

Introduction & Overview to the Festivals

YHWH said to Moses, 2“Give the following instructions to the people of Israel. These are YHWH’s appointed festivals, which you are to proclaim as official days for holy assembly. Leviticus 23:1-2

I. THE FESTIVALS: RELEVANCE, BENEFITS, & INVITATION

A. God’s Calendar is Important for Believers

B. We Are Called to Participate: (More information on this is available in the Lighthouse 7-part series *Grafted In* - <https://www.lighthousecolorado.org/graftedin-messages>)

1. You will eventually celebrate these festivals: why not start now?

And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says YHWH. Isaiah 66:24

16And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Zechariah 14:16-19

2. *A New Testament Practice*: Paul encourage Gentile Believers in Corinth to participate in the feast of Unleavened Bread

⁸Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Corinthians 5:8

3. *Dress Rehearsals* of What is Yet to Come: Our observance of the festivals are dress rehearsals of what is to come and in observing them better prepare us for what is coming.

¹⁶Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day-- ¹⁷things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Messiah. Colossians 2:16-17

4. *An Ancient Path of Blessing*

¹⁶Thus says YHWH, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.' ¹⁷"And I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'" Jeremiah 6:16-17

II. FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

God has a weekly schedule, a yearly schedule, a multi-yearly schedule, a once-a-lifetime schedule, and a thousand year schedule. They all inter-relate.

A. It’s All About Yeshua: He is the foundation, our present Sustainer, and the coming glorious fulfillment of all the festivals. He is the One Who we should love all the more deeply as a result of observing the festivals.

B. Consistent Themes

1. The overarching theme is that YHWH wants to dwell with us as His covenant people. The festivals are about His plan to do this.
2. During the different seasons of the year, there are consistent themes and a divine focus which is largely the same as last year. It will also be the same next year at this time. What will change from year to year is our personal and corporate *application* based on these firm and grounded truths.
3. The festivals allow for a yearly rhythm and focus on God’s weightiest themes by telling us what is on His heart and what He wants us to emphasize as His children.
4. Regular observance brings a greater relevance to more of the Bible. In embracing the biblical festivals, we “swap out” the cultural festivals which don’t find their roots in the biblical texts. In consistently doing this, we incorporate more of the Bible’s contents into the fabric of our lives which provides a greater “fitting together” of the biblical principles, stories, and themes.

C. Weekly (The Seventh Day): The Sabbath [a weekly Convocation] (Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 23:1-3; Hebrews 4) Yeshua is Our Rest

D. Yearly Festival Observance: the Festivals are “dress rehearsals” where we repetitively celebrate God’s themes (Leviticus 23)

Spring Festivals (Yeshua’s First-Coming)

1. **The New Year** [Nissan 1] – *New Beginnings* [Rosh Chodesh] Yeshua is our New Beginning
2. **Pesach (Passover)** [Nissan 14] - *Justification* [No Convocation] Yeshua is our Savior/Deliverer
3. **Unleavened Bread** [Nissan 15-21 -7 days] - *Sanctification* (Unleavened Bread) [1st Day Convocation & 7th Day Solemn Assembly Convocation] Yeshua is our Sanctifier
4. **Firstfruits** [Sunday after Passover]- *Resurrection* [No Convocation] Yeshua is our Resurrector
5. **Counting the Omer** [50 days from Firstfruits to Shavuot] - *Persevering Anticipation* (Counting of the Omer) Yeshua is our Sustainer
6. **Shavuot (Pentecost)** - *Empowerment & Instruction* for God’s Mission [Convocation] Yeshua is our Provider

Fall Festivals (Yeshua’s Second-Coming)

7. **Elul** [month directly preceding Tishrei] - *Tribulation* (Jacob’s Trouble) Yeshua is the Accessible One (the King who is in the field)
8. **Yom Teruah (Trumpets)** [Tishrei 1] - *Second-Coming* (& rapture); Yeshua’s Return [Convocation] Yeshua is our Coming King
9. **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)** [Tishrei 10] - *National Salvation* (Israel’s) [Convocation] Yeshua is Our Judge Who Vindicates & Restores
10. **Sukkot (Tabernacles)** [Tishrei 15-21] - *Millennium* [1st Day Convocation] Yeshua is Our Bridegroom who Protects & Provides
11. **Shemini Atzeret (the Eighth Day)** [Tishrei 22] - *The Eternal Age* with the new heaven and the new earth & the lake of fire [Solemn Assembly Convocation] Yeshua is our Glorious Hope

Winter Festivals [Non-Mosaic Additions]

(Glorious Hope in the Midst of Great Difficulty)

12. **Hanukkah** [Kislev 25 – Tevet 2] - *Tribulation* [No Convocation] Yeshua is Triumphant over the Anti-Messiah
13. **Purim** [Adar 14] – *Divine Reversal* [No Convocation] Yeshua is Faithful in Difficulty (even when we don’t see Him), and He will miraculously turn the tables at His Return

E. The Shemithah - Every Seventh Year: Israel was to rest and let the land lie fallow (Leviticus 25:1-7) Yeshua is Our Provision

F. The Jubilee Year - Once in a Lifetime (The Seven times Seven Years (+1) = 50): every 50 years (Leviticus 25:8-55) Yeshua is Our Restorer

G. The Millennium - The Seven Thousandth Year: a thousand year “rest” after six thousand years of “work” as Yeshua rules from Jerusalem over the nations (Revelation 20:1-10) Yeshua is the King Who Will Rule the Earth

H. Eternity - The eighth day (Revelation 20:7-22:5) the new heavens and the new earth & the lake of fire; Yeshua is Our Glorious Hope

III. APPLICATION

A. Holy Convocations: YHWH has 59 appointed meetings with us throughout the year: the 52 weekly Sabbath meetings and the 7 festival meetings. A convocation ideally includes the following:

1. *Resting:* Ceasing from our secular work for a 24-hour period.
2. *Convocating:* Within that 24-hour time frame coming out of our home (if not hosting) to convocate with other Believers for the sake of worship, teaching, and fellowship.

B. Aligning Our Calendars with His

1. Difficult to Do: This is difficult in a culture that largely doesn’t value or honor these days.
2. Busy Seasons: There are some busy seasons in the spring and in the fall where our schedule is more significantly affected.
3. Small Added Benefits Over Time: While many of the times that we convocate together are not seemingly profound, it is the cumulative benefit over time that does bring change in our lives.