

Leviticus 23

Verses 1- 3

The Lord spoke again to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘The Lord’s appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations—my appointed times are these: ³ ‘For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the Lord in all your dwellings.

There were 7 holy convocations (gatherings) that were celebrated once a year and one that was celebrated every 7th day of the week.

Number 1 The Sabbath

³ ‘For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the Lord in all your dwellings.

The Sabbath was observed every Saturday (the 7th day of the week). There were additional Sabbaths that were observed during some of the festivals, but they were considered special Sabbaths. People were not to work on these special Sabbaths but unlike the weekly Sabbath they could prepare food on that day. This made sense since these Sabbaths were often part of a feast.

This was a day of rest from the work they did the other 6 days of the week. There were no exemptions to keeping the Sabbath? Even during plowing time and harvest the people had to refrain from working.

Verses 4 - 8

⁴ ‘These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. ⁵ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord’s Passover. ⁶ Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. ⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. ⁸ But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.’”

⁴ ‘These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them.

7 Holy times are mentioned in this chapter. These special days/weeks were to be observed by the whole nation.

See chart 2305

Jewish Feasts						
Feast	Scripture	Date Observed	Roman Calendar	Sabbath	Offerings	Commemorates
Passover	Lev. 23:05	Nisan 14 At twilight	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Oldest son saved from death
Festival of Unleavened Bread	Lev. 23:6-8	Nisan 15-21	March/April	Day 1 & 7 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 28:16-24	The hasty flight from Egypt
Offering the First Fruits	Lev. 23:9-14	After the Sabbath	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Beginning of the barley harvest
Feast Of Weeks (Pentecost)	Lev. 23:15-22	50 days after F.F.	May/June	Special Sabbath	Numbers 28:26-31	beginning of the wheat harvest.
Festival of Trumpets	Lev. 23:23-25	Tishri 1	September	Special Sabbath	Numbers 29:1-6	Civil New Year
Day of Atonement	Lev. 23:26-32	Tishri 10	Sept/Oct	Sabbath	Numbers 29:7-11	Forgiveness of sin for the nation
Tabernacles Temp. Shelters	Lev. 23:33-34	Tishri 15-22	Sept/Oct	Day 1 & 8 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 29:12-38	Wilderness End of harvest

⁵ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. ⁶ Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

These two times, Passover and The feast of Unleavened Bread, were known as the week of Passover to the Jews.

Number 2 The Passover

This was the celebration of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It was celebrated on the 14th of Nisan (previously called Abib). The Passover lamb was killed shortly before sunset.

Number 3 Feast of Unleavened Bread

This feast lasted seven days from the 15th of Nisan until the 21st of Nisan. The people were to eat unleavened bread for 7 days. The 15th and the 21st were special Sabbaths. There was a difference between the regular weekly Sabbaths and the special Sabbaths of this and other feasts.

See Chart 2310

Regular Sabbaths vs High/Special Sabbaths

Regular Sabbaths

See Ex. 35:2-3

For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy day, a Sabbath of complete rest to the Lord; **whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.**

You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day.

Food had to be prepared the day before

Special Sabbaths

See Ex. 12:16

And on the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; **no work at all shall be done on them, except for what must be eaten by every person—that alone may be prepared by you.**

Food could be prepared on a special Sabbath

The Day of Atonement was like a Regular Sabbath

Lev. 23:28

Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement

⁸ **But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.’”**

See Numbers 28:16-25.

¹⁶ **‘The Lord’s Passover *shall be* on the fourteenth day of the first month. ¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of this month *there shall be* a feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. ¹⁸ On the first day *there shall be* a holy assembly; you shall do no laborious work. ¹⁹ But you shall present an offering by fire, a burnt offering to the Lord: two bulls and one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, *that you have without defect.* ²⁰ For their grain offering, you shall offer fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for a bull, and two-tenths for the ram. ²¹ A tenth *of an ephah* you shall offer for each of the seven lambs; ²² and one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for you. ²³ You shall present these besides the burnt offering of the morning, which is for a continual burnt offering. ²⁴ In this way you shall present daily, for seven days, the food of the offering by fire, of a soothing aroma to the Lord; it shall be presented with its drink offering in addition to the continual burnt offering. ²⁵ On the seventh day you shall have a holy assembly; you shall do no laborious work.**

Verses 9 - 14

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ **“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. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the Lord. ¹³ Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the Lord *for a soothing aroma*, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine. ¹⁴ Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.**

¹⁰ **“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.**

Number 4 The First Fruits (of the Barley Harvest)

A sheaf is a bundle of grain stalks laid lengthwise and tied together after reaping

See Pic 2315



¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

The Feast of First Fruits took place during the week-long Passover celebration, on the first day after the Regular Sabbath that occurred in the midst of the week. Pentecost occurred fifty days after that Sabbath.

See chart 2305 above

The first fruits celebrated the first of the Barley harvest which matured faster than wheat and was harvested sooner.

Barley looked quite similar to wheat.

See pics 2320 and 2325



¹² Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the Lord. ¹³ Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths *of an ephah* of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the Lord *for a soothing aroma*, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine.

Since this was a burnt offering none of it was eaten.

Verses 15 - 21

¹⁵ ‘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. ¹⁶ You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord. ¹⁷ 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 Lord. ¹⁸ Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord. ¹⁹ You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings. ²⁰ The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the Lord; they are to be holy to the Lord for the priest. ²¹ On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.

¹⁶ You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord.

Number 5 Pentecost (50 days after The First Fruits of the Barley Harvest)

The Feast of Weeks or Pentecost celebrated the first fruits of their wheat crops.

¹⁷ 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 Lord.

A wave offering was eaten by the priests.

¹⁸ Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord.

This was a huge sacrifice and none of it was eaten.

¹⁹ You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings. ²⁰ The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the Lord; they are to be holy to the Lord for the priest.

The sin offering and the wave offering can only be eaten by a priest.

²¹ On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.

This was a special Sabbath which allowed the people to prepare food.

Verse 22

²² ‘When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the Lord your God.’”

The Lord commanded the people to show acts of kindness to the poor.

Verses 23 - 25

²³ Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ “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. ²⁵ You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord.’”

The feast of trumpets was observed on the first day of the seventh month. The month of Tishri was the 1st month of the new civil year but month 7 of the sacred year. The Jews had two calendars, one for the fiscal year and one for the religious year.

See Pic 2330

The Jewish Calendar			
The Jews used two types of calendars			
The Civil: Used for kings, births, contracts & The Sacred: Used for festivals			
Month Name	Corresponds to	Civil Year	Sacred Year
Tishri	Sep-Oct	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct-Nov	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov-Dec	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec-Jan	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan-Feb	5th	11th
Adar	Feb-Mar	6th	12th
Nisan	Mar-Apr	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr-May	8th	2nd
Sivan	May-Jun	9th	3rd
Tammuz	Jun-Jul	10th	4th
Ab	Jul-Aug	11th	5th
Elul	Aug-Sep	12th	6th

The older name for Tishri was Ethanim.

See 1 Kings 8:2

² **So all the men of Israel assembled themselves before King Solomon at the feast, in the month Ethanim, that is, the seventh month.**

Again, this was a special Sabbath.

The offering by fire to the Lord is outlined in the Book of Numbers.

See Numbers 29:1- 6

‘Now in the seventh month, on the first *day* of the month, you shall have a holy assembly; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for blowing trumpets. ² And you shall offer a burnt offering as a soothing aroma to the Lord: one bull, one ram, *and* seven male lambs one year old without defect; ³ also their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths *of an ephah* for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, ⁴ and a tenth for each of the seven lambs, ⁵ and one male goat as a sin offering, to make atonement for you, ⁶ besides the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the Lord.

Verses 26 - 32

²⁶ The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁷ “On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the Lord. ²⁸ You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the Lord your God. ²⁹ If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰ As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹ You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. ³² It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath.”

Number 7 The Day of Atonement

²⁶ The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁷ “On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the Lord.

This Day of Atonement is still honored by the Jews who call it Yom Kippur. It was a time of self-examination and repentance. Even though fasting is not mentioned here it was a day of fasting. In fact, it was the only day of fasting that God commanded Israel to keep.

The offering by fire to the Lord is outlined in the Book of Numbers.

See Numbers 29:7 - 11

⁷ ‘Then on the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy assembly, and you shall humble yourselves; you shall not do any work. ⁸ You shall present a burnt offering to the Lord as a soothing aroma: one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, that you have without defect; ⁹ and their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ¹⁰ and a tenth for each of the seven lambs; ¹¹ one male goat as a sin offering, besides the sin offering of atonement and the continual burnt offering, and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

²⁹ If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. ³⁰ As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people.

This was more restrictive than the special Sabbaths of other Holy Days. It had the same ranking as the weekly Sabbath.

Verses 33 - 36

³³ Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁴ “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the Lord. ³⁵ On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. ³⁶ For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the Lord; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.

Number 8 The Feast of booths

³⁴ “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the Lord.

This feast celebrated the final harvest of their crops and had a special degree of gladness and festivity. It was called Succoth (booths) by the Jews and was a reminder of their journeys in the wilderness. It is also known as The Harvest Festival, The Feast of Ingathering and The feast of Tabernacles

³⁵ **On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind.**

This was a special Sabbath so they could prepare food.

³⁶ **For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the Lord; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.**

All 8 days had different offerings. This is outlined in Numbers 29:12 – 38.

Days 1 thru 7 each had a decreasing number of bulls, 13 – 12 – 11 – 10 – 9 – 8 – 7.

The 8th day, like the 1st day, was a special Sabbath.

There was an offering by fire and 1 bull was offered.

Verse 37 - 38

³⁷ **‘These are the appointed times of the Lord which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the Lord—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day’s matter on its own day—**

³⁸ **besides those of the Sabbaths of the Lord, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the Lord.**

These appointed holy days all required offerings.

For the feasts that lasted for a week there was always a weekly Sabbath that fell during that time period. The regular weekly Sabbath offerings were in addition to the offerings that were specified for each day of the festival.

See Numbers 28:9 – 10

⁹ **‘Then on the Sabbath day two male lambs one year old without defect, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and its drink offering: ¹⁰ This is the burnt offering of every Sabbath in addition to the continual burnt offering and its drink offering.**

Just as the weekly Sabbath sacrifices were in addition to the feast of Booth sacrifices so were their voluntary (gifts, votive and freewill) offerings.

Verses 39 - 44

³⁹ ‘On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. ⁴⁰ Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. ⁴¹ You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It *shall be* a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, ⁴³ so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.’” ⁴⁴ So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the Lord.

⁴⁰ Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days.

This is further instructions concerning the branches to be used for constructing the booths. The Israelites were to use Palm branches, branches from leafy trees and willows of the brook.

⁴² You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, ⁴³ so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

Each generation of the Jews needed to learn what God has done for his people. God provided shelter, food (manna & quail) and water for 2½ million people in a desert land for 40 years. God also gave them a place to worship, a system of sacrifices and the priesthood.