

The Fall Feasts of Israel

by [Chuck Missler](#)

The Seven Feasts of Moses

The Torah - the five books of Moses - details seven feasts during the Hebrew calendar:¹ Three feasts are in the spring, in the month of Nisan: Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of First Fruits. Then fifty days later there is the Feast of Weeks, *Shavout*, also known as Pentecost.

There are three remaining feasts in the fall, in the month of Tishri: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*), and the Feast of Tabernacles. (There are two reckonings of the Hebrew year: the civil year starts in the fall on the 1st of Tishri; the religious calendar starts in the spring in the month of Nisan.²)

Their Prophetic Role

While each of these feasts has a historical commemorative role, they also have a *prophetic* role. Jesus indicated this in Matthew 5:17:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Paul also emphasized that in Romans 15:4:

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...

The prophetic role of the feasts is also highlighted in Colossians 2:16 and 17:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come...

The Feast of Trumpets

The Jewish New Year (*Rosh Ha' Shana*), along with the Feast of Trumpets, begins on the 1st of Tishri. Immediately following the Feast of Trumpets begins the seven Days of Affliction, in anticipation of the Day of Atonement, or *Yom Kippur*.

Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement,³ is observed on the 10th of Tishri. This day was a day of sin offerings and numerous other rituals as it was the most solemn of all the observances.

This was the day - the only day - that the High Priest was able to enter the Holy of Holies,⁴ and then only after elaborate ceremonial washings, offerings, and associated rituals.

This was also the day that two goats were selected, one for an offering and one as the "scapegoat."⁵

(The lottery box, used to select which goat was to serve in which capacity, has been fashioned for service in the forthcoming Temple and may be seen during a visit to the Temple Institute in Jerusalem today.)

As many aspects of the feasts were prophetic, the scapegoat is also Messianic.⁶

Even the seven days preceding, the Days of Affliction, are an affliction of preparation, suggestive of the threshing floor, which is also a prophetic idiom.⁷

Since the loss of the Temple in 70 A.D., the God-centered observances of the Torah have tragically been replaced with a man-centered, good works system of appeasement through prayer, charity, and penitence. However, it appears that a return to the traditional ways is on the horizon with the plans to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.⁸

Succoth (The Feast of Tabernacles)

Five days later, on the 15th of Tishri, is the final feast of the year: *Succoth*, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Booths. This lasts for eight days and is one of the three feasts that were compulsory for all Jewish males.⁹

It is fascinating to visit Israel at this time and observe them build their temporary "booths" in the traditional way, leaving deliberate gaps in the branches to view the stars at night, and for the wind to blow through during the day. This is intended to remind them of the wilderness wanderings.

At the end of the eight days, they leave their temporary dwellings to return to their permanent homes. (This is one of the reasons some suspect that this feast, rather than the Feast of Trumpets, is suggestive of the Rapture of the Church. Also, there appears to be a hint by Peter, desiring to build "succoths" at the transfiguration.¹⁰) This day, traditionally, is the day that Solomon dedicated the first Temple.

This feast also involved a daily processional to the Pool of Siloam to fetch water for the Temple. This ceremonial procession is the setting for the events of John 7, where Jesus offers them "living water."¹¹

This procession involved four types of branches: the willow, the myrtle, the palm, and a citrus.¹² The willow has no smell and no fruit. The myrtle has smell, but no fruit. The palm has no smell, but bears fruit. The citrus has both smell and bears fruit. This sounds reminiscent of the four soils of the first "kingdom parable" of Matthew 13, doesn't it?¹³

The prophetic implications of this climactic feast are many. Most scholars associate it with the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom in Israel.¹⁴

In Summary

Most observers note that the first three feasts, in the first month of the religious year -Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Feast of First Fruits - are prophetic of the Lord's First Coming. They each were also fulfilled on the day they were observed.

Between these three feasts and the final three feasts is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, which is predictive of the Church. (It is also the only feast in which leavened bread is ordained!)

It is believed that the last three feasts, in the 7th month, are prophetic of the Lord's Second Coming. That is why many are particularly watchful in the fall of each year. For more background, review our briefing package, [The Feasts of Israel](#).

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Notes:

1. Leviticus 23; Numbers 28, 29; Deuteronomy 16.
2. Exodus 12:2.
3. Leviticus 16:1-19; 23:26-32.
4. Hebrews 9:1-16.
5. Leviticus 16:20-34.
6. 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:6; 52:15.
7. Luke 3:16,17. Note the location of Ruth (a Gentile bride-to-be) during the threshing floor scene (Ruth 3:8,9): at Boaz's (the kinsman-redeemer) feet.
8. See [The Coming Temple Update](#) briefing package for further study.
9. Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the Feast of Tabernacles were mandatory: Deuteronomy 16:16.
10. Matthew 17:4.
11. John 7:2, 10, 37-39.
12. Thanks to Doug Wetmore for his insights.
13. Matthew 13:3-9; 18-23.
14. Hosea 5:15-6:3; Zechariah 14:4, 9, 16.



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