

# The Feasts of the Lord<sup>1</sup>

The liturgical calendar also holds a significant place in the book of Leviticus. In ancient Israel there were **seven annual religious festivals especially ordained by God:**

- 1. Passover** (*pesah*, HEB). EXO 12:1–28, 43–49; LEV 23:5; NUM 28:16; DEU 16:1–8  
**Time:** The evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan (Abib), the first month of the biblical year (March/April).  
**Purpose:** (1) To commemorate Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage. (2) To remind the children of Israel that God “passed over” their houses, i.e., spared the firstborn of the Israelites (EXO 12:27).  
**Prophetic Significance:** (1) Christ is our Passover (cf. JOH 1:29; 19:36; 1CO 5:6-7; 1PE 1:18, 19). (2) The Passover is the foundation for the Lord’s Supper (cf. MAT 26:17–30; MAR 14:12–25; LUK 22:1–20). (3) The Passover foreshadows the marriage supper of the Lamb (cf. MAT 26:29; MAR 14:25; LUK 22:16–18).
- 2. Feast of Unleavened Bread** (*matsot*, HEB). EXO 12:15–20; 13:3–10; LEV 23:6–8; NUM 28:17–25; DEU 16:3–8  
**Time:** It began on the fifteenth day of Nisan (Abib) and continued for one week (March/April).  
**Purpose:** To commemorate the hardships of Israel’s hurried flight from Egypt (EXO 12:39). The absence of leaven symbolized complete consecration and devotion to God.  
**Prophetic Significance:** (1) Unleavened bread is a type of Christ (cf. JOH 6:30–59; 1CO 11:24). (2) Unleavened bread is a type of the true church (cf. 1CO 5:7, 8).
- 3. Day of Firstfruits** (*bikkurim*, HEB). LEV 23:9–14  
**Time:** On the day after the Sabbath of Passover week (March/April).  
**Purpose:** To dedicate and consecrate the firstfruits of the barley harvest.  
**Prophetic Significance:** (1) Firstfruits is a type of the bodily resurrection of Christ (cf. 1CO 15:20–23). (2) Firstfruits is a guarantee of the bodily resurrection of all believers (cf. 1CO 15:20–23; 1TH 4:13–18). (3) Firstfruits is a type of the consecration of the church.
- 4. Feast of Pentecost** (or Weeks: *shabuot*, HEB). LEV 23:15–22; NUM 28:26–31; DEU 16:9–12  
**Time:** The day after the seventh Sabbath after the Day of Firstfruits (May/June).  
**Purpose:** To dedicate and consecrate the firstfruits of the wheat harvest.  
**Prophetic Significance:** The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church occurred on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The two loaves, representative of the Jew and Gentile, contained leaven because sin is found within the church.
- 5. Day of Trumpets** (*rosh hashanah*, HEB). LEV 23:23–25; NUM 10:10; 29:1–6  
**Time:** The first day of the seventh month (Tishri), the sabbatical month (September/October).  
**Purpose:** To usher in and consecrate the seventh month as the sabbatical month.  
**Prophetic Significance:** In the N.T. the blowing of the trumpet is associated with the return of our Lord (cf. MAT 24:31; 1CO 15:52; 1TH 4:16).
- 6. Day of Atonement** (*yom kippur*, HEB). LEV 16; 23:26–32; NUM 29:7–11  
**Time:** The tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri—September/October).  
**Purpose:** To make annual atonement for the sins of the priests and the people, and for the tabernacle (temple).  
**Prophetic Significance:** The Day of Atonement finds its ultimate fulfillment in the crucifixion of Christ (cf. HEB 9). It represents the redeeming work of Christ more adequately than any other O.T. type.
- 7. Feast of Tabernacles** (Booths or Ingathering; *sukkot*, HEB). LEV 23:33–43; NUM 29:12–38; DEU 16:13–17  
**Time:** The fifteenth through twenty-first of the seventh month (Tishri), with an eighth day added as a climax to all the feasts (September/October).  
**Purpose:** (1) To commemorate God’s deliverance and protection during the wilderness wanderings (23:43). (2) To rejoice in the completion of all the harvest (23:39).  
**Prophetic Significance:** The Feast of Tabernacles foreshadows the peace and prosperity of the millennial reign of Christ (ZEC 14:16).

<sup>1</sup> C:\My Documents\SCHOOLofLocalChurch\Lessons\22OurJewishRoots\Articles\FeastsoftheLordNelsonBibleMaps&Charts.doc

