

The End-Times Relevance of Israel

Part 4: The Feasts

An Overview of God's Plan

Intro

- Lev 23:1-2, “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Speak to the Israelites and say to them: “These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the Lord, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.””
 - “appointed feasts” (Heb, *moed*): (1) appointed or designated time; (2) annual season; (3) unit of time; (4) feast; a festival of celebration and/or worship appointed by an authority; (5) assembly, i.e., a group of persons that meet for a specific purpose or occasion; (6) army, group of soldiers assembled together
 - “assemblies” (Heb, *miqra*): (1) assembly or convocation of people gathered for a purpose; (2) a public reading; (3) a public signal or sign calling a community together
 - common themes: (1) appointed/designated time (not negotiable); (2) involves assembly of people; (3) has specific purpose
 - “the appointed feasts of the Lord”
 - their fulfillment is in the order in which they occur
 - they portray Jesus’ entire redemptive career
 - they provide insight to end times events
- Side notes
 - many of the feasts were based on Israel’s agricultural seasons
 - feasts were assigned to specific dates in Jewish calendar (lunar months)
 - Jewish day begins at sundown: evening first, then morning/daylight
 - the Bible is one book; OT holds the imagery & precedent, NT holds the fulfillment
 - this presentation is only an overview of the feasts

Spring Feasts

- Passover
 - What was the significance of the original Passover?
 - To Israel, Passover represents redemption — shedding of blood, liberation from bondage in Egypt, receiving the promised homeland
 - Lev 23:5, “The Lord’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.”
- Fulfillment of Passover
 - 1 Co 5:7, “For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.”
 - Jn 1:29, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
 - Col 2:16-17, “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.”

- to us, Jesus' death provides our redemption — shedding of his blood, our liberation from bondage to sin, receiving God's promises
- Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - Lev 23:6, "On the fifteenth day of that month the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast."
 - leaven/yeast represents sin or evil, causes fermentation (decay/decomposition)
- Fulfillment of Unleavened Bread
 - Ps 16:9-10, ⁹ "My body also will rest secure, ¹⁰ because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay."
 - represents redemption from *effects* of sin: "sanctification"
 - Jesus' final week
 - Tuesday evening (after sundown), the last supper (Passover seder)
 - Wednesday, Passover, the crucifixion
 - Thursday, beginning of Feast of Unleavened Bread (a special Sabbath, no work)
 - Friday, women prepared the spices for Jesus' burial
 - Saturday, weekly Sabbath, everyone rested
 - Sunday, day after the Sabbath, day Jesus rose from the dead
 - Mk 9:31, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise."
 - Mt 12:40, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."
- Feast of Firstfruits
 - Lev 23:9-11, "The Lord said to Moses, ¹⁰ 'Speak to the Israelites and say to them: "When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. ¹¹ He is to wave the sheaf before the Lord so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath."'"
- Fulfillment of Firstfruits
 - 1 Co 15:20, "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."
 - Ro 8:23, "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."
 - Firstfruits represents spiritual life after spiritual death, for both the Jew and Gentile.
- Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits combined seem to represent:
 - birth of Israel as a nation
 - Jesus' death, burial, & resurrection, which provide salvation for those who believe

- Feast of Weeks (Shavuot)
 - Lev 23:15-17, ¹⁵ “From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. ¹⁶ Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the Lord. ¹⁷ From wherever you live, bring two loaves made of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as a wave offering of firstfruits to the Lord.”
 - New Testament (Greek): “Pentecost,” means “fiftieth”
 - What kind of bread were they to eat during Feast of Unleavened Bread?
 - What did leaven/yeast represent to a Jew?
 - Shavuot/Weeks/Pentecost mandated the use of leavened bread
- Fulfillment of Pentecost/Shavuot
 - Acts 1:3-5, ³ “After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”
 - Acts 2:1-4, ¹ “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”
 - two loaves of bread baked with yeast for Shavuot
 - Eph 2:14-16, ¹⁴ “For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.”
 - “abolish” (Gk, *katargeo*): (1) put an end to; (2) put a stop to, make completely inactive; (3) invalidate, deprive of power; (4) free from earlier relationship
 - Pentecost represents the birth of the Church

Key Points

God fulfilled the Spring feasts with Jesus’ first coming, fulfilling each Jewish holiday on the precise date it occurred that year. Likewise, God will fulfill the Fall feasts with Jesus’ second coming, fulfilling each Jewish holiday on the precise date it will occur that year.

Fall Feasts

- Feast of Trumpets
 - Lev 23:23-24, “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: “On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a day of rest, a sacred assembly commemorated with trumpet blasts.”””
 - Rosh Hashanah (civil New Year’s Day) is not the Feast of Trumpets (religious festival), but they occur on the same day (1st day of Tishri)
- Fulfillment of Feast of Trumpets
 - 1 Co 15:51-52, ⁵¹ “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”
 - Rev 11:15, “The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.’”
 - This suggests the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11 coincides with the last trumpet sounded at the Feast of Trumpets.
- Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)
 - Lev 23:26-27, “The Lord said to Moses, ‘The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the Lord by fire.’”
 - vs 28-32, ²⁸ “Do no work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God. ²⁹ Anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. ³⁰ I will destroy from among his people anyone who does any work on that day. ³¹ You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. ³² It is a sabbath of 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.”
- Fulfillment of Yom Kippur
 - High Priest entered God’s literal presence as Israel’s representative on that day, *only* on that day.
- Feast of Tabernacles (*Succoth*)
 - Lev 23:33-36, ³³ “The Lord said to Moses, ³⁴ ‘Say to the Israelites: “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord’s Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. ³⁵ The first day is a sacred assembly; do no regular work. ³⁶ For seven days present offerings made to the Lord by fire, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present an offering made to the Lord by fire. It is the closing assembly; do no regular work.”

- Lev 23:40-43, ⁴⁰ “On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. ⁴¹ Celebrate this as a festival to the Lord for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths ⁴³ so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”
- Fulfillment of Tabernacles
 - I suggest: at the beginning of the feast, Jesus returns to earth to rule from the Temple in Jerusalem, dwell/tabernacle among his people.
 - Mt 17:1-5,
 - ¹ After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.
 - ⁴ Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”
 - ⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”
 - “shelters” (Gk, *skene*): (1) tent, tabernacle, dwelling, possibly temporary shelter booth made of green boughs, skins, other materials; (2) tabernacle tent
 - If Jesus was transfigured during Feast of Tabernacles, what would that suggest?
 - Zech 14:16-17, ¹⁶ “Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, they will have no rain.”
 - Why will this be the only event the nations will be required to observe?
- When will God pour out his wrath?
 - Trumpets (1st of month): catching away of saints
 - Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement, 10th of month): forgiveness of Israel’s sins
 - Tabernacles (15th - 21st of month): Jesus dwells among the Jews, reigns on earth
 - It really doesn’t matter

Three Mandatory Feasts

- Deut 16:16, “Three times a year all your men must appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles.”
 - ***These are the only mandatory feasts***; have special significance
- They reveal God’s plan
 - New beginnings
 - Unleavened Bread — birth of Israel
 - Feast of Weeks, Pentecost — birth of the church
 - Feast of Tabernacles — birth of Jesus’ kingdom on earth, dwelling among his people
 - God’s relationship with his people
 - Unleavened Bread — God chooses a people, Israel
 - Feast of Weeks, Pentecost — God spiritually lives within his people, Christians
 - Feast of Tabernacles — God physically lives among his people, Israel
 - God’s redemptive plan
 - Unleavened Bread — redemption/salvation; sanctification, free from effects of sin
 - Feast of Weeks, Pentecost — empowerment; anointing of spiritual gifts
 - Feast of Tabernacles — official authority, setting in place; ruling with Christ
- We can expect the fall feasts (Trumpets, Yom Kippur, Tabernacles) to be fulfilled on the days they occur.
- Possibly unresolved issue
 - Jesus stated clearly that we need to be ready because we won’t know the day or hour of his return (Mt 24:36; 24:50; 25:13).
 - Yet it appears we’ll be caught away on the Feast of Trumpets, which is only one day long.
 - Consider warning to remain awake (1 Th 5:4; Rev 3:3)
 - I’d suggest that since we can know when Feast of Trumpets occurs (same day as Rosh Hashanah), we should really be alert as it approaches each year.