

Holy Convocations

Leviticus Chapter 23

This chapter summarizes the seven annual feasts for Israel instituted by the Lord.

Lev 23:1 1) The Sabbath vs 1-3

The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying,

Lev 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:

- "Times" - (Hebrew "mowed" (mō ād)) Appointed Season, Sign or Signal
- "Convocations" - (Hebrew "miqra" (mik ra)) Assembly, Gathering
- Two fold purpose
 - First to provide Feasts for Celebration and to maintain a focus on their current relationship with a Holy God
 - Second to provide a "Sign" for a "Gathering". These are types and signs for prophetic fulfillment.
 - Colossians 2:16-17 "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ."

Lev 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.

- While the Sabbath is not one of the annual feasts God does not want the weekly Sabbath to lose emphasis. So He reminds Israel not to just live for the seven feasts.
 - 1 Day in Seven (7th Day)
 - Complete Rest
 - Man's first full day - Rest
- Even the repetitiveness of the word complete in this verse (7th day - the work was complete; Sabbath activity is complete rest) points to an ultimate goal of being complete upon the return of Christ.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Lev 23:4 2) The Feast of Passover vs 4-5

'These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them.

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

- Passover was the first holy convocation - Held on the 14th day of the first month of the Jewish Calendar.
- Passover meant to commemorate Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and with the sacrifice of the lamb for each family, show how the blood of the lamb averted the judgment of God for each Israelite family
- For our understanding this would happen in March - April
- 1 Corinthians 5:7 "For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed"
- 3 days later is the 17th. Interesting things happen on the 17th of Nissan.
 1. Nissan 17, Noah's Ark safely rested on Mt. Ararat (Gen 8:4)
 2. Nissan 17, Hebrews entered Egypt (Exo 12:40-41) 430 years before deliverance.
 3. Nissan 17, Moses led the Israelites through the Parting of the Red Sea (Exo 3:18, 5:3)
 4. Nissan 17, Israel entered and ate the first fruit of the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12)
 5. Nissan 17, The cleansing fo the Temple by Hezekiah (eight hundred years after entering the promised land. (2 Chronicles 29:1-28)
 6. Nissan 17, Queen Esther saved the Jews from Elimination (Esther 3:12, 5:1)

7. Nissan 17, The Resurrection of Messiah

The odds of just two of these events both happening accidentally on the same day of the Hebrew year (360 days) are one in 129,000.

The odds of these events all happening coincidentally on the same day of the Hebrew year are one in 783 quadrillion, 864 trillion, 876 Billion, 960 Million (783,864,876,960,000,000). These stats are from *A Scientific Approach to Biblical Mysteries* by Robert W. Faid.

Lev 23:6 3) The Feast of Unleavened Bread vs 6-8

'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.

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

Lev 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.**'"

- Feast of Unleavened Bread is seven days of celebration to show the purity Israel was to walk in.
- Immediately after Passover were 7 days where leaven was removed from the house and Israel was to only eat bread that was unleavened. (leaven is a picture of sin)
- Jesus said of himself that He was the Bread of Life. (John 6:35) The unleavened bread is a picture of Jesus' sinless perfection. Our holiness comes from feeding on Jesus, the Bread of Life.
- Interesting note that deliverance by the blood of the Lamb comes before a pure walk. Many people think they must purify themselves before walking with Jesus.
- For our understanding this would happen in March - April

Lev 23:9 4) The Feast of Firstfruits vs 9-14

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 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.

Lev 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 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 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.

Lev 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.

- Feast of First Fruits was a holy convocation that was the 1st day after the Sabbath. SUNDAY
- This holy convocation was to dedicate the first ripened stalks of grain to God, in anticipation of a greater harvest to come.
- This was a spring harvest from the barley that was planted in the winter time. The first sheaf was cut and brought with a sacrifice to the priest as a wave offering and a burnt offering.
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming"

Lev 23:15 **5) The Feast of Pentecost (Feast of Weeks)** vs 15-22

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

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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 gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.'

- Feast of Pentecost is 50 days after first fruits.
- The Barley Harvest was used for the sheaf at the first fruits. 50 days then the Wheat Harvest. But the offering is not a sheaf but the wheat is ground and baked as bread.
- Two loaves of bread are baked. WITH LEAVEN! (see verse 17) Could the two loaves symbolize Jew and Gentile coming together at the birth of the church?
- Acts 1:4-5 "*Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*
- Acts 2:1-4 "*When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance."*
- For our understanding this would happen in May - June

Verse 22 - Gleanings come to play in the "Book of Ruth" 1. "Ruth" is read on the Day of Pentecost
2. Ruth is about a Jewish Redeemer takes a gentile bride.

Pentecost ends the Spring Feasts. The Next holy convocation is in the fall, the feast of Trumpets. This period of time between Pentecost and Trumpets are viewed as the Church age. The next Feast to be fulfilled is the Feast of Trumpets.

Lev 23:23 **6) The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)** vs 23-25

Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 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.

Lev 23:25 **You shall not do any laborious work,** but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD."

- Rosh Hashanah is on the first day of the seventh month. This is the beginning of the Jewish Religious Year. (Not the Civil Year)
- It is celebrated by the blowing of the Shofar. (A Rams Horn Trumpet) The purpose is to call Israel together. It is a call to gather.
- This is a holy convocation on a day of a New Moon. A New Moon is different than that of a Full Moon. It is when the slightest sliver of the moon is seen. This would be carefully watched for by the priests.
- Jesus told the disciple to be watchful. Matthew 24:30-31, 42 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other....Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming."
- 1 Corinthians 15:52 "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
- For our understanding this would happen in September - October

Lev 23:26 **7) The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)** vs 26-32

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

- Lev 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.
- Lev 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 23:29 "If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people.
- Lev 23:30 "As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.
- Lev 23:31 "You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.
- Lev 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."
- 10 days after Trumpets, Yom Kippur or The Day of Atonement is recognized. Those ten days would become known at the "days of awe".
 - It wasn't celebrated so much as recognized.
 - It was a day of humbling. (KJV = afflict your soul) This day of offerings are described in detail in Leviticus 16. This is the day the High Priest makes a sacrifice for himself, for the Tent of Meeting, and the nation. This is where two memorable things occur. First the "Scapegoat" is used to atone for sins. Secondly the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies to make atonement.
 - Verse 29 of this chapter, declares how important this day was in God's relationship with Israel. Those who DO NOT HUMBLE THEMSELVES will be CUT OFF.
 - In the "Book of Jubilees" two books were opened on the Feast of Trumpets. The Book of Life for the Righteous and the Book of Life for the Unrighteous. Those whose names were in the Book of Life for the Unrighteousness had 10 days to humble themselves before the book was closed on the Day of Atonement. Then their fate was sealed.
 - This resembles the relatively short period of time people who will be left after the rapture will have to repent until the Final Judgment
 - Hebrews 10:19-22 "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."
 - For our understanding this would happen in September - October

Lev 23:33 **8) The Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth)** vs 33-44

Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 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.

Lev 23:35 'On the first day is a holy convocation; **you shall do no laborious work of any kind.**

Lev 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.**

Lev 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—

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 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.

Lev 23:42 'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths,

Lev 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."

- Called The Feast of Booths, Feast of Tabernacles, to Feast of Ingathering.
- This occurs five days after the Day of Atonement.
- This celebration was a time to rejoice in God's deliverance and provision for Israel during the time of wilderness wandering; a time when having come into the promised land, looking back with gratitude on all God had done to deliver and provide in the tough times of the wilderness.
- The 1st day and the 8th day was a day of rest. No work was to be done.
- Clearly this was a celebration of God's provision yet the best way to celebrate it was to enjoy the rest that God's provision provides. This refers to the Millennial Reign of Jesus.
- **Zechariah 14:16-19** " *Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.*"
- For our understanding this would happen in September - October

Lev 23:44 **So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD.**

So this is the progression:

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| 1. Passover = Jesus is the Sacrifice Lamb | 2. Unleavened Bread = Jesus - the sinless sacrifice Buried | |
| 3. First Fruits = Jesus Resurrection | 4. Pentecost = Birth of the Church, Holy Spirit Given | |
| 5. GAP = Church Age | 6. Trumpets = Rapture | 7. "Days of Awe = Great Tribulation |
| 8. Day of Atonement = Jesus Atonement | 9. Booths = Jesus' Millennial Reign | |

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