

The Feasts of the Lord- the Appointed Time
(The Spring Feasts)
(Leviticus 23)

The Lord's Feasts were established for prophetic purposes; they represented an appointed **time or season**. When the Lord God freed Israel from Egypt to form a nation for Himself, He ordered them to observe spring and fall festivals according to His instructions; these were the Lord's prophetic feasts, which were to be fulfilled in His Son, YAHSHUA. He said to Moses, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim holy **convocations** even these are My appointed feasts. These feasts were registered in the appointed time when they would be no longer shadows, but reality in its fulfillment. When God created the lights in the firmament of the heaven they were not only to divide the day from the night, but also for **signs**, for **seasons** and for **days** and **years** (Genesis 1:14). "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament His handiworks; day after day pours forth speech, and night after night shows forth knowledge; there is neither speech nor spoken word; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, their sayings to the end of the world. Of the heavens has God made a tent for the sun; its going forth is from the end of the heavens and its circuit to the ends of it; and nothing is hidden from the heat of it" (Psalm 19: 1-6). God speaks to us through the signs in the moon and the sun. Much of that will be seen before and during the tribulation days. YAHSHUA said that after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not shed its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken; then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn and beat their breasts and lament in anguish and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt. 24:29-30); Revelation chapter six verses twelve through fourteenth confirms this event. This is the time called Jacob's trouble or tribulation.

These are the Lord's appointed times, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: (1) The **Passover** to the Lord comes in the first month, at twilight on the fourteenth day of the month; (2) the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** to the Lord is on the fifteenth day of the same month. (3) **The Feast of Harvest or First Fruit**; (4) **Feast of Weeks or Pentecost** is fifty days after Passover (**Lev. 23**).

The **Passover Feast** is YAHSHUA our Redeemer. He was the Passover Lamb, Who was made a sacrifice for us once and for all. Only His blood had the power of forgiveness and of redemption. No other sacrifice was and is necessary for the salvation of the world. Six days before the Passover, He came to Bethany where Lazarus lived and they prepared a supper for Him; that was on Nisan 8/9 (between March and April). At that time, Mary the sister of Lazarus, took a pound of nard, a very expensive perfume and poured it on YAHSHUA'S feet and wiped them with her hair. This was done, YAHSHUA said, to prepare Me for My burial (John 12: 3, 7). This act of Mary set the Lamb of God apart and prepared Him for His death and burial, which was going to happen in a few days. YAHSHUA, as the Lamb of God, fulfilled the time frame when the sacrificial lambs were to be set apart four days before they were to be sacrificed. YAHSHUA fulfilled Passover feast even to the detail of time. Nisan 9/10 He is greeted by the crowd with branches of palm trees and shouts of Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel (John 12:13)! On Nisan 10/11 He is inspected as the lambs were inspected days before they were to be sacrificed. In Mark 12:13 He is inspected by the Pharisees and by the Herodians to catch Him in His words; In Matt. 26:59-60 by the chief priests and elders and all the council, who sought false witness against Him to put Him to death, but found none; and by Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, to let them know that he had examined Him before them and have found no fault in Him, touching the things they accused Him of; not even Herod (Luke 23:13-15). YAHSHUA was the perfect Passover Lamb, without blemishes and sin. Only He could fulfill the feasts in all perfection. After having gone through six illegal trials from Thursday to Friday, He was crucified at nine o'clock. For six hours He was hanged on the cross and was made sport of by His people. From the sixth to the ninth hour (from 12 to 3 o'clock) there was darkness; and at the ninth hour YAHSHUA cried with a loud voice, My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me? He uttered a loud cry, and breathed out His life (Mark 15: 34,37). It is finished! He said. He had fulfilled the feast of Passover with His life as the "Lamb of God, Who takes the sin of the world"! As He was offering Himself as the sacrifice, the Jewish priest were sacrificing the lambs destined to be killed on that day, unaware of that appointed time, when God was giving His Son as the perfect sacrifice for their sins and of the world. He offered Himself as the sacrifice, once and for all; He had appeared one time, at the end of the ages, for the removal of sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26b).

YAHSHUA fulfilled the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**, which happened immediately after the first day of Passover Feast. He is the Bread of life, pure and sinless that gives life to all who receives Him. At His last supper with His disciples, He offered them bread as His broken body; and the wine as His blood- the new covenant, which would be shed for many. Many years before this appointed time, the prophet Isaiah prophesied about His broken body this way: His appearance is so disfigured that He did not look like a man, and His form did not resemble a human being (52:13-15). He was beyond recognition! When He was beaten, flogged by the Romans, He fulfilled this prophecy and became the broken bread He shared with His disciples. The feast of Unleavened Bread signifies Israel's deliverance from the life of slavery in Egypt under Pharaoh; it does have a meaning for the believers as well; for those who have been washed by the blood of the Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God. We have been delivered from the power of sin and from the control of Satan. Unleavened Bread is freedom for the believers; the Passover Lamb of God, has bought us with His precious blood, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (I Peter 1:19). We are regenerated born-again through the enduring living Word of God (1 Peter 1:23b). Unleavened Bread is the new birth in Christ; a new creation in whom we are made new; old things have passed away, new things have come (II Cor. 5:17). Unleavened Bread is a memorial feast.

The Feast of **Harvest or First Fruit** corresponds with the harvest of barley, which was the first grain crop to ripen; it was waved before the Lord, as He commanded, to mark the counting of the sheaf of barley starting the forty-nine day counting down to the harvest festival of Shavuot (Pentecost). YAHSHUA fulfilled this feast when He was raised from the dead; Paul said in I Corinthians, But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep; for since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man; for just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive; but each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; afterward, at His coming, the people of Christ (15: 20-23). This feast corresponds to the resurrection of YAHSHUA and at the appointed time, the resurrection of the saints.

The **Feast of Weeks or Pentecost** was celebrated on the fiftieth day after Passover. In Leviticus 23:15-16, God commanded Israel to count seven weeks or forty-nine days beginning on the second day of Passover. They were to present to the Lord offerings of new grain, expressing thanksgiving for the blessing of the harvest. Before YAHSHUA'S death He promised the gift of His Holy Spirit; after His

death and resurrection He commanded the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father's promise. "This, He said, is what you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:4-5). The **Pentecost Feast** in the New Testament had its first celebration when the Holy Spirit arrived. The disciples were all together in one place, as YAHSHUA commanded them to be, when suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying; tongues like flames of fire that were divided, appeared to them and rested on each one of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages, as the Spirit gave them ability for speech (Acts 2:1-4). The Feast of Passover is God's Son redeeming the world through His death; the Feast of Pentecost is the birth of the invisible, redeemed church officiated and confirmed by the coming and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The first Pentecost in the New Testament was the harvest of souls into the kingdom of God, when three thousands of them were saved that day.