

## Mo'edim Goyim?!

The past couple of months we have been celebrating the Fall Festivals; starting with Yom Teruah (Day of the Trumpet Blast), then following Yom Teruah we observed Yamim Noraim (Days of Awe) the ten days of introspection that lead us to Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and most recently we rejoiced as we dwelt in sukkot.

**How many here have been asked by someone:**

“Why do you celebrate the *Jewish* holidays?”

Or,

“Are you Jewish? I thought you were Christian?”

My question to you today, is;

**Why do you celebrate the ‘Jewish Festivals’?!**

Let’s start with the book of Leviticus. In chapter 23 it says:

The L-RD spoke again to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'The L-rd's appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations-- My appointed times are these. NAS Leviticus 23:1-2

Our first point in answering these questions is that these are **the L-rd's festivals**, appointed times – Mo'edim in Hebrew, given as holy convocations to the Jewish people.

Let’s look at the word convocation for just a moment. The Hebrew word for convocation is ‘**miqra**’ which is most commonly translated as ‘assembly’, ‘convocation’ or ‘summoning’ but it can also be translated as ‘**rehearsal**’. <04744>

מִקְרָא (miqra)

Webster’s defines rehearsal like this:

Rehearsal: 1. a session of exercise, drill or practice in preparation for a performance or ceremony.  
3. A repeating or relating.

Rehearse: 1. to practice (a part in a play, a musical composition as speech etc.)  
3. To relate the facts or particulars of; recount.

On the one hand we have a recount of how the L-rd delivered the nation out of Egypt and on the other we have a drill or practice in preparation for a [future] ceremony.

Over and over again we see the same pattern in the Bible. The L-rd gives us *historical facts* that illustrate *spiritual truths*. These are known as a ‘**types**’ and ‘**shadows**’.

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Coming back to our ‘theme’, the original question of why we – as “New Testament” believers should celebrate the ‘Jewish’ festivals, one commentator quotes Colossians 2:16-17:

*So don't let anyone pass judgment on you in connection with eating and drinking, or in regard to a Jewish festival or Rosh Chodesh or Shabbat. **These are a shadow of things that are coming**, but the body is of the Messiah. (Colossians 2:16-17)*

Here is what he has to say about these verses:

“While this passage is often taken to mean ‘avoid legalism,’ there is another truth stated. It is true that the “**festivals**” **are not the ultimate goals** of faith, yet they *do* hold tremendous lessons for G-d’s children. **The festivals are not antiquated tangents to faith but, on the positive side, they are in fact legitimate shadows or models of G-d’s truth.** This is something that should be explored in a positive way, not shunned as legalism.”

First let me say this; in my opinion, if you read the entire letter it DOES seem to address the avoidance of legalism. But! It does NOT say ‘stop celebrating the festivals’. He (Paul) tells us they are a **shadow** of things **that are coming**... not just ‘**that have come**’ but that are coming!

<sup>CJB</sup> **Matthew 23:1** Then Yeshua addressed the crowds and his *talmidim*: <sup>2</sup> "The *Torah*-teachers [Scribes] and the *P'rushim*, [Pharisees]" he said, "sit in the seat of Moshe. <sup>3</sup> So whatever they tell you, take care to do it. But don't do what they do, because they talk but don't act!

<sup>CJB</sup> **1 Corinthians 5:8** **So let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover hametz, the hametz of wickedness and evil, but with the matzah of purity and truth.**

The Torah is truth, it is G-d’s Word but it must be observed from the heart.

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I would like to walk us through a quick review of the Festivals, we don’t have time to go into any real depth but I do want to show some highlights.

**First we have the spring festivals of Pesach, Hag HaMatzah, Bikkurim and Shavuot:**

**Pesach / Passover**

Nisan/Aviv 14

<sup>NAS</sup> **Exodus 12:1-15** Now the L-RD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, <sup>2</sup> **"This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.**  
<sup>5</sup> "Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old... then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> "Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ...you shall eat it in haste-- it is the L-RD's Passover. ... <sup>13</sup> **'And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you,** and no plague will befall you to destroy you ... <sup>14</sup> **'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the L-RD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.**

<sup>CJB</sup> **John 1:29** The next day, Yochanan saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, "Look! G-d's lamb! The one who is taking away the sin of the world!

<sup>CJB</sup> **Luke 24:25-26** He said to them, "Foolish people! So unwilling to put your trust in everything the prophets spoke! <sup>26</sup> Didn't the Messiah have to die like this before entering his glory?"

<sup>CJB</sup> **1 Corinthians 5:7b** For our *Pesach* lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed.

**Hag HaMatzah / Feast of Unleavened Bread**

Nisan/Aviv 15-21

<sup>NAS</sup> **Leviticus 23:6-8** 'Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** to the L-RD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup> 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. <sup>8</sup> 'But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the L-RD. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.'

<sup>CJB</sup> **1 Corinthians 5:6** Your boasting is not good. Don't you know the saying, "It takes only a little *hametz* to leaven a whole batch of dough?" <sup>7</sup> Get rid of the old *hametz*, so that you can be a new batch of dough, because in reality you are unleavened. For our *Pesach* lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> So let us celebrate the *Seder* not with leftover *hametz*, the *hametz* of wickedness and evil, but with the *matzah* of purity and truth.

**Sfirat Haomer (Yom HaBikkurim) / First Fruits (Barley Harvest)**

(waving of the omer)

The day after Shabbat during Hag HaMatzah

<sup>NAS</sup> **Leviticus 23:9-11** Then the L-RD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>10</sup> "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the **first fruits** of your harvest to the priest. <sup>11</sup> **'And he shall wave the sheaf before the L-RD for you to be accepted;** on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

<sup>NAS</sup> **John 12:23b-24** Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

<sup>CJB</sup> **1 Corinthians 15:20** But the fact is that the Messiah *has* been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** of those who have died.

## **Shavuot / Feast of Weeks – Pentecost**

Fifty days from First Fruits

<sup>NAS</sup> **Leviticus 23:15-17** 'You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. <sup>16</sup> 'You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the L-RD. <sup>17</sup> 'You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the L-RD.

<sup>CJB</sup> **Acts 2:1** The festival of *Shavu'ot* arrived, and the believers all gathered together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> They were all filled with the *Ruach HaKodesh* and began to talk in different languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

We have seen the **fulfillment** of the Spiritual meaning of the **Passover** – that is the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua as our Pesach lamb, the **First Fruits** of those who have died and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit [**Pentecost/Shavuot**] upon those who believe in Him.

**Now we will look at the fall festivals, which are; Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot:**

## **Yom Teruah / Feast of Trumpets**

Tishrei 1

(Rosh HaShanah – Jewish Civil New Year / “Spiritual” per rabbinic tradition)

<sup>NAS</sup> **Leviticus 23:23** Again the L-RD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>24</sup> "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month, you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. <sup>25</sup> 'You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the L-RD.'"

<sup>NAS</sup> **Isaiah 27:12-13** And it will come about in that day, that the L-RD will start *His* threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt; and you will be gathered up one by one, O sons of Israel. <sup>13</sup> **It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown;** and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the L-RD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

<sup>CJB</sup> **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18** For **the L-rd himself will come down from heaven** with a rousing cry, with a call from one of the ruling angels, and with **G-d's shofar**; those who died united with the Messiah will be the first to rise; <sup>17</sup> then we who are left still alive will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the L-rd in the air; and thus we will always be with the L-rd. <sup>18</sup> **So encourage each other with these words.**

## Yom Kippur / Day of Atonement

Tishrei 10

<sup>CJB</sup> **Leviticus 23:27-32** "The tenth day of this seventh month is *Yom-Kippur*; you are to have a holy convocation, you are to deny yourselves, and you are to bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI. <sup>28</sup> You are not to do any kind of work on that day, because it is *Yom-Kippur*, to make atonement for you before ADONAI your G-d. <sup>29</sup> Anyone who does not deny himself on that day is to be cut off from his people; <sup>30</sup> and anyone who does any kind of work on that day, I will destroy from among his people. <sup>31</sup> You are not to do any kind of work; it is a permanent regulation through all your generations, no matter where you live. <sup>32</sup> It will be for you a *Shabbat* of complete rest, and you are to deny yourselves; you are to rest on your *Shabbat* from evening the ninth day of the month until the following evening."

<sup>NAS</sup> **1 Thessalonians 5:1** <sup>9</sup> For G-d has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our L-rd Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

<sup>NAS</sup> **Revelation 20:1** <sup>11</sup> And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. ...<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

## Sukkot / Feast of Tabernacles/Booths

Tishrei 15-21

<sup>CJB</sup> **Leviticus 23:33-37** ADONAI said to Moshe, <sup>34</sup> "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the feast of **Sukkot** for seven days to ADONAI. <sup>35</sup> On the first day there is to be a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work. <sup>36</sup> For seven days you are to bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI; on the eighth day you are to have a holy convocation and bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI; it is a day of public assembly; do not do any kind of ordinary work. <sup>37</sup> "these are the designated times of ADONAI that you are to proclaim as holy convocations.

<sup>CJB</sup> **Zechariah 14:16** Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack Yerushalayim will go up every year to worship the king, ADONAI-Tzva'ot, and to keep the festival of Sukkot. <sup>17</sup> If any of the families of the earth does not go up to Yerushalayim to worship the king, ADONAI-Tzva'ot, no rain will fall on them.

<sup>NAS</sup> **Revelation 21:1** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from G-d, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of G-d is among men, and He shall dwell among them**, and they shall be His people, and G-d Himself shall be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be *any* death; there shall no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

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## **“Why should we celebrate AND STUDY the ‘Jewish’ Festivals?”**

1. They are the L-rd’s Festivals. Leviticus 23:1-2
2. The Festivals are part of The Word itself and:  
**All Scripture is inspired by G-d** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. **NAS 2 Timothy 3:16**  
  
**The entirety of Your word is truth**, and all Your righteous judgments endure forever. **CSB Psalm 119:160**
3. Passover / Unleavened Bread / First Fruits and Pentecost have been prophetically fulfilled in Yeshua’s first coming as the Suffering Servant.
4. Trumpets / Atonement and Tabernacles are yet to be fulfilled when He returns as the Conquering King.

If the nation of Israel has been given the Word of G-d and taught to rehearse the festivals in commemoration of all the L-rd has done for them; And if the Festivals are a rehearsal of all that He still intends to do; And, if we are grafted into the nation of Israel as one new man and we have not yet seen the complete fulfillment of these prophetic events, does it not make sense that we should take the time to study the Scriptures, learn what the festivals mean and PREPARE OURSELVES for the future coming of our Messiah?

<sup>NAS</sup> **Matthew 24:36-39** "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. <sup>37</sup> "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. <sup>38</sup> "For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, <sup>39</sup> **and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away**; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.

<sup>NAS</sup> **Luke 19:44** <sup>41</sup> And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> "For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, <sup>44</sup> and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.**"