



God's festivals מועדי in the Scriptures

The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'These are my appointed festivals, the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies...at their appointed times.'"

Leviticus 23:1-2, 4 (NIV)

There are numerous references throughout the entire Bible to the festivals (sacred gatherings or "appointed times" in Hebrew) that God set aside for regular celebration, consecration, rest, and worship as noted in the list drawn from Leviticus 23 below:

	Biblical Festival	Leviticus	New Testament
	Shabbat	23:3	Multiple references
A	1. Pesach Passover	23:5	Matthew 26:2, 17-19 Mark 14:12-16 Luke 2:41-42; 22:1, 7-20 John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 13:1-30 Acts 20:6 1 Corinthians 11:23-29
	2. Chag HaMotzi Unleavened Bread	23:6-8	1 Corinthians 5:6-8
	3. Reshit Kitzir Firstfruits	23:10-14	Observed as Easter
B	4. Shavuot Feast of Weeks or Pentecost	23:15-22	Acts 2:1-21; 20:16 1 Corinthians 16:8
C	5. Rosh Hashanah Feast of Trumpets	23:23-25	Matthew 24:30-31 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Revelation 11:15
	6. Yom Kippur Day of Atonement	23:26-32	Acts 27:9, Hebrews 9
	7. Sukkot Feast of Tabernacles	23:33-43	John 7:1-2, 7:8, 10, 14

The major festivals outlined above and discussed in the first half of our book* are those designated by God for regular observance which have either been variably carried over with modifications or set aside entirely by the wider Christian community. The first of these, although technically not a festival in the sense that the others are, is the weekly Sabbath day set aside as the 4th Commandment in Exodus 20:8-11 to be kept faithfully on the seventh day. Most people in our modern world have retained some relationship with the concept if not the actual practice of keeping Sabbath.

The remaining seven have been clustered as three annual Pilgrimage Festivals which include A) the spring celebration of Passover (along with the Feasts of Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits), followed by B) Shavuot or Pentecost, and then C) the fall celebrations of Rosh Hashanah (Trumpets), Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), and Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles). We have included five more celebrations commonly

observed in the Jewish community that have less directive Biblical origins, including Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Hanukkah, Tu B'Shevat, and the popular Purim festivities.

Of the Pilgrimage Festivals, the two that most Christians are familiar with are the those of Passover which transitioned into a set of observances from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, and the Shavuot festival which Christians celebrate as Pentecost in remembrance of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples gathered in the Upper Room following the reported crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. Some of the core sentiments of the third Pilgrimage Festival (encompassing the fall holidays or “holy days” of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot) may be found in Lenten activities. However, unlike the first two Festivals, Sukkot is a forward-looking celebration that remains to be fulfilled when the Messiah comes to establish His millennial reign as prophesied in Zechariah 14.

Jesus and His disciples celebrated all of the prescribed feasts. What can both Christians and Jews learn today from the Bible, the festivals, each other, and the example of those who have gone before us? Why did God set things up and instruct His people to carry them out the way He did? Who are His people in our world? Are we listening and being obedient to His voice?

In the second half of our book* we have expanded upon and showcased Passover because it is the cornerstone of our mutual salvation and redemption, a celebration of the faithfulness of God in saving those who called upon His Name and obeyed His voice during the Exodus as well as all who have called on His name for salvation from the slavery of sin ever since. The Bible is united in its witness to the God who saves, sanctifies, and sends His people back out into the world as redeemed citizens and ambassadors of His Kingdom on earth. Please join us as we learn to celebrate our common heritage together.

Blessed are those who wash their festal robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

Revelation 22:14



קהילת עץ החיים
The Tree of Life Community

**The Biblical Festivals* is available at <https://tinyurl.com/365dctv6>