

## FESTIVALS.

Besides the daily worship, the law prescribed special festivals to be observed from time to time by the congregation. One Heb. name for festival was *hāg* (from the verb signifying to “dance”), which, when applied to religious services, indicated that they were occasions of joy and gladness. The term most fitly designating, and which alone actually comprehended all the feasts, was *mô.ēd*, (a “set time” or “assembly, place of assembly”). This name refers to the stated assemblies of the people—the occasions fixed by divine appointment for meeting together in holy fellowship, i.e., for acts and purposes of worship. There is also the Gk. *heortē* (“festival, holy day”). The date of every Mosaic festival without distinction, no matter what its special object may have been, gave evidence of being connected in some way or other with the number *seven*. So every seventh day, every seventh month, every seventh year, and last, the year that came after the lapse of seven times seven years, was marked by a festival. Again, the Passover and the feast of Booths (Tabernacles, KJV) extended over seven days; the number of special *convocations* (which see) during the year was seven—two at the Passover, one at Pentecost, one at the feast of Trumpets (or New Moon), one on the Day of Atonement, and two at the feast of Booths. All the festivals instituted by the law of Moses may be arranged in two series, septenary and yearly. In addition are the postexilic and doubtful festivals. See table 8, “Festivals of Israel.”

Table 8  
Festivals of Israel

Cycle or Historic Period	Name of Observance	Reference in the Scripture or Apocrypha
Septenary (or cycles of Sabbaths)	Weekly Sabbath	Ex. 20:8–11; 31:12–17; Lev. 23:12
	Seventh New Moon, or Feast of Trumpets	Num. 28:11–15; 29:1–6
	Sabbatic Year, i.e., every seventh year	Ex. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:2–7
	Year of Jubilee	Lev. 25:8–16; 27:16–25
	New Moon	Num. 10:10; 28:11–15

Yearly	Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread	Ex. 12:1–28; 23:15; Lev. 23:4–8; Num. 28:16–25; Deut. 16:16; 18:1–8
	Pentecost, or Feast of Weeks	Ex. 34:22; Lev. 23:15–16; Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:10, 16
	Day of Atonement	Ex. 30:10–30; Lev. 16:1–34; Num. 29:7–11
	Feast of Booths (Tabernacles)	Lev. 23:34–42; Num. 29:12–38; Deut. 10:13–16; Neh. 8:13–18; John 7:2, 37
Postexilic	Feast of Purim	Esther 9:24–32
	Feast of Dedication	1 Macc. 4:52–59; 2 Macc. 10:5–8; John 10:22

**The Weekly Sabbath.** In addition to entire cessation from all work the Sabbath was observed by a holy assembly, the doubling of the morning and evening sacrifices (Num. 28:9–10), and the presentation of new bread in the Holy Place (Lev. 24:8). *See Sabbath.*

**The Seventh New Moon, or Feast of Trumpets** (Heb. *yôm tfrû.â*, “day of blowing,” Num. 29:1). The feast of the New Moon, which fell on the seventh month, or Tishri. This differed from the ordinary festivals of the new moon because of the symbolic meaning of the seventh or sabbatical month and partly, perhaps, because it marked the beginning of the civil year. This month was distinguished above all the other months of the year by the multitude of ordinances connected with it, the first day being consecrated to sacred rest and spiritual employment, the tenth being the Day of Atonement, whereas the fifteenth began the feast of Booths (Tabernacles, KJV).

*Sacrifices.* (1) The usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings. (2) The ordinary sacrifice for the New Moon, except the sin offering, namely, two young bulls, one ram, seven yearling lambs, with their grain and drink offerings (Num. 28:11–14). (3) Another festive offering of one young bull, one ram, seven lambs, with their grain and drink offerings, together with “one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you” (Num. 29:1–6).

*Observance.* This day was observed as a feast day, in the strict sense, by resting from all work, and as a holy convocation, by the blowing of horns. In later times, while the drink offering of the sacrifice was being poured out, the priests and Levites chanted Ps. 81, whereas in the evening

sacrifice they sang Ps. 29. Throughout the day trumpets were blown at Jerusalem from morning to evening. In the Temple it was done even on a Sabbath, but not outside its walls. "The Day of Atonement, which falls on this month, provides full expiation of all sins and the removal of all uncleanness; and the Feast of Tabernacles, beginning five days thereafter, provides a foretaste of the blessedness of life in fellowship with the Lord. This significance of the seventh month is indicated by the sounding of trumpets, whereby the congregation present a memorial of themselves loudly and strongly before Jehovah, calling on him to vouchsafe the promised blessings of grace in fulfillment of his covenant" (Keil, *Arch.*, 2:10). The fact that Tishri was the great month for sowing might easily have suggested the thought of commemorating on this day the finished work of creation, and thus the feast of Trumpets came to be regarded as the anniversary of the beginning of the world. The rabbis believed that on this day God judges all men, and that they pass before Him as a flock of sheep passes before a shepherd.

**Sabbatic Year.** The septennial rest for the land from all tillage and cultivation as enjoined by Moses (Ex. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:2–7; Deut. 15:1–10; 31:10–13).

*Names.* The Mosaic titles express features of their observance. These are (1) "Rest of Entire Rest" (Heb. *shabbat shabbāṭôn*, "Sabbath of Sabbatism," Lev. 25:4; NASB and NIV, "a sabbath rest"), because the land was to have a complete rest from cultivation; (2) "Year of Rest" (Heb. *shfnat shabbāṭôn*, "Year of Sabbatism," Lev. 25:5; NASB, "sabbatical year"; NIV, "year of rest"), because the rest was to extend through the year; (3) "Release" (Heb. *shfmittâ*, Deut. 15:1–2, KJV), or more fully, the "Year of Release" (Heb. *shfnat hashshfmittâ*, 15:9; NASB, "year of remission"; NIV, "year for canceling debts"), because in it all debts were remitted; (4) "The Seventh Year" (Heb. *shfnat hashsheba*, Deut. 15:9), because it was to be celebrated every seventh year.

*Design.* The spirit of the sabbatic year is that of the weekly Sabbath. The rest that the land was to keep in the seventh year was not to increase its fruitfulness by lying fallow or merely to be a time of recreation for laboring men and beasts, needful and useful as that may be. It was rather to afford true spiritual rest and quickening, with their attendant life and blessing. "Thus Israel, as the people of God, was to learn two things: First, that the earth, though created for man, was not merely that he might turn its powers to his own profit, but that he might be holy to the Lord and participate also in his blessed rest; next, that the goal of life for the congregation of the Lord did not lie in that incessant laboring of the earth which is associated with sore toil in the sweat of the brow (Gen. 3:17, 19), but in the enjoyment of the fruits of the earth, free from care, which

---

Keil, Johann Karl Friedrich Keil, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology* (1888)

*Arch.* Johann Karl Friedrich Keil, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology* (1888)

NASB *New American Standard Bible*

NIV *New International Version*

NASB *New American Standard Bible*

NIV *New International Version*

KJV King James Version

NASB *New American Standard Bible*

NIV *New International Version*

the Lord their God gave and ever would give them if they strove to keep his covenant and to take quickening from his law” (Keil, *Arch.*, 2:12). Such an institution as the sabbatic year might seem, at first sight, to be impracticable. But we are to remember that in no year was the owner of land allowed to reap the whole harvest (Lev. 19:9; 23:22). Unless the remainder was entirely gleaned there might easily have been enough to insure quite a spontaneous crop the ensuing year, while the vines and olives would yield fruit of themselves. Then, too, the unavoidable inference from 25:20–22 is that the owners of land were to lay by grain in previous years for their own and their families’ need.

*Time, Observance.* The sabbatic year, like the year of Jubilee, began on the first day of the civil year, namely, the first of the month Tishri. Although this was the time fixed for the celebration of the sabbatic year during the time of the second Temple, the tillage and cultivation of certain fields and gardens had already begun to be left off in the sixth year. Thus it was ordained that fields upon which trees were planted were not to be cultivated after the feast of Pentecost of the sixth year, whereas the cultivation of grainfields was to cease from the feast of the Passover (Mishna, *Shebith* 1.1–8). The keeping of the sabbatic year is distinctly attested to by 1 Macc. 6:49, 53, and Josephus (*Ant.* 13.8.1; 14.10.6; 15.1.2; etc.), and it was observed also by the Samaritans (Josephus *Ant.* 11.8.6).

*Laws.* The laws respecting this year were four in number: (1) The soil, the vineyards, and the olive groves were to have perfect rest (Ex. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:2–5). Rabbinical regulations carried the law to such an extent that anything planted wittingly or unwittingly had to be plucked up by its roots (Mishna, *Terum* 2.3). (2) The spontaneous growth of the fields or of trees (cf. Isa. 37:30) was for the free use of the poor, the hireling, the stranger, servants, and cattle (Ex. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:2–7). An especially fruitful harvest was promised for the sixth year (25:20–21). (3) Debts, with the exception of ones owed by foreigners, were to be canceled (Deut. 15:1–4). This does not seem to denote the entire renunciation of what was owed but entailed not pursuing it during the sabbatic year. This enactment did not forbid the voluntary payment of debts but their enforced liquidation, and also that no poor man should be oppressed by his brother. (4) Finally, at the feast of Booths in this year, the law was to be read to the people—men, women, children, and strangers—in solemn assembly before the sanctuary (Deut. 31:10–13).

The sabbatic year seems to have been systematically neglected. Hence Jewish tradition explains (see 2 Chron. 36:21) that the seventy years’ captivity was intended to make up for the neglect of sabbatical years. After the return from captivity this year was most strictly observed.

**Jubilee** (Heb. *yôbēl*, a “blast” of a trumpet). Usually in connection with the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:28); also called the “year of liberty” (Ezek. 46:17; NIV, “year of freedom”). Its relation to the sabbatic year and the general direction for its observance are found in Lev. 25:8–16, 23–55. Its bearing on lands dedicated to Jehovah is given in 27:16–25. It is not mentioned in Deuteronomy, and the only other reference to it in the Pentateuch is in Num. 36:4.

---

Keil, Johann Karl Friedrich Keil, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology* (1888)

*Arch.* Johann Karl Friedrich Keil, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology* (1888)

NIV *New International Version*

*Time.* After the lapse of seven Sabbaths of years, or seven times seven years, i.e., forty-nine years, the trumpet was to sound throughout the whole land, and the fiftieth year was to be announced and hallowed as the Jubilee year. This was not the forty-ninth year, as held by some chronologists. Decisive against this view is the fact “that in Lev. 25:10[–13] not only is the fiftieth year expressly named as the year of Jubilee, but the forty-nine years which make seven Sabbatic years are expressly distinguished from it” (Winer, “Jubeljahr,” in *R. W. Buch*).

*Observance.* It should be noticed that the observance of Jubilee was to become obligatory upon the Israelites after they had taken possession of the Promised Land and had cultivated the soil for forty-nine years. The ancient Talmudic tradition, which appears to be correct, is that the first sabbatic year was the twenty-first, and the first Jubilee the sixty-fourth after the Jews came into Canaan, for it took them seven years to conquer it and seven more to distribute it. The only enactment as to the *manner* of its observance is that there should be announced with the blowing of trumpets the Jubilee that proclaimed to the covenant nation the gracious presence of its God. Because the Scriptures do not record any particular instance of the public celebration, some have denied or questioned whether the law of Jubilee ever came into actual operation. In favor of its actual observance are (1) the probability arising from the observance of all the other festivals; (2) the law of the inalienability of landed property that really did exist among the Hebrews (Num. 36:4, 6–7; Ezek. 46:17); (3) the unanimous voice of Hebrew tradition.

*Laws.* The law stated three respects in which the Jubilee was to be hallowed, i.e., separated from other years: rest for the soil, reversion of landed property, and manumission of Israelites.

*Rest for the Soil.* No sowing, reaping, or gathering from the unpruned vine (Lev. 25:11). Thus the soil enjoyed a holy rest, man was freed from the sore labor of sowing and reaping, and in blessed rest he was to live and enjoy the bounty provided by Jehovah in the sixth year (v. 21).

*Reversion of Landed Property* (Lev. 25:10–34; 27:16–24). The law of Moses provided that all the Promised Land was to be divided by lot among the Israelites, and then it was to remain absolutely inalienable. Therefore, at Jubilee all property in fields and houses situated in villages or unwalled towns, which the owner had been obliged to sell through poverty and that had not been redeemed (*see* Redemption), was to revert without payment to its original owner or his lawful heirs. The only exceptions were houses in walled cities, which remained with the buyer unless redeemed within one year (25:29–30), and those fields which, unless redeemed by the owner, had been sold and thereby rendered unredeemable (27:17–21), in which case they reverted to the priests.

*Manumission of Israelites.* Every Israelite who through poverty had sold himself to one of his countrymen or to a foreigner settled in the land, if he had been unable to redeem himself or had not been redeemed by a kinsman, was to go out free with his children (Lev. 25:35–43, 47–54). Thus ownership of a person was changed into a matter of hire (vv. 40, 53). It would seem that there must have been a perfect remission of all debts in the year of Jubilee from the fact that all persons in bondage for debt were released, and all landed property of debtors was freely returned. Thus the Jubilee year became one of freedom and grace for all suffering, bringing not only redemption to the captive and deliverance from want to the poor, but also release to the whole congregation of the Lord from the sore labor of the earth, representing the time of refreshing (Acts 3:19) that the Lord provides for His people. For in this year every kind of oppression was to

cease and every member of the covenant people to find his redeemer in the Lord, who brought him back to his possession and family.

**New Moon** (Heb. *r. ōsh ḥōdesh*, “beginning of a month,” Num. 10:10; 28:11). The ordinary new moons, i.e., all except the seventh, were raised out of the rank of ordinary days, but not to that of festivals. They may be called demi-feast days and will therefore be inserted here.

*Origin.* Many nations of antiquity celebrated the returning light of the moon with festivals, sacrifices, and prayers. Some believe that the object of Moses in providing for this occasion was to suppress heathen celebrations of the day. There was, however, a deeper meaning in this observance. The new moon stood as the representative of the month. For an individual day, a burnt offering that emphasized consecration to the Lord rather than atonement was sufficient. But for the month, because of sins committed and remaining unexpiated during the course of the month, a special sin offering for atonement was required. Thus, on the ground of the forgiveness and reconciliation with God thereby obtained, the people might be able in the burnt offering to consecrate their lives anew to the Lord.

*Mode of Ascertaining the New Moon.* As the festivals, according to the Mosaic law, were always to be celebrated on the same day of the month, it was necessary to fix the commencement of the month. This was determined by the appearance of the new moon; for the new moon was reckoned not by astronomical calculation, but by actual personal observation. On the thirtieth day of the month watchmen were placed on commanding heights around Jerusalem to watch the sky. As soon as each of them detected the moon he hastened to a house in the city kept for this purpose and was there examined by the president of the Sanhedrin. When the evidence of the appearance was deemed satisfactory, the president stood up and formally announced it, uttering the words, “It is consecrated.” The information was immediately sent throughout the land from the Mount of Olives by beacon fires on the tops of the hills. The religious observance of the day of the new moon may plainly be regarded as the consecration of a natural division of time.

*Sacrifices.* These were of two types: (1) the usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings, and (2) special sacrifices, consisting of two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year, as a burnt offering, with their grain and drink offerings. A goat was also presented as a sin offering, at which time the priests blew the silver trumpets (Num. 10:10; 28:11–15). It is evident from the writings of the prophets and from postexilic documents that the New Moon was an important national festival. It was often called a feast along with the Sabbath (Ps. 81:3; Isa. 1:13; Ezek. 46:1; Hos. 2:11), on which all business ceased (Amos 8:5), the pious Israelites waited on the prophets for edification (2 Kings 4:23), many families and clans presented their annual thank offerings (1 Sam. 20:6, 29), social gatherings and feasting were indulged in (vv. 5, 24), and the most devout persons omitted fasting (Judith 8:6).

**The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.** Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread as a unit constituted the most important of the three great annual festivals of Israel.

*Name and Significance.* It was indifferently called the feast of the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread, but where the object was to mark the distinction between the Passover as a sacrifice and as a feast following the sacrifice, the latter was designated the feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:5–6). The Heb. word *pesah* (from *pāsah*, to “leap over,” figuratively, to “spare, show mercy”) denotes (1) an overstepping and (2) the paschal sacrifice by virtue of which the

passing over was effected (Ex. 12:21, 27, 48; 2 Chron. 30:15). The paschal meal was on the evening of the 14th Nisan, and the seven days following are called the feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:5–6), hence the expression “the morrow of the Passover” for the 15th Nisan (Num. 33:3; Josh. 5:11, *see marg.*). The whole feast, including the paschal eve, is called the festival of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 23:15; Lev. 23:6; Ezra 6:22; Luke 22:1, 7; Acts 12:3; 20:6); but the simple name “Passover” (Heb. *pesach*) is the one commonly used by the Jews to the present day for the festival of Unleavened Bread (2 Chron. 30:15; 35:1, 11; Mark 14:1; Gk. *pascha*).

*Institution.* The Passover was instituted in memory of Israel’s preservation from the last plague visited upon Egypt (the death of the firstborn) and their deliverance from bondage (Ex. 12:1–28). “The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was accompanied by their adoption as the nation of Jehovah. For this a divine consecration was necessary that their outward severance from Egypt might be accompanied by an inward severance from everything of an Egyptian or heathen nature. This consecration was imparted by the Passover, a festival which was to lay the foundation of Israel’s birth (Hos. 2:15; Ex. 6:6–7) into the new life of grace and fellowship with God and to perpetuate it in time to come” (K. & D., *Com.*, on Ex. 12).

*Observance.* Observances connected with the Passover are in two categories, those established at the keeping of the first Passover and those enacted after the Exodus.

Before the Exodus. At its first institution, just before the Exodus, the keeping of the Passover was as follows: Every head of a family chose a male of the first year without blemish from the small cattle, i.e., from the sheep or goats, on the 10th Nisan (Ex. 12:3). Later it became the fixed practice to take a lamb. On the 14th Nisan the animal was slain “at twilight” (12:6); according to the Karaite Jews between actual sunset and complete darkness but understood by the Pharisees and rabbis as the time when the sun begins to descend to its real setting (from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.). A bunch of hyssop was dipped in the blood of the animal and applied to the two posts and the lintel of the house where the meal was to be eaten. Then the whole animal, without a broken bone, was roasted and eaten by each family, including slaves and strangers, if circumcised. If the number of the family was too small, the neighboring family might join in the eating. It was eaten that same night with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, probably endives, wild lettuce, which are eaten by Jews of the present day in Egypt and Arabia with the paschal lamb. The meal was eaten the same evening, all who partook having their loins girded, shoes on their feet, and a staff in hand, ready to march out of Egypt. What of the lamb could not be eaten was to be burned the next morning, and nothing of it was to be carried out of the house (12:1–13, 21–23, 43–51). According to Jewish authorities this was called the “Egyptian” Passover in distinction from the “Permanent” Passover. The paschal lamb was a sacrifice, combining in itself the significance of the sin offerings and holy offerings, i.e., it shadowed reconciliation as well as glad fellowship with God; the lamb suffered instead of the partakers. There being no fixed sanctuary, the houses were converted into such places of grace or altars, and the blood put on the posts and lintel of the door was the sign that the house was to be spared. This sparing and reconciliation accomplished

---

marg. margin, marginal reading

K. & D. Johann Karl Friedrich Keil and Franz Julius Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentaries* (1875)  
*Com. Commentary*

through forgiveness of sins was immediately associated with the meal, and thus the *sacrificium* became the *sacramentum*, the sacrificial flesh a means of grace. The unleavened bread symbolized the spiritual purity after which Israel in covenant with the Lord is to strive, and the bitter herbs were intended to call to mind the bitter experiences that the Israelites had suffered in Egypt.

After the Exodus. The following supplementary enactments were introduced after the Exodus: all male members of the congregation were to appear before the Lord with “the choice first fruits” (Ex. 23:14–19), the first sheaf of the harvest to be offered on “the day after the sabbath” (Lev. 23:10–14; *see also* the article First Fruits); those prevented from keeping the Passover on the 14th Nisan were to observe it on the fourteenth of the following month (Num. 9:6–14); special sacrifices were to be offered each day of the festival (28:16–25); the paschal animals were to be slain in the national sanctuary and the blood sprinkled on the altar instead of the doorposts and lintels of the homes (Deut. 16:1–8).

**Feast of Unleavened Bread.** The feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed the Passover and lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st Nisan (or Abib). On each of those days, after the morning sacrifice, a sacrifice in connection with the feast was presented; unleavened bread alone was eaten (Ex. 12:15–20; 13:6–7; Deut. 16:3–8).

*Sacrifices.* (1) The usual morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings. (2) Two young bulls, one ram, seven lambs of the first year, with their grain and drink offerings. These were presented after the morning sacrifice (Num. 28:19–24).

*Convocations.* The first and seventh days of the feast were celebrated by a holy convocation and resting from work, with the exception of preparing food. On the intervening days work might be carried on unless the weekly Sabbath fell on one of them, in which case the full strictness of Sabbath-keeping was observed, and the special feast sacrifice was not presented until after the Sabbath offering.

*Barley Sheaf.* On the second feast day (16th Nisan) the first sheaf of the new harvest (barley) was symbolically offered to the Lord by waving—not burning on the altar—accompanied with a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, with its grain and drink offerings. Previous to this offering neither bread nor roasted grain of the new harvest was allowed to be eaten (Lev. 23:9–14). Those attending presented freewill, burnt, and holy offerings of sheep and oxen (Ex. 23:15, 19; Deut. 16:2), and sacrificial meals were eaten. The feast closed on the 21st, with rest from work and a holy convocation.

*History.* Scripture records that the Passover was kept on the evening before the Israelites left Egypt (Ex. 12:28), the second year after the Exodus (Num. 9:1–5), and then not again until they entered Canaan (Ex. 13:5; Josh. 5:10). Only three instances are recorded in which the Passover was celebrated between the entrance into the Promised Land and the Babylonian captivity, namely, under Solomon (2 Chron 8:13), under Hezekiah when he restored the national worship (30:15), and under Josiah (2 Kings 23:21; 2 Chron. 35:1–19). But the inference that the Passover was celebrated only on those occasions seems the less warranted, that in later times it was so punctually and universally observed.

*Postexilic Observance.* After the return of the Jews from captivity the celebration of the Passover, like that of other institutions, became more regular and systematic; and its laws, rites, manners, and customs have been faithfully transmitted to us. These were the same as those in the time of

Christ and His apostles and are, therefore, of the utmost importance and interest to us in understanding the NT. We give the various practices in connection with the days of the festival on which they were respectively observed.

1. The Great Sabbath (10th Nisan). The Sabbath immediately preceding the Passover, it is so called because, according to tradition, the 10th of Nisan, when the paschal lamb was to be selected, originally fell on the Sabbath. In later legislation the animal was not required to be set aside four days beforehand, yet the Sabbath was used for the instruction of the people in the duties of this great festival. In addition to the regular ritual, special prayers bearing on the redemption from Egypt, the love of God to Israel, and Israel's obligation to keep the Passover, were prescribed for that Sabbath. Malachi 3:1–4:6 was read as the lesson of the day, and discourses were delivered explaining the laws and domestic duties connected with the festival. This is likely the Sabbath referred to in John 19:31.

2. The 13th Nisan. On the evening of the 13th Nisan, which, until that of the 14th, was called the "preparation for the Passover" (John 19:14), every head of a family searched for and collected by the light of a candle all the leaven. Before beginning the search, he pronounced the following benediction: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with thy commandments, and hast enjoined us to remove the leaven." After the search he said, "Whatever leaven remains in my possession which I cannot see, behold, it is null, and accounted as the dust of the earth."

3. The 14th Nisan. This day, called until the evening *the preparation for the Passover*, was also known as the "first day" of Passover (Lev. 23:5–7). Handicraftsmen, with the exception of tailors, barbers, and laundresses, were obliged to cease from work, either from morning or from noon, according to the custom of the different places in Palestine. No leaven was allowed to be eaten after noon, when all that had been found either on this day or the preceding one was to be burned. On the 14th Nisan every Israelite who was physically able, not in a state of Levitical uncleanness, or further distant from Jerusalem than fifteen miles, was to appear before the Lord with an offering proportionate to his means (Ex. 23:15; Deut. 16:16–17). Women, though not legally bound to appear in the sanctuary, were not excluded (1 Sam. 1:7; Luke 2:41–42).

4. Offering of the Paschal Lamb. The lamb was to be free from all blemish and neither less than eight days nor more than exactly one year old. Each paschal lamb was to serve a "company" of not less than ten nor more than twenty, the representatives of each company going to the Temple. The daily evening sacrifice (Ex. 29:38–39), usually killed at the eighth and a half hour (i.e., 2:30 p.m.), and offered up at the ninth and a half hour (i.e., 3:30 p.m.), was on this day killed at 1:30 and offered at 2:30 p.m., an hour earlier. And if the 14th of Nisan happened on a Friday, it was killed at 12:30 and offered at 1:30 p.m., two hours earlier than usual, so as to avoid any needless breach of the Sabbath.

Before the incense was burned or the lamps were trimmed, the paschal sacrifice had to be offered. It was done in this way: The first of the three festive divisions, with their paschal lambs, was admitted within the court of the priests. Each division was to consist of not less than thirty persons. Immediately, the massive gates were closed behind them, and the priests blew a threefold blast from their silver trumpets when the Passover was slain; altogether, the scene was most impressive. All along the court up to the altar of burnt offering priests stood in two rows,

the one holding golden, the other silver, bowls. In these the blood of the paschal lambs, which each Israelite slew for himself (as representative of his company at the paschal supper), was caught up by a priest, who handed it to his colleague, receiving back an empty bowl, and so the bowls with the blood were passed up to the priest at the altar, who jerked it in one jet at the base of the altar. While this was going on, a most solemn “hymn” of praise was raised, the Levites leading in the song and the officers either repeating after them or merely responding. “The *Hallel* [which see] was recited the whole time, and if it was finished before all the paschal animals were slain it might be repeated a second and even a third time. Next the sacrifices were hung up on hooks along the court, or laid on staves which rested on the shoulders of two men (on Sabbaths they were not laid on staves), then flayed, the entrails taken out and cleansed, and the inside fat separated, put in a dish, salted, and placed on the fire of the altar of burnt offering. This completed the sacrifice.

“The first division of officers being dismissed, the second entered, and finally the third, the service in each case being conducted in precisely the same manner. Then the whole service concluded by burning the incense and trimming the lamps for the night.” If it was the Sabbath, the first division waited in the court of the Gentiles, the second between the ramparts, i.e., the open space between the walls of the court of the women and the trellis work in the Temple, whereas the third remained in its place. At dark all went out to roast their paschal sacrifices. According to Jewish ordinance, the paschal lamb was roasted on a spit of pomegranate wood, the spit passing through from mouth to vent. If it touched the oven, the part so touched was to be cut away, thus carrying out the idea that the lamb must not be defiled by any contact with foreign matter. It was not to be “sodden,” because the flesh must remain pure, without the addition even of water, and no bone of it was to be broken.

5. The Paschal Supper. As the guests gathered around the paschal table they were arrayed in their best festive garments, joyous and at rest, as became the children of a king. To express this idea the rabbis insisted that at least a part of the feast should be partaken in a recumbent position. The left elbow was placed on the table, the head resting on the hand, with sufficient room between each guest for the free movement of the right hand. This explains in what sense John “was reclining on Jesus’ breast,” and afterward “leaning back thus on Jesus’ breast,” when he leaned back to speak to Him (John 13:23, 25; Luke 22:14). The father, or other person presiding, took the place of honor at the table, probably somewhat raised above the rest.

The paschal supper commenced by the head of the “company” pronouncing a benediction over the first cup of wine, which had been filled for each person. It was then drunk, and a basin of water and a towel were handed around or the guests got up to wash their hands (John 13:4–5, 12), after which the appropriate blessing was pronounced.

These preliminaries ended, a table was brought in, upon which was the paschal meal. The president of the feast first took some of the herbs, dipped them in the sauce (Heb. *charoseth*), ate some, and gave to the others (Matt. 26:23; John 13:26). Immediately after this all the dishes were removed from the table (to excite curiosity), and the second cup of wine was filled. Then the son asked his father as follows: “Wherefore is this night distinguished from all other nights? For on all other nights we eat leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night only unleavened bread? On all other nights we eat any kind of herbs, but on this night only bitter herbs? On all other nights

we eat meat roasted, stewed, or boiled but on this night only roasted? On all other nights we dip [the herbs] only once, but on this night twice?" In reply the head of the house related the whole national history, commencing with Terah, Abraham's father, Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and the giving of the law.

The paschal dishes were now placed back upon the table. The president took up in succession the dish with the Passover lamb, that with the bitter herbs, and that with the unleavened bread, briefly explaining the importance of each; the first part of the Hallel was sung (Pss. 113 and 114), with this brief thanksgiving at the close: "Blessed art thou, Jehovah our God, King of the universe, who hast redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt." The second cup of wine was then drunk, and hands were washed a second time, with the same prayer as before, and one of the two unleavened cakes broken and "thanks given."

Pieces of the broken cake, with "bitter herbs" between them and "dipped" in the *charoseth*, were next handed to each of the company. This, in all probability, was the "dipped morsel" which, in answer to John's inquiry about the betrayer, the Lord "gave" to Judas (John 13:25–30; cf. Mark 14:22; Luke 22:21).

The paschal supper itself consisted of the unleavened bread, with bitter herbs, of the so-called *Chagigah* (i.e., a voluntary peace offering made by private individuals), and the paschal lamb itself. After that nothing more was to be eaten, so that the flesh of the paschal sacrifice might be the last meat partaken of. But since the cessation of the paschal sacrifice, the Jews conclude the supper with a piece of unleavened cake called the *Aphikomen*, or after dish. Hands were again washed, the third cup was filled, and grace after meat said. The service concluded with the fourth cups over which the second portion of the Hallel was sung (Pss. 115–18), the whole ending with the so-called "blessing of the song."

6. The 15th Nisan, Unleavened Bread. On this day there was a holy convocation, and it was one of the six days on which, as on the Sabbath, no manner of work was allowed, with this exception: whereas on the Sabbath the preparation of necessary food was not allowed (Ex. 16:5, 23, 29; 35:2–3), on holy convocation it was permitted (12:16; Lev. 23:7; Num. 28:18). The other five days on which the Bible prohibits servile work are the seventh of this festival, the day of Pentecost, New Year's Day, and the first and last of the feast of Booths (Tabernacles, KJV).

In addition to the ordinary sacrifices there were offered on this and the following six days two bulls, a ram, and seven lambs of the first year (with grain offerings) for a burnt offering, and a goat for a sin offering (28:19–23). Besides these public sacrifices voluntary offerings were made by each individual appearing before the Lord in Jerusalem (Ex. 23:15; Deut. 16:16). The Jewish canon prescribed that this freewill offering should be a burnt offering, worth not less than sixteen grains of corn; a festive offering of not less value than thirty-two grains; and a peace, or joyful offering (27:7), the value to be determined by the offerer (16:16–17).

7. The 16th Nisan, Cutting the Barley Sheaf. This day was also called "the day after the Sabbath"; and on it the omer of the first produce of the harvest (i.e., barley) was waved before the Lord (Lev. 23:10–14). Though for obvious reasons it was customary to choose barley grown in the sheltered Ashes valley across the Kedron, there were no restrictions, save that the barley was to be grown

in Palestine and without being forced by manuring and artificial watering. On the 14th Nisan, delegates from the Sanhedrin had marked out the spot where the first sheaf was to be cut by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley to be reaped. When the time came for cutting the sheaf (i.e., the evening of the 15th Nisan, even though it was a Sabbath), just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, set formally to work. In order to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked the bystanders the following questions three times each: "Has the sun gone down?" "With this sickle?" "Into this basket?" "On this Sabbath?" and, last, "Shall I cut?" Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down the barley to the amount of one ephah (nearly three and a half pecks). The ears were brought into the court of the Temple and threshed out with canes or stalks, so that the grains might not be crushed. The grain was then "parched" on a perforated pan, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. It was then ground and sifted to the required fineness, which was ascertained by one of the "Gizbarim" (treasurers) plunging his hand into it. The sifting process was continued as long as any of the flour adhered to the hand. In this manner the prescribed omer of flour was secured and offered in the Temple on the 16th Nisan. Whatever was in excess of an omer was redeemed and could be used for any purpose. The omer of flour was mixed with a "log" of oil, and a handful of frankincense put upon it. It was then waved before the Lord, and a handful taken out and burned on the altar (2:15–16). This was what is popularly, though not correctly, called "the presentation of the first, or wave sheaf."

8. The 17th to the 20th Nisan. These days constituted a half holy day and were "the lesser festival." As regards work during this period, all that was necessary for the public interest or to prevent private loss was allowed, but no new work of any kind for public or private purposes might be begun. The following work was allowed: irrigating dry land; digging watercourses; repairing conduits, reservoirs, roads, marketplaces, and baths; and whitewashing tombs, etc. Dealers in fruit, garments, or utensils were allowed to sell privately what was required for immediate use. In the Temple the additional sacrifices appointed for the festival were offered up, and the lesser Hallel was sung instead of the greater.

9. The 21st Nisan, or the Last Day of the Passover. The last day of the Passover was observed by a holy convocation and was celebrated in all respects like the first day, except that it did not commence with the paschal meal.

10. The second, or Little Passover. Anyone prevented by Levitical defilement, disability, or distance from keeping the regular Passover might observe the "second," or the "little Passover," exactly a month later (Num. 9:9–12). In this "second" Passover both leavened and unleavened bread might be kept in the house; the Hallel was not to be sung at the paschal supper; no *Chagigah* was offered. The supper could not be eaten by any defiled person.

11. Release of Prisoners. It is not certain whether the release of a prisoner at the Passover (Matt. 27:15; Mark 15:6; Luke 23:17; John 18:39) was a custom of Roman origin, or whether it was an old Jewish custom that Pilate allowed them to retain.

12. Preparations for the Passover. A month previous (the 15th Adar) bridges and roads had been repaired for the use of pilgrims. This was also the time for administering the testing draught to women suspected of *adultery* (which see), for burning the red heifer (Num. 19:1–5), and for

boring the ears of those wishing to remain in bondage. One of these preliminary arrangements is especially interesting when recalling the words of the Savior. Any dead body found in the field was buried where found, and, as the pilgrims coming to the feast might have contracted “uncleanness” by unwittingly touching such graves, it was ordered that all tombs should be whitened a month before the Passover. Evidently it was in reference to what our Lord saw going on around Him at the time He spoke that He compared the Pharisees to “whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness” (Matt. 23:27). Two weeks before the Passover, and at the corresponding time before the other two great festivals, the flocks and herds were to be tithed and the treasure chests publicly opened and emptied. Last, “many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves” (John 11:55; cf. 1 Cor. 11:27–28).

*Present Observance.* The Jews of today continue to celebrate the Passover largely as in the days of the second Temple. Several days before the festival all utensils are cleansed; on the eve of the 13th Nisan the master of the house with a candle or lamp searches most diligently into every hole and crevice of the house to discover any leaven that may remain about the premises. Before doing so he pronounces the benediction, following with the formal renunciation of all leaven. On the 14th Nisan (the Preparation Day) all the firstborn males above thirteen years of age fast in commemoration of the sparing of the Jewish firstborn in Egypt. On this evening the Jews, arrayed in festive garments, offer up the appointed prayers in the synagogue. Returning to their homes, they find them illuminated and the tables spread with the following food: three unleavened cakes on a plate; the shank bone of a shoulder of lamb, having a small bit of meat on it, and an egg roasted hard in hot ashes in another dish; bitter herbs in a third dish; and the sauce (Heb. *charoseth*) and salt water, or vinegar, in two cups. The whole family, including the servants, are gathered around the table. With blessings and benedictions, they partake of the food, together with four cups of wine. The same service is repeated the following evening, for the Jews have doubled the days of holy convocation.

**Pentecost** (Gk. *Pentēkostē*, “fiftieth,” i.e., “day”). The second of the three great annual festivals, the others being the Passover and Tabernacles. The most important Bible passages relating to it are Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:15–22; Num. 28:26–31; Deut. 16:9–12.

*Names and Significance.* This festival is called (1) the feast of Weeks (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10, 16; 2 Chron. 8:13), because it was celebrated seven complete weeks, or fifty days, after the Passover (Lev. 23:15–16); (2) the feast of the Harvest (Ex. 23:16), because it concluded the harvest of the later grains; and (3) the day of the first fruits (Num. 28:26), because the first loaves made from the new grain were then offered on the altar (Lev. 23:17; *see also* the article First Fruits).

*Origin and Import.* The Scriptures do not clearly attach any historical significance to this festival but seem to teach that Pentecost owes its origin to the harvest that terminated at this time. It is to be expected that, in common with other nations of antiquity who celebrated the ingathering of grain by offering to a deity among other firstling offerings the fine flour of wheat, the Jews would recognize Jehovah’s bounty with the first fruits of their harvest. The Jews, at least as early as the days of Christ, connected with the Passover and commemorated on the 6th Sivan the giving of the Ten Commandments. It was made out from Ex. 19 that the law was delivered on the fiftieth day after the Exodus. It has been conjectured that a connection between the event and the

festival may possibly be hinted at in the reference to the observance of the law in Deut. 16:12. Pentecost was essentially linked to the Passover—the festival that above all others expressed the fact of a race chosen and separated from other nations—and was the solemn termination of the consecrated period.

*The Time of the Festival.* The time fixed for celebrating Pentecost is the fiftieth day from “the day after the Sabbath” of the Passover (Lev. 23:11, 15–16); or, as given in Deut. 16:9, seven full weeks after the sickle was put to the corn. The precise meaning of the word *Sabbath* in this connection, which determines the date for celebrating this festival, has been from time immemorial a matter of dispute. The Boethusians and the Sadducees in the time of the second Temple, and the Karaites since the eighth century of the Christian era, have taken “Sabbath” in the sense of the “seventh day of the week” and have maintained that the omer was offered on the day following that weekly Sabbath that might happen to fall within the seven days of the Passover. This would make Pentecost always come on the first day of the week. Many arguments are presented against this, showing that such an opinion involves many arbitrary and improbable arrangements. Commenting on Lev. 23:15–22, Keil and Delitzsch (*Com.*, ad loc.) say that “*Sabbaths* (v. 15) signifies weeks. Consequently, ‘the morrow after the seventh Sabbath’ (v. 16) is the day after the seventh week, not after the seventh Sabbath.” It is therefore evident that the Jews, who during the second Temple kept Pentecost fifty days after the 16th Nisan, rightly interpreted the injunction in 23:15–22. The fiftieth day, according to the Jewish canons, may fall on 5th, 6th, or 7th Sivan.

*Observance, Pentateuchal.* The Mosaic ordinances provided that on the Day of Pentecost there was to be a holy convocation, on which no manner of work was to be done; all the able-bodied men of the congregation were to be present (unless legally precluded) at the sanctuary; and a special sacrifice was to be offered (Lev. 23:15–22; Num. 28:26–31). The sacrifices offered were (1) the morning and evening sacrifices, with their grain and drink offerings; (2) a burnt offering, consisting of seven lambs, one young bull, two rams, with their grain and drink offering (Lev. 23:18; Num. 28:26–31); (3) the two wave loaves, the new grain offering, of two-tenths of an ephah of new flour (Lev. 23:17); and (4) with the loaves, a kid of the goats for a sin offering and two lambs for a peace offering. The firstling loaves, with the two lambs (peace offering), were devoted to the Lord by waving, as a thank offering for the harvest that had been gathered in during the seven previous weeks. The words “You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering” (Lev. 23:17) are not to be understood as if every head of a house was to bring two such loaves, but that the two loaves were presented for the whole people. “From your dwelling places” appears to mean that they were to be loaves prepared for the daily nourishment of the house and not specially for a holy purpose or paid for out of the treasury. They were freewill offerings, presented by each person in proportion to the blessings received from God. These might be burnt, grain, drink, or thank offerings (Deut. 16:10). This festival was to be a season of rejoicing, in which were to share the children, men and women servants, the Levites, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow (16:11). Israel was also to recall her bondage in Egypt and was admonished to keep the divine law (16:12).

*Observance, Postexilic.* From Acts (2:9–11) we infer that, perhaps more than to any other great festival, the Jews came from distant countries to Jerusalem. On the day before Pentecost the pilgrims entered Jerusalem, and the approach of the holy convocation was proclaimed in the evening by blasts of the trumpets. The great altar was cleansed in the first watch, and immediately after midnight the Temple gates were thrown open. Before the morning sacrifice all burnt and peace offerings brought by the people were examined by the priests. The following order was observed for the various sacrifices: (1) The regular morning sacrifice. (2) The festive offerings, as prescribed (Num. 28:26–31); the Levites chanting the Hallel, in which the people joined. (3) The firstling loaves, with their accompanying offerings. These loaves were prepared as follows: “Three *seahs* of new wheat were brought to the temple, threshed like other [grain] offerings, ground and passed through twelve sieves, and the remainder was redeemed and eaten by anyone. Care was taken that the flour for each loaf should be taken separately from one and a half *seah*; that it should be separately kneaded with luke-warm water (like all thank offerings), and separately baked in the temple itself. The loaves were made the evening preceding the festival; or, if that fell on the Sabbath, two evenings before. These loaves, with the two lambs, formed part of the same wave offering.” (4) The freewill offerings of the people, which formed the cheerful and hospitable meal of the family and to which the Levite, the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger were invited.

*Present-Day Observance.* This festival is annually and sacredly kept by Jews on the 6th and 7th Sivan—i.e., between the second half of May and the first half of June, thus prolonging it to two days. In accordance with the injunction in Lev. 23:15–16, the Jews regularly count every evening the fifty days from the second day of Passover until Pentecost and recite a prayer over it. The three days preceding the festival, on which the Jews commemorate the giving of the law, are called “the three days of separation and sanctification,” because the Lord commanded Moses to set bounds about the mount and that the people should sanctify themselves three days prior to the giving of the law (Ex. 19:12, 14, 23).

On the preparation day the synagogues and private houses are adorned with flowers and fragrant herbs; the males purify themselves by immersion and confession of sins, put on festive garments, and go to the synagogue, where, after evening prayer, the hallowed nature of the festival is proclaimed by the cantor in the blessing pronounced over a cup of wine. The same is also done by every head of a family before the evening meal. After supper, either in the synagogue or in private houses, the reading of Scripture continues all night, the reason given being that, when God was about to reveal His law to Israel, He had to awaken them from sleep; to remove that sin they now keep awake during the night.

In the general festival service of the morning special prayers are inserted for the day, which set forth the glory of the Lawgiver and of Israel; the Great Hallel is recited; the lesson from the law (Ex. 19:1, 20, 25), the *Maphtir* (Num. 18:26–31), and the lesson from the prophets (Ezek. 1:1–28; 3:12) are read, the evening prayer (*Musaph*) is offered, and the benediction is received by the congregation, their heads covered by the fringed wrapper. On the second evening they again go to the synagogue, using there the ritual for the festivals, in which are again inserted special prayers for the occasion, chiefly those on the greatness of God and on the giving of the law and the Ten Commandments. The sanctification of the festival is again pronounced, both by the

prelector in the synagogue and by the heads of the families at home. Prayers different from those of the first day, also celebrating the giving of the law, are mingled with the ordinary prayers; the Hallel is recited, as well as the book of Ruth; the lesson read from the law is Deut. 15:19–16:17, and the lesson from the prophets is Hab. 2:20–3:19, or 3:1–19; prayer is offered for departed relatives; the *Musaph Ritual* is recited; the priests pronounce the benediction; and the festival concludes after the afternoon service, as soon as the stars appear or darkness sets in.

**Atonement, Day of** (Heb. *yôm hakkippūrîm*). The day appointed for a yearly, general, and perfect expiation for all the sins and uncleanness that might remain, despite the regular sacrifices.

*Significance.* The Levitical ritual was a constant reminder that “the Law ... can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near” (Heb. 10:1). Even with the most scrupulous observance of the prescribed ordinances many sins and defilements would still remain unacknowledged and therefore without expiation. This want was met by the appointment of a yearly, general, and perfect expiation of all the sins and uncleanness that had remained unatoned for and uncleansed in the course of the year (Lev. 16:33). Thus on the Day of Atonement Israel was reconciled unto Jehovah, which was necessary before the feast of Booths, the feast that prefigured the ingathering of all nations. In connection with this point it may also be well to remember that the Jubilee year was always proclaimed on the Day of Atonement (25:9).

*Time.* The tenth day of the seventh month, or Tishri (October), and the fifth of Atonement (Lev. 16:1–34; Num. 29:7–11). The day was a high Sabbath, on which no work was done. All the people were to afflict their souls, i.e., to fast (from the evening of the ninth to the evening of the tenth), under penalty of being cut off from Israel (Lev. 23:27–32). The chronological link connecting the Day of Atonement with the death of Aaron’s sons (10:1–5) was intended to point out that event as leading to it and also to show the importance and holiness attached to an entrance into the inmost sanctuary of God (16:1–2).

*Sacrifices.* From Lev. 16:5–28 and Num. 29:7–11, it would appear that the sacrifices for the day were as follows: (1) The ordinary morning sacrifice. (2) The expiatory sacrifices for the priesthood, namely, a young bull. (3) The sin offering for the people, a kid from the goats for Jehovah and another for Azazel. (4) The festive burnt offerings of the priests and people and, with them, another sin offering. (5) The ordinary evening sacrifice. If the Day of Atonement fell on a Sabbath, the ordinary Sabbath sacrifices were offered besides all these.

*Ceremonies.* Ceremonies on the Day of Atonement were connected with the preparations for the high priests, the expiatory rites, and the festive offerings.

*Preparation.* The center point of this feast was the expiation offered by the high priest after the morning sacrifice. In later times, at least, the high priest underwent a special preparation for this service. Seven days before, he had left his own home and taken up his residence in the Temple chambers. A substitute was provided, lest the high priest should die or become Levitically unclean. During this week he practiced the various priestly duties, such as sprinkling the blood, burning incense, lighting the lamps, offering the daily sacrifices, etc.; for every part of the service on Atonement Day depended upon the high priest, and he could make no mistake. Further, he was to abstain from all that could render him unclean or disturb his devotions. On the morning of the Day of Atonement the high priest bathed his entire person, not in the place ordinarily used

by the priests but one specially set apart for him. He then put on the holy garments—the coat, drawers, girdle, and headdress of white cloth—thus signifying that he was entirely cleansed from the defilement of sin and was arrayed in holiness.

**Expiatory Rites.** After everything was ready, the high priest slew the bull (the sin offering for himself and his house), then filled a censer with burning coals from the altar of burnt offering, and, putting two handfuls of incense into a vase, bore them into the Holy of Holies. He poured the incense upon the coals, “that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat.” As the burning incense was a symbol of prayer, this covering of the Mercy Seat with the cloud of incense was a symbolic covering of the glory of the Holy One with prayer to God, and thus served as to protect the worshiper. The high priest now returned to the altar of burnt offering to fetch some of the blood of the bull, which he sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat (“on the east side,” Lev. 16:14) and seven times upon the ground before it. After this he slew the goat selected for a sin offering and did the same as with the blood of the bull, namely, sprinkled it upon and before the Mercy Seat. He thus made atonement for the Holy of Holies because of the uncleanness of both priests and people (v. 16). He was now required to atone for the “tent of meeting,” which he did by sprinkling the blood of both the bull and the goat, first on the horns of the golden altar once, and then seven times toward the altar, on the ground (*see* Ex. 30:10). Atonement having been made for the building, the high priest was to expiate the altar of burnt offering, which he did by first putting some of the blood of the bull and the goat upon the horns of the altar and sprinkling it seven times. Thus the dwelling, the court, and all the holy things were expiated and cleansed. The question as to how often the high priest went into the Holy of Holies on this day is not of great importance. The biblical account seems to indicate that he entered four times: (1) with the incense, while a priest continued to agitate the blood of the bull lest it should coagulate; (2) with the blood of the bull; (3) with the blood of the goat; and (4) to bring the censer, which, according to the Talmud, was done after the evening sacrifice. The high priest then, going out into the court of the Tabernacle, laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, confessing over it all the sins and transgressions of the people. It was led away into the wilderness by a man standing ready and there let go free to signify the carrying away of Israel’s sins that God had forgiven. *See* Azazel.

**Festive Offerings.** The high priest then went into the Tabernacle, took off his white garments, laid them down there (because they were to be worn only in the expiatory ritual of this day), washed himself in the Holy Place (in the laver of the court), put on his usual official robes, and completed his own and the people’s burnt offering in the court, at the same time burning the fat of the sin offerings on the altar. But both of the sin offerings were carried outside of the camp and burned with skin, flesh, and dung. The persons who had taken the live goat into the wilderness and burned the sin offerings outside the camp were, before they returned into it, to wash their clothes and bathe their bodies (Lev. 16:2–29). “This act of expiation for the people and the holy places being finished, there was presented immediately before the evening sacrifice, according to Jewish tradition, the offering prescribed for the feast of the day, a goat as sin offering, a bullock, a ram, and several lambs as burnt offerings, with the corresponding meat and drink offerings (Num. 29:7–11), and therewith the feast of the day was closed.” According to the rabbis, the high priest on this day performed all the duties of the regular daily service; sprinkled the blood eight times, once toward the ceiling and seven times on the floor; and after returning the third time from the Holy of Holies to the Holy Place sprinkled the blood of bull and goat toward the veil, mixed the

blood of the two animals together, and sprinkled the altar of incense with the mixture, pouring out what remained at the foot of the altar of burnt offerings. The two goats were similar in appearance (size and value); the lots with which they were chosen were originally of boxwood, later of gold. The high priest, as soon as he received the signal that the goat had reached the wilderness, read some lessons from the law and offered prayer. Very strict rules are given by the Mishna for the fasting of the people.

*Modern Observance.* The strict Jews, on the day previous to the Day of Atonement, provide a cock slain by a lower-ranking rabbi; the person whose property it is then takes the fowl by the legs, swings it over the heads of himself and company, and at the same time prays to God that the sins committed by them during the year may enter the fowl. This fowl seems to be a substitute for the scapegoat of old. In the evening, after a sumptuous meal, they go to the synagogue dressed in their best. After a blessing by the clerk, each contributes toward the free gift offering, after which begins the evening prayer. The reader, the chief rabbi, and many of the congregation are clad with the shrouds in which they are to be buried, continuing in prayer and supplication for upward of three hours. Some remain all night, and those who go to their homes come again in the morning at five o'clock and remain until dark. The following is the order for the day: morning prayers; the usual prayers and supplications peculiar to the day; reading the portion from Lev. 16, the *maphter* (Num. 19:7–11), the portion from the prophets (Isa. 57:14–58:14); the prayer of the *musaph*, i.e., “addition,” which makes mention of the additional sacrifices (Num. 29:7) and supplicates Jehovah to be favorable; the offering of the day from 29:7–28. They abstain from food altogether during the day. *See* Expiation.

**Booths (or Tabernacles), Feast of.** The third of the great annual feasts, the other two being the Passover and Pentecost.

*Names.* (1) The festival of Tents (Heb. *ḥag hassūkkôt*, “Feast of Booths,” 2 Chron. 8:13; Ezra 3:4; Zech. 14:16, 18–19; Gk. *skēnopēgia*. John 7:2, “Feast of Booths”) was so called because the Israelites were commanded to live in booths during its continuance (cf. Lev. 23:43). (2) The feast of Ingathering (Heb. *ḥag hā-āsip*, Ex. 23:16, “Feast of the Harvest”; 34:22), because it was held after the ingathering of the harvest and fruits. (3) The festival of Jehovah (Heb. *ḥag YHWH*, Lev. 23:39, “feast of the Lord”), or simply *the festival* (1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron. 5:3, “the feast”), because it was the most important or well known. The principal passages referring to this feast are Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:34–36; 39:43; Deut. 16:13–15; 31:10–13; Neh. 8.

*Origin and Import.* The origin of this feast is connected by some with Succoth, the first halting place of the Israelites on their march out of Egypt, and the booths are taken to commemorate those in which they lodged for the last time before they entered the desert. It was ordered by Moses in the regulations he gave to the Israelites respecting their festivals, and it unites two elements: the ingathering of the labor of the field (Ex. 23:16), the fruit of the earth (Lev. 23:39)—or the ingathering of the threshing floor and the wine press (Deut. 16:13)—and the dwelling in booths, which were to be matters of joy to Israel (Lev. 23:41–43; Deut. 16:14). The dwelling in booths was to be a reminder to them of the fatherly care and protection of Jehovah while Israel was journeying from Egypt to Canaan (Deut. 8:7–18). “In comparison with the ‘house of bondage’ the dwelling in booths on the march through the wilderness was in itself an image of

freedom and happiness” (K. & D., *Com.*, ad loc.). Such a reminder of God’s loving care and Israel’s dependence would, naturally, keep the Israelites from pride and conceit.

*Time of the Festival.* It began on the 15th of Tishri (the seventh month), five days before the Day of Atonement, and although, strictly speaking, it lasted only seven days (Deut. 16:13; Lev. 23:36; Ezek. 45:25), another day was added (Neh. 8:18). This day was observed with a sabbatic rest.

*Observance.* To distinguish between the pentateuchal enactments and the rites, ceremonies, etc., that gradually developed, we divide the description of its observance into three sections: Mosaic, postexilic, and post-Dispersion.

Mosaic. On the first day of the feast, booths were constructed of fresh branches of fruit and palm trees, “boughs of leafy trees and willows.” These were located in courts, streets, public squares, and on house roofs. In these all home-born Israelites were to dwell during the festival, in memory of their fathers’ dwelling in booths after their exodus from Egypt (Lev. 23:40; Neh. 8:15). The day was also to be observed as a Sabbath and a holy convocation, in which no secular work was to be done, and all abled-bodied male members of the congregation not legally precluded were to appear before the Lord. The booth in Scripture is not an image of privation and misery but of protection, preservation, and shelter from heat, storm, and tempest (Pss. 27:5; 31:20; Isa. 4:6). Table 9 lists the sacrifices offered during this festival.

Table 9  
Sacrifices During the Feast of Booths

Day	Bulls	Rams	Lambs	Goats <sup>1</sup>
First	13	2	14	1
Second	12	2	14	1
Third	11	2	14	1
Fourth	10	2	14	1
Fifth	9	2	14	1
Sixth	8	2	14	1

---

K. & D. Johann Karl Friedrich Keil and Franz Julius Delitzsch, *Old Testament Commentaries* (1875)  
*Com. Commentary*

Seventh	7	2	14	1
	—	—	—	—
Total for the seven days	70	14	98	7
Eighth	1	1	7	1

### I. The sin offering

Each bull, ram, and lamb was accompanied with its prescribed grain and drink offering. The above sacrifices were offered after the regular morning sacrifice (Num. 29:12–34). Every sabbatical year the law was to be read publicly in the sanctuary on the first day of the festival (Deut. 31:10–13). The six following days were half festivals, probably devoted to social enjoyments and friendly gatherings, when every family head was to extend hospitality, especially to the poor and the stranger (16:14). To these seven days there was added an eighth, the twenty-second of the month, as the close of the feast. This day was observed with a sabbatic rest and holy convocation but had only a simple sacrifice, similar to the first and tenth days of the seventh month (Num. 29:35–38; *see* table 9). There is only one instance recorded of this festival's being celebrated between the entrance into the Promised Land and the Babylonian captivity (1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chron. 7:8–10; Neh. 8:17).

Postexilic. After the Babylonian captivity the feast of Booths began to be strictly and generally kept, and more minute definitions and more expanded applications of the concise pentateuchal injunction were imperatively demanded, in order to secure uniformity of practice, as well as to infuse devotion and joy into the celebration.

It was ordained that the booth must be a detached and temporary habitation, constructed for the festival and not for permanent residence; the interior must neither be higher than twenty cubits nor lower than ten palms; it must have not less than three walls and must be so thatched as to admit the view of the sky and the stars. The part open to the rays of the sun was not to exceed the part shaded by the cover; it must not be under a tree, or covered with a cloth or with anything that contracts defilement or does not derive its growth from the ground. The furniture of the booths must be of the plainest, and only such as was fairly necessary. Every Israelite was to dwell in the booth during the whole of the seven days of the festival, while his house was to be only his occasional abode; and he was only to quit the booth when it rained heavily. Even a child, as soon as it ceased to be dependent upon its mother, must dwell in the booth. The only persons exempt were those deputed on pious missions, invalids, nurses, women, and infants.

There was a controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees respecting the use of the branches of trees mentioned in Lev. 23:40; the latter, from Neh. 8:15–16, understanding them to be for the

erection of the booths, whereas the Pharisees applied them to what the worshipers were to carry in their hands. The rabbis ruled that the *aethrog*, or citron, was the fruit of the “beautiful trees,” and “the boughs of leafy trees” meant the myrtle, provided it did not have more berries than leaves. Every worshiper carried the *aethrog* in his left hand, and in his right the *lulab*, or palm, with myrtle and willow branch on either side of it tied together on the outside with its own kind, though on the inside it might be fastened with a gold thread. The *lulab* was used in the Temple on each of the seven festive days; even children, if able to shake it, were required to carry one.

1. The day before the feast, 14th Tishri, was the *Preparation Day*. On this day the pilgrims came to Jerusalem and prepared all that was necessary for the solemn observance of the festival. When evening set in, the blasts of the priests’ trumpets on the Temple mount announced the advent of the feast. As at the Passover and at Pentecost, the altar of burnt offering was cleansed during the first night watch, and the Temple gates were thrown open immediately after midnight. The time until the beginning of the ordinary morning sacrifice was occupied in examining the various sacrifices and offerings that were to be brought during the day. If this day was the Sabbath all *lulabs* had to be deposited somewhere in the Temple, as it was contrary to law to carry the palms from the booths of the pilgrims to the Temple on the Sabbath.

2. On the first day of the feast, 15th Tishri, while the morning sacrifice was being prepared, a priest, accompanied by a joyous procession and with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam, where he drew water into a golden pitcher capable of holding three *logs*. On the Sabbaths the water was brought from a golden vessel in the Temple itself, to which it had been carried from Siloam the preceding day. At the same time that the procession started for Siloam, another went to a place in the Kidron Valley (i.e., Motza), to which they brought willow branches. These they stuck on either side of the great altar, bending them over so as to form a canopy. The priest who had gone to Siloam timed his return so as to join his brother priests as they carried the sacrifice to the altar. On reaching the water gate he was welcomed by three blasts of the trumpet. He ascended the steps of the altar with another priest, who carried a pitcher of wine for a drink offering. They turned to the left, where there were two silver basins with holes in the bottom; the basin for the water at the W with a narrower hole, that for the wine at the E with wider hole, so that both might empty at the same time. Into these respective basins the water and wine were poured; the people shouting to the priest, “Raise thy hand,” to show that he really poured the water into the basin. The reason for this was that Alexander Jannaeus, a Sadducee (about 95 b.c.), had shown his contempt for the Pharisees by pouring the water upon the ground. He was pelted by the people with their *aethrogs*, and the soldiers, being called in, killed nearly six thousand Jews in the Temple.

As soon as the altar was decorated with the willow branches the morning sacrifice was offered, followed by the special festive sacrifices. While these sacrifices were being offered, the Levites chanted the Great Hallel, as at the Passover and Pentecost. When the choir came to the words “Give thanks to the Lord” (Ps. 118:1), again when they sang, “O Lord, do save, we beseech Thee” (118:25), and once more at the close, “Give thanks to the Lord” (118:29), all the worshipers shook their *lulabs* toward the altar. The chant finished, the priests marched around the altar, exclaiming, “Hosanna, O Jehovah; give us help, O Jehovah, give prosperity” (cf. 118:25). The benediction was then pronounced, and the people dispersed, amid the repeated exclamation

“How beautiful art thou, O altar!” or “To Jehovah and thee, O altar, we give thanks!” This prayer for succor was applied to Christ when the multitude greeted Jesus on His entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:8–9; John 12:12–13).

Each pilgrim went to his booth, there to enjoy his social repast with the Levite, the stranger, etc. On the first day of the festival every Israelite carried about his *lulab*, or palm, all day—to the synagogue, on his visits to the sick and mourners.

3. The second through sixth days of the feast, 16th–20th Tishri, were called also *the middle days of the feast* (John 7:14), or *the lesser festival*. These days were half holy days, on which necessary food or raiment might be privately purchased, and work required for the observance of the festival might be performed. During these days the sacrifices were offered, the palm and the citron were used, and the priests marched around the altar as on the first day of the festival, with the exception that the number of animals offered diminished daily.

4. The seventh or *the last day of the feast*, fell on the 21st Tishri (but according to some authorities this title was given to the 22nd Tishri). This seventh day of the festival was distinguished from the other days as follows: after the *Musaph*, or special festival sacrifices of the day, the priests marched seven times around the altar instead of once, as on other days; the willows that surrounded the altar were then so thoroughly shaken by the people that the leaves lay thickly on the ground; the people also brought palm branches and beat them to pieces at the side of the altar, from which the day was called *the day of willows* and *the branch-threshing day*. This over, the children who were present threw away their palms and ate their *aethrogs*, or citrons; on the afternoon of this day the pilgrims began to move the furniture from the booths, the obligation to dwell in them ceasing at that time. This, the great Hosanna day, was regarded as one of the four days whereon God judges the world. It seems altogether probable that it was on this day that Jesus uttered those memorable words, “If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink” (John 7:37).

5. The eighth day of the feast, 22nd Tishri, was added as the close of the festival and was observed with sabbatic rest and holy convocation. It had only a simple sacrifice (similar to the first and tenth day of the seventh month; see table 9, “Sacrifices Offered During the Feast of Booths”). The people no longer dwelt in booths, the joyful procession for the drawing of water was discontinued, the illumination of the court of the women ceased, and the palms and willows were not used.

The ceremony of drawing the water was repeated every morning during the seven days of the festival but was discontinued on the eighth.

When the feast of Booths fell on a sabbatic year, the reading of portions of the law (Deut. 31:10–13) was afterward confined to one book of the Pentateuch, the number of synagogues in which the law was read every week rendering it less needful to read extensive portions in the Temple. A peculiarity of this festival was that on the first seven days all twenty-four divisions of the priests officiated, whereas at all the other festivals only those upon whom the lot fell served (cf. 1 Chron. 24:7–19). On the eighth day the twenty-four divisions were not all present; only those upon whom the lot fell. As the close of the first day of the feast was celebrated, the “joy of the pouring out of the water,” the worshipers descended to the court of the women, where great preparations had been made. Four golden candelabra were there, each with four golden bowls, a ladder resting

against each candelabra and upon them standing four sons of the priests holding pitchers of oil with which they fed the lamps, while the cast-off breeches and girdles of the priests served for wicks. The light from these lamps illuminated the whole city, and around them danced men with lighted torches in their hands, singing hymns and songs of praise. The Levites, stationed on the fifteen steps that led into the court, corresponding to the fifteen psalms of degrees, i.e., *steps* (Pss. 120–134, “ascents”), accompanied the songs with harps, lyres, cymbals, and other musical instruments. The dancing, as well as the music, continued until daybreak. It is probable that Jesus referred to this custom when He spoke those well-known words “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12).

Since the Dispersion. Except for the adaptation of the rites to the altered condition of the nation, the Jews of the present day continue to celebrate the feast of Booths as in the days of the second Temple.

As soon as the Day of Atonement is over, every orthodox Jew begins to erect the booth in which he and his family are to take up their abode during the festival, and he also provides himself with a *lulab* (palm) and *aethrog* (citron). The festival commences on the eve of 14th Tishri (Preparation Day). All the Jews, attired in festive garments, resort to the synagogues, where, after the evening prayer, the hallowed nature of the festival is proclaimed by the cantor in the blessing pronounced over the wine. After the evening service every family goes to its booth, which is illuminated and adorned with leaves and fruit and in which the first festive meal is taken. Before this is eaten, the head of the family pronounces the sanctity of the festival over a cup of wine. Each member of the family washes his hands, pronouncing the prescribed benediction while drying them, and all begin to eat. Orthodox Jews sleep in the booths all night.

The following morning, the first day of the feast, they go to the synagogue, holding the palms and citrons in their hands, laying them down during the former part of the prayer, but taking them up after the eighteen benedictions, when about to recite the Hallel. Holding the palm in the right hand and the citron in the left, they recite the following prayer: “Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments, and hast enjoined us to take the palm branch.” Then each turns his citron upside down and waves his palm branch three times toward each point of the compass, and the legate of the congregation pronounces the benediction; the Hallel is chanted; the lessons are read from the law (Lev. 22:26; 23:44; Num. 29:12–16) and from the prophets (Zech. 14:1–21). After this the *Musaph* prayer is recited; when the reader comes to the passage where the word *priests* occurs, the Aaronites and the Levites rise, and, after the latter have washed the hands of the former, the priests, with uplifted hands, pronounce the priestly benediction (Num. 6:24–27) upon the congregation, whose faces are veiled with the *Talith*. The elders then march around the ark, in the center of the synagogue, the legate carrying the scroll and the rest of the palm branches, repeating the *Hosanna* and waving the palms in memory of the procession around the altar. The morning service concluded, the people again go to their booths to partake of the festive meal with the poor and the stranger. About five or six o’clock they recite, in the synagogue, the *Minchah* prayer, answering to the daily evening sacrifice in the Temple.

The ritual and rites of the second evening and morning are similar to those of the first; the lesson from the prophets, however, is from 1 Kings 8:2–21. After the afternoon service of this day the

middle days of the festival begin, which last four days, when the ritual is like that of ordinary days, a few prayers being inserted in the regular formula; lessons are read on each day, and the procession goes around the ark.

The seventh day, i.e., *the Great Hosanna*, is celebrated with peculiar solemnity, inasmuch as it is believed that on this day God decrees the rain for the future harvest. On the evening previous every Israelite supplies himself with a small bunch of willows tied with palm bark. Some pious Jews read all night from Deuteronomy, the Psalms, the Mishna, etc., and are immersed before the morning prayer. Candles are lighted at the time of morning service, and after the morning prayer (similar to those of the preceding days) seven scrolls are taken from the ark, from one of which the lesson is read. After prayer the procession, headed by the rabbi and the legate, with those carrying the scrolls, goes seven times around the ark or the reading desk, reciting the Hosannas and waving their palms. The palms are then laid down and the willows beaten.

On the evening of the seventh day the festival commences, which concludes the whole cycle of the feast. Being a day of holy convocation, the *Kiddush* (i.e., proclamation) of its sanctity is offered. On the following morning, in the synagogue, the prayers of the first two days are offered; the special lesson of the day is read; the *Musaph*, or additional prayer, is offered, and the priests pronounce the benediction. The people no longer take their meals in the booths on this day. On the evening of this day begins the festival called *the Rejoicing of the Law*. The eighteen benedictions are recited. All the scrolls are taken from the ark, into which a lighted candle is placed. A procession of distinguished members is headed by the legate; they hold the scrolls in their hands and go around the reading desk; the scrolls are then put back into the ark, except the one placed upon the desk, from which is read the last chapter of Deuteronomy. All persons in the synagogue are called to the reading, including children. The evening service over, the children leave the synagogue in procession, carrying banners with sundry Heb. inscriptions.

On the following morning the Jews resort again to the synagogue, recite the *Hallel* after the eighteen benedictions, empty the ark of all its scrolls, put a lighted candle into it, and with the scrolls go around the reading desk amid jubilant songs. The scrolls are returned to the ark, with the exception of two, from one of which is read Deut. 33. Four persons are at first called, then all the little children, and then again several adults. The first of these is known as *the Bridegroom of the Law*, and after the cantor has addressed him in a lengthy Heb. formula the last verses of the Pentateuch are read. Following the reading, all the people exclaim, "Be strong!" Genesis 1:1–2:3 is read, to which another is called who is known as *the Bridegroom of Genesis*, to whom is delivered a Heb. formula; the *Maphtir* (i.e., Num. 29:35–30:1) is read from another scroll; the *Mustaph*, or additional special prayer for the festival, is said; and the service is concluded. The rest of the day is spent in rejoicing and feasting.

The design of this festival is to celebrate the annual completion of the perusal of the Pentateuch, inasmuch as on this day the last section of the law is read. Hence the name of the festival, *The Rejoicing of Finishing the Law*.

**Postexilic Festivals.** To the yearly festivals instituted by the Mosaic law several were added after the Exile, of which two, Purim and the feast of Dedication, were as regularly kept as the Mosaic yearly feasts.

*Purim* (Heb. *pûrîm*, “lots,” Esther 9:26, 31). This feast was instituted by Mordecai, at the suggestion of Esther, in memory of the extraordinary deliverance of the Jews of Persia from the murderous plot of Haman. It was generally adopted, though not at first without opposition.

**Name and Significance.** The name *Purim*, “lots,” was given to this festival because of the casting of lots by Haman to decide when he should carry into effect the decree issued by the king for the extermination of the Jews (Esther 9:24). The name was probably given to the festival in irony.

**Observance.** The only directions given respecting the observance of the festival is that Mordecai ordered the 14th and 15th of Adar to be kept annually by the Jews; that these two days should be days of feasting and joy, of the interchange of presents, and of sending gifts to the poor; and that the Jews agreed to continue the observance of the festival as it was begun (Esther 9:17–24). No mention is made of any special sacrifice. At the present day the festival is kept as follows: the day preceding (13th Adar) is kept as a fast day (called “the Fast of Esther”), in accordance with the command of the queen (4:15–16). Sundry prayers, expressive of repentance, etc., are introduced into the ritual for the day. As on all fast days, Ex. 32:11–14 and 34:1–11 are read as the lesson from the law, and Isa. 55:6–56:8 as the Haphtarah. If 13th Adar falls on a Sabbath, the fast is kept on the previous Thursday. As soon as the stars appear the festival commences, candles are lighted, and all the Jews go to the synagogue, where, after the evening service, the benediction is pronounced, and the book of Esther is read by the prelector. As often as the name of Haman is mentioned in the reading, the congregation stamps on the floor, saying, “Let his name be blotted out. The name of the wicked shall rot!” while the children shake rattles. After the reading the congregation exclaims, “Cursed be Haman; blessed be Mordecai!” etc.; the benediction is said, and all go home and partake of milk and eggs. On the 14th, in the morning, the people go to the synagogue; several prayers are inserted into the regular ritual; Ex. 17:8–16 is read as the lesson from the law, and Esther, as on the previous evening. The rest of the festival is given up to rejoicing, exchanging of presents, games, etc. Rejoicing continues on the 15th, and the festival terminates on the evening of this day.

**Dedication, Feast of** (Heb. *hanûkkâ*). In 1 Macc. 4:52–59 it is called “the dedication of the altar,” and by Josephus (*Ant.* 12.7.7) “the feast of lights.” It was a popular and joyous festival commemorating the purifying of the Temple, the removal of the old polluted altar, and the restoration of the worship of Jehovah by Judas Maccabeus, 164 b.c.

This feast began on the 25th Chisleu (December) and lasted eight days but did not require attendance at Jerusalem. Assembled in the Temple or in the synagogues of the places where they resided, the Jews sang “Hallel,” carrying palm and other branches; and there was a grand illumination of the Temple and private houses. The origin of the illumination of the Temple is unknown, although tradition says that when the sacred “lampstands” of the restored Temple were to be lighted only one flagon of oil, sealed with the signet of the high priest, was found to feed the lamps. This was *pure* oil, but only sufficient for one day—when by a miracle the oil increased, and the flagon remained filled for eight days, in memory of which the Temple and private houses were ordered to be illuminated for the same period. No public mourning or fast was allowed on account of calamity or bereavement. The festival did not require anyone to abstain partially or completely from his ordinary occupation, and unlike some other celebrations it was not marked by a holy assembly at the beginning and the end. The celebration was always of

a joyous, exuberant character which commemorated the restoration of the worship of the Temple (1 Macc. 4:41–49). The similarity between this festival and the “feast of Booths” would seem to indicate some intended connection between the two. Without doubt, our Lord attended this festival at Jerusalem (John 10:22). It is still observed by the Jews.

**Festivals as Types.** According to many Bible teachers, the seven feasts of the Lord (Lev. 23) constitute a prophecy and foreshadowing of future events, part of which have been fulfilled and part are yet to be fulfilled. They are “a mere shadow of what is to come,” of which Christ is the body or substance (Col. 2:16–17). The seven annual feasts may be divided into two sections of four and three. The first section includes the Passover, the feast of Unleavened Bread, the feast of First Fruits, and Pentecost. The second group, separated by a four-month period, includes the feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the feast of Booths. The three great festivals were the Passover, Pentecost, and Booths. The first four feasts foreshadow truths concerning this present gospel age. The last three foreshadow blessings in store for Israel. The first four are historic; the last three, prophetic. Those who hold the typical view of the Hebrew feasts teach the significance of each as follows:

*Passover.* The Passover (Lev. 23:4–5) speaks of Calvary and of redemption by blood from Egypt, a type of the world; from Pharaoh, a type of Satan; and from Egyptian servitude, a type of sin. The festival speaks of our redemption from sin by the Lamb of God (1 Pet. 1:19), Christ being our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7).

*Unleavened Bread.* Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6–8) typifies the holy walk of a believer after redemption (1 Cor. 5:8; 11:23–33; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:7–9). The divine order is eloquent. First, redemption, followed by a holy walk. The eating of unleavened bread and the putting away of all leaven from the household portrays holiness, as leaven is a figure of “malice and wickedness” (1 Cor. 5:8) and is not befitting a believer’s walk.

*First Fruits.* First Fruits (Lev. 23:9–14) is typical of resurrection, first of Christ’s, then of “those who are Christ’s at His coming” (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:13–18). When the priest on the day of Christ’s resurrection waved the sheaf of first fruits in the Temple, it was before a torn veil and was but an antiquated form, for the substance had come and the shadow had passed away. Joseph’s empty tomb proclaimed that the great first fruit sheaf had been reaped and waved in the heavenly Temple. This feast has been completely fulfilled in Christ. (*See also* the article First Fruits.)

*Pentecost* (Lev. 23:15–22). The type of the feast of Pentecost is the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to form the church, the Body of Christ. Because the church is not yet glorified and contains evil, leaven is present (Matt. 13:33). The two loaves are not a sheaf of separate stalks loosely tied together but a union of particles making loaves or a homogeneous body. At the Pentecost following Christ’s resurrection, the Holy Spirit, by His baptizing work, formed the separate disciples into one organism, the Body of Christ (cf. Acts 1:5 with 11:16 and 1 Cor. 12:13). The church had to begin on Pentecost because it was the first historical instance of the Spirit’s baptizing work (cf. Merrill F. Unger, *The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit* [1953], pp. 53–65). Although leaven was in the two loaves offered at Pentecost, typifying Jew and Gentile made one in Christ (cf. Eph. 3:1–10), yet the leaven was baked, that is, sin in those who are redeemed

has been judged in Christ. The four-month period between Pentecost and Trumpets was occupied in gathering in the harvest, typical of the present church period before Christ restores Israel.

*Trumpets.* Trumpets (Lev. 23:23–25) speaks of the regathering of Israel to its homeland after the out-gathering of the church. Matthew 24:31 speaks of the Son of Man at His second advent sending His angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather together His elect (of Israel) from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

*Day of Atonement.* The Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:26–32) envisions Israel's national cleansing from sin (Rom. 11:25) and refers to the time when a "fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity" (Zech. 13:1). It portrays their future conversion as a nation at the second advent of Christ (12:9–14).

*Booths.* The antitype of Booths (or Tabernacles; Lev. 23:33–43) has not yet appeared. Peter anticipated it, however, on the mount of transfiguration when he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (Matt. 17:4). What Peter desired, the dwelling of heavenly and earthly people on the earth, was not possible in that age but will be possible in the conditions of the mediatorial Davidic kingdom. Then the kingdom of the heavens will bring heaven and earth in closer union. The feast of Booths is thus prophetic of Israel's millennial rest. The feast of Booths is a memorial to Israel, going back to Egypt and forward to millennial rest, as the Lord's Supper now points back to a finished redemption until Christ appears. The eighth day following the Sabbath (Lev. 23:39) points to the new heaven and the new earth following the Millennium and to the dispensation of the fullness of time before the eternal state. m.f.u.

bibliography: *Pentecost*: H. Darby, trans., *Mishnah*, Menahot, 10:3; *Talmud*, Manahot, 65a; H. Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals* (1938), pp. 86ff.; L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees* (1946), pp. 115ff.

*Purim*: J. H. Greenstone, *Jewish Feasts and Fasts* (1946).

See also G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Three Centuries of the Christian Era* (1927), 2:40–54; H. Schauss, *Jewish Festivals* (1958), pp. 284–88; J. Pedersen, *Israel, Its Life and Culture* (1940), 3-4:377–78; R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (1961), pp. 468–517.<sup>1</sup>

---

M.F.U. Merrill F. Unger

<sup>1</sup> Merrill Frederick Unger, R. K. Harrison, Howard Frederic Vos et al., *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Rev. and updated ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988).