

The first day of the 7th month (Tishri) marked the Feast of Trumpets, which included a Sabbath rest, the blowing of trumpets, and a holy convocation. As as aside the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Feast of Tabernacles speak of events associated with the Second Coming of Christ. This may be why these three Fall feasts are separated by a long interval from the four Spring feasts.

## FOLLOWING NOTES FROM JUDAISM 101

by Tracey R Rich

### ROSH HASHANAH

**Judaism 101** says "[Rosh Hashanah](#) occurs on the first and second days of [Tishri](#). In Hebrew, **Rosh Hashanah** means, literally, "head of the year" or "first of the year." Rosh Hashanah is commonly known as the *Jewish New Year*. This name is somewhat deceptive, because there is little similarity between Rosh Hashanah, one of the holiest days of the year, and the American midnight drinking bash and daytime football game. There is, however, one important similarity between the Jewish New Year and the American one: Many Americans use the New Year as a time to plan a better life, making "resolutions." Likewise, the Jewish New Year is a time to begin introspection, looking back at the mistakes of the past year and planning the changes to make in the new year. More on this concept at **Days of Awe** (see below)...

**Another popular practice** of the holiday ([Rosh Hashanah](#)) is **Tashlikh** ("casting off"). We walk to flowing water, such as a creek or river, on the afternoon of the first day and empty our pockets into the river, symbolically casting off our sins. Small pieces of bread are commonly put in the pocket to cast off. This practice is not discussed in the Bible, but is a long-standing custom. Tashlikh is normally observed on the afternoon of the first day, before afternoon services. When the first day occurs on Shabbat, many synagogues observe Tashlikh on Sunday afternoon, to avoid carrying (the bread) on Shabbat." ([Judaism 101- Rosh Hashanah](#))

**Walter Kaiser** comments on the "**Casting Off**" of sins described above - "The last three verses of this book (Micah 7:18-20) are linked with the book of Jonah for the afternoon reading in the synagogue on Yom Kipper, the "Day of Atonement." **Once every year, on Ros Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the orthodox Jew goes to a stream or river and symbolically empties his sins from his pockets into the water as he recites Micah 7:18-20 (Micah 7:18-20 Commentary).** This is the **Tashlich service**, named after the word "You will cast." (shalak) It symbolizes the fact that God can and will take our sins, wash them down the streams of running water and bury them deep in the depths of the ocean. God not only forgives our sins, He also forgets them. If some object that God cannot forget our sins if He is omniscient, let it be remembered that what He does when He forgets our sins is remember them against us no more!

### DAYS OF AWE

**Days of Awe** = The ten days starting with Rosh Hashanah and ending with Yom Kippur are commonly known as the Days of Awe [Yamim Noraim] or the Days of Repentance. This is a time for serious introspection, a time to consider the sins of the previous year and repent before [Yom Kippur](#). One of the ongoing themes of the Days of Awe is the concept that G-d has "books" that he writes our names in, writing down who will live and who will die, who will have a good life and who will have a bad life, for the next year. These books are written in on Rosh Hashanah, but our actions during the Days of Awe can alter G-d's decree. The actions that change the decree are "teshuvah, tefilah and tzedakah," repentance, prayer, good deeds (usually, charity). These "books" are sealed on Yom Kippur. This concept of writing in books is the source of the common greeting during this time is "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year." Among the customs of this time, it is common to seek reconciliation with people you may have wronged during the course of the year. The Talmud maintains that Yom Kippur atones only for sins between man and G-d. To atone for sins against another person, you must first seek reconciliation with that person, righting the wrongs you committed against them if possible. ([Judaism 101- Days of Awe](#))

### KAPPAROT

**Another custom observed during this time is kapparot.** This is rarely practiced today, and is observed in its true form only by

Chasidic and occasionally Orthodox Jews. Basically, you purchase a live fowl, and on the morning before Yom Kippur you wave it over your head reciting a prayer asking that the fowl be considered **atonement for sins**. The fowl is then slaughtered and given to the poor (or its value is given). Some Jews today simply use a bag of money instead of a fowl. Most Reform and Conservative Jews have never even heard of this practice. ([Judaism 101- Days of Awe](#))

**M R De Haan** comments related to "**Kapparot**" - What is the future hope of those who rejecting Jesus as Messiah—still have no temple, no priest, and no Yom Kippur sacrifice to assure them of God's mercy and forgiveness? Can they find assurance in their repentance, prayer, and good deeds, hoping that God will forgive? Moses said: "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." (Lev. 17:11). **After the temple was destroyed in AD 70, the rabbis from the known world gathered for a council—the Yavneh Council.** Their purpose was to decide the future of Jewish worship without priesthood or sacrifices. The religious customs established at Yavneh are the basis of modern rabbinic Judaism and have remained relatively unchanged over nearly 2,000 years. Rabbi Yochanan Ben-Zakkai, the most influential member of the council and still a widely studied commentator, appears to have exhibited little confidence in the new synagogue system's ability to save his soul from judgment. On his deathbed, the rabbi is quoted as saying, "*Now I am being led before the supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who lives and endures for ever and ever. If He is angry with me, He is angry forever. If He imprisons me, He imprisons me forever. If He puts me to death, He puts me to death forever. I cannot persuade Him with words or bribe Him with money. Moreover, there are two ways ahead of me: one leads to Paradise and the other to Hell, and I do not know which one will take me. How can I do anything but weep?*" (B'rakhot 28b Talmud). Yet, in fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, there is evidence declaring that God has not left us without hope or atonement. He has not left us devoid of hope, without sacrifice, or without a way of apprehending His mercy. In the pictures of the Akeida, and in the pictures of the sin offering of Yom Kippur, we can see the character and foreshadowing of God's Messiah, our assurance of salvation. These pictures are not just remarkable parallels or coincidences. They are God's revelation to Israel—and to all nations. ([For the complete discussion see booklet - The Holidays Of God- The Spring Feasts](#))

**Mitch Glaser** comments on the Kapparot - Another custom that was practiced by the masses but has largely become a thing of the past (except among orthodox communities) is the ritual of kapparot. In remembrance of the ancient Temple sacrifice, a pious Jew would take a white fowl (a rooster for males and a hen for females) and wave it over his head three times, while reciting the following formula: "*This is a substitute for me; this is in exchange for me; this is my atonement. This cock (or hen) shall be consigned to death, while I shall have a long and pleasant life and peace.*" The bird was then slaughtered and given to the poor or eaten for the evening meal and its value contributed to the less fortunate. Some religious modern-day Jews, while not actually performing this ritual, nevertheless participate in a less bloody form: a handkerchief with money tied in it is swung around the head three times while a similar phrase is recited. The ceremony of kapparot is a **substitutionary sacrifice**. That is precisely the reason learned rabbis have opposed it through the ages. Faced with the immense popularity of the tradition, yet knowing that the Bible forbade sacrifice outside of the Temple, the rabbis attempted to limit and control the similarities between the kapparot ceremony and the Temple sacrifices. Nevertheless, in the minds of many pious Jews, the kapparot filled the vacuum left by the destruction of the Temple. It points to the continuing role of **substitutionary atonement** in Judaism. (**Ed comment:** And this of course points to the Messiah, God in the flesh, the perfect Passover Lamb [1Cor 5:7, 1Pe 1:18-19], the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world [Jn 1:29], and although He "knew no sin," He was made to be "sin on our behalf" [Our Substitute = He died in our place in time that we would not have to die in eternity], "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." [2Cor 5:21]) ([The Fall Feasts Of Israel- Mitch Glaser, Zhava Glaser](#))

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#### QUESTION - [What is the Feast of Trumpets?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Feast of Trumpets marked the beginning of ten days of consecration and repentance before God. It is one of seven Jewish feasts or festivals appointed by the LORD and one of three feasts that occur in the autumn. The Feast of Trumpets began on the first day (at the new moon) of the seventh month. Its name comes from the command to blow trumpets (Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1-6). It is also called *Rosh Hashanah*, which means "Head of the Year," because it marks the beginning of the Jewish civil calendar. During this celebration, no kind of work was to be performed, but burnt offerings and a sin offering were to be brought before the Lord.

In the Leviticus passage, the words *trumpet blasts* are a translation of the Hebrew word *teruah*, which means "a shout" or "a

blowing.” It appears that the shofar (ram’s horn) was to be blown at this time, as it was on the other new moons (Psalm 81:3). Jewish tradition indicates that both the ram’s horn and the priestly silver horns (*hazozerah*) were used in the Feast of Trumpets.

The Feast of Trumpets was important for several reasons.

First, it commemorated the end of the agricultural and festival year.

Also, the Day of Atonement fell on the tenth day of this month, and the Festival of Booths began on the fifteenth day. The blowing of the trumpets on first day of the month heralded a solemn time of preparation for the Day of Atonement; this preparation time was called “Ten Days of Repentance” or the “Days of Awe.” The trumpet sound was an alarm of sorts and can be understood as a call to introspection and repentance.

The Feast of Trumpets, along with the other six festivals of the LORD, foreshadowed certain aspects of the ministry of Jesus Christ. The prophets linked the blowing of trumpets to the future Day of Judgment: “Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. It is close at hand” (Joel 2:1; see also Zephaniah 1:14, 16).

In the New Testament, we see that the [rapture of the church](#) will be accompanied by the sound of a trumpet (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Each of the judgments in Revelation 8-9 is also signaled by a trumpet. Just as the shofar called the Jewish nation to turn their attention to the Lord and ready themselves for the Day of Atonement, so will the “trump of God” call us to heaven and warn the world of coming judgment. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the true meaning of Rosh Hashanah?](#)**

**ANSWER** - One of the “appointed feasts of the LORD” given to Israel in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is known today as Rosh Hashanah, literally “Head of the Year.” We read about Rosh Hashanah in the [Torah](#), the Jewish Law found in the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the people of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of solemn rest, a memorial proclaimed with blast of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work, and you shall present a food offering to the LORD’” (Leviticus 23:23–25).

Rosh Hashanah, or the Jewish New Year, is also known as Yom Teruah or the Day of Trumpets. The word *teruah* means “to shout or make a noise,” so this holiday is marked by the blowing of the shofar or ram’s horn in Jewish synagogues around the world. Rosh Hashanah falls on the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishri on the Jewish calendar, which usually corresponds to September or October. It always falls on the seventh new moon of the Jewish year. After the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem in AD 70, even though this feast day falls on the seventh month of the Jewish religious calendar, it began to be called Rosh Hashanah and became the beginning of the Jewish civil calendar.

Rosh Hashanah begins a ten-day period leading up to the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. These ten days are called the *yomim nora'im* or Days of Awe in modern Judaism. The sounding of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah is a wake-up blast and a sobering reminder that the time is near for the Day of Atonement. It is a call to *teshuvah*, which is repentance and turning back to the LORD. These ten days are ones of great introspection, heart-searching and self-examination. The sound of the shofar for the Jew was, and still continues to be, a call to examine one’s life, to make amends with all those one may have wronged in the previous year, and to ask forgiveness for any vows one may have broken. So the primary theme of Rosh Hashanah is one of repentance.

During Rosh Hashanah a common greeting/blessing is “May your name be inscribed”—a wish for one’s name to be written in the book of life. Jewish people enjoy sweets on Rosh Hashanah: treats made with apples, honey, raisins, figs, and pomegranates. Eating sweet things symbolizes the desire for a “sweet” year; also included is the idea that the enjoyment of sweet things can help counter the sorrow associated with repentance. In the eating of pomegranates, some Rosh Hashanah celebrants express the wish that their good deeds will be as numerous as the seeds of the pomegranate. Others eat portions of the head of a fish or a sheep, symbolizing the desire to be “the head, not the tail” (see Deuteronomy 28:13).

According to rabbinic tradition, on Rosh Hashanah the destiny of the righteous and the wicked are sealed. The righteous are written into the Book of Life, and the wicked are written into the Book of Death, but most people won’t be written into either book. These are given the ten days until Yom Kippur to exercise repentance and self-examination and then seal their fate. Then, on the Day of Atonement, everyone has his or her name inscribed into one of the two books.

Like all of the Lord’s appointed days in the Hebrew Bible, Rosh Hashanah points Christians to an even greater reality. For those who have placed their faith in the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, we understand the true meaning of the call to repentance and of turning our hearts toward God. The God of the Bible indeed has a Book of Life and a Book of Death. The Bible clearly warns us that on the Day of Judgment, which is yet to come, anyone’s name not found in the Book of Life will reside in the lake of fire for all eternity



(Revelation 20:15).

For those who have placed their trust in the atoning work of Jesus through His life, death, burial, and resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:21), their names are already written into the Lamb's Book of Life. And now, even we believers in Jesus listen for that trumpet call, "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### Related Resources:

- [Is the last trumpet of 1 Thessalonians 4 the same as the seventh trumpet of Revelation? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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#### Leviticus 23:25 'You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD.'

- Lev 23:24-25, Num 29:1-6 Neh 8:2 Neh 8:9-12
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

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#### Leviticus 23:26 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

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**Leviticus 23:27 "On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD.**

- **tenth:** Lev 16:29,30 Lev 25:9 Nu 29:7-11
- **humble:** Lev 16:31 Nu 29:7 Ezr 8:21 Ps 35:13 Isa 58:5 Da 10:2,3 Zec 12:10 Acts 2:37,38 2Co 7:10,11 Jas 4:9
- **offering:** Lev 16:11,15,24
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

[Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur.](#)

## YOM KIPPUR "Yom ha-Kippurim" Day of Atonement

**On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD.** - Bush on **exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement**- This was properly an annual fast, and the only one prescribed by the law, however fasts may abound in the present calendar of the Jews. It occurred on the fifth day before the Feast of Tabernacles, or on the tenth of the seventh month, Tisri (October). On this day they were to abstain from all servile work, to take no food 'from evening to evening,' during which they were to 'afflict their souls.' The sacrificial services of this day were the most solemn in all the year, but as we have more fully considered the details of the festival in our Notes on the 16th chapter, it will be unnecessary to repeat them here.

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**Freeman** - This shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. The Great Day of Atonement took place on the tenth day of the seventh month, Tisri, corresponding to our October. It was a day of great solemnity, especially designated and kept as a fast day, (see Lev 23:27; Nu 29:7 ; comp. Ps. 35:13 Isa. 58:5,) and in later times was known by the name of The Fast. Acts 27:9. On this day the high priest, clad in plain white linen garments, brought for himself a young bullock for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt-offering; and for the people two young goats for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. The two goats were brought before the door of the Tabernacle, and by the casting of lots one was designated for sacrifice and the other for a scape-goat. The high priest then slaughtered the bullock and made a sin-offering for himself and family. He next entered the Most Holy Place for the first time, bearing a censer with burning coals, with which he filled the place with incense. Taking the blood of the slain bullock, he entered the Most Holy Place the second time, and there sprinkled

the blood before the mercy-seat. He next killed the goat which was for the people's sin-offering, and, entering the Most Holy Place the third time, sprinkled its blood as he had sprinkled that of the bullock. Some of the blood of the two animals was then put on the horns of the altar of incense, and sprinkled on the altar itself. After this the high priest, putting his hands on the head of the scapegoat, confessed the sins of the people, and then sent him off into the wilderness. He then washed himself, and changed his garments, arraying himself in the beautiful robes of his high office, and offered the two rams as burnt-offerings for himself and for the people. Lev 16. ([Manners and Customs 1875](#))

The "futility" of the **Day of Atonement** - Ever since the destruction of the Jewish Temple by the Romans in AD70, their required sacrifices have been arbitrarily eliminated, so that the observance of this day can have no "atoning" value for them in reality (See Hosea 3:4).

**Following is adapted from M R De Haan II** - The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts'" (Lev. 23:1-2). With these words, the Lord of Israel established an annual cycle of holidays that are still observed in Jewish communities all over the world. Whether these communities are Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform; whether they are Russian, Yemenite, or American, these feasts form a common thread in global Jewish culture. In the Hebrew language, the word for "My feasts," pronounced mo-a-deem, literally means "appointed times" or "appointed feasts." In Jewish culture these "appointed times of the Lord" are important for many reasons. These events, as listed in Leviticus 23, are part of a national system of "time-outs." Together they provide weekly, monthly, and yearly rests from the common routines of daily life. They also provide a preplanned schedule for reflection and worship. These "holidays of God" are sacred convocations that summoned a nation not only to the grandeur and majesty of the temple, but also to quiet and simple worship in the home. Together these "appointed times of the Lord" give every home, whether rich or poor, an occasion to remember the holiness, power, and longsuffering love of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It's important for us to understand, however, that this cycle of holidays is not just about Jewish culture. Even though they are linked to the harvest cycle of the land of Israel, and even though the festival calendar is used to retell stories of Jewish life and origins, these holidays provide a panorama of history that has strong implications for all of the families of the earth. Seen individually and together, these feasts paint a compelling picture of the past, present, and future work of a Messiah who is the source of life, hope, and peace for all the nations of the world.

As in the Spring Feasts, many Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus share the conviction that the first phase of Messiah's deliverance has been recorded on the center page of human history. According to a group of Jewish eyewitnesses, the plan of God was revealed during the holy days of **Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost**. With a sudden turn of events, the first four feasts of Israel took on the personality of a miracle worker who bore the marks of God's Messiah. On Passover, Jesus became the sacrificial Lamb whose blood marked all who believe in Him for deliverance. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, He died to take away our sin and to give us, in the place of our own efforts, the "bread" (life-sustaining provision) of His eternal presence. On the Feast of Firstfruits, He arose from the dead to show that it was by God's power that He carried out our rescue. Then 50 days later on the Feast of Pentecost (also known as the Feast of Weeks, or Shavuot), Jesus sent His Spirit to show His presence with all who are willing to stake their lives on Him.

**Yom Kippur** (literally "day of covering") falls on the tenth day of the month of Tishri and brings to a close the period of repentance begun on Rosh Hashanah. On this national Day of Atonement, the high priest of the temple used compelling and colorful ritual to show God's willingness to forgive the sins of the previous year. Seven days before Yom Kippur, every effort was taken to ensure that the high priest was kept in a state of ritual purity. On this day of days, he would undergo five immersions and have an entourage of about 500 Levites with him everywhere he went, to help guard him from anything that might render him "unclean." On every other day of the year, the high priest dressed in his formal uniform, which included the golden crown, colorful robes, a breastplate, and jewels inscribed with the names of the tribes of Israel. On the Day of Atonement, however, he set aside his normal splendor and wore only a white linen robe, which was symbolic of purity. Because the Day of Atonement was a day of sacrifice, the high priest's white linen robe was soon spattered with blood. To atone for his own sins, he sacrificed a bull before the Lord. Then to atone for the sins of the nation, the high priest took two kid goats and cast lots to determine their fate. Depending on how the lots fell, one of the goats was sacrificed as a sin offering for the nation. When this sacrificial goat was appointed, the high priest pronounced, "For Jehovah," and the throngs of worshipers would fall on their faces and call out, "Blessed be the Name; the glory of His kingdom is forever and ever." Then the goat was slain. The other goat, known as the Azazel, or scapegoat, became a second picture of national atonement. First the high priest symbolically placed the sins of the nation on the head of the live goat. He did this by laying both of his hands on the goat's head while confessing the sins of the people. Then, with the sins of the people on the head of the goat, the high priest sent the Azazel off into the wilderness. It was a dramatic picture of God's willingness to separate His people from their sins. In the second temple period (515 BC to AD 70), the scapegoat was led to a cliff and forced over the brink to make sure it didn't return. Then, only on this one day of the year, the high priest risked his life to carry the blood of the sacrificed animal into the Most Holy Place of the Lord's house of worship. Going behind the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, the high priest entered the presence of God to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the golden Mercy Seat that covered the Ark of the Covenant. If any aspect of the ritual was not fulfilled according to God's instructions (Lev. 16), the high priest could be struck dead.

Only when the high priest came out alive did the nation rejoice that for one more year God had accepted the sacrifice for their sins. An additional fact about the scapegoat is worth noting. In the second temple period, the Talmud records that the Levites tied a scarlet thread of wool around a horn of the Azazel. After the goat was driven off a cliff, witnesses were sent to examine the thread. For centuries, this thread is reported to have miraculously turned white, indicating that God had accepted their sacrifice and forgiven the nation of Israel. It was believed that this was in fulfillment of Isaiah 1:18, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The Jewish Talmud records, however, that 40 years before the destruction of the second temple, the thread ceased to turn white. Is it a mere coincidence that at the same time as the death and resurrection of Jesus, around AD 30, the rabbis themselves took note of the fact that the Most High began rejecting the Azazel sacrifice?

**YOM KIPPUR: LOOKING BACK** - Many believers of both Jewish and Gentile origin see in the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement a foreshadowing of a Messiah who would come to make atonement for our sins. Many believe that Isaiah 53 speaks of this suffering Savior when it says, "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa 53:10). The message seems to be that our Messiah is pictured as both the sin offering and the Azazel, carrying our sins off into the wilderness of Gehenna (hell) so that our scarlet sins could be white as snow, and so that our sins could be wiped away before the Judge of all the earth. That God would accept a messianic sacrifice for sin is still a difficult concept for Jewish people to believe. Yet the concept of such a sacrifice is rooted in the Jewish theology of rabbinic commentaries. The following quote comes from The Stone Edition: The Chumash, "Why is the death of the righteous mentioned in conjunction with the chapter of the Yom Kippur service? Because just as Yom Kippur brings atonement, so the death of the righteous brings atonement."

**YOM KIPPUR: LOOKING WITHIN** - What can Yom Kippur mean for us today? For those who see that the sacrifice for our sins has been made by God's Messiah once and for all, the truth of Yom Kippur has great meaning. We don't look back fearfully at the comment of the Talmud that the scarlet thread no longer turned white as proof of God's forgiveness. Instead, we can reflect back on an empty tomb and on the compelling testimonies of the appearances of the One whose bodily resurrection proved that the price for our sins has been paid in full and that we have been accepted by God. Now we can confess, "Yes, I have gossiped. Yes, I have had lust in my heart. Yes, I have been angry with my brother. Yes, I have been arrogant. Yes, I withheld love from God and sinned against Him in countless ways. Yes, I have withheld love from my neighbors, and sinned against God by not giving others the consideration I want for myself. Yes, I have sinned, but by the blood of His own Messiah, the Father has paid the penalty." As we have trusted Him, so He has forgiven us. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a day to be mindful of our sin and the offering that was made on our behalf. It is a day to be mindful—and grateful—for the grace afforded through the perfect, everlasting sacrifice, Messiah Jesus.

**YOM KIPPUR: LOOKING AHEAD** The Day of Atonement also points us to the future. On the heels of a last-days call to repentance there will be a day of final reckoning for all who have not repented of their sins. According to Hebrew prophets, in the last days there will be a great and awesome Day of the Lord that will reveal the judgment that awaits those who have not taken advantage of the atonement of God. Here we can let the Scriptures speak for themselves. The Lord gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it? ... The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord (Joel 2:11,31). "Behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," says the Lord of hosts, "that will leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1). No one can afford to be "uncovered" or "unatoned for" on the final Yom Kippur. That day will be inexpressibly hopeless for all those who have spent the days of their lives resisting the evidence and claims of God's Messiah! It will be the kind of regret anticipated by the prophet Zechariah when he wrote: I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family by itself (Zech. 12:10-14). ([For the complete discussion see booklet - The Holidays Of God- The Spring Feasts](#))

**Atonement** ([03725](#)) (**kippur/kippurim**) is a masculine plural noun which refers to an act of reconciliation and is used to describe the Day of Atonement. Swanson adds that kippurim refers to "an act. of ceremonially accounting for wrong done in a covenantal relationship, which causes forgiveness, pardon, and right relationship, which may have a possible implication of appeasement or anger (Ex 29:36; 30:10, 16; Nu 5:8; 29:11)" and then adds that "the plural (kippurim) is a marker of a superlative."

**Baker** - Kippurim is used five times to indicate the act or process of reconciliation: a young bull was sacrificed each day for seven days during the ordination ceremony of Aaron and his sons to make atonement (Ex. 29:36). Once a year, the blood of a sin offering was used to make atonement on the horns of the altar of incense located in front of the Holy of Holies (Ex. 30:10). Ransom money of a half-shekel was used to effect atonement or reconciliation for male Israelites who were at least twenty years old (Ex. 30:16). The money was then used to service the Tent of Meeting. When a person had wronged the Lord or another person, a ram was

presented to the priest, along with proper restitution (Num. 5:8); a sin offering for atonement was presented yearly on the Day of Atonement (Num. 29:11). Three times the noun is used to indicate the Day of Atonement itself (Lev. 23:27, 28; 25:9).

**Gilbrant** - This noun is derived from the verb **kāphar**, "to make atonement." It is also attested in Middle Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic. The noun is used to denote both the sin offering and the Day of Atonement. The relationship of the sin offering and the Day of Atonement is clear. The purpose of cleansing the Temple of the accumulated sin of the priests is much the same process as an offering for cleansing a person guilty of sin. The noun is used in the context of sin offerings in three occurrences (Ex. 29:36; Nu 5:8; 29:11). It is used to denote the money collected in the course of taking the census, a fee paid as ransom if the individual was not ritually pure. The purpose of the census was usually military, and one needed to be in a state of ritual purity to engage in military endeavor, for Yahweh was in the camp, fighting for the Israelites, and one could not threaten to contaminate His presence without suffering death. The noun is used to refer to the **Day of Atonement** in four occurrences. The purification of lamps on this day is mentioned (Ex 30:10). On this day, the people were not to work, but to afflict themselves and make burnt offerings to Yahweh (Lev. 23:27-28). The day, the tenth day of the seventh month, was announced by a trumpet blast (Lev. 25:9). The purpose of the rituals which filled this day was to purify the Temple. (Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

#### Related Resources:

- [Yom Kippur - Wikipedia](#)
- [What is the Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)?](#)
- [What is the meaning of Azazel / the scapegoat?](#)
- [What is the true meaning of Rosh Hashanah?](#)

#### Kippur - 8v - atonement

Exodus 29:36 "Each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for **atonement** (kippur), and you shall purify the altar when you make atonement (kaphar) for it, and you shall anoint it to consecrate it.

Exodus 30:10 (Day of Atonement) "Aaron shall make atonement (kaphar) on its horns once a year (Lev 16:18); he shall make atonement (kaphar) on it with the blood of the sin offering of **atonement** once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

Exodus 30:16 "You shall take the **atonement** money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement (kiphar) for yourselves."

Leviticus 23:27 (Day of Atonement) "On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of **atonement** (yôm hakkippûrîm); it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD. 28 "You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of **atonement**, (kippur) to make atonement (kaphar) on your behalf before the LORD your God.

Leviticus 25:9 (Day of Atonement) "You shall then sound a ram's horn (Heb = shophar) abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of **atonement** (kippur) you shall sound a horn all through your land.

**Comment:** This marks the beginning of the Year of Jubilee, which is the year of liberty that occurs after 49 years ("seven Sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years" Lev 25:8).

Numbers 5:8 "But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution which is made for the wrong must go to the LORD for the priest, besides the ram of **atonement** (kippur), by which atonement (kaphar) is made for him.

Numbers 29:11 one male goat for a sin offering, besides the sin offering of atonement (kippur) and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

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#### **ATONEMENT** - in the [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery \(available online\)](#)

The English word atonement is derived from the two words "at onement" and denotes a state of togetherness and agreement between two people. Atonement presupposes two parties that are estranged, with the act of atonement being the reconciliation of them into a state of harmony. The theological meaning is the reconciliation between God and his fallen creation, especially between God and sinful human beings. Atonement is thus a solution to the main problem of the human race-its estrangement from God stemming from the fall of Adam and Eve. A range of biblical images portrays this central event of the religious faith of the Bible.

The Sacrificial Imagery of the Old Testament. The imagery of animal sacrifice, especially blood sacrifice, is the dominant OT image

for atonement, based on the principle that “under the [OT] law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Heb 9:22 RSV). The OT sacrificial laws are a series of variations on that theme. The imagery of atoning sacrifice may be summed up in this manner: the sins of humanity violated the holiness of the Creator and brought the sentence of death, a sentence that can be averted only by the substitution of a sacrifice of death. Through the blood of sacrifice, sinful people are able to receive the blessing of God instead of his judgment.

From the earliest times of human history, animal sacrifices were designed to establish atonement between God and his sinful image bearer. Some interpreters have even understood the animal-skin clothing given to Adam and Eve as symbolic of blood sacrifice (Gen 3:21). The importance of animal sacrifices is clearly displayed in the practices of Abel (Gen 4:2–4; cf. Heb 11:4), Noah (Gen 8:20) and the Patriarchs (Gen 13:18; 26:25; 33:20; 35:7), though little meaning is assigned to these animal sacrifices prior to Moses. One clue, however, appears outside the Pentateuch in the retrospective account of Job 1:5. Here Job sacrifices on behalf of his children to protect them from divine judgment against their sins. Animal sacrifices are thus portrayed as a way of atonement, a means of securing divine favor for sinful people.

The law of Moses brings extensive development to the imagery of sacrificial atonement. At the first Passover (Ex 12:1–30) the blood of the sacrificed lamb on the doorways of Israelite homes protects the faithful from the judgment of death. When the Lord sees the blood he does not harm those within the home. Leviticus 1–7 describes a variety of sacrifice rituals to be practiced at the tabernacle. The detailed ritual instructions regarding whole burnt offerings (Lev 1:1–17), guilt offerings (Lev 5:14–6:7) and sin offerings (Lev 4:1–5:13) indicate that the problem of sin before the holy God of Israel is a chief concern. The people are unable to approach God enthroned in his holy place without following the prescribed arrangements and offering the appropriate sacrifices.

The clearest expression of the imagery of atoning sacrifice appears in the legislation for the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:1–34; 23:27–32; cf. Heb 9:7–12). An intricate series of rituals is assigned to the tenth day of the seventh month of Tishri to atone for the sins of the entire nation. The sacrificial ritual itself involves three main steps (Lev 16:11–22). First, Aaron sacrifices for himself and his house so he can continue the ceremony without fear of judgment (Lev 16:11–14). Second, he offers the sin-offering of a goat for the congregation of Israel (Lev 16:15–19). Third, Aaron lays his hands on a second goat (a scapegoat) and sends it outside the camp to die (Lev 16:20–22).

All of these actions and the rituals surrounding them have important symbolic value that expresses various aspects of the imagery of atonement. The use of two goats in the ritual of atonement clearly reveals the two sides of atonement. The first goat is sacrificed, and its blood sprinkled on top of the ark of the covenant (“atonement cover” [NIV], “mercy seat” [KJV], “mercy seat” [RSV], Lev 16:15, 27). This act symbolizes the divine side of atonement: God’s holy justice is satisfied by the sprinkling of blood before him. The second goat represents the human side of atonement. The sins of the people are transferred to the goat by Aaron’s hands. The goat is then escorted outside the camp to “carry on itself all their sins” (Lev 16:21–22 NIV). By means of this transfer the people are cleansed of the defilement sin has brought on them.

This twofold imagery helps to resolve a longstanding theological controversy over the imagery of atonement. Two viewpoints on atonement have come to expression in the terms expiation and propitiation. Expiatory views of atonement focus on sacrifices as the way to free people of sin and its defilement. Propitiatory understandings of atonement present sacrifices as the appeasement of divine wrath. The symbolism of two goats on the Day of Atonement indicates that both concepts are essential in the OT imagery of atonement. The sacrificial system of the OT is presented as God’s design for satisfying the just judgment of God but also for removing the guilt of sin from those for whom sacrifices are made.

It is important to note that the OT imagery of atonement through sacrifice is not a matter of mere ritual. Unfortunately, as the OT relates, Israel from time to time reduces the symbols of atonement to outward practice, as if merely performing the rites of sacrifice will bring them atonement. The OT prophets, however, make it clear that sacrifices are ineffectual without sincere repentance and faith. In fact the practice of sacrifice apart from appropriate inward commitments stirs the judgment of God. For instance Isaiah reports God’s rebuke: “I have had enough of burnt offerings; ... I do not delight in the blood of bulls.... Bring no more vain offerings” (Is 1:11, 13 RSV). Other prophets respond to Israel’s hypocrisy in much the same way (e.g., Amos 4:4, 5; Jer 7:21). Put simply, sacrificial rituals atone for those who have genuinely turned from sin and humbled themselves before God. Nothing less than such inward sincerity accompanying sacrifice will bring about reconciliation between God and sinful humanity.

Through the course of the OT story, it becomes clear that the system of animal sacrifice is inadequate. While the prophets announce that Israel will suffer the judgment of exile, they also proclaim that a greater way of atonement is on the horizon. The restoration of God’s people from exile will be accomplished not by animal sacrifice but by human sacrifice. The clearest expression of this expectation appears in Isaiah 52:13–53:12. Isaiah speaks of God’s “servant” (Is 52:13), the son of David who will be “wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities” (Is 53:5). “The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Is 53:6). In fact, this servant will become “a guilt offering” for the people of God (Is 53:10).

### **The New Testament Imagery of Christ’s Sacrifice.**

The NT rests its doctrine of atonement on this prophetic concept of the suffering servant. Thirty-four times we find various NT writers referring to Isaiah's proclamation as fulfilled in Jesus (e.g., Acts 8:32–35; 1 Pet 2:22–25). Jesus' death is the substitutionary suffering of the Son of David that brings appeasement of divine wrath and sets God's people free from the guilt of sin.

**The Gospels elaborate on the atoning nature of Christ's death in a number of ways.** Matthew explains that Jesus is the promised child who saves his people p 56 from their sins (Mt 1:21). Matthew 8:17 links Jesus to the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 and offers the image of substitution. John the Baptist calls Jesus "the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29). Mark claims that Christ's death is the payment of a ransom (Mk 10:45). Luke depicts the atonement of Christ as the escape from God's wrath (Lk 3:7). In John's Gospel, Jesus uses a number of images to explain the atoning significance of his death. He will be lifted up as Moses lifted the serpent (Jn 3:14). He is the bread of heaven and eternal life can be found by eating his flesh and blood (Jn 6:33). He is the good shepherd who will die for his sheep (Jn 10:11).

**The Pauline epistles also offer a number of images to capture the various facets of the richness of Christ's atoning work.** One of Paul's favorite images for describing humankind's plight under sin is slavery. Paul writes that Christ's atonement has set us free from our enslavement (Gal 5:1). Paul also describes our "natural" death as the "wages" earned from our sin. But the justice due us is absorbed by Christ and replaced by the "gift" of eternal life (Rom 6:23; 5:17). Reiterating prominent OT images, Paul describes Christ's atoning work in terms of the offering of a sacrifice (Eph 5:2). At least two images of atonement having to do with obligation to the law emerge in Paul's writings. First, though sinners are held captive to the law of sin (Rom 7:23), they are released from the law of death and bondage and are justified by the righteousness of Christ alone (Rom 3:20–26). Second, because of people's inability to keep the law, they bear the "curse" of the law, but Christ has borne the curse in their place (Gal 3:12).

Paul also portrays atonement in legal terms (see Legal Images). With courtroom imagery the sinner is pronounced as the object of divine judgment both now and at the end of the age (Rom 1:24, 26, 28; 2:16). Yet because of Christ's atoning work there is no condemnation (Rom 8:1). In similar terms, fallen humanity is described as the object of God's holy wrath, but in Christ's sacrifice there is escape from the coming wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9). Another important Pauline image of atonement is that of reconciliation. Though we were once enemies, we now have become reconciled through the blood of Christ (Rom 5:10–11). The hostility between God and his creation is abolished for those who benefit from the atoning work of Christ. The scope of this reconciliation reaches cosmological proportions: through Christ, God will "reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col 1:20 RSV).

**No NT book is richer in the imagery of atonement than the epistle to the Hebrews.** Unfolding the ultimate meaning of the priestly activity in the OT tabernacle, the author explains that Jesus is not only the great high priest but the sacrifice as well (Heb 9:6–13). The OT ceremonial sacrifices and practices were only "external regulations, applying until the time of the new order" (Heb 9:10 NIV). The imagery of animal blood is emphasized in Hebrews as a "shadow" of the effectual cleansing of the blood of Christ (Heb 9:13–14). Hebrews also highlights the finality of Christ's sacrifice, thereby making the work of Christ the climactic image of atonement. Though the priest "stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices," Christ has "[offered] for all time a single sacrifice for sins" (Heb 10:11–14 RSV). What the blood of animals could have never accomplished, Jesus accomplished once and for all. But this redemption included great suffering. The author of Hebrews frequently employs images of suffering surrounding the atoning work of Christ to impress upon the imaginations of Christians the great cost of salvation (Heb 2:10; 5:7; 13:12).

**Images of the atonement fill the Revelation of John.** Christ is often designated as the lamb who was slain but triumphed (Rev 5:6, 12; 17:14). The redeemed "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev 7:14 RSV). The atonement is celebrated by the living creatures and elders surrounding the throne of heaven (Rev 5:11–12). This great song of redemption becomes the chorus of every believer. In Revelation 19:9 the imagery of the sacrificial lamb is joined with the imagery of the final wedding feast. This great celebration of salvation symbolizes that atonement will be fully accomplished when the redeemed in Christ enter their final destiny of eternal life in the new heaven and new earth.

## Summary.

The imagery surrounding the Bible's teaching on atonement threatens to overwhelm us by its very abundance and multiplicity. Much of the biblical data can be summed up under five master images or controlling motifs. One is the bearing away of sins so that sinners can be freed from a penalty they have incurred (the OT scapegoat escorted into the wilderness, 1 Pet 2:24; Heb 9:28). Second is the financial image of a ransom that is paid in exchange for sinners (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; 1 Tim 2:6; Rev 5:9). A third motif is the substitute who takes the place of sinners, suffering the punishment that stems from God's justice in their place (Is 53:4–6; Rom 5:12–21, with its emphasis on Christ as the second Adam, the representative of the human race who effects redemption for it; 2 Cor 5:14; Gal 3:12). Fourth, the OT sacrifices and Christ as the fulfillment of those sacrifices are a satisfaction (not simply a waiving) of the offense that the human race has committed against God by virtue of its sinfulness, and an appeasement of the just anger of God against the human race for its offense (Rom 3:24–26; Heb 2:17; 1 Jn 2:1–2). And fifth, atonement is a legal and juridical meeting of the requirements of the law so that sinful people can stand acquitted before God the judge (Rom 3:7; 5:18–19;

8:1; 2 Cor 5:19). The result of all these transactions, finally, is reconciliation between an offended, holy God and a sinful, rebellious humanity (Rom 5:7–11; 2 Cor 5:18–20; Col 1:20).

p 57 See also BLOOD; CLEANSING; CROSS; CURSE; GUILT; JESUS, IMAGES OF; LAMB; LEGAL IMAGES; OFFERING; PASSOVER; PRIEST; SACRIFICE; SIN; SUFFERING SERVANT; TRIUMPH.

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Day of Atonement ([Leviticus 23:27-28](#)), also known as Yom Kippur, was the most solemn holy day of all the Israelite feasts and festivals, occurring once a year on the tenth day of Tishri, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. On that day, the high priest was to perform elaborate rituals to atone for the sins of the people. Described in [Leviticus 16:1-34](#), the atonement ritual began with Aaron, or subsequent high priests of Israel, coming into the holy of holies. The solemnity of the day was underscored by God telling Moses to warn Aaron not to come into the Most Holy Place whenever he felt like it; he could only come on this special day once a year, lest he die (v.2). This was not a ceremony to be taken lightly, and the people were to understand that atonement for sin was to be done God's way.

Before entering the tabernacle, Aaron was to bathe and put on special garments (v. 4), then sacrifice a bull for a sin offering for himself and his family (v. 6, 11). The blood of the bull was to be sprinkled on the ark of the covenant. Then Aaron was to bring two goats, one to be sacrificed "because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been" (v. 16), and its blood was sprinkled on the ark of the covenant. The other goat was used as a scapegoat. Aaron placed his hands on its head, confessed over it the rebellion and wickedness of the Israelites, and sent the goat out with an appointed man who released it into the wilderness (v. 21). The goat carried on itself all the sins of the people, which were forgiven for another year (v. 30).

The symbolic significance of the ritual, particularly to Christians, is seen first in the washing and cleansing of the high priest, the man who released the goat, and the man who took the sacrificed animals outside the camp to burn the carcasses (v. 4, 24, 26, 28). Israelite washing ceremonies were required often throughout the Old Testament and symbolized the need for mankind to be cleansed of sin. But it wasn't until Jesus came to make the "once for all" sacrifice that the need for cleansing ceremonies ceased (Hebrews 7:27). The blood of bulls and goats could only atone for sins if the ritual was continually done year after year, while Christ's sacrifice was sufficient for all the sins of all who would ever believe in Him. When His sacrifice was made, He declared, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He then sat down at the right hand of God, and no further sacrifice was ever needed (Hebrews 10:1-12).

The sufficiency and completeness of the sacrifice of Christ is also seen in the two goats. The blood of the first goat was sprinkled on the ark, ritually appeasing the wrath of God for another year. The second goat removed the sins of the people into the wilderness where they were forgotten and no longer clung to the people. Sin is both propitiated and expiated God's way—only by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Propitiation is the act of appeasing the wrath of God, while expiation is the act of atoning for sin and removing it from the sinner. Both together are achieved eternally by Christ. When He sacrificed Himself on the cross, He appeased God's wrath against sin, taking that wrath upon Himself: "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!" (Romans 5:9). The removal of sin by the second goat was a living parable of the promise that God would remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12) and that He would remember them no more (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17). Jews today still celebrate the annual Day of Atonement, which falls on different days each year in September-October, traditionally observing this holy day with a 25-hour period of fasting and intensive prayer. Jews also often spend most of the day in synagogue services. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **QUESTION - [How did the Israelites deny themselves in Leviticus 23:27?](#)**

**ANSWER** - Leviticus 23:27 reads, "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present a food offering to the LORD." So, on [Yom Kippur](#), the nation of Israel were to "deny" themselves as part of the sacred observance.

The Hebrew phrase here can literally be translated "you shall humble your souls." The same command is found in Leviticus 16:29, and it has traditionally been understood as a reference to fasting or not eating for this day. The "denial" may have involved more than food, however. In the *Mishnah*, an ancient collection of Jewish traditions, the Day of Atonement forbade food and drink, bathing, using oil to moisten the skin, wearing sandals, and sexual relations.

In modern Judaism, the Day of Atonement takes places on the tenth day of the seventh month on the Jewish calendar and is considered one of two major fasts (the other is Tisha B'Av). There are five minor fast days, as well, for a total of seven fasts in the modern Jewish tradition. However, the Day of Atonement is the only day the Old Testament commanded a fast (or a humbling of the

soul).

Leviticus 23:28–32 offers additional insight regarding how the Jews denied themselves on the Day of Atonement: “Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God. Those who do not deny themselves on that day must be cut off from their people. I will destroy from among their people anyone who does any work on that day. You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. It is a day of sabbath rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath.”

Here we find an emphasis on 1) not performing work of any kind, 2) making atonement, and 3) being “cut off” for disobeying this command. This command was an ongoing one; every Day of Atonement was to be a day of fasting and rest. The Day of Atonement was also the one day per year the high priest could enter the [Holy of Holies](#).

Numbers 29:7–11 gives additional instructions for the Day of Atonement: “On the tenth day of this seventh month hold a sacred assembly. You must deny yourselves and do no work. Present as an aroma pleasing to the Lord a burnt offering of one young bull, one ram and seven male lambs a year old, all without defect. With the bull offer a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil; with the ram, two-tenths; and with each of the seven lambs, one-tenth. Include one male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the sin offering for atonement and the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.”

This Day of Atonement was the high holy day of the year, considered the Sabbath of Sabbaths, since no work would take place on that day. To humble one’s soul likely included both fasting from food and from work, allowing God’s people to focus on worship to the Lord through the sacrificial offerings and the atonement of sin. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### **F B Meyer - Leviticus 23:27, 29, 32 Ye shall afflict your souls.**

Whilst Aaron was making the solemn atonement for the people, confessing their sins on the victims and sending them away, the camp was pervaded with the atmosphere of the Sabbath rest. No servile work was done on penalty of death. Probably for the most part the people abode in their tents. No sound was heard save sighs, and groans, and cries of penitence. The people afflicted themselves for their sins.

Sin is forgiven by God, but it should not be forgotten by us. — We should remember it, in order to refresh our memory of God’s great grace in putting it away; in order to deepen our sense of gratitude and to promote our self-humiliation; in order to make us watchful and careful in our daily walk and conversation. Holding the hand of our Savior, we need not dread to look down into the abyss from which He has redeemed us. We shall turn from it to Him with tenderer love and gratitude.

Repentance is once for all; penitence is perennial. — We repent when we turn from the kingdom of darkness to that of God’s dear Son; it is the act of the will, the utter reversal of the course we had been pursuing. But we are penitent after we have seen the face of Jesus: it is the act of the emotions; the sense of Christ’s love and of our unworthiness together makes us weep, as the forgiven sinner did at his feet.

Penitence does not purchase forgiveness, but accompanies and follows it. — Could our tears for ever flow, they could not bring God’s pardon into our souls. That is secured by the offering of our Substitute on Calvary. But being forgiven, we wash his feet with our tears, we break our alabaster boxes on his head, and love much.

**Leviticus 23:28 "You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God.**

- Lev 16:34 Isa 53:10 Da 9:24 Zec 3:9 Ro 5:10,11 Heb 9:12,26 Heb 10:10,14 1Jn 2:2 1Jn 4:10 1Jn 5:6
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **DAY OF ATONEMENT (YOM KIPPUR)**

This passage describes the Day of Atonement which is described in detail in Leviticus 16 (see commentary). Here in Leviticus 23, the stress is upon sorrow and repentance of Israel.

**Make atonement** ([03722](#))([kappar](#)) means to make atonement, to make reconciliation (to reconcile), to purge, to make propitiation (to



propitiate), to pacify, to cancel. There are two main ideas regarding the meaning of **kapar** - (1) **Kapar** means to cover over sin (2) A number of resources however favor the idea that **kapar** means to wipe away. These ideas are discussed more below.

**Richards** notes that "It is often said that the idea expressed (in **kapar**) is one found in a possibly related Arabic root that means "to cover or conceal." **Atonement** would then denote a *covering* that *conceals* a person's sin and makes it possible for him to approach God. Although this relationship is possible, the language link is not at all certain. What is certain is the role that atonement played in the religion of Israel—a role given to atonement by God to carry a vital message about our faith."

As might be surmised the verb **kapar** is found most often in the Pentateuch, especially in Leviticus. In Leviticus, **kapar** is especially prominent in Leviticus 16, occurring 16 times in the great chapter that describes the annual Day of Atonement.

**Vine** writes that "Most uses of **kapar** involve the theological meaning of "covering over," often with the blood of a sacrifice, in order to atone for some sin. It is not clear whether this means that the "covering over" hides the sin from God's sight or implies that the sin is **wiped away** in this process."

**Mounce** writes that while **kapar** can mean "to cover, to ransom, or to wipe clean/purge, it is the last one that seems most appropriate in the OT."

(1) When **kāpar** is used in verses not connected with Israel's sacrificial system, it has the nuance of wiping something clean or appeasing someone. Jacob attempts to appease Esau's anger (i.e., to wipe the anger off his face) by the enormous gift he has sent on ahead of his actual encounter with him (Gen 32:20). Similarly, a wise man knows how to wipe away a king's wrath (Pr 16:14).

(2) In Israel's religious ceremonies other than the Day of Atonement, **kāpar** usually refers to God's wiping away our sins through various sacrifices (cf. Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31). Note especially the parallel lines of Jer 18:23: "Do not forgive their crimes or blot out their sins from your sight." To *forgive* sins is to *blot* them out and *wipe* them clean. As Ps 65:3 attests, when we come to God overwhelmed by our sins, God *wipes* them clean (KJV, "will purge them away"; NIV "forgave"; cf. Ps 78:38 where "forgave" = **kapar**).

(3) As described in Lev 16 (**kāpar** occurs 16x), the Day of Atonement was a **day of purging** sins from the holy sanctuary. All throughout the year, the priest sprinkled the blood of sacrificial animals in front of the curtain of the sanctuary (e.g., Lev 4:6) and thus symbolically transferred the sins of God's people into his Holy Place. By the end of the year, that place was, as it were, filled up with all their sins. Something had to be done in order to "clean house"; this was the purpose of the Day of Atonement. Note how in the final stage of this ceremony, the sins of God's people were placed on the head of the live goat, who then carried them far away into the desert, never to be seen again. There was now "room" for another year's worth of sin in the Most Holy Place. Jesus, of course, has by his sacrifice taken away our sins once for all (Heb 9–10). See NIDOTTE, 2:699–702. (Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words)

The **NET Bible Note** (these are usually very good, even if a bit technical) states that the primary sense of the **kapar** is "to wipe [something off (or on)]" (see esp. the goal of the sin offering, Lev 4, "to purge" the tabernacle from impurities), but in some cases it refers metaphorically to "**wiping away**" anything that might stand in the way of good relations by bringing a gift (see, e.g., Ge 32:20, "to appease; to pacify" as an illustration of this). The translation "**make atonement**" has been retained in Leviticus 1:4 because, ultimately, the goal of either **purging** or **appeasing** was to maintain a proper relationship between the LORD (Who dwelt in the tabernacle) and Israelites in whose midst the tabernacle was pitched.

**Swanson** defines **kapar** -

(1) (piel) make atonement, make amends, pardon, release, appease, forgive, i.e., remove the guilt from a wrongdoing for any length of time (Ex 29:36); (nitpael) atoned for (Dt 21:8); (pual) be atoned for (Ex 29:33; Nu 35:33; Pr 16:6; Isa 6:7; 22:14; 27:9); (hitp) allow for atonement (1Sa 3:14);

(2) (piel) ransom, i.e., pay an amount of money as a gift, with a quid pro quo of so being allowed to keep one's freedom (Isa 47:11)

(3) (pual) be annulled, i.e., have a relationship or agreement broken (Isa 28:18); 4. LN 57.178–57.185 (piel)

(4) pacify, give a gift, formally, cover the face, i.e., give a gift of tribute which will establish some level of relationship, possibly implying reconciliation (Ge 32:20) (Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew)

**Stephen Renn** explains that "**kapar** refers to the process by which the barrier between Yahweh and his people may be removed, or appeasing God's wrath. For his wrath is the inevitable divine response to the violation of his law. This "appeasement" is synonymous

with the concept of “propitiation.” Divine wrath is set aside, however, only if the sacrifice of atonement is offered with a true spirit of repentance and sorrow for sin. **Kapar** means “to make atonement,” and is almost exclusively confined to the context of worship — where reconciliation with Yahweh is sought through sacrificial offering. **Kapar** refers to sacrifices for the sins of the priests (Lev 1:4); the Levites (Nu 8:12); the entire Israelite community or nation (Lev 4:20; 10:17; Nu 8:19; 16:47; 1Chr 6:49; 2Ch. 29:24; Neh. 10:33); and the high priest (Lev. 9:7; 16:6ff.). The latter passage is especially significant in that it involves the crucial atoning sacrifices for the ritual leader of the nation as he prepares to offer the sacrifice for the Israelite people on the Day of Atonement. (Expository Dictionary)

The **Septuagint - Lxx** translates every use of **kapar** in **Leviticus** with the verb **exilaskomai** which means to propitiate, to make atonement, to appease. **Thayer** says that **exilaskomai** is used “When one endeavors to attain the goodwill of another, the word can be rendered,” meaning to appease. We find such a sense in Ge 32:20 where Jacob seeks to appease his brother Esau (whom he had cheated out of the blessing of the first-born).

On the other hand, the **Septuagint - Lxx** translates every use of **kapar** in **Exodus** with the verb **hagiazō** which means to sanctify, set apart, make holy.

#### Here are the cognate (related) words:

- Make Atonement (03722) [kapar](#) כָּפַר
- Atonement (03725) [kippur/kippurim](#) כִּפּוּרִים
- Mercy Seat (03727) [kapporet](#) כַּפֹּרֶת
- Ransom (03724) [koper](#)

**ATONEMENT** — the act by which God restores a relationship of harmony and unity between Himself and human beings. The word can be broken into three parts that express this great truth in simple but profound terms: “at-one-ment.” Through God’s atoning grace and forgiveness, we are reinstated to a relationship of at-one-ment with God, in spite of our sin... Although Old Testament believers were truly forgiven and received genuine atonement through animal sacrifice, the New Testament clearly states that during the Old Testament period God’s justice was not served: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (Heb. 10:4). Atonement was possible “because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed” (Rom. 3:25). However, God’s justice was served in the death of Jesus Christ as a substitute: “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12). “And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant” (Heb. 9:15). (Nelson’s new illustrated Bible dictionary)

**ATONEMENT.** The word ‘atonement’ is one of the few theological terms which derive basically from Anglo-Saxon. It means **‘making at one’**, and points to a process of bringing those who are estranged into a unity... Its use in theology is to denote the work of Christ in dealing with the problem posed by the sin of man, and in bringing sinners into right relation with God. (New Bible dictionary)

**ATONEMENT** - The English word atonement is derived from the two words “at onement” and denotes a state of togetherness and agreement between two people. Atonement presupposes two parties that are estranged, with the act of atonement being the reconciliation of them into a state of harmony. The theological meaning is the reconciliation between God and his fallen creation, especially between God and sinful human beings. Atonement is thus a solution to the main problem of the human race—its estrangement from God stemming from the fall of Adam and Eve. (Dictionary of biblical imagery)

**ATONEMENT** - The root meaning in English, “reparation,” leads to the secondary meaning of reconciliation, or “at-one-ment,” the bringing together into harmony of those who have been separated, enemies. (New International Bible Dictionary)

**ATONEMENT** In Christian thought, the act by which God and man are brought together in personal relationship. The term is derived from Anglo-Saxon words meaning “making at one,” hence “at-one-ment.” It presupposes a separation or alienation that needs to be overcome if human beings are to know God and have fellowship with him. As a term expressing relationship, atonement is tied closely to such terms as reconciliation and forgiveness. (Tyndale Bible dictionary)

**ATONEMENT** - Primarily in the Old Testament, atonement refers to the process God established whereby humans could make an offering to God to restore fellowship with God. Such offerings, including both live and dead animals, incense, and money, were required to remove the bad effects of human sin. ([Atonement - Holman Bible Dictionary](#))

**English word - Appease** = To make quiet; to calm; to reduce to a state of peace; to still; to pacify; as, to appease the tumult of the ocean, or of the passions; to appease hunger or thirst. [This word is of a general application to every thing in a disturbed, ruffled or agitated state.] (Webster - 1828)

**English word - Propitiate** = To conciliate; to appease one offended and render him favorable; to make propitious. **PROPITIATION**,

1. The act of appeasing wrath and conciliating the favor of an offended person; the act of making propitious. 2. In theology, the atonement or atoning sacrifice offered to God to assuage his wrath and render him propitious to sinners. (Webster - 1828)

**English word - Atonement** = Agreement; concord; reconciliation, after enmity or controversy. Expiation; satisfaction or reparation made by giving an equivalent for an injury, or by doing or suffering that which is received in satisfaction for an offense or injury; with for. In theology, the expiation of sin made by the obedience and personal sufferings of Christ. (Webster - 1828)

**English word - Expiation** - The act of atoning for a crime; the act of making satisfaction for an offense, by which the guilt is done away, and the obligation of the offended person to punish the crime is canceled; atonement; satisfaction. Among pagans and Jews, expiation was made chiefly by sacrifices, or washings and purification. Among Christians, expiation for the sins of men is usually considered as made only by the obedience and sufferings of Christ. 2. The means by which atonement for crimes is made; atonement; as sacrifices and purification among heathens, and the obedience and death of Christ among Christians. 3. Among ancient heathens, an act by which the threats of prodigies were averted. (Webster - 1828)

**John Walvoord** in a discussion of atonement writes that "Etymologically the English verb **"to atone"** and the noun **"atonement"** signify the process and/or result of two estranged persons becoming **"at one,"** that is, in agreement or reconciled. Biblically the word is used mainly in the OT to describe the result of various Levitical animal sacrifices. **"To atone"** is a translation of the Hebrew word **kápar**, "to cover," and signifies God's temporary dealing with the sins of His people Israel corporately or individually. The sacrifices Israel offered anticipated God's final and permanent dealing with human sin in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross."

#### **Resources on Atonement/Day of Atonement:**

- [What is the Day of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\)?](#)
- American Tract Society [Atonement](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Day of atonement Atonement](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Day of Atonement Atoning Sacrifice Atonement](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Day of Atonement Atonement](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Day of Atonement Atonement](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Atonement \(2\) Atonement Day of Atonement](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Atonement](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Day of Atonement Atonement](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Atonement Atonement day of](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Atonement](#)

**Baker** writes that "At its most basic level, **kápar** conveys the notion of covering but not in the sense of merely concealing. Rather, it suggests the imposing of something to change its appearance or nature. It is therefore employed to signify the cancellation or "writing over" of a contract (Isa 28:18); the appeasing of anger (Ge 32:20[21]; Pr. 16:14); and the overlaying of wood with pitch so as to make it waterproof (Ge 6:14) The word also communicates God's covering of sin. (**Ed: See R Laird Harris' comments below on the concept of "covering"**). Persons made reconciliation with God for their sins by imposing something that would appease the offended party (in this case the Lord) and cover the sinners with righteousness (Ex. 32:30; Ezek. 45:17; cf. Da 9:24). In the Old Testament, the blood of sacrifices was most notably imposed (Ex. 30:10). By this imposition, sin was purged (Ps. 79:9; Isa. 6:7) and forgiven (Ps 78:38). The offenses were removed, leaving the sinners clothed in righteousness (cf. Zech. 3:3, 4). Of course, the imposition of the blood of bulls and of goats could **never fully cover our sin** (see Heb 10:4-note), but with the coming of Christ and the imposition of His shed blood, a perfect atonement was made (Ro 5:9-11-note).

**Kápar** - 94v translated - appease(1), appease\*(1), atone(3), atoned(2), atonement is made(1), atonement shall be made(1), atonement was made(1), atoning(1), canceled(1), expiation can be made(1), forgave(1), forgive(4), forgiven(5), made atonement(3), make atonement(71), makes atonement(2), making atonement(1), pardon(1). Ge 6:14 Ge 32:20; Exodus 29:33, 36,37; Ex 30:10, 15, 16; 32:30; Leviticus 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7, 8; Leviticus 14:18-21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; Leviticus 16:6, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 30, 32, 33,34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:28; Nu 5:8; 6:11; 8:12, 19, 21; 15:25, 28; 16:46f; 25:13; 28:22, 30; 29:5; 31:50; 35:33; Deut 21:8; 32:43; 1Sa 3:14; 2Sa 21:3; 1Chr 6:49; 2Chr 29:24; 30:18; Neh 10:33; Ps 65:3; 78:38; 79:9; Pr 16:6, 14; Isa 6:7; 22:14; 27:9; 28:18; 47:11; Jer 18:23; Ezek 16:63; 43:20, 26; 45:15, 17, 20; Da 9:24

Gen 6:14 "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall **cover**

(**kapar**) it inside and out with **pitch (koper)**."

**The NAS Concordance** does not list Ge 6:14 for the classic sense of to atone or make atonement and distinguishes the use of **kapar** there as a different word than the other 93 uses in the OT. The following note by Harris attempts to explain the logic, but I must confess (not being a Hebrew scholar) that is a difficult, somewhat technical point.

**R Laird Harris** (TWOT) feels that the Hebrew verb **kapar** used here in Ge 6:14 while having the same spelling as the uses of **kapar** in the following passages, is a separate and distinct Hebrew word with a different derivation. Harris explains that "This denominative verb (**kapar**) is used only in Ge 6:14 in the waterproofing of the ark. The cognate word is used in the Babylonian flood story."

**Harris** goes on to distinguish between **kapar** as used in Ge 6:14 and **kapar** as used in the 93 other OT verses beginning in Ge 32:30 below explaining that **kapar** (as used in Ge 32:20, Lev 1:4, etc, etc - see all uses below) "should probably be distinguished from **kapar** "to smear with pitch" (the sense of the word in Ge 6:14)." Harris goes on to explain that "There is an equivalent Arabic root meaning "cover," or "conceal." On the strength of this connection it has been supposed that the Hebrew word means "to cover over sin" and thus pacify the deity, making an atonement (so Brown-Driver-Briggs' A Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament). It has been suggested that the OT ritual symbolized a covering over of sin until it was dealt with in fact by the atonement of Christ. There is, however, very little evidence for this view. The connection of the Arabic word is weak and the Hebrew root is not used to mean "cover." The Hebrew verb is never used in the simple or Qal stem, but only in the derived intensive stems. These intensive stems often indicate not emphasis, but merely that the verb is derived from a noun whose meaning is more basic to the root idea." Okay, I realize this is very technical (at least it is to me). So what is the point? The point is that the classic understanding of **kapar** in the many Leviticus uses may not mean "cover over sin" so that God cannot see it (so to speak).

**Harris** then adds that **kōper** which is translated **pitch** is "noun, from which the above verb (**koper** - to waterproof) was doubtless derived. Pitch, bitumen, asphalt was used in early antiquity as an adhesive to hold inlays into statues. It was a logical material for caulking the ark as specified both in the Bible and the Babylonian flood story."

**NET Bible Note** - The Hebrew term **kapar**, "to cover, to smear" [= to caulk] appears here in the Qal stem with its primary, non-metaphorical meaning. The Piel form of **kapar** is **kipper**, which has the metaphorical meaning "to atone, to expiate, to pacify," is used in Levitical texts. Some authorities (**Ed: I think they are alluding to R Laird Harris**) regard the form in Ge 6:14 as a **homonym** (each of two words having the same spelling but different meanings and different origins) of the much more common Levitical term.

The Greek translation (**Septuagint - Lxx**) of Genesis 6:14 would tend to support the premise of Harris that **Kapar** in this passage might not have the meaning of "to cover" because the corresponding Greek verb is **asphaltōo** which means to smear with pitch or cover with tar and is used only here in Scripture. The Hebrew noun **koper** translated **pitch** in Ge 6:14 is translated in the **Septuagint - Lxx** with the Greek noun **asphaltos** which means asphalt, bitumen, tar, a kind of petroleum. This Greek word is used in Ge 11:3 and Ge 14:10 in both passages translating **chemar**, the Hebrew word for tar, asphalt, bitumen.

Gen 32:20 and you shall say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob also is behind us.'" For he said, "I will **appease** (Lxx = *exilaskomai*) him with the present that goes before me. Then afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me."

Ex 29:33 "Thus they shall eat those things by which **atonement** was **made** (Lxx = **hagiazo** = sanctified, set apart, make holy - translated = "by which they have been set apart by") at their ordination [and] consecration; but a layman shall not eat [them,] because they are holy.

Ex 29:36 "And each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement (**kippur**), and you shall purify the altar when you **make atonement** (**kapar**; Lxx = **hagiazo** translated "when you perform consecration for it" [for the altar]) for it; and you shall anoint it to consecrate it.

Ex 29:37 "For seven days you shall **make atonement** (Lxx = **hagiazo**) for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, [and] whatever touches the altar shall be holy.

Ex 30:10 "And Aaron shall **make atonement** (Lxx = verb *exilaskomai* = propitiate, make atonement) on its horns once a year; he shall **make atonement** on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement (**kippur**) once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

Ex 30:15 “The rich shall not pay more, and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to **make atonement** (Lxx = verb **exilaskomai** = propitiate, make atonement) for yourselves.

Ex 30:16 “And you shall take the atonement money (**kippur**) from the sons of Israel, and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to **make atonement** (Lxx = verb **exilaskomai** = propitiate, make atonement) for yourselves.”

Ex 32:30 And it came about on the next day that Moses said to the people, “You yourselves have committed a great sin; and now I am going up to the LORD, perhaps I can **make atonement** (Lxx = verb **exilaskomai** = propitiate, make atonement) for your sin.”

Lev 1:4 ‘And he shall lay (resting or support oneself on the animal = worshiper identifies with the animal as his **substitute**) his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to **make atonement** (Lxx = verb **exilaskomai** = propitiate, make atonement) on his behalf.

Lev 4:20 ‘He shall also do with the bull just as he did with the bull of the sin offering; thus he shall do with it. So the priest shall **make atonement** for them, and they shall be forgiven.

Lev 4:26 ‘And all its fat he shall offer up in smoke on the altar as [in the case of] the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him in regard to his sin, and he shall be forgiven.

Lev 4:31 ‘Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat was removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.

Lev 4:35 ‘Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offerings, and the priest shall offer them up in smoke on the altar, on the offerings by fire to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him in regard to his sin which he has committed, and he shall be forgiven.

Lev 5:6 ‘He shall also bring his guilt offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat as a sin offering. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin.

Lev 5:10 ‘The second he shall then prepare as a burnt offering according to the ordinance. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin which he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

Lev 5:13 ‘So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin which he has committed from one of these, and it shall be forgiven him; then [the rest] shall become the priest’s, like the grain offering.”

Lev 5:16 “And he shall make restitution for that which he has sinned against the holy thing, and shall add to it a fifth part of it, and give it to the priest. The priest shall then make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

Lev 5:18 “He is then to bring to the priest a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation, for a guilt offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his error in which he sinned unintentionally and did not know [it], and it shall be forgiven him.

Lev 6:7 and the priest shall **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai**) for him before the LORD; and he shall be forgiven for any one of the things which he may have done to incur guilt.”

Lev 6:30 ‘But no sin offering of which any of the blood is brought into the tent of meeting to **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai**) in the holy place shall be eaten; it shall be burned with fire.

Lev 7:7 ‘The guilt offering is like the sin offering, there is one law for them; the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it.

Lev 8:15 Next Moses slaughtered [it] and took the blood and with his finger put [some of it] around on the horns of the altar, and purified the altar. Then he poured out [the rest of] the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it, to make atonement for it.

Lev 8:34 “The LORD has commanded to do as has been done this day, to make atonement on your behalf.

Lev 9:7 Moses then said to Aaron, “Come near to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, that you may **make atonement** for yourself and for the people; then make the offering for the people, that you may **make atonement** for them, just as the LORD has commanded.”

Lev 10:17 “Why did you not eat the sin offering at the holy place? For it is most holy, and He gave it to you to

bear away the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD.

Lev 12:7 'Then he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears [a child, whether] a male or a female.

Lev 12:8 'But if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, the one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.'

Lev 14:18 while the rest of the oil that is in the priest's palm, he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed. So the priest **shall make atonement** on his behalf before the LORD.

Lev 14:19 "The priest shall next offer the sin offering and make atonement for the one to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Then afterward, he shall slaughter the burnt offering.

Lev 14:20 "And the priest shall offer up the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

Lev 14:21 "But if he is poor, and his means are insufficient, then he is to take one male lamb for a guilt offering as a wave offering to make atonement for him, and one-tenth [of an] [ephah] of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, and a log of oil,

Lev 14:29 "Moreover, the rest of the oil that is in the priest's palm he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed, to make atonement on his behalf before the LORD.

Lev 14:31 "[He shall offer] what he can afford, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, together with the grain offering. So the priest shall make atonement before the LORD on behalf of the one to be cleansed.

Lev 14:53 "However, he shall let the live bird go free outside the city into the open field. So he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."

Lev 15:15 and the priest shall offer them, one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. So the priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the LORD because of his discharge.

Lev 15:30 'And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. So the priest shall make atonement on her behalf before the LORD because of her impure discharge.'

Leviticus 16:6 "Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may **make atonement** for himself and for his household.

10 "But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell shall be presented alive before the LORD, to **make atonement** upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

11 "Then Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and **make atonement** for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself.

16 "He shall **make atonement** for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities.

17 "When he goes in to **make atonement** in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may **make atonement** for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel.

18 "Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and **make atonement** for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides.

20 "When he finishes **atonement** for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat.

24 "He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and **make atonement** for himself and for the people.

27 "But the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to **make atonement** in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire.

30 for it is on this day that **atonement shall be made** for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

32 "So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall **make atonement**: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments,

33 and **make atonement** for the holy sanctuary, and he shall **make atonement** for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also **make atonement** for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.

34 "Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he did.

Leviticus 17:11 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that **makes atonement**.'

Leviticus 19:22 'The priest shall also **make atonement** for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed, and the sin which he has committed will be forgiven him.

Leviticus 23:28 "You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to **make atonement** on your behalf before the LORD your God.

Numbers 5:8 'But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution which is made for the wrong must go to the LORD for the priest, besides the ram of atonement, by which **atonement is made** for him.

Numbers 6:11 'The priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, and **make atonement** for him concerning his sin because of the dead person. And that same day he shall consecrate his head,

Numbers 8:12 "Now the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls; then offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the LORD, to **make atonement** for the Levites.

19 "I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to perform the service of the sons of Israel at the tent of meeting and to **make atonement** on behalf of the sons of Israel, so that there will be no plague among the sons of Israel by their coming near to the sanctuary."

21 The Levites, too, purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes; and Aaron presented them as a wave offering before the LORD. Aaron also **made atonement** for them to cleanse them.

Numbers 15:25 'Then the priest shall **make atonement** for all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and they will be forgiven; for it was an error, and they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their error.

28 'The priest shall **make atonement** before the LORD for the person who goes astray when he sins unintentionally, **making atonement** for him that he may be forgiven.

Numbers 16:46 Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer and put in it fire from the altar, and lay incense on it; then bring it quickly to the congregation and **make atonement** for them, for wrath has gone forth from the LORD, the plague has begun!"

47 Then Aaron took it as Moses had spoken, and ran into the midst of the assembly, for behold, the plague had begun among the people. So he put on the incense and **made atonement** for the people.

Numbers 25:13 and it shall be for him and his descendants after him, a covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and **made atonement** for the sons of Israel."

Numbers 28:22 and one male goat for a sin offering to **make atonement** for you.

30 also one male goat to **make atonement** for you.

Numbers 29:5 'Offer one male goat for a sin offering, to **make atonement** for you,

Numbers 31:50 "So we have brought as an offering to the LORD what each man found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings and necklaces, to **make atonement** for ourselves before the LORD."

Numbers 35:33 'So you shall not pollute the land in which you are; for blood pollutes the land and no **expiation** can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

Deuteronomy 21:8 'Forgive Your people Israel whom You have redeemed, O LORD, and do not place the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of Your people Israel.' And the bloodguiltiness shall be forgiven them.

Deuteronomy 32:43 "Rejoice, O nations, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land and His people."

1 Samuel 3:14 "Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

2 Samuel 21:3 Thus David said to the Gibeonites, "What should I do for you? And how can I make atonement that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?"

1 Chronicles 6:49 But Aaron and his sons offered on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, for all the work of the most holy place, and to **make atonement** for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

2 Chronicles 29:24 The priests slaughtered them and purged the altar with their blood to **atone** for all Israel, for the king ordered the burnt offering and the sin offering for all Israel.

2 Chronicles 30:18 For a multitude of the people, even many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not purified themselves, yet they ate the Passover otherwise than prescribed. For Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "May the good LORD **pardon**

Nehemiah 10:33 for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to **make atonement** for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.

Psalms 65:3 Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You **forgive** (Lxx = **hilaskomai** = to be merciful, make reconciliation for, be propitious, be favorably inclined, to forgive) them.

Psalms 78:38 But He, being compassionate, **forgave** (Lxx = **hilaskomai** = to be merciful, make reconciliation for, be propitious, be favorably inclined, to forgive) their iniquity and did not destroy them; And often He restrained His anger And did not arouse all His wrath.

Psalms 79:9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; And deliver us and **forgive** (Lxx = **hilaskomai** = to be merciful, make reconciliation for, be propitious, be favorably inclined, to forgive) our sins for Your name's sake.

Proverbs 16:6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is **atoned** for, And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.

14 The fury of a king is like messengers of death, But a wise man will **appease** it.

Isaiah 6:7 He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is **forgiven** (Lxx = **perikatharizo** = to clean or purge away entirely; used to translate "circumcise" in Dt 30:6 a prophecy of the end-times when a believing remnant of the nation will be saved - Ro 11:25-27)."

Isaiah 22:14 But the LORD of hosts revealed Himself to me, "Surely this iniquity shall not be **forgiven** (Lxx = **aphiemi**) you Until you die," says the Lord GOD of hosts.

Isaiah 27:9 Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be **forgiven** (Lxx = **aphaireo**); And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones; When Asherim and incense altars will not stand.

Isaiah 28:18 "Your covenant with death will be **canceled** (Lxx = **aphaireo**), And your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the overwhelming scourge passes through, Then you become its trampling place.

Isaiah 47:11 "But evil will come on you Which you will not know how to charm away; And disaster will fall on you For which you cannot atone (Lxx = **katharos** = not be free from); And destruction about which you do not know Will come on you suddenly.

Jeremiah 18:23 Yet You, O LORD, know All their deadly designs against me; Do not **forgive** (Lxx = **athoo** - [do not] hold guiltless, let go unpunished) their iniquity Or blot (Hebrew = machah = to wipe, wipe out; Lxx = **exaleipho** as in Acts 3:19) out their sin from Your sight. But may they be overthrown before You; Deal with them in the time of Your anger!

Ezekiel 16:63 so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have **forgiven** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) you for all that you have done," the



Lord GOD declares.

Ezekiel 43:20 'You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about; thus you shall cleanse it and **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for it.

26 'For seven days they shall **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it.

Ezekiel 45:15 and one sheep from each flock of two hundred from the watering places of Israel-- for a grain offering, for a burnt offering and for peace offerings, to **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for them," declares the Lord GOD.

17 "It shall be the prince's part to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the drink offerings, at the feasts, on the new moons and on the sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering and the peace offerings, to **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for the house of Israel."

20 "Thus you shall do on the seventh day of the month for everyone who goes astray or is naive; so you shall **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for the house.

Daniel 9:24-**commentary** "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to **make atonement** (Lxx = **exilaskomai** = propitiate) for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

**Andrew Trotter** ([Atonement - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)) -

That the Bible's central message is atonement, that is, that God has provided a way for humankind to come back into harmonious relation with him, is everywhere apparent in Scripture. From the first stories in Genesis to the last visions of Revelation, God seeks to reconcile his people to himself. Atonement, however, cannot be usefully discussed in this way, and translators have settled on it, and its cognate expressions, as a translation for a relatively circumscribed number of nouns and verbs in the Bible.

**The Old Testament** - In the Old Testament atonement, and related phrases, such as sacrifice of atonement, most often translates the Hebrew piel verb *kipur* [כִּפְּרִים] and two related nouns, one, *kippurim*, found always in the plural and signifying the noun equivalent of *kipur* [כִּפְּרִים], and the other, *kapporeth* [כַּפֹּרֶת], meaning the so-called mercy-seat or the place where the sacrifice of atonement happens. These occur with meanings related to atonement around 140 times, almost always in the context of the cults, as a sacrifice for sins and to provide reconciliation to God.

**The breadth of the use of the concept in the Old Testament is striking** **Atonement** is provided for inanimate objects such as a mildewing house, the altar in the temple, the sanctuary (i.e., the Holy of Holies within the Tent of Meeting), the holy place, and the tent of meeting/temple itself. In one place atonement is also provided for an animal, the scapegoat used in the atonement rituals found in Leviticus 16 . Sacrifice accomplishes atonement "**for sins**" in many places, though these passages always mean atonement for people "because of" their sins rather than atonement "on behalf of" sins, as if sins were being personified and therefore in need of redemption. **Of course, the majority of all the references are to atonement on behalf of people, either individually or as members of the community of Israel.**

**Atonement for inanimate objects** is found twelve places in the Old Testament: Exodus 29:36-37; 30:10; Leviticus 8:15; 14:53; 16:10,16 , 18,20; Ezekiel 43:20,26; 45:20 . Eleven of these passages refer to cleansing either the tent/temple, one of its rooms, or the altar inside it. The lone exception refers to the cleansing of a contaminated house. In one of the stranger passages of the Law, God instructs Moses and Aaron about the purification rites they are to apply to a house that has "a spreading mildew" and declares that, if a house responds to the treatment, then it can be declared clean (Leviticus 14:33-53 ). The priest cleanses the house by sacrificing a bird, and dipping cedar wood, hyssop, scarlet yarn, and a live bird in the blood of the dead bird, then sprinkling the blood on the house seven times. He then is to release the live bird into the open fields outside the town. "In this way he will make atonement for the house, and it will be clean" (Leviticus 14:53 ).

The entire passage significantly echoes the preceding passage in which a human being undergoes the same investigations and purifications for infectious skin diseases, and it anticipates the important regulations of Leviticus 16 concerning the Day of Atonement, the most important sacrifice of all, when sacrifice is made for the cleansing of the sins of all the people. The point is apparently that the surface of the skin can demonstrate a deeper sickness underneath as can the surface of a house; both need to be cleansed of that deeper sickness as does the human heart of its sin.

**Far more important are the references to the atonement of the Tent of Meeting, the temple, the holy place, the sanctuary, and the altar.** These take place in the contexts of the ordination of priests (Exodus 29:35-37; Leviticus 8:15 ), God's instructions for

the building of the eschatological temple in the later chapters of Ezekiel (Ezek 43:20,26; 45:20), and the Day of Atonement itself (Leviticus 16:16,18,20 ). The need for cleansing the buildings, the altar and the sanctuaries is due to the fact that these are the meeting places of the divine Holy One with his people. The holiness and purity of God are so emphasized that not only does He and the one who approaches Him have to be pure, but even the means of their communication and relationship must be covered by the blood of an atoning sacrifice because of its contamination by sin.

It is perhaps important that this cleansing of inanimate objects, with the lone exception of the house (which seems to serve as an analog to human cleansing), is limited to the house of God and its parts. There is no sense that the world is God's place of meeting and in need of a cleansing sacrifice of atonement, but rather that the special cultic and covenantal relationship that God has with his people is what is in need of purification. This is not to deny that the world has been infected by sin, just that the particular relationship of redemption that God has with his covenant people is not extended to the whole world, but simply to the people of Israel, and even that is vicarious, that is, through the priests and their cultic duties.

**Primary among the objects of atonement in the Old Testament are the people of God, but the means of atonement can vary**

Goats, sheep, and birds are listed among the acceptable animals to be sacrificed, but there were also grain, oil, and drink offerings. Ransom money can provide atonement for the lives of the people; God commands at least one census to be made of the people at which each participant pays the same amount to buy his life and the lives of his family from God, who promises no plague will harm them when they do pay (Exodus 30:11-16 ). Significantly, the money is to be used to support the services of the Tent of Meeting, hence tying it to the sacrifice of blood for atonement, if only in a tangential way. The other non-animal sacrifices are often equally tied to atonement by blood.

**Certainly the most frequently mentioned means of atonement in the Old Testament were the blood sacrifices**, dominating the use of the term by constant reference in the books of Leviticus and Numbers. Atonement needed to be made for everything from heinous crimes like idolatry (Numbers 16:47 ) to mistakes of intent, when the only sin was ignorance or error, not willful disobedience (Numbers 15:22-29 ).

**Perhaps the heart of the Old Testament teaching on atonement is found in Leviticus 16** , where the regulations for the Day of Atonement occur. Five characteristics relating to the ritual of the Day of Atonement are worthy of note because they are generally true of atonement as it is found throughout Scripture:

- (1) the sovereignty of God in atonement;
- (2) the purpose and result of making atonement;
- (3) the two goats emphasize two different things, and the burning another, about the removal of sin;
- (4) that Aaron had to make special sacrifice for himself;
- (5) the comprehensive quality of the act.

Atonement is clearly the action of God and not of man throughout the Bible, but especially in Leviticus 16 . Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu, had been recently put to death by the Lord for disobeying his command by offering "unauthorized fire" before the Lord (Leviticus 10:1-3). Here God gives Aaron precise instructions concerning how he wants the sacrifices to be made, down to the clothes Aaron is to wear, the bathing rituals in which he is to engage, and the types of sacrificial animals he is to bring. His sovereignty is further emphasized by the fact that the lot is used to choose which goat will be sacrificed and which goat will serve as the scapegoat.

The purpose for the ritual is made very clear in several places. It is to cleanse you "from all your sins" (Leviticus 16:30). Other passages make it clear that such cleansing results in saving the life of the participant (cf., e.g., Leviticus 17:11). The restoring of pure relationship is an important result, too, since the atonement is for all "uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been" (Leviticus 16:16). Thus Israel is reunited in purity to its God by the atoning sacrifice for sins.

The symbolic import of the sacrifices is so detailed that three different actions were necessary to display everything that God apparently intended us to understand about the way he was to deal with sin. The sacrificial death of the first goat showed clearly that the offense of sin requires the punishment of death (Ezekiel 18:4). The sending of the second goat into the wilderness with the sins laid on the top of its head emphasizes that sin will be removed from the person and the community "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). The burning of the sacrifice so that it is consumed shows the power of God over sin, completely destroying it so that it can bother the supplicant no more.

Particularly important for the full biblical picture of atonement as it is found in Christ is the sacrifice Aaron makes for himself and his family (Leviticus 16:11-14). Everyone, even the high priest, is guilty and needs atonement that can only be provided by God himself. The author of Hebrews emphasizes this point to make clear his doctrine of the purity of Christ as both the true and perfect sacrifice and the true and perfect priest who performs the ritual of atonement (8:3-6; 9:6-15). The Old Testament sacrifices are

shown to be but shadows of the real sacrifice of Christ on the cross by the fact of Aaron's sinfulness; an imperfect high priest cannot offer a true sacrifice, just as the blood of bulls and goats could never truly pay for the offense of human sin or substitute for the shedding of human blood.

**Lastly, atonement covers all the sins—intentional, unintentional, heinous, trivial of those for whom it is intended** No one was to enter the Tent of Meeting until the ritual was over because what was taking place there was for the whole of the community of Israel (Leviticus 16:17), presumably because any interference with the sovereign action of God's cleansing might bring an impurity into the equation that would nullify the purificatory act. The comprehensive nature of the sacrifice of atonement prefigures the comprehensiveness of the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross, but it limits its effects in the same way the Old Testament limits the effects of its sacrifice on the day of atonement to the people whom God has elected to call his own and them alone.

([Atonement - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)) -

**Mercy Seat** (3727) ([kapporet](#)) always refers to the golden cover of the sacred chest in the Holy of holies. Recall that it was here (above the mercy seat) that God had promised to meet with men (Nu 7:89). The word is derived from the root "to atone."

The Greek equivalent in the **Lxx** is usually **hilasterion**, "place or object of propitiation," a word which is applied to Christ in Romans 3:25. The translation "**mercy seat**" does not sufficiently express the fact that the lid of the ark was the place where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement. "**Place of atonement**" would perhaps be more expressive.

**Kapporet** - 22v - Always translated "**Mercy Seat**" in the **NAS** - Ex 25:17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6, 7, 8, 9; 39:35; 40:20; Lev 16:2, 13, 14, 15; Nu 7:89; 1Chr 28:11

- [What is the mercy seat?](#)
- [What is the Ark of the Covenant?](#)
- [What does it mean that God is the King of glory?](#)
- [What is the ark of the testimony?](#)
- [What is the throne of God? Does God literally have a throne?](#)
- ISBE - [Mercy Seat](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Mercy Seat](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Mercy Seat](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Mercy Seat](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Mercy Seat](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Mercy Seat](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Mercy seat](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Mercy Seat](#)

**Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words** on **hilasterion** = "the lid or cover of the ark of the covenant," signifies the Propitiatory, so called on account of the expiation made once a year on the great Day of Atonement, Hebrews 9:5 . For the formation see Exodus 25:17-21 . The Heb. word is kapporet, "the cover," a meaning connected with the covering or removal of sin (Psalm 32:1 ) by means of expiatory sacrifice. This mercy seat, together with the ark, is spoken of as the footstool of God, 1 Chronicles 28:2; cp. Psalm 99:5; 132:7 . The Lord promised to be present upon it and to commune with Moses "from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim," Exodus 25:22 (see CHERUBIM). In the Sept. the word epithema, which itself means "a cover," is added to hilasterion; epithema was simply a translation of kapporet; accordingly, hilasterion, not having this meaning, and being essentially connected with propitiation, was added. Eventually hilasterion stood for both. In 1 Chronicles 28:11 the Holy of Holies is called "the House of the Kapporet" (see RV , marg.). Through His voluntary expiatory sacrifice in the shedding of His blood, under Divine judgment upon sin, and through His resurrection, Christ has become the Mercy Seat for His people. See Romans 3:25 , and see PROPITIATION , B, No. 1. ([Mercy Seat - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#))

**Ransom** (03724)([koper](#)) is a masculine noun which refers to the ransom payment, but in several OT contexts assumes the sense of a bribe. A ransom is the price required to redeem a person. See all uses below for discussion of the meaning of ransom or bribe in each passage.

**Ransom** (English word) - 1. The money or price paid for the redemption of a prisoner or slave, or for goods captured by an enemy; that which procures the release of a prisoner or captive, or of captured property, and restores the one to liberty and the other to the original owner. 2. Release from captivity, bondage or the possession of an enemy. They were unable to procure the ransom of the prisoners. 3. In law, a sum paid for the pardon of some; great offense and the discharge of the offender; or a fine paid in lieu of corporal punishment. 4. In Scripture, the price paid for a forfeited life, or for delivery or release from capital punishment. 5. The price paid for procuring the pardon of sins and the redemption of the sinner from punishment. The Son of man came—to give His life a **ransom** for many. Mark 10:45. (**Webster**-1828)

**Bribe** (English word) - 1. A price, reward, gift or favor bestowed or promised with a view to pervert the judgment, or corrupt the conduct of a judge, witness or other person. A bribe is a consideration given or promised to a person, to induce him to decide a cause, give testimony, or perform some act contrary to what he knows to be truth, justice or rectitude. It is not used in a good sense, unless in familiar language. 2. That which seduces. (**Webster**-1828)

Note that some concordances (NAS) do not include the use of **koper** in Ge 6:14 as they interpret it as a different word than in the remaining uses. The KJV concordance does include it in the list of verses with koper.

The **Lxx** translates **koper** with the Greek noun **lutron/lytron** which refers to the ransom price or the payment which is necessary to free a slave from bondage (or a prisoner from captivity) giving them liberty.

**Koper** - translated in **NAS** - bribe(1), bribes(1), ransom(11).

**Koper** - 17v (KJV) - Ge 6:14; Ex 21:30; 30:12; Num 35:31-32; 1Sam 6:18; 12:3; Job 33:24; 36:18; Ps 49:7; Pr 6:35; 13:8; 21:18; Song 1:14; 4:13; Isa 43:3; Amos 5:12

Ge 6:14 "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with **pitch** (**Heb - koper; Lxx - asphaltos** = asphalt, tar).

Ex 21:30 (Context - Ex 21:28-29) "If a **ransom** is demanded of him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded of him.

**NET Note** - The family of the victim would set the amount for the **ransom** of the man guilty of criminal neglect. This practice was common in the ancient world, rare in Israel. If the family allowed the substitute price, then the man would be able to redeem his life.

Ex 30:12 (Context - Ex 30:11-16) "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a **ransom** for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them.

**NET Note** - The "**ransom**" is כֹּפֶר (kofer), a word related to words translated "**atone**" and "**atonement**." Here the noun refers to what is paid for the life. The idea is that of delivering or redeeming by a substitute – here the substitute is the money. If they paid the amount, their lives would be safe (W. C. Kaiser, Jr., "Exodus," EBC 2:473).

**Comment:** Note that in this context the **ransom** is for each of the sons of Israel over 20 years of age, so that no plague might come on them (Ex 30:12) that the ransom is half a shekel, a contribution to the LORD (Ex 30:13-14), to make atonement (Ex 30:16 - verb **kapar**) with the "atonement money." (Ex 30:16 - noun - **kippur/kippurim**).

Num 35:31 'Moreover, you shall not take **ransom** for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death. **32** 'And you shall not take **ransom** for him who has fled to his city of refuge, that he may return to live in the land before the death of the priest.

**Eugene Merrill** - The reason for such strict measures was the fact that bloodshed in murder pollutes the land and the only "cleansing" agent was the blood of the murderer himself (Gen. 4:10; 9:6). It was not fitting that Israel and the LORD, who lived in Israel's midst, should occupy a polluted land. So blood vengeance was not an option but a theological necessity. (The Bible Knowledge)

Job 33:24 Then let him be gracious to him, and say, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a **ransom**';

**Roy Zuck** - The angel's interceding work (in contrast with angelic "messengers of death," Job 33:22) was based on his providing a ransom for the sick person. The "ransom," while not specified, means something that can be regarded as a consideration or reason for the sufferer to be relieved from his illness. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Job 36:18 "[Beware] lest wrath entice you to scoffing; And do not let the greatness of the **ransom** turn you aside.

**Roy Zuck** - Bribe may be rendered "ransom or recompense," as in 33:24. Perhaps it means here "the large price Job is paying by his suffering." As many people have learned, money and accomplishments cannot buy a person out of distress. (The Bible Knowledge Commentary)

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his providing a ransom for the sick person. The “ransom,” while not specified, means something that can be regarded as a consideration or reason for the sufferer to be relieved from his illness.

Ps 49:7 No man can by any means redeem [his] brother, Or give to God **ransom** for him—

**Comment:** Every rich person in the world needs to emblazon this proverb on their heart (while they still have time - 2Cor 6:2). If you are in Christ, you are immeasurably rich forever!!!

Pr 6:35 He (See context = Pr 6:32-34) will not accept any **ransom**, Nor will he be content though you give many gifts.

**Comment:** The idea here is that he will refuse a **bribe**, no matter how great! Why? Presumably because it was money paid to cover up a crime or as we might say today it was “hush money!” (See comment on Amos 5:12)

**NET Note:** The word rendered “compensation” is כֹּפֶר (cofer); it is essentially a ransom price, a sum to be paid to deliver another from debt, bondage, or crime. The husband cannot accept payment as a ransom for a life, since what has happened cannot be undone so easily.

As the word “ransom” (כֹּפֶר, cofer) indicates, the rich are susceptible to kidnapping and robbery. But the poor man pays no attention to blackmail – he does not have money to buy off oppressors. So the rich person is exposed to legal attacks and threats of physical violence and must use his wealth as ransom.

**Buzzell** - Bribery is frequently condemned in Proverbs (6:35; 15:27; 17:8), in the Law (Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19; 27:25), and elsewhere (e.g., Job 36:18; Ps. 15:5; Ecc. 7:7; Isa. 33:15). (The Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Pr 13:8 The **ransom** of a man’s life is his riches, But the poor hears no rebuke.

**NET Note:** As the word “ransom” (כֹּפֶר, cofer) indicates, the rich are susceptible to kidnapping and robbery. But the poor man pays no attention to blackmail – he does not have money to buy off oppressors. So the rich person is exposed to legal attacks and threats of physical violence and must use his wealth as ransom.

Pr 21:18 The wicked is a **ransom** for the righteous, And the treacherous is in the place of the upright.

**NET Note:** The Hebrew word translated “ransom” (כֹּפֶר, kofer) normally refers to the price paid to free a prisoner. R. N. Whybray (Proverbs [CBC], 121) gives options for the meaning of the verse: (1) If it means that the wicked obtain good things that should go to the righteous, it is then a despairing plea for justice (which would be unusual in the book of Proverbs); but if (2) it is taken to mean that the wicked suffers the evil he has prepared for the righteous, then it harmonizes with Proverbs elsewhere (e.g., 11:8). The ideal this proverb presents – and the future reality – is that in calamity the righteous escape and the wicked suffer in their place (e.g., Haman in the book of Esther).

**Buzzell** - This verse does not mean that the wicked redeem the righteous. Instead it may mean that the wicked who have caused the righteous to suffer will themselves suffer and will thereby “set free” (become a ransom for) the righteous, for the godly will no longer suffer at the hands of the wicked. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Song 1:14 “My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms In the vineyards of Engedi.”

Song 4:13 “Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates With choice fruits, henna with nard plants,

Isa 43:3 “For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place.

**John Martin** - As a ransom or reward for releasing the Jewish captives, Persia was enabled by God to conquer Egypt ... Cush (modern-day southern Egypt, all of Sudan, and northern Ethiopia), and Seba, possibly the same as Sheba in southern Arabia (cf. 60:6; Job 6:19; 1 Kings 10:1–13) where the Sabceans lived (cf. Job 1:15; Isa. 45:14; Ezek. 23:42; Joel 3:8). (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Amos 5:12 For I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great, [You] who distress the righteous [and] accept bribes, And turn aside the poor in the gate.

**NIDOTTE** - **Bribery** always results in someone’s losing the meaning of life or life itself. Wolff comments, “Bribery leads to declaring the innocent guilty and the guilty innocent” (248). This explains why Amos charges the Israelite aristocracy with the sins of greed and injustice, “For I know how many are your

offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes (כֹּפֵר) and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts" (Amos 5:12; see also 1 Sam 12:3)."

**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."**

- **will:** Lev 23:27,32 Isa 22:12 Jer 31:9 Eze 7:16
- **he shall be:** Ge 17:14
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

How important is humility to God? That's a rhetorical question of course. Cut off from his people is at least ex-communication (but look at the punishment in the next passage - the implication is that the person in verse 30 has refused to humble himself and obey God's clear instruction!) It is an inviolable principle that pride obstructs the flow of grace, while humility opens the floodgates! Grace always flows in a "downward direction." James says God "arrays Himself against" (like ancient armies did in battle!) the pride person! (James 4:6-note)

**Leviticus 23:30 "As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people."**

- Lev 20:3,5,6 Ge 17:14 Jer 15:7 Ezek 14:9 Zep 2:5 1Co 3:17
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Holiness is separation from the profane, and it is not a partial separation, not a partial obedience (which is really "disobedience" with a shell of complicity)!. God is serious about it and is not here accepting 90% acquiescence! Do we in 21st century America (and specifically the evangelical church) really understand God's desire for His people to be holy as He is holy.

**Leviticus 23:31 "You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places."**

**Leviticus 23:32 "It is to be a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your sabbath."**

- **sabbath** Lev 16:31 Mt 11:28-30 Heb 4:3,11
- **humble:** Lev 23:27 Ps 35:13 Ps 51:17 Ps 69:10,11 Ps 126:5,6 Isa 57:15,18,19 58:3-7 Isa 61:3 Mt 5:4 1Co 11:31
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Sabbath** means intermission or rest so one might paraphrase it as "It is to be a rest of complete rest"!

**Humble your souls** - This is not to be an external ornament one puts on for show. God is looking at our hearts, not what we wear. He is interested in the internal, not the external. It's easy for us to "do" something to appease (that we think will appease) God, but God is primarily interested for us to "be" someone! Being should always proceed doing. In this context, being calls for humility and doing is keeping sabbath.

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**Norman Geisler - LEVITICUS 23:32—Was the feast observed on the ninth day or on the tenth day?**

**PROBLEM:** According to this verse the fast associated with the Day of Atonement was to begin on the "ninth day of the month." But earlier in Leviticus 16:29 they were to begin fasting on the "tenth day of the month."

**SOLUTION:** This fast began on the ninth day and extended over to the tenth day (cf. Lev. 23:27). Hence, it was appropriate to speak of it as being either day. There are several other problems of a similar nature. For example, in like manner the feast was both seven days (Ex. 12:15) or six days (Deut. 16:8). God ended His work of creation on the seventh day (Gen. 2:2) and yet did it in six days (Ex. 20:11). Also, "after eight days" means the next Sunday (John 20:26; cf. 20:19). ([When Critics Ask](#))

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Leviticus 23:34 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD.

- **fifteenth:** Ex 23:16 34:22 Nu 29:12 Dt 16:13-15 Ezr 3:4 Ne 8:14 Zec 14:16-19 John 1:14 7:2 Heb 11:9,13
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**FEAST OF INGATHERING  
FEAST OF TABERNACLES  
FEAST OF BOOTHS**

**Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD** - Bush comments "This festival is termed in Hebrew חג הסוכות 'hag hassukoth, feast of tents, or booths, but by the Chal. is called 'the shade of clouds,' in allusion to the shadow of the divine protection in the pillar of cloud that attended the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness. The Feast of Tabernacles was instituted in memory of the journey through the Arabian wilderness, and therefore the people, during its continuance, dwelt in booths. This lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 22d of the seventh month, Tisri (October). It is usual to state that another object of this feast was as a Feast of In-gathering, to return thanks, and to rejoice for the completed vintage and gathering in of the fruits. But a close examination will make it probable that this was the separate object of the eighth day, which was added to the seven: for it was only during the seven days that the people were to dwell in booths. Being thus closely connected, they got to be regarded as one festival, and the names were confounded and interchanged, as in the analogous case of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Instead, therefore, of regarding this as one festival of eight days, with two names and two objects, it seems best to regard it as a union of two festivals with different names and objects, the one of seven days, and the other of one day. As in the other festivals of a week's duration, the first and last days were to be observed as Sabbaths, with the exception that only servile labor was interdicted. On the other five days any kind of work might be executed. During all the seven the people were to live in booths made of branches of several sorts of trees, which, as mentioned in Lev. 23:40, are the palm, the willow, and two others, which seem to denote 'beautiful trees,' and any 'thick or bushy wood,' rather than any particular species. Those named in Nehem. 8:15, are different, and it seems reasonable to conclude that it was not the intention of the law to compel the use of any particular species, but only such as were suitable for the purpose and could be easily procured. It is not expressly said in the law that the booths were to be made with those branches, though the language of the text with the context, obviously leads to that conclusion. It was so understood in the time of Nehemiah. But the Sadducees and Pharisees, in later days, split on this point; the former understanding that the booths were to be made of the boughs, while the latter contended that they were to be borne rejoicingly in the hands. The latter practice prevailed in the time of Christ, as it does to this day. The Karaites, however, follow the interpretation of the Sadducees, which seems to be the right one, although it must be confessed that the Israelites did not, in the Arabian wilderness dwell in green booths, but in cots. It seems that the people often made their booths on the flat roofs of their houses. More public sacrifices were to be offered on this festival than on any of the others, as may be seen in Num. 29:12-39. This feast was celebrated with more of outward glee than any others, though without intemperance, to which the Hebrews as a nation, do not appear to have been ever much addicted. The ceremonies of parading in procession with branches, chanting hosannas, and of drawing water from the pool of Siloam, to pour out, mixed with wine, on the sacrifice as it lay on the altar, existed in the time of Christ, and before; but they rest rather upon tradition than upon any express law of Moses. The eighth day, which we regard as the proper Feast of In-gathering, was kept as a Sabbath (and sometimes must actually have been one) like the first of the tabernacle feasts. Notwithstanding its being a distinct festival, the sacrifices for it were less than those of any of the preceding seven days.

See Jesus' great invitation to all who are thirsty to come and drink, this invitation given at the end of the feast of Booths **John 7:37-39 Commentary** (See **Excursus on the feast**)

**Bramer on Booths** (hassukot)—This specific feast is referred to in Leviticus only here. In the rest of the Pentateuch it is mentioned by name only in Deut 16:13, 16; 31:10. Its four other mentions in the OT occur in 2 Chr 8:13; Ezra 3:4, and Zech 14:16, 18. Zechariah describes this feast as being the required one for non-covenant nations to participate in during the coming Kingdom Age (Ed: Aka the "[Millennium](#)") to show their acknowledgment of the true God and the nation He delivered from Egypt. In the NT this feast is referred to only in John 7:2. It is also described, though not designated by the phrase *gib' at yamim*, in Ex 23:16b; Ex 34:22b (both times called the "Feast of Ingathering"); Nu 29:12-34. The function of this feast may be related in part to the fall ingathering of fruit as the references in Exodus seem to indicate. However, the other biblical passages seem merely to relate it to living in temporary shelters as the Israelites did during their wilderness wanderings. **These tabernacles or booths were made of boughs and would remind God's people of all that He did in giving them both a permanent place to live and a land that produced**

**bountifully.** [sukka] (Bible Knowledge Key Word Study)

**Scofield:** The Feast of Tabernacles, or Ingathering, Lev 23:34-44, is, like the Lord's Supper for the Church, both memorial and prophetic - memorial as to redemption out of Egypt (v. 43); prophetic as to the kingdom-rest of Israel after her regathering and restoration, when the feast again becomes memorial, not for Israel alone, but also for all nations (Ezra 3:4; Zech 14:16-21; cp. Rev 21:3). This festival, its name derived from the fact that during its observance the Israelites dwelt in booths or tabernacles (Lev 23:42-43), began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, Tishri, and lasted for one week.

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#### **QUESTION - [What is the Feast of Tabernacles / Booths / Sukkot?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Feast of Tabernacles, also known as the Feast of Booths and *Sukkot*, is the seventh and last feast that the Lord commanded Israel to observe and one of the three feasts that Jews were to observe each year by going to "appear before the Lord your God in the place which He shall choose" (Deuteronomy 16:16). The importance of the Feast of Tabernacles can be seen in how many places it is mentioned in Scripture. In the Bible we see many important events that took place at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. For one thing, it was at this time that [Solomon's Temple](#) was dedicated to the Lord (1 Kings 8:2).

It was at the Feast of Tabernacles that the Israelites, who had returned to rebuild the temple, gathered to celebrate under the leadership of Joshua and Zerubbabel (Ezra 3). Later, the Jews heard Ezra read the Word of God to them during the Feast of Tabernacles (Nehemiah 8). Ezra's preaching resulted in a great revival as the Israelites confessed and repented of their sins. It was also during this Feast that Jesus said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-39).

The Feast of Tabernacles takes place on the 15th of the Hebrew month Tishri. This was the seventh month on the [Hebrew calendar](#) and usually occurs in late September to mid-October. The feast begins five days after the Day of Atonement and at the time the fall harvest had just been completed. It was a time of joyous celebration as the Israelites celebrated God's continued provision for them in the current harvest and remembered His provision and protection during the 40 years in the wilderness.

As one of the three feasts that all "native born" male Jews were commanded to participate in, the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned multiple times in Scripture, sometimes called the Feast of the Ingathering, the Feast to the Lord, or the Feast of Booths (Exodus 23:16; Deuteronomy 16:13). As one of the pilgrim feasts (when Jewish males were commanded to go to Jerusalem), it was also the time when they brought their tithes and offerings to the Temple (Deuteronomy 16:16). With the influx of people coming to Jerusalem at that time, we can only imagine what the scene must have been like. Thousands upon thousands of people coming together to remember and celebrate God's deliverance and His provision, all living in temporary shelters or booths as part of the requirements of the feast. During the eight-day period, so many sacrifices were made that it required all twenty-four divisions of priests to be present to assist in the sacrificial duties.

We find God's instructions for celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23, given at a point in history right after God had delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt. The feast was to be celebrated each year on "the fifteenth day of this seventh month" and was to run for seven days (Leviticus 23:34). Like all feasts, it begins with a "holy convocation" or Sabbath day when the Israelites were to stop working to set aside the day for worshiping God. On each day of the feast they were to offer an "offering made by fire to the Lord" and then after seven days of feasting, again the eighth day was to be "a holy convocation" when they were to cease from work and offer another sacrifice to God (Leviticus 23). Lasting eight days, the Feast of Tabernacles begins and ends with a Sabbath day of rest. During the eight days of the feast, the Israelites would dwell in booths or tabernacles that were made from the branches of trees (Leviticus 23:40-42).

The Feast of Tabernacles, like all the feasts, was instituted by God as a way of reminding Israelites in every generation of their deliverance by God from Egypt. Of course, the feasts are also significant in that they foreshadow the work and actions of the coming Messiah. Much of Jesus' public ministry took place in conjunction with the Holy Feasts set forth by God.

The three pilgrim feasts where all Jewish males were commanded to "appear before the Lord in the place he chooses" are each very important in regards to the life of Christ and His work of redemption. We know with certainty that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are symbolic of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross. Likewise, we know that Pentecost, which marked the beginning of the Feast of Weeks, was the time of Jesus' bodily ascension. And most scholars would agree that the Feast of Tabernacles is symbolic of Christ's [Second Coming](#) when He will establish His earthly kingdom.

There are also some who believe that it was likely during the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus was born. While we celebrate Christ's birth on [December 25](#), most scholars acknowledge that this tradition was begun in the fourth century AD by the Roman Catholic Church and that the exact day of Jesus' birth is unknown. Some of the evidence that Jesus might have been born earlier in the year during the Feast of the Tabernacles includes the fact that it would be unlikely for shepherds to still be in the field with their sheep in December, which is in the middle of the winter, but it would have been likely they were in the fields tending sheep at the time of the



Feast of Tabernacles. The strong possibility that Jesus was born at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles is also seen in the words John wrote in John 1:14. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The word John chose to speak of Jesus "dwelling" among us is the word *tabernacle*, which simply means to "dwell in a tent."

Some believe it is very likely that John intentionally used this word to associate the first coming of Christ with the Feast of Tabernacles. Christ came in the flesh to dwell among us for a temporary time when He was born in the manger, and He is coming again to dwell among us as Lord of Lords. While it cannot be established with certainty that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles, some believe there is a strong possibility the Feast of Tabernacles not only looks forward to His second coming but also reflects back on His first coming.

The Feast of Tabernacles begins and ends with a special Sabbath day of rest. During the days of the feast all native Israelites were "to dwell in booths" to remind them that God delivered them out of the "land of Egypt" and to look forward to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would deliver His people from the bondage of sin. This feast, like all of the feasts of Israel, consistently reminded the Jews and should remind Christians as well that God has promised to deliver His people from the bondage of sin and deliver them from their enemies. Part of God's deliverance for the Israelites was His provision and protection of them for the 40 years they wandered in the wilderness, cut off from the Promised Land. The same holds true for Christians today. God protects us and provides for us as we go through life in the wilderness of this world. While our hearts long for the Promised Land (heaven) and to be in the presence of God, He preserves us in this world as we await the world to come and the redemption that will come when Jesus Christ returns again to "tabernacle" or dwell among us in bodily form. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

#### **Leviticus 23:35 'On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind.**

- Lev 23:7,8,24,25
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

#### **Leviticus 23:36 'For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.**

- **Seven:** Nu 29:12-38
- **eighth:** 2Chr 7:8-11 Ne 8:18 John 7:37
- **assembly:** Heb. day of restraint, Dt 16:8 Joel 1:14 Joel 2:15
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

See related discussion of this feast in John 7 where Jesus stood up on the last day and cried out asking if any was thirsty? **See John 7-37-39 Commentary** (See **Excursus on the feast**)

**For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work - Bush on it is an assembly.**

- Heb. עֲצֵרֶת הוּא atzereth hi, rendered in the margin a day of restraint. This is a new term, which does not occur previously in reference to any of the feasts here mentioned, and is of somewhat difficult interpretation. As the verbal root עָצַר âtzar signifies to shut up, to close, Theodoret renders it το τέλος των εορτων conclusion of the feast. So also the Gr. of the LXX. has ἐξοδιον, outgoing, or close. The term is applied to the last or concluding day of the feast of unleavened bread, Deut. 16:8, and Josephus remarks, that the feast of Pentecost, which was kept at the end of seven computed weeks, was called ἀσάρθα, asartha, evidently from the Heb. original. This, therefore, as it was the last, so it was the great day of the feast, as it is termed by the Evangelist, John 7:37. From this it would seem that any great solemnity or assemblage is called by this name of עֲצֵרֶת atzereth, as 2 Kings 10:20, Joel 1:14; although Gesenius maintains that the noun derives the meaning of assemblage from that sense of the root which he renders to stay, restrain, constrain; which is equivalent to the explication of the Jewish doctors, who make it as implying restraint or detention, inasmuch as they were detained at Jerusalem one day longer than on any other, festival, none of which lasted more than

seven days. It is one of the cases where the import of the original is unavoidably left doubtful.

**Holy Convocation** - 14x/14v - Lev. 23:3; Lev. 23:7; Lev. 23:8; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:24; Lev. 23:27; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:7; Num. 29:12

**No laborious work** - 9x/9v - Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:35; Lev. 23:36; Num. 28:18; Num. 28:25; Num. 28:26; Num. 29:1; Num. 29:12; Num. 29:35

**Leviticus 23:37 'These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD--burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day--**

- **feasts:** Lev 23:2,4 Dt 16:16,17
- **each:** Ec 3:1
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Appointed times** ([04150](#)) see notes above on [moed](#)

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## [Our Refuge](#)

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. —Psalm 46:1

Today's Scripture : Leviticus 23:37-43

Most homes are built to keep its inhabitants safe from ill effects of the weather, but not the dwellings built for Succoth. During this Jewish holiday, also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, worshipers live in dwellings made of leaves and branches. One requirement is that the stars must be visible through the "roof."

Obviously, this dwelling provides little protection from inclement weather. And that's the point. Living in this vulnerable shelter reminds the Jews of their dependency on God.

During the days of the prophet Isaiah, the people bragged about a very different kind of dwelling place; they had made lies their refuge and falsehood their hiding place (Isa. 28:15). Because of the Israelites' dependence on ungodly things, the Lord said to them through the prophet, "Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place" (v.17).

Succoth calls us to examine our lives to make sure that our security rests not on lies but on God's truth. The Feast of Tabernacles reminds us that all of life is sustained by God's goodness.

When we make truth our refuge, no storm can threaten us, for we can depend on God to sustain us. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

No storm can shake my inmost calm  
While to that refuge clinging;  
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,  
How can I keep from singing?  
—Lowry

God is a safe dwelling place in life's storms.

**Leviticus 23:38 besides those of the Sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.**

- **Sabbaths:** Lev 23:3 Lev 19:3 Ge 2:2,3 Ex 20:8-11
- **besides:** Nu 29:39 Dt 12:6 1Chr 29:3-8 2Chr 35:7,8 Ezra 2:68,69
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Leviticus 23:39 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you**

**shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day.**

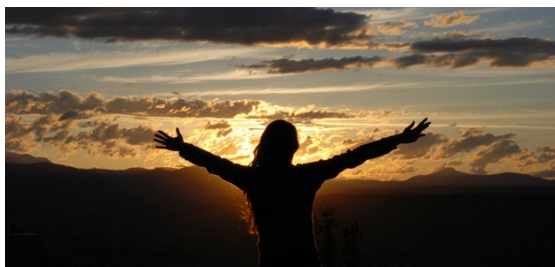
- **when:** Lev 23:34 Ex 23:16 Dt 16:13
- **on the first:** Lev 23:24,36
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Bush on the fifteenth day, &c.** - There is here no new injunction, but merely a reiteration and enforcement of what was said before. It is simply an amplification of the particulars of the feast of tabernacles. The particle 'also' therefore should be rendered 'surely' 'truly,' or something equivalent.

**Freeman** - The **Feast of Ingathering**, more generally known as the **Feast of Tabernacles (Booths)**, (Lev. 23:34,) was instituted to remind the people that their fathers dwelt in tents in the wilderness, (Lev. xxiii, 43 ;) and also to be an annual thanksgiving after all the products of the earth corn, fruit, wine, and oil were gathered for the year. Lev. 23:39. It was held in the seventh month, Tizri, or Ethanim, corresponding to our October, and lasted for eight days; during which time the people dwelt in booths made of the branches of palm, willow, and other trees. Lev. 23:39-43. On each day there were offered in sacrifice two rams, fourteen lambs, and a kid for a burnt-offering. During the continuance of the feast seventy bullocks were offered, thirteen on the first day, twelve on the second, eleven on the third, and so on, the number being diminished by one on each day until the seventh day. when only seven were offered. The eighth day was a day of peculiar solemnity, and had for its special offerings a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs for a burnt-offering, and a goat for a sin-offering. Nu 29:12-38. On the Sabbatical year, the Feast of Tabernacles was still further celebrated by a public reading of the law. Dt. 31:10-13. Whether this was intended to include the whole law, or only certain portions, and if so, what portions, is matter of dispute. Other ceremonies than these, originally instituted, were afterward added. See John 7:37. These festivals at the gathering of harvests were not peculiar to the Hebrews, but were in use among many Gentile nations. "The ancient sacrifices, assemblies, and conventions for sacrifices, were made at the gathering in of the fruits and productions of the earth, as the season of greatest leisure and rest." ARISTOTLE, cited by MAIMONIDES, Reasons, etc., p. 257. ([Manners and Customs 1875](#))

**Leviticus 23:40 'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.'**

- **foliage:** Ne 8:15 Mt 21:8
- **palm trees:** Ps 92:12 John 12:13 Rev 7:9
- **rejoice:** Dt 16:14,15 Isa 35:10 66:10 John 16:22 Ro 5:11 Php 3:3 4:4 1Pe 1:8
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Deuteronomy 16:10 "Then you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the LORD your God blesses you; 11 and **you shall rejoice before the LORD your God**, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite who is in your town, and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your midst, in the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name. 12 "You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

**Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees-** Bush - "Heb. פרי עץ הדר, peri ëtz hãdâr, the fruit of the tree of goodness, or honor; implying probably that branches were taken with the fruit as well as the leaves upon them, wherever such could be conveniently obtained. Otherwise common fruitless boughs were doubtless to be made use of. Their booths were a kind of arbors. Maimonides, the oracle of the Jews, following the Jerusalem Targum, contends that the citron or pome-citron, is the particular tree whose boughs were taken on this occasion; and so firm in this persuasion are even the modern Jews, that they fancy the feast cannot be duly celebrated without such branches. Numbers, therefore, of the German Jews send annually into Spain, to procure a quantity of branches with the citrons upon them; and when the feast is over they distribute them as a gift of great value

to their friends."

**palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook** - Bush - " These branches, as also the others mentioned in this connexion, the Sadducees understood to be for making their booths, but the Pharisees contend that they were to be carried in their hands; which is the practice of the modern Jews to this day. They tie together one branch of palm, three branches of myrtle, and one of willow. This they carry in their right hands, and in their left they have a branch of citron with its fruit, whenever they can procure it. With these they make a procession in their synagogues every day of the feast, that is, for seven days, around their reading desks, as their ancestors did around the walls of Jericho, in token of the expected downfall of their enemies. While making this procession, they sing 'Hosannah,' whence the feast itself is sometimes called by the Rabbins 'the Hosannah;' and sometimes the branches are called by the same name. On the last great day, which they call 'Hosannah Rabbah,' or 'the great Hosannah,' they make the procession seven times together, in memory of the siege of Jericho. The form of the Hosannah in their ritual, which they sing on this occasion, is remarkable:—

For thy sake, O our Creator, Hosannah.

For thy sake, O our Redeemer, Hosannah.

For thy sake, O our Seeker, Hosannah.

This would seem to be a virtual calling upon the blessed Trinity to save them and send them help.

Another distinguishing ceremony on this occasion was the pouring out of water, the manner of which was as follows:—One of the priests, with a golden flagon, went to the pool of Siloam or Bethesda, where, filling it with water, he returned to the court of the priests by the gate on the south side of the court of Israel, thence called the Water Gate; and no sooner did he appear, than the silver trumpets sounded to announce his arrival. He continued to advance and went directly to the top of the altar, to the two basins that stood, the one with the wine for the ordinary drink-offering, the other for the water which he had brought; where, pouring the water into the empty bason, he mixed the wine and water together, and afterwards poured out both together by way of libation. There is nothing said about this part of the ceremonies in the law of Moses, but the Jews pretend to find authority for it in Is. 12:3, 'With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.' The conjecture of Patrick is far more probable, that it was in memory of the water which followed them during all the time of their sojourning in the wilderness. It is supposed that our Savior alludes to this custom, where it is said, John 7:37, 38, 'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' This was a season of so much rejoicing, that it passed into a common proverb, that 'he that never saw the rejoicing of drawing water, never saw rejoicing in his life.'

**and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.**

**Disciple's Study Bible** - The Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles or Ingathering) was a time of high rejoicing. The expression "before the LORD" is a reminder that we live in full knowledge of God's watchful eye. See Ge 19:27. Prayer expresses our joy and celebration in God's presence.

**rejoice before the LORD** Lev. 23:40; Deut. 12:12; Deut. 12:18; Deut. 16:11; Deut. 27:7

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### **Not A Killjoy**

Take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, . . . and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God. —Leviticus 23:40

Today's Scripture : Leviticus 23:33-44

Contrary to what many believe, God is not a killjoy who frowns on His people having fun. The Old Testament Feast of Tabernacles is one evidence of this. The week-long festival came 5 days after the annual Day of Atonement, a day of fasting when Israelites expressed sorrow for their sins (Leviticus 23:26-32).

The tabernacles were booth-like structures reminding Israel of the temporary dwellings they had in the wilderness. Also known as "The Feast of Ingathering" (Exodus 23:16), it pictured God's blessing on their harvest, as well as the final rest and harvest planned for them in the future.

Everyone who was able joined in a week of worship, rejoicing, and celebration (Deuteronomy 16:13-14). Imagine children greeting playmates they hadn't seen for a year, feasts with plenty of food for all, bonfires under the starry sky, families feasting, and the nation celebrating forgiveness and freedom together.

God used the feasts to teach His people the close connection between the spiritual and physical aspects of life. Times of prosperity and blessing were to be marked by rejoicing before the Lord. Though God takes sin seriously, He is also the One who abundantly

pardons and provides for every need. He is not a killjoy! By: Herbert Vander Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God takes delight when we rejoice  
In all that He has done;  
And when we see the love of Christ  
Our joy has just begun.  
—D. De Haan

God wants to paint your life with joy.

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### **Rejoice Before The Lord!**

The common tradition in Christian worship is to worship God in a somber, solemn manner. Praise is solemn (“Do you not understand the Lord is to be feared?”). Prayer is solemn (“To approach God with quietness is to show God dignity!”) Communion is solemn (“Do you not realize this is about death—not victory!”) Preachers who make people laugh do not take God’s word seriously! From Christian worship one might get the impression that God always has been offended by any worship approach that was less than solemn.

In Deuteronomy 16:9-12 Moses wrote worship instructions for the Feast of Weeks. It was to be celebrated seven weeks from the beginning of harvest. It was to be an occasion when they gave God freewill offerings of their harvest. It was one of the three assemblies of the year in which all the men of Israel were to gather in one place and worship God as a nation (Deuteronomy 16:16).

Hopefully everyone (including males, females, and servants) could gather on this occasion. It was to be a happy occasion when everyone rejoiced before the Lord. They were to rejoice for two reasons: (1) God blessed them in harvest! (2) God delivered them from slavery!

Why do we assume that any tribute to God must be a solemn occasion? From the origins of worship in Israel, God was not offended by the joy of His people. Instead, He was honored that His people found reason for joy in Him. God’s blessings call for celebration! Celebration calls for expressions of joy! Only the person who credits himself or herself for God’s blessings finds no reason to rejoice before the Lord.

After the first baptisms into Christ, Jewish Christians were together daily expressing gladness and sincerity (or simplicity) of heart. To suggest that people who knew for generations how to “rejoice before the Lord,” who expressed gladness daily were solemn in all worship gatherings is quite a stretch! If ever there was a generation who had reason to rejoice before the Lord, they were it! They knew forgiveness as it had never been known before! They existed in the assurance of resurrection! That is the knowledge of joy!

The hope of the gospel (good news) is NOT found in this statement: “Are you miserable as a sinner? Come to Christ and we will show how to live a life of greater misery!” Instead, it IS found in this understanding: “In Christ, your sin is a solved problem and your forgiveness is continuing (1 John 1:5-10)! In Christ, Your resurrection is certain! Rejoice in the Lord! Be happy, and express your joy to God!

Are you in Christ? Do you find joy in that? Is it a joy the opposition of ungodliness cannot destroy? Have you expressed your happiness to God?

If you are a Christian, let your joy be evident—even to God! [Snippets from David](#)

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### **Lehman Strauss - A Time to Rejoice**

This final feast was further a time of rejoicing before the Lord. “Ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days” (Leviticus 23:40). Don’t miss the orderly progression here: first the Day of Atonement, then the Feast of Tabernacles. On the Day of Atonement, they expressed affliction of soul (23:27, 29, 32), a deep sorrow over their sins. Until their sins had been cleansed and forgiven, they could not rejoice. Sin always prevents joy; joy always follows cleansing and forgiveness. When David sinned, he lost his joy. Hear him as he pleads with God: “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation” (Psalm 51:12). He did not lose his salvation, but he did lose his joy. When we walk in unbroken fellowship with our Lord and keep our confessions up to date, the heart remains joyful. The Feast of Tabernacles was the most joyous of the annual Jewish feasts. Notice God’s words to His people in the following passage:

“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven

days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice" (Deuteronomy 16:13-15).

It was the Lord's intention that this final feast be a time of great rejoicing. "Thou shalt rejoice... thou shalt surely rejoice."

How can we account for the extraordinary joy which accompanied the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles? What precipitated the joyful attitude of the Israelites when the toil and trials of this life were forgotten and their thoughts went back to the past? The answer to these questions is not far removed from us. By a careful review of the first four feasts, in their application to all believers in Christ, a joyous spirit should fill our hearts.

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### **1 Thessalonians 5:16+ - Rejoice always (Leviticus 23:40 you shall rejoice before the LORD your God)**

This is a command to make this our lifestyle, our daily practice. Are you rejoicing as you read this note? What would happen if we began our day rejoicing in the Lord and to the Lord and again I will say, rejoice! (Php 4:4-note)? The other question of course is how is this even possible? Beloved, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE! At least not in dependence upon our own human strength, our rotten, fallen flesh. The last thing the fallen flesh will impel us to do is to rejoice -- To criticize? Yes. To complain? Yes. To withhold forgiveness? Yes. To hold a grudge? Yes. But to rejoice? No! But what is IM-possible is HIM-possible. The Holy One in us is continually energizing us, giving us the desire and the power to rejoice always (see Php 2:13NLT-note). Will you surrender your will this morning to the sweet will of the Spirit of Jesus in you? He, and He Alone, can enable supernatural rejoicing from a heart filled with/controlled by Him (note), by His Spirit. Believe it beloved. If necessary...Confess. Repent. Forget what lies behind. Walk forth rejoicing, because no matter the circumstances today, our tomorrow is as bright and certain and joy filled as the Scars on the eternal inscribed on the hands of our Redeemer Jesus Christ (cf Rev 5:6±; Rev 5:12±, Isa 49:16+).

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**S Aldridge** - There were three great festivals for the Israelites, the dates for which were plainly marked, and at which times it behooved the males of the nation as far as possible to be present at the sanctuary. It is the last of these we are about to consider. The regulations for its observance were enunciated in fullest detail. Were not the people thus reminded that they assisted in the celebration of the ceremonies of a royal court? The Christian Church has its festivals, prominent among which are its gatherings on the Lord's day, and the observance of the Lord's Supper. Much of what can be said with reference to the Israelitish feasts is applicable also to the latter.

#### **I. THIS WAS THE MOST JOYOUS OF THE FESTIVALS. "Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God."**

1. See God's delight in the happiness of his people. He loves to witness their rejoicing. Religion was never intended to be synonymous with gloom or moroseness.

2. This was the crowning festival of the year, and therefore ought to be its climax of joy. For the child of God better days are ever in store; he need never pine for the past to return; each festival shall surpass the preceding. Jesus keeps the best wine till the last; not so with the world's pleasures.

3. It took place five days after the solemn Day of Atonement, when the national sin was purged, and Israel's communion with its God re-established. To impress sin and obtain pardon is the fitting preparation for gladness of heart. No man who has not experienced the feeling of relief from the burden of guilt and the emotion caused by restoration to his heavenly Father's favour, knows the meaning of real joy. Compared with this the delights of sense and intellect are flavourless.

4. Joy reaches its highest expression in the presence of God. "Rejoice before the Lord," even the holy righteous God who searches the heart and tries the reins. We may without pride know that we have done what was right, and that the Being of beings approves our conduct and graces the festival with the light of his countenance. There is none of the secret misgiving that attends sinful banquets, where the laugh is hollow and the gaiety forced, from a conviction that conscience is being silenced and moral law violated. Cf. the rejoicing of the people, and the terror of Adonijah and his guests (1 Kings 1:40, 49). David danced for glee before the Lord when the sacred ark was brought into the city of David. "Rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for thy king cometh unto thee." We would fain have the children glad when it is said, "Let us go unto the house of the Lord."

#### **II. THIS WAS A FESTIVAL OF GRATITUDE FOR RECENT BLESSINGS.**

1. Another name for it was the Feast of Ingathering. All the produce of the ground had been garnered, the Lord had blessed them in

all their increase - corn, oil, and wine; daily food and luxuries abounded; the booths were constructed of fruit trees and leafy palms. God's bounteous bestowment was acknowledged. Spiritual and temporal mercies had enriched the people and evoked manifestations of thanksgiving. So visibly dependent is man upon God for the germinating and maturing of the grain and fruit, that a harvest thanksgiving seems peculiarly appropriate, and again at the storing of the harvest, when the work for the year is practically ended, a festival is of evident fitness. The compassions of the Lord, "new every morning," furnish ample matter for devout meditation and praise.

2. This feature of the festival was a reason why all should share in it, not only the wealthy, high-born Israelites, but the strangers, the fatherless, the widow, and the poor (Deuteronomy 16:14). God allows his sun to shine and rain to descend upon all, and he expects those who receive his lavish gifts to invite others to participate in the enjoyment thereof. Anticipating our Lord's directions to summon to a feast the poor and maimed and blind, the Israelites were accustomed to "send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared." Selfish exclusion was thus prevented, and universal rejoicing made possible.

3. An offering to God from each was essential. "They shall not appear before the Lord empty; every man shall give as he is able" (Deuteronomy 16:17). Speech and sentiment without deeds are rightly deemed insincere. It is true of all converts from heathendom that when they give of their substance to God we may infer that they have first given him their hearts. The priests and Levites were in part supported by these national free-will presentations. If we esteem the Master, we shall treat his servants well for his sake.

**III. THIS WAS A COMMEMORATION OF FORMER BLESSINGS.** During seven days the Israelites dwelt in booths made of green boughs to remind them of the days when they sojourned in the wilderness (verse 43).

1. Previous experience may well be remembered. If it pass into oblivion, its lessons have not been graven on the mind, and our state has not proved the discipline it was designed to be. Stand, O believer, upon the mount of present station, and survey the path with all its windings by which you have ascended to this lofty summit. Much a review will be profitable in the extreme, it will produce deepened humility and thankfulness. Keil says, "the recollection of privation and want can never be an occasion of joy." Surely he forgets the Latin Nine, "haec olim meminisse juvabit." Contrast ever heightens joy, a danger successfully surmounted is one of the most pleasing of memories.

2. The exhibition of God's protecting grace and love demands particular recollection. Not the might and resources of the Israelites, but the watchful, provident care of Jehovah, had led them safely through the desert. He had been to them "a booth for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (Isaiah 4:6). The honour of God was concerned in having a permanent memorial of Israel's stay in the wilderness, and this institution was adapted to preserve the continued confidence of the people in him and consequent freedom from boastful self-assertion. In many ways, "the joy of the Lord is our strength."

3. The deliverances wrought for our forefathers in olden days should excite gratitude to God in our breasts. Can we recall unmoved the triumphs of the early Christians, or the heroism which God's Spirit enabled martyred Protestants to evince? The wonders of our age become the heirlooms of the ages that follow.

**CONCLUSION.** The sacrifice of Jesus Christ commemorated in the Lord's Supper was the Passover of the Church; the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost marked the era of the Church's Feast of Weeks; the Feast of Tabernacles yet waits its due counterpart, when the elect shall be gathered into the kingdom from every land, to celebrate the cessation of earthly toil, to exult in the complete removal of sinful stain, and to enter upon the undimmed, undying gladness of the eternal sabbath. Not one of God's people shall be missing through illness or distance of abode, and a retrospect of the pilgrimage of earth shall enhance the bliss of heaven. - S.R.A.

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**Sidlow Baxter** - There can be no rejoicing in the curse of the Law; but we may well rejoice at the altar which sets us free from the curse. That altar speaks of Calvary. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). As the Law testified to sin, so the sacrifices on that Mount Ebal altar testified to grace - to the provision of mercy, which lay within the Covenant, for the covering of guilt. Without this provision of grace Israel's position under the Law would obviously have been a mockery. When Israel later fouled the Covenant, she not only disobeyed the writing on Ebal's memorial pillars, she forsook the Lord's altar also, and offered to strange gods. Moreover, the approach to the Lord's own altar was often insincere or unintelligent, as the Lord Himself testifies against Israel through His prophets. Yet that altar spoke with comforting eloquence of grace to cover man's failure, if only faith and sincerity came thither. The peace-offerings and burnt-offerings speak of peace made for us with God, through Christ, and of God's perfect delight in the sacrifice of His Son, whereby we become fully accepted with Him. Oh, well may we "rejoice before the Lord our God" at that altar! The old dispensation pronounces curse, yet is made to point to the new dispensation in Christ, which administers blessing. Under the old-curse. Under the new-blessing. Thank God, the old has given

place to the new! (Explore the Book)

Free from the Law, oh, happy condition!

Jesus hath bled, and there is remission!

Cursed by the Law, and bruised by the Fall,

Grace hath redeemed us, once for all!

**Leviticus 23:41 'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month.**

- Nu 29:12 Ne 8:18
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Perpetual statute** - Exod. 27:21; Exod. 29:9; Exod. 30:21; Lev. 3:17; Lev. 10:9; Lev. 23:14; Lev. 23:21; Lev. 23:31; Lev. 23:41; Lev. 24:3; Num. 10:8; Num. 15:15; Num. 18:23; Num. 19:10; Num. 19:21

**Leviticus 23:42 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths**

- Ge 33:17 Nu 24:2,5 Ne 8:14-17 Jer 35:10 2Co 5:1 Heb 11:13-16
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Nehemiah 8:14-17 They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month. 15So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written." 16So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing.

**'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths-** Bush - " Heb. בסכת תשבו besukkoth tēshebu, ye shall sit (abide) in booths. These were afterwards, in Jerusalem, constructed on the tops of their houses, in their court-yards, and in the streets. Neh. 8:16. They were made of the branches of various trees, as before remarked, v. 15, and the Hebrew canons affirm that they were not to be covered with any kind of cloth, or any thing that had not grown out of the earth, or with aught that was faded or withered, or that had an ill savor, or that was in any way unclean. Maimonides observes that this feast was fixed to that season when the people could dwell in booths with the least inconvenience, as the weather was then moderate, and they were not wont to be troubled either with heat or with rain."

**Norman Geisler - LEVITICUS 23:42–43—Did Israel dwell in booths or in tents?**

**PROBLEM:** Here the people of Israel are told to "dwell in booths." But earlier in Exodus 16:16, it speaks of everyone being "in his tent."

**SOLUTION:** Since the people moved throughout the wilderness for 40 years, their homes were tents. However, the Leviticus passage does not speak of their homes in the wilderness, but about later instructions for celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) in Jerusalem. Since it was only for a week, they were instructed to make temporary booths in which to live while at the feasts. There was, after all, no Holiday Inn in Jerusalem at the time. ([When Critics Ask](#))

**Leviticus 23:43 so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God."**

- Ex 13:14 Dt 31:10-13 Ps 78:5,6
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Deuteronomy 31:10-13 Then Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, 11when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. 12"Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the LORD your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. 13"Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."

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### Leviticus 23:44 So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD

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- Lev 23:1,2 Lev 21:24 Mt 18:20
- Leviticus 23 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## APPOINTED TIMES DECLARED BY MOSES

### So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD

**Appointed times** ([04150](#)) see notes above on [moed](#)

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**C H McIntosh** - The feasts of the Lord. This was their true character, their original title; but in the Gospel of John, they are called "feasts of the Jews." They had long ceased to be Jehovah's feasts. He was shut out. They did not want Him; and hence, in John 7., when Jesus was asked to go up to "the Jews' feast of tabernacles" He answered, "My time is not yet come"; and when He did go up it was "privately," to take His place outside of the whole thing, and to call upon every thirsty soul to come unto Him and "drink. There is a solemn lesson in this. Divine institutions are speedily marred in the hands of man; but, oh! how deeply blessed to know that the thirsty soul that feels the barrenness and drought connected with a scene of empty religious formality, has only to flee to Jesus and drink freely of His exhaustless springs, and so become a channel of blessing to others.