



The Feasts of Israel

3. Timing of the Feasts



The seven feasts of Israel in Leviticus reveal God's prophetic calendar of redemption for humanity. Calendars play an important role in redemption because they mark the time of events. The Lord in Genesis 1:1 began "time" when He created the universe of matter and space. He said in the "beginning", this was the start of time, therefore time began at the creation. The accounting for time was also set in motion in Genesis chapter 1, on the 4th day God created the Sun, Moon and Stars for light, time and seasons.

Therefore, to better understand God's prophetic calendar we need to

understand the basis of time used in the scriptures.

The Jewish Day

When does the day begin? For most people in the west the day begins at 12:00 AM and moves forward from 12 AM to 12 AM the next day. The recognition is largely a Roman based system, the Biblical system is different, the day begins at sundown and continues until sundown the next day, this is a complete Jewish day. Six times Genesis Chapter 1 speaks of the day as "the evening and the morning" (Genesis 1:5,8,13, 19, 23, 31). The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur was to be kept from evening to evening.

Genesis 1:5

(5) God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

³² It *shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath." Leviticus 23:32

The problem is that the start of the day changes every day since with the change of seasons, the Sun will go down later or earlier based on the season. Also, there are places where the days and nights are longer depending on the season, such as the Arctic areas, where the day can be all day long in the summer months.

The Jewish Week

Why are there only 7 days in a week? Why do people all over the earth use a "Seven-day week"? Even those who would deny the Bible still follow a seven-day week. The pattern was set in motion at creation. God created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh day, man created in God's image was use the 7-day unit as a division in time.

The Hebrew word for *week* comes from the Hebrew word for seven שָׁבוּעַ (*shabuwa*), what we call Saturday is called the 7th Day in Hebrew. The English names for the days of the week are derived

from pagan mythology, for example Thursday is derived from “Thor’s day”¹. The Biblical names for the week are based on their order number such as “First day”, Second day and so forth. The Seventh day is set apart as holy and sacred day of rest, called the “Sabbath”. On this day Israel was forbidden to work, since the nation was to model the Lord to the nations.

¹⁵ Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Exodus 31:15

The Sabbath was to be specifically set aside from the other six days of the week. Israel was to meet on this day and celebrate the Lord through a “Holy Convocation” (Gathering) (Leviticus 23:3). On this day all types of work and travels were to be restricted, this was a day set aside to honor the Lord. The “Sabbath” was a sign of the covenant between Israel and the Lord God.

¹⁶ Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. ¹⁷ It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:16-17

The distance that someone could travel on the Sabbath was 2000-cubits about 3000-feet this distance is based on Joshua 3:4-5, the distance from Ark of God and the people. Firewood and food were all to be collected the day before the Sabbath in preparation (Numbers 15:32-36), the people were to expect and prepare for the Sabbath, it was to be a time of family and rejoicing with the God of Israel.

In modern Israel, EL AL the official airline of Israel does not fly on the Sabbath, in observant building, the elevators will stop at each floor so the occupants do not have to work, by pressing the floor buttons. Work stops at evening on Friday until evening on Saturday.

A Time to Rejoice

The Sabbath is a sacred time in the Jewish home it is called to be a “Holy Convocation” a gathering where the Lord God is remembered. Sabbath candles are lit on Friday at sundown in the observant Jewish house by the mother. The Father then pours the wine and recites the Kiddush, prayer of sanctification, over the cup of wine. At the Sabbath there is also a special dinner along with *Hallah* bread served with a white tablecloth. This instills the importance of the Sabbath in generations to come as the children grow; the meaning and sanctification of this day are instilled in the hearts and minds of their family.



Time to Reflect

The Sabbath begins on Friday Evening and ends on Saturday evening, at the closing of the Sabbath there is a *Havdalah* ceremony (separation). The purpose is to separate the holy from the secular.

A cup of wine is filled to overflowing demonstrating the joy of the Sabbath. The cup is held in the right hand with the following blessing recited: “Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.” A blessing is then said over a decorated box of spices, as the Sabbath passes the family smells the fragrance of the spices. Then a blue and white braided candle is lit as the Sabbath draws to a close with a blessing recited over it. The Sabbath is a time of remembrance in the Jewish house, where the Lord is the focus over the secular.

¹ <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=thursday&searchmode=none>



The Jewish Month

The Hebrew Calendar is lunar, the month starts with the appearance of the thin crescent moon at the beginning of the month, the “New moon”. This occurs every 29 ½ days, therefore the length of the Month is between 29 and 30 days. The Hebrew word for month is *Hodesh* the same word used for moon. The English word for Month is derived from the word Moon.

Biblical Observance for the New Moon

The New Moon was a sacred time in Israel. In the book of Numbers, we read.

¹⁰ Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the LORD your God.” Numbers 10:10

¹⁴ With each bull there is to be a drink offering of half a hin ^[a] of wine; with the ram, a third of a hin ^[b]; and with each lamb, a quarter of a hin. This is the monthly burnt offering to be made at **each new moon** during the year. Numbers 28:14

The first day of the month was known as *Rosh Hodesh* (Head of the month). Special sacrifices were offered on this day along with the blowing of trumpets (Psalm 81:3). Biblically we see David miss the “New moon” festival at the table of Saul.

²³ And about the matter you and I discussed—remember, the LORD is witness between you and me forever.” ²⁴ So David hid in the field, and when the New Moon festival came, the king sat down to eat. ²⁵ He sat in his customary place by the wall, opposite Jonathan, ^[a] and Abner sat next to Saul, but David's place was empty. I Samuel 20:23-24

The start of the month was confirmed by the Priests and later the Sanhedrin, the council of seventy rulers. The rulers would sanctify (separate) this month from the previous, when the *crescent moon* was first witnessed. This was then telegraphed throughout the Jewish community via signal fires for hundreds of miles.

Modern Observance

Without the Temple, services for the New Moon have been modified. Prayers for the Third Temple are included in the modern “New Moon” celebration. Wikipedia explains the order of events in the modern New Moon celebration.²

During the evening service of Rosh Chodesh, a prayer Ya'a'le Ve-Yavo is added to the Avodah, the prayer for the restoration of the Temple and a segment of the Amidah. During the morning service, Ya'a' le Ve-Yavo is again recited, and half Hallel (Psalms 113-118) is recited (except on Rosh Chodesh Tevet, which is during Chanukkah, when Full Hallel is recited). The Book of Numbers 28:1-15, which includes the offerings of Rosh Chodesh, is read. An additional prayer service, called Mussaf, is added to commemorate the original sacrifices in the Temple. The middle blessing here is “Rashei Chadashim”. After the service, many recite Psalm 104. The Ya'a'le Ve-Yavo prayer is also inserted in the Grace after Meals (Birkat Ha-Mazon). Many have a custom to make sure to eat a special meal in honor of Rosh Chodesh, as the Code of Jewish Law suggests. This gives one the opportunity to recite the Ya'a'le Ve-Yavo in the Grace after Meals. Some Hasidic Jews sing Psalm 104 during this meal.

If Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbat, the regular Torah reading is supplemented with a reading of Numbers 28:9-15. The regular Haftarah is replaced by a special Rosh Chodesh Haftarah. The Mussaf prayer is also modified when Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbat. The central benediction is replaced with an alternate version (Ata Yatzarta) that mentions both the Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh. If Rosh Chodesh falls on a Sunday, a different Haftarah, Mahar Chodesh (“Tomorrow is the New Moon”, I Samuel 20:18-42) is read. The Kiddush Levanah (sanctification of the moon) is recited soon after Rosh Chodesh, typically on the first Saturday night after Rosh Chodesh.

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_Chodesh

The Future Observance



David celebrated the New Moon in the days of Saul and Jonathan as shown in 1 Samuel 20. David will also celebrate the New Moon in the Messianic Kingdom³ when Jesus reigns as King over the earth. Through the line of King David, the Messiah Jesus Christ came into the world to die for the sins of humanity. The Davidic Kingdom was established in scripture, God also made promises to David about his reign and place in the coming kingdom. In the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-7), the 1000-year reign of Messiah, God will fulfill his promises to King David. David plays a role in Israel's redemption and restoration. Ezekiel was written over 400-years after David, yet it looked forward to a resurrected King David in the Kingdom to come.

²⁵ Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. Ezekiel 37:25

Jesus reigns as King over the Earth, as the Lord of Hosts, David along with the rest of the saints will rule and reign with him. In the Messianic Kingdom, the 12 disciples will rule over the 12 tribes of Israel according to Matthew 19:27. Believers will also rule and reign with Christ in the Kingdom of Christ (Daniel 7:22-27, Luke 19:16). In the Kingdom of God, the saints both Old Testament and New Testament will rule and reign with Christ. Daniel was promised to awake to his inheritance in the end of days (Daniel 12:13).



Daniel 12:13
(13) But go your way till the end.
And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days."



¹⁶ And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. Zechariah 14:16-17

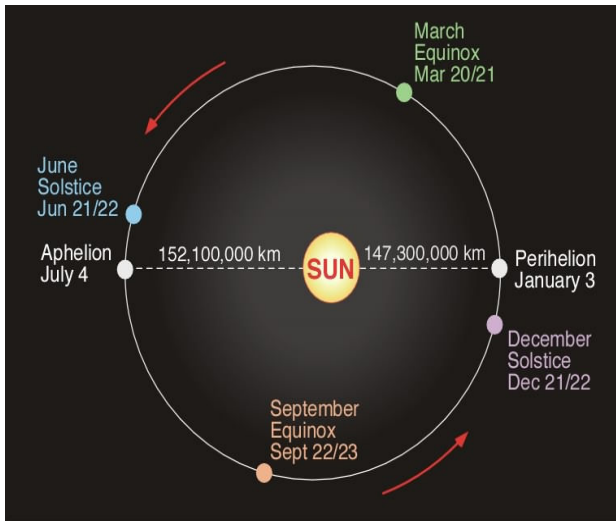
David will lead the "New Moon" worship services before the Lord. He is referred to as the "the prince" in Ezekiel 46.

¹ Thus says the Lord GOD: "The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the New Moon it shall be opened. ² The prince shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway from the outside, and stand by the gatepost. The priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings. He shall worship at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be shut until evening. ³ Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before the LORD on the Sabbaths and the New Moons. ⁴ The burnt offering that the prince offers to the LORD on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish; Ezekiel 46:1-4

³ The Messianic Kingdom is the Millennial Kingdom of 1000-years, where Jesus Christ will reign over the earth at the end of the tribulation. Satan is bound during this time, the saints are rewarded for their service and resurrected (Revelation 20:1-7).

When the Lord created the Sun, Moon and Stars, He created them to mark the time on the earth. In the Kingdom of God, the “New Moon” will be celebrated by all the nations, not only Israel. Israel will be the chief nation on the Earth (Deut. 28:1), when they are obedient to the Lord.

²² “As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure. ²³ From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD. ²⁴ “And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.” Isaiah 66:22-24



The Jewish Year

The Gregorian Calendar

Our current calendar is a solar calendar based on the time it takes the earth to revolve around the sun and arrive at the same place in a period. The time involved takes 364.242 days. The Romans under Julius Caesar devised the Julian calendar in 45 B.C. The Calendar had 365 days per year and a leap year every 4th year to account for the extra time in a solar year. However it was soon understood, that the *Julian Calendar* was still missing time, since it took the earth 365.242 days not just 365.25 to revolve around the earth.

Therefore, Pope Gregory in 1582 issued an edict where he declared the century divisible by 400 would be

leap years (1600,2000,2400). During these centuries an extra day would be added to sync the Calendar back to the sun, the name of this calendar was known as the *Gregorian calendar*.

The Hebrew Calendar

Based on New Moons as the start of the month, and the syncing of the Lunar with the Solar in future years, the Jewish Calendar is called *Lunisolar*. The Moon revolves around the earth on average every 29 ½ days, nearly 12 times in a solar year (354 days), meaning a Lunar Year is about 11-days short of a *Solar Year*. Therefore, Passover would be celebrated earlier as the years passed since each year would be 11-days short. The “Holy Days” were to be kept in their appointed seasons (Num. 9:2-3), these seasons were solar. Therefore, Passover was to be observed at Spring, this meant the timing of the solar and the lunar had to be re-synced every so often.

The solar and lunar Calendars were reconciled with a 19-year cycle. Every third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth years were to be leap years. During these years an extra day was added in the month of Adar and a 13th Month was added to the Calendar known as “Second Adar”

The Jewish calendar is lunisolar—i.e., regulated by the positions of both the moon and the sun. It consists usually of 12 alternating lunar months of 29 and 30 days each (except for Heshvan and Kislev, which sometimes have either 29 or 30 days), and totals 353, 354, or 355 days per year. The average lunar year (354 days) is adjusted to the solar year (365 1/4 days) by the periodic introduction of leap years in order to assure that the major festivals fall in their proper season. The leap year consists of an additional 30-day month called First Adar, which always precedes the month of (Second) Adar. A leap year consists of either 383, 384, or 385 days and occurs seven times during every 19-year period (the so-called Metonic cycle). Among the consequences of the lunisolar structure are these: (1) The number of days in a year may vary considerably, from 353 to 385 days. (2) The first day of a month can fall on any day of the week, that day varying from

year to year. Consequently, the days of the week upon which an annual Jewish festival falls vary from year to year despite the festival's fixed position in the Jewish month⁴

This is the reason Passover sometimes occurs in April and other times in March.

Two Calendars



When the Israel was in the wilderness of Sinai God assigned Nisan to be the "First month" of the year to them. This is the month Israel was freed from Egyptian bondage.

¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Exodus 12:1-2

Prior to the Exodus, Israel calendar was linked to the harvest times in the land. The conclusion of the harvest signaled the end of the year, the harvest was over at the end of the 6th month, Therefore the Seventh month was the beginning of the new harvest year. So, the seventh month, Tishri was known as the first month of the civil or agricultural year.

¹⁶ and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in *the fruit of your labors* from the field. Exodus 23:16

Therefore, the *Nisan* became the first of the religious year, while the seventh month *Tishri* became the first of the commercial year. Once the Temple was destroyed, the Feast of Trumpets had a diminished role since sacrifice required the Temple. So, the first of Tishri became known as "*Rosh Hashanah*" (Head of the Year) since it was the start of the civil new year.

Josephus the Jewish historian records how the calendar switched from Tishri to Nisan in the time of Moses. He writes,

"Moses appointed that Nisan...should be the first month for their festivals, because he brought them out of Egypt in that month: so that this month began the year as to all the solemnities they observed to the honor of God, although he preserved the original order of the months as to selling and buying, and other ordinary affairs" (**Antiquities of the Jews 1.3.3**)

Biblical Calendar



The Biblical Year is 360-days / year. Genesis records Noah's Ark was in the waters for 5-months (Gen7:11; 8:4) for the equivalent of 150-days. Therefore 30-days are assigned to a month, and 12 months are noted in a year. Revelation and Daniel also list 1260 days as 3 ½ years of 30 days each month for 42 months.

Hebrew Months

The names of the Hebrew months were originally Canaanite, because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived in pagan Canaan lands and they used the names known by the inhabitants. The first month was Abib (Ex.

⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica 2004, Jewish Calendar.

13:4; 23:15; 34:18; Dt. 16:1). The second month was Ziv (1Kings 6:1,37); the seventh month, Ethanim (I Kings 8:2) and the eighth month Bul (I kings 6:38). After the Babylonian captivity (586 BC) the Babylonian names of the months were adopted and are used by Israel today. For example, Tammuz was the name of a Babylonian god the women of Israel wept for, the God condemned the nation for.

Ezekiel 8:13-15

(13) He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they commit."

(14) Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the LORD, and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

(15) Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these."

The Jewish Calendar			
MONTH	LENGTH	DATE	HOLIDAY
1. Nisan	30 days	Nisan 14 Nisan 15-21 Nisan 16	Passover Unleavened Bread Firstfruits
2. Iyar	29 days		
3. Sivan	30 days	Sivan 6	Shavuot (Weeks)
4. Tammuz	29 days		
5. Av	30 days	Av 9	Tisha B' Av
6. Elul	29 days		
7. Tishri	30 days	Tishri 1 Tishri 10 Tishri 15-21	Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur Sukkot (Tabernacles)
8. Heshvan	29 or 30 days		
9. Kislev	29 or 30 days	Kislev 25- Tevet 2/3	Hanukkah
10. Tevet	29 days		
11. Shevat	30 days		
12. Adar	29 days (30 in leap year)	Adar 14	Purim

The Feasts of the Lord		
FEAST	DATE	SIGNIFICANCE
PASSOVER	Nisan 14 Spring	Passover speaks of redemption. Messiah, the Passover Lamb, would be sacrificed for us.
UNLEAVENED BREAD	Nisan 15-21 Spring	Unleavened Bread speaks of sanctification. Messiah's body would not decay in the grave.
FIRSTFRUITS	Nisan 16 Spring	Firstfruits speaks of resurrection. Messiah would rise triumphantly from the grave on the third day.
WEEKS	50 days after Firstfruits Spring	Weeks/Shavuot speaks of origination. Messiah would send the Holy Spirit to inaugurate the New Covenant and Church Age.
TRUMPETS	Tishri 1 Fall	Trumpets/Rosh Hashanah points to the future day when the Messiah returns to rescue the righteous (Rapture) and judge the wicked.
YOM KIPPUR	Tishri 10 Fall	Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement points to the future day when Israel repents of her sins and turns to the Messiah for salvation.
TABERNACLES	Tishri 15-21 Fall	Tabernacles/Sukkot points to the future day when the Messiah sets up the messianic Kingdom and tabernacles among men.

The Dating System:

The Hebrew world uses a calendar from the date of Creation which is calculated as starting from fall of 3761 BC. To get the current date, we just need to add the current year 5776, we add 3761 and our current year 2015 together (3761+2015= 5776).

Since Israel does not recognize Jesus as Messiah, they use the secular B.C.E (Before the Common Era) instead of B.C. (Before Christ). They also use C.E (Common Era) instead of A.D. *Anno Domini* ("In the Year of Our Lord").

Day	Corresponds To
Sunday	The sun, in honor of the sun god.
Monday	The moon, in honor of the moon god.
Tuesday	The planet Mars, in honor of the god Mars. The Saxons named this day after their god Tiw and called it Tiw's day. "Tuesday" comes from the name of this Saxon god.
Wednesday	The planet Mercury, later named in honor of the Teutonic god Wedn or Woden.
Thursday	The planet Jupiter, later named in honor of the Teutonic god Thor.
Friday	The planet Venus, later named in honor of the Teutonic goddess Frigg or Freia.
Saturday	The planet Saturn, in honor of the Roman god Saturn.

Month	From the Latin
January	Januarius, in honor of the Roman god Janus.
February	Februarius, in honor of the Roman festival of general expiation and purification.
March	Martius, in honor of the Roman god Mars.
April	Aprilis, which was derived from <i>aperio</i> , a Latin verb meaning to open. The month is so called because it is the month when the earth opens to produce new fruits.
May	Maius, in honor of the Greek goddess Maia.
June	Junius, in honor of the Roman goddess Juno.
July	Julius, in honor of Roman emperor Julius Caesar.
August	Augustus, in honor of Roman emperor Augustus Caesar.