

## Leviticus 23     Seven Feasts

In this chapter, God gave seven feasts to his people. God's love and mercy are revealed in these feasts because again God is love. God wants his people to rest and really rejoice. This is why God begins with the Sabbath before giving the seven feasts. From the beginning to chapter 22 of the Leviticus, God gives the law of the offering, the law regarding all aspects of the daily life and worshipping life of his people. They are very rigorous, tedious, repetitive, and overwhelming in details. But in this chapter God seems to change his focus completely, and talks about His feasts. It would feel like the people are being given a break. Here God talks about enjoyment, rest, peace, and celebration. It seems that God is giving a hint to his people about the true purpose of those laws. God wants his people not to miss the point (or the purpose) of those laws. Today to God's people of the New Testament, these seven feasts may help us learn and experience the reality of grace of God in Christ from seven perspectives.

### Several key points:

1. Holy Convocation: In many of the feasts, God mentions convocation. God's people need to gather for the feast. The substance of enjoyment and rest in feast is more in corporate, than individual.
2. No manner of servile work: Although labor and sweat are the outcomes of the sin, God wants his people to return to the divine rest he predestines after giving them the salvation.
3. Offering: The sacrifice has to be always in every aspect of the life of the people of God, even in the time of enjoyment and rest.
4. The everlasting statute: Our God is the God who was, who is and who is to come. He has predestined his people to rejoice and to rest in his salvation. Nothing can change his purpose. No one can shake his determination. What a blessed assurance this is, the "everlasting feasts".

1. The Passover
2. The feast of unleavened bread
3. The feast of the First Fruit
4. The feast of Pentecost
5. The feast of trumpet
6. The Atonement day
7. The feast of the booth

## Old Testament Feasts AND OTHER SACRED DAYS

NAME	OT REFERENCES	OT TIME	MODERN EQUIVALENT
Sabbath	Ex 20:8-11; 31:12-17; Lev 23:3; Dt 5:12-15	7th day	Same
Sabbath Year	Ex 23:10-11; Lev 25:1-7	7th year	Same
Year of Jubilee	Lev 25:8-55; 27:17-24; Nu 36:4	50th year	Same
Passover	Ex 12:1-14; Lev 23:5; Nu 9:1-14; 28:16; Dt 16:1-3a, 4b-7	1st month (Abib) 14	Mar.-Apr.
Unleavened Bread	Ex 12:15-20; 13:3-10; 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:6-8; Nu 28:17-25; Dt 16:3b, 4a, 8	1st month (Abib) 15-21	Mar.-Apr.
Firstfruits	Lev 23:9-14	1st month (Abib) 16	Mar.-Apr.
Weeks (Pentecost) (Harvest)	Ex 23:16a; 34:22a; Lev 23:15-21; Nu 28:26-31; Dt 16:9-12	3rd month (Sivan) 6	May-June
Trumpets (Later: Rosh Hashanah—New Year's Day)	Lev 23:23-25; Nu 29:1-6	7th month (Tishri) 1	Sept.-Oct.
Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)	Lev 16; 23:26-32; Nu 29:7-11	7th month (Tishri) 10	Sept.-Oct.
Tabernacles (Booths) (Ingathering)	Ex 23:16b; 34:22b; Lev 23:33-36a, 39-43; Nu 29:12-34; Dt 16:13-15; Zec 14:16-19	7th month (Tishri) 15-21	Sept.-Oct.
Sacred Assembly	Lev 23:36b; Nu 29:35-38	7th month (Tishri) 22	Sept.-Oct.
Purim	Est 9:18-32	12th month (Adar) 14, 15	Feb.-Mar.

On Kislev 25 (mid-December) Hanukkah, the feast of dedication or festival of lights, commemorated the purification of the temple and altar in the Maccabean period (165/4 B.C.). This feast is mentioned in Jn 10:22.

DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE	NT REFERENCES
Day of rest; no work	Rest for people and animals	Mt 12:1-14; 28:1; Lk 4:16; Jn 5:9; Ac 13:42; Col 2:16; Heb 4:1-11
Year of rest; fallow fields	Rest for land	
Canceled debts; liberation of slaves and indentured servants; land returned to original family owners	Help for poor; stabilize society	
Slaying and eating a lamb, together with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast, in every household	Remember Israel's deliverance from Egypt	Mt 26:17; Mk 14:12-26; Jn 2:13; 11:55; 1Co 5:7; Heb 11:28
Eating bread made without yeast; holding several assemblies; making designated offerings	Remember how the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt in haste	Mk 14:1, 12; Ac 12:3; 1Co 5:6-8
Presenting a sheaf of the first of the barley harvest as a wave offering; making a burnt offering and a grain offering	Recognize the Lord's bounty in the land	Ro 8:23; 1Co 15:20-23
A festival of joy; mandatory and voluntary offerings, including the firstfruits of the wheat harvest	Show joy and thankfulness for the Lord's blessing of harvest	Ac 2:1-4; 20:16; 1Co 16:8
An assembly on a day of rest commemorated with trumpet blasts and sacrifices	Present Israel before the Lord for his favor	
A day of rest, fasting and sacrifices of atonement for priests and people and atonement for the tabernacle and altar	Cleanse priests and people from their sins and purify the Holy Place	Ro 3:24-26; Heb 9:7; 10:3, 19-22
A week of celebration for the harvest, living in booths and offering sacrifices	Memorialize the journey from Egypt to Canaan; give thanks for the productivity of Canaan	Jn 7:2, 37
A day of convocation, rest and offering sacrifices	Commemorate the closing of the cycle of feasts	
A day of joy and feasting and giving presents	Remind the Israelites of their national deliverance in the time of Esther	

In addition, new moons were often special feast days (Nu 10:10; 1Ch 23:31; Ezr 3:5; Ne 10:33; Ps 81:3; Isa 1:13-14; 66:23; Hos 5:7; Am 8:5; Col 2:16).