

A Practical Guide to Keeping the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the Complete Jewish Version of the Bible & The Amplified Bible.

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Appointed Times

If you see yourself as a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven, then dates matter, they matter a lot! We see in Genesis that God made time and seasons part of the very foundation of creation.

Genesis 1:14 Complete Jewish Bible

¹⁴ God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to divide the day from the night; let them be for signs, seasons, days and years;

To truly understand what this verse means, we need to look at two words found in this verse in their original Hebrew:

Signs:

Hebrew: אֹת Transliteration: 'ôth Pronunciation: oth

Definition: Appearing, flag, beacon, monument, evidence, mark, token

Seasons:

Hebrew: מועֵדָה Transliteration: mō'êd Pronunciation: mo-ade

Definition: properly appointed, fixed time, festival, assembly, congregation, place of meeting, appointed place and time, feast

Before I even knew to look at the Hebrew meaning of these words, I just thought this meant that the sun, moon and stars were there to show us the seasons: summer, autumn, winter and spring. But if we look at what God really meant, we see it has to do with evidence related to an appointed time for a feast or an assembly. Yes, the feasts were there, at the very beginning of creation! God is a God of relationship, and He has appointed times during the cycle of one year, where He meets with His children. The question is: are you showing up for these "dates" with the King?

These moadim do not just refer to the weekly Sabbath, but also to the 7 feasts that we find in the Word of God. God calls these His feasts, while people in general tend to call it the feast of the Jews. Although the Jews have been faithful in the keeping of these Godly feasts, they are not exclusively just for the Jews, they are for every person who calls themselves a child of God.

Important Dates 2024

There are different calendars that are followed, the Bible commands us to use the sighting of the New Moon or the harvesting cycles to know when many of these feasts start. But this is related specifically to the land of Israel, and since we are not in Israel, we cannot use these physical signs to know exactly when to honor the feasts of the LORD. Because the authority was given to Judah (this tribe would later become the Jewish Nation), we align ourselves with the Jews as the leading authority today and as a sign of coalition we keep the feasts based on the Hillel calendar, which they also follow.

Hillel was a Jewish scholar and religious leader who lived in Jerusalem during the 1st century BCE. He is known for his contributions to Jewish law and his role in establishing the Jewish calendar.

Prior to Hillel's time, the Jewish calendar was determined based on observations of the moon and the harvest seasons. However, this method was not always accurate, and it led to confusion and disputes about when to celebrate important religious festivals.

Hillel proposed a new system for calculating the calendar based on mathematical calculations and astronomical observations. He established a 19-year cycle that included seven leap years in which an additional month was added to the calendar. This helped to align the lunar and solar cycles and ensure that the festivals fell at the appropriate times of the year.

Hillel's calendar became widely accepted by the Jewish community and is still used today to determine the dates of major Jewish holidays such as Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

The below dates are based on the Hillel calendar. It is important to note that these are not set dates for the feasts, and they change yearly.

Pesach / Passover

Lev. 23:5 "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between sundown and complete darkness, comes Pesach for Adonai."

Starts at sunset 22 April 2024 – Ends at sunset 29 April 2024 (From sunset on 14 Nissan or 22 April till the end of the week of Unleavened Bread is traditionally known as “Passover, and for that reason the entire week is included in this date)

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 22 April 2024 – Sunset 23 April 2024

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Lev. 23:6-8 On the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of matzah; for seven days you are to eat matzah. ⁷ On the first day you are to have a holy convocation; don't do any kind of ordinary work. ⁸ Bring an offering made by fire to Adonai for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work.”

Starts at sunset 22 April 2024 – Ends at sunset 29 April 2024

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 22 April 2024 – Sunset 23 April 2024

Sunset 28 April 2024 – Sunset 29 April 2024

First Fruits

Lev. 23:10-11 “Tell the people of Isra’el, ‘After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the cohen. ¹¹ He is to wave the sheaf before Adonai, so that you will be accepted; the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat.”

Starts at sunset 23 April 2024 – Ends at sunset 24 April 2024

Note: Most Messianic Jewish congregations observe First Fruits on the day after the High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or 16 Aviv. Many others observe it on the day after the weekly Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which will change from year to year but always fall on the first day of the week (Sunday). The Counting of the Omer begins on this day.

Shavuot / Pentecost

Lev. 23:15-16 "From the day after the day of rest — that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving — you are to count seven full weeks, ¹⁶ until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to Adonai."

Starts at sunset 11 June 2024 – Ends at sunset 12 June 2024

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 11 June 2024 – Sunset 12 June 2024

Note: Shavuot is 50 inclusive days from the day of First Fruits. The traditional date is 6 Sivan. Congregations that observe First Fruits on the day after the weekly Sabbath will conclude the 50-day count on the first day of the week (Sunday) and the date will vary from year to year.

Yom Teruh / Feast of Trumpets / Rosh Hashanah

Lev. 23:24-25 "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'In the seventh month, the first of the month is to be for you a day of complete rest for remembering, a holy convocation announced with blasts on the shofar. ²⁵ Do not do any kind of ordinary work, and bring an offering made by fire to Adonai.'"

Starts at sunset 2 October 2024 – Ends at sunset 3 October 2024

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 2 October 2024 – Sunset 3 October 2024

Yom Kippur / Feast of Atonement

Lev. 23:27-28 "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. ²⁸ 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 God.

Starts at sunset 11 October 2024 – Ends at sunset 12 October 2024

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 11 October 2024 – Sunset 12 October 2024

Sukkot / Feast of Booths

Lev. 23:34-36 "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the feast of Sukkot for seven days to Adonai. ³⁵ On the first day there is to be a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work. ³⁶ 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."

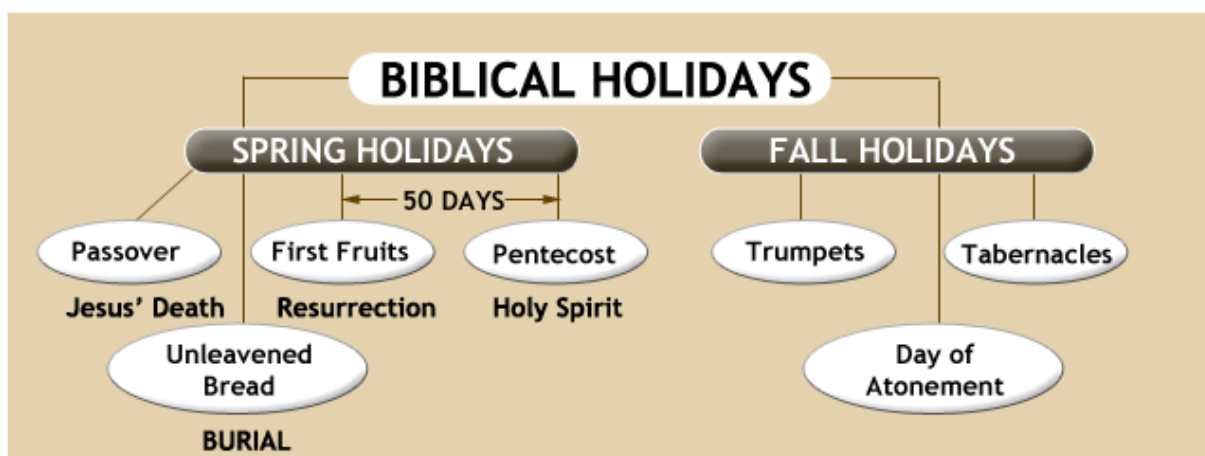
Starts at sunset 16 October 2024 – Ends at sunset 24 October 2024

Sabbath Days:

Sunset 16 October 2024 – Sunset 17 October 2024

Sunset 23 October 2024 – Sunset 24 October 2024

Figure 1: Biblical Feasts



The Sabbaths

Again, just like with the feasts, many will call the Sabbaths “Jewish”, but all over the Word of God we see Him referring to the Sabbaths as His Sabbaths. This comes from the very foundation of creation, where God rested on the seventh, day, and set it apart, blessed it, and called it holy.

We find in the Word of God that there are two types of Sabbaths: the weekly Sabbath and the High Sabbaths related to God’s festivals or feast days.

The weekly Sabbath is a day of rest and worship that is observed every week from Friday evening to Saturday evening. It commemorates the seventh day of creation when God rested after creating the world. It is a time where believers refrain from work, engage in prayer and study, and spend time with family and friends. The weekly Sabbath is considered to be a holy day, and it is observed every week throughout the year.

The High Sabbaths, on the other hand, are related to the seven feasts of God. These include Passover, Unleavened Bread, Shavuot, Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot. The only feast day that is does not have a high Sabbath is First Fruits. These festivals are observed according to the Hillel calendar, which is based on the lunar cycle. The High Sabbaths fall on specific days of the festival and are considered to be holy days on which work is prohibited, and special prayers and rituals are observed.

Unlike the weekly Sabbath, the High Sabbaths are not always on the same day of the week. For example, the first day of Passover and the last day of Sukkot are considered High Sabbaths and are observed as holy days, even if they fall on a weekday. The High Sabbaths are an important part of keeping the feasts of ADONAI and are observed with special meals, prayers, and rituals specific to each festival.

In summary, the weekly Sabbath is observed every week and commemorates the seventh day of creation, while the High Sabbaths are related to specific festivals and fall on different days of the week. Both are important parts of worship in a believers’ life.

Hebrews 4:1-9

4 Therefore, let us be terrified of the possibility that, even though the promise of entering His rest remains, any one of you might be judged to have fallen short of it;² for Good News has also been proclaimed to us, just as it was to them. But the message they heard

didn't do them any good, because those who heard it did not combine it with trust. ³ For it is we who have trusted who enter the rest.

It is just as He said,

"And in My anger, I swore

that they would not enter My rest."

He swore this even though His works have been in existence since the founding of the universe. ⁴ For there is a place where it is said, concerning the seventh day,

"And God rested on the seventh day from all His works."

What are you allowed to do and not allowed to do on the Sabbath and High Sabbaths?

- Remember it, set it apart, keep it holy (Ex 20: 8)
- You are not to do any kind of work. Not you, your livestock, your slave, your son or daughter, or any foreigner inside your gates or property. (Ex 20: 10)
- Rest on the Shabbat (Hebrews 4:9)
- Do not kindle a fire (Ex 35:3)
- Do not do evil on the Shabbat (Isaiah 56:2)
- It will serve as a sign between you and God (Ezekiel 20:12-24)
- Do not buy and sell on the Shabbat (Nehemiah 13:15-22)
- Do not do your own pleasure on God's holy day (Isaiah 28:13-14)
- Call it a delight and honor it (Isaiah 28:13-14)
- Do not speak idle words on the Shabbat (Is 28:13-14)
- Do not treat it as ordinary (Ex 31:14)
- It is a perpetual commandment (Ex 31:16)
- It is a holy convocation (Lev 23:3)

The Word of God and the Traditions of Man

There is often confusion especially with believers that the feasts are “Jewish”. Although God did give the authority to Judah, and they did stay true to the commandments given in the Word of God, to guard and to keep it, He commanded all of Israel to keep His feasts.

If you study the Word of God, you will note that He calls it His feasts, not the feasts of the Jews. And if you believe that you are grafted into the covenant with Israel through the Blood of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), then these feasts are a commandment that you should be keeping as well.

While there are valuable lessons to be learned from the Jewish traditions surrounding the feasts, it is important to remember that God's commandments should always take precedence over the traditions of man. Therefore, before we begin observing the feasts, we should consult the Word of God to understand how He commands us to observe these holy celebrations. However, we can also study the Jewish traditions to gain insight and knowledge, and if we feel led, we may choose to incorporate certain aspects of those traditions in our own observance of the feasts. It is crucial, however, to always keep in mind that the rules and traditions of man should never supersede the commandments of the living God we serve.

What is Passover?

Passover is the first of the seven feasts of the LORD we are commanded to keep. We find the first mention of Passover in Exodus 12:14.

Exodus 12:14

“This will be a day for you to remember and celebrate as a festival to Adonai; from generation to generation you are to celebrate it by a perpetual regulation.

We see here that God commands us to keep this feast every year, at this specific appointed time, from generation to generation as a perpetual regulation.

Definition of Perpetual – “never ending or changing”.

So, should we be keeping this feast today? Well God says He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. If He commanded it as a perpetual regulation, that is exactly what He meant!

Passover is a family celebration, where we remember how God brought the Israelites out from the slavery they suffered under the Egyptians, through the blood of a lamb. This is a picture of our own lives, where we were slaves to sin and to this world, and He delivered us through the Blood of the Lamb. Every year when we celebrate this feast with our loved ones, we are commanded to recall this story and to tell of the wonders that ADONAI has done for us.

How to keep Passover according to the Word of God

Exodus 12:1-2

Adonai spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt; He said,² “You are to begin your calendar with this month; it will be the first month of the year for you.

This is the real beginning of the religious new year according to God’s calendar.

Exodus 12: 3

³ Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month,

"The Jewish calendar, unlike the civil Gregorian calendar, is based both on the cycles of the moon as well as the sun — the months correspond to cycles of the moon and the years correspond to cycles of the sun." – Wikipedia.

The Jewish calendar works slightly different from the Roman calendar we use today. It is a moon calendar for determining the cycles of the months, and a sun calendar for determining the cycles of the year, where the Roman one we use is based on the sun. I suggest you download a Jewish calendar and mark out the special dates of the feasts in your own calendar you use daily, so you don't miss out on meeting up with God on His appointed times.

Now there are also different Jewish calendars out there, some that strictly look at the moon in Jerusalem and then adapt their dates accordingly. But after the destruction of the second temple, when many of the Jews were scattered all over the world, and they could not watch the moon in Jerusalem, a mathematician by the name of Hillel developed the calendar we use today. It allows all the Jews, and those scattered all over the world, to come together at the same time to celebrate the feasts. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in terms of which calendar to use. I find it easier for those who work and would like to honor the High Sabbaths and not work on those days, to use the common Hillel calendar, as it allows you to put in leave at work and to gather with Israel and stand in unity with them.

Exodus 12:3-5

each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household — ⁴ except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. ⁵ Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats.

You can take a goat or a lamb, as long as it is not older than a year. Most lamb meat you buy in in the store or at the butcher today is slaughtered around the age of 6-7 months. If you as a family cannot consume a whole lamb by yourself, it is commanded to get together with other families to share the meat so none will go to waste. I usually buy a piece of lamb big enough for the amount of people that will be joining me for this special feast.

Other times we gathered as a larger group and then we would “spit braai” a whole lamb.

Exodus 12:6

⁶ “You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra’el will slaughter it at dusk. ⁷ They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the two sides and top of the door-frame at the entrance of the house in which they eat it.

When the Temple was in service, the lambs were taken there to be slaughtered. There is no Temple in service today. Also: you will note in later passages of the Bible, it is never commanded again for the Israelites to put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts as part of Passover. It was a once off event. Just like the blood of Yeshua (Jesus) saves us once and is applied to the doorposts of our hearts. So it would not be part of your celebration of Passover to put any blood on the doorposts of your house! You can symbolically pray for the Blood of Yeshua to mark the doorposts of your house and your heart.

Exodus 12:8-9

⁸ That night, they are to eat the meat, roasted in the fire; they are to eat it with matzah and maror. ⁹ Don’t eat it raw or boiled, but roasted in the fire, with its head, the lower parts of its legs and its inner organs.

We see specific instructions on how we are to prepare the lamb meat. It is not to be raw. It is not to be boiled. It is to be roasted over fire.

This meal also starts the feast of Unleavened Bread and that is why we are commanded to eat the meat with Matzah. Maror is a bitter herb. We may gain some more understanding of the bitter herbs when we look at the traditions of the Jews and how they celebrate Passover.

Summary:

- Gather with your family and others that believe in Messiah Yeshua.
- Prepare a meal with roasted lamb meat, unleavened bread (Matzah) and bitter herbs.
- Do this while testifying of how God set you free from a life of slavery to sin.
- Tell the story of Yeshua, the ultimate Lamb, and how His sacrifice saved you and the whole world.

Significant Passover Traditions

The Jews have a specific order of Service that is called the “Passover Seder”. Like I mentioned earlier, although the traditions of man should never be emphasized more than the commandments of God, there is some beautiful symbolism we can learn from this.

You may find this to Messianic Seder helpful, it contains all the prayers and the order in which the Passover Seder is conducted.

[The Gospel in the Passover - A Messianic Seder](#)

Extra Resources

[A Passover Story for Children](#)

[Preparing for Passover](#)

What is the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

Unleavened Bread is the second of the seven feasts of the LORD we are commanded to keep. It starts the day after Passover and lasts for seven days. We find the first mention of this feast in Exodus 12:17.

Exodus 12:17

You are to observe the festival of matzah, for on this very day I brought your divisions out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, you are to observe this day from generation to generation by a perpetual regulation.

We see here again that God says this will be a feast that will be kept from generation to generation as a perpetual regulation.

How to keep the feast of Unleavened Bread according to the Word of God

Exodus 12:15

“For seven days you are to eat matzah — on the first day remove the leaven from your houses. For whoever eats hametz [leavened bread] from the first to the seventh day is to be cut off from Isra’el.

Before the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread start: we are commanded to go through our homes and remove all the leaven in our homes. This is not just something we should be doing physically, but also figuratively. Leaven is symbolic of sin. We should be looking into our lives and searching out any sin, removing it before we sit at the table of Passover that evening.

And then for seven days, we are not allowed to eat anything with leaven in it. We also see here a warning from the LORD, if you consume leaven during this time, you will be cut off from the house of Israel. This is speaking specifically to someone who is defiant to the commandments of God and acts out of rebellion against His Word (if you eat leaven and it was not done on purpose, pray and ask the LORD’s forgiveness).

Exodus 12:16

¹⁶ On the first and seventh days, you are to have an assembly set aside for God. On these days no work is to be done, except what each must do to prepare his food; you may do only that.

We see the first day of this feast of Unleavened Bread and the seventh day, are High Sabbaths. It is a Sabbath we are to honor by not doing any work. Remember: the day according to God starts when the sun sets (reference back to Genesis and the creation). So, when you look at a Jewish Calendar, and it says that Passover starts on 6 April (it will differ from year to year), then it will start at sunset on the 5th of April.

Exodus 12:17-20

¹⁷ You are to observe the festival of matzah, for on this very day I brought your divisions out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, you are to observe this day from generation to generation by a perpetual regulation. ¹⁸ From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month until the evening of the twenty-first day, you are to eat matzah. ¹⁹ During those seven days, no leaven is to be found in your houses. Whoever eats food with hametz in it is to be cut off from the community of Isra'el — it doesn't matter whether he is a foreigner or a citizen of the land. ²⁰ Eat nothing with hametz in it. Wherever you live, eat matzah."

We see the dates set out for this feast in these passages. It is reiterated that no leaven is to be eaten or even found in your home. The warning of the consequences of wilfully disobeying this commanded is also repeated to add emphasis to this. It is also clearly stated that this will apply to the foreigner, or the citizen of Israel, and is applicable wherever you live, even if you do not live in the land of Israel.

What is leaven or a leaven product?

- Anything that has a rising agent in is considered leaven.
- Foods that contain yeast like breads, biscuits, rolls.
- Foods with baking powder or baking soda including breads, muffins, waffles, pancakes, brownies, cakes.
- Sourdough bread or sourdough products.

Just keep in mind that every commandment God gave is for us to learn a spiritual lesson as well. So, when He says no leaven, He means NO LEAVEN in the house or being consumed physically. But He is also trying to teach us a spiritual principle, and that is that

we should be searching our lives for sin, the same way you search your house for leaven. In the same way you are denying yourself of leavened products during these seven days, you should be denying your soul the cravings it may have, that bring pride. Because leaven is indicative of sin and pride.

Search your heart during this time and ask the LORD to show you where you are acting out of pride and ego.

Summary:

- Before the feast begins, remove all leaven from your house, but also search your heart and ask God to reveal any sin or pride in your life so you can repent of it.
- Bake Matzah (unleavened bread).
- Eat Matzah for seven days.

Unleavened Bread Recipes

One of my favorite things to do when preparing the Passover meal, is to bake my own Matzah. I usually make extra that will last another day or two and store them in airtight containers.

You can use any of the below basic recipes and add your own twist to it. I like coating the hot Matzah with olive oil as it comes out of the oven, and then putting coarse salt on it.

Or even mixing fresh herbs like rosemary or thyme with some coarse salt and olive oil, putting that on the Matzah before baking it.

Coating it with a bit of honey as it comes out the oven and then putting toasted sesame seed on is also a winner!

Recipe 1

Ingredients for Unleavened bread:

- 2 cups + 2 TBSP flour

- 1 cup of cold water
- 1/2 tsp salt

Directions to make Matzah (Unleavened bread):

1. Combine the salt and flour together in a large bowl. Stir in the water until the dough comes together. Knead for 5 minutes.
2. Pre-heat skillet over medium-low heat.
3. Pinch off 7 pieces of dough and form into balls. Roll out each piece on a lightly floured surface (approx. 6-7-inch ovals).

Recipe 2

Ingredients for Unleavened bread:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 cup milk

Directions to make Matzah (Unleavened bread):

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease a baking sheet.
2. Mix flour and salt in a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture.
3. Beat eggs and melted butter together; pour into the well in the flour mixture and mix with a fork until crumbly. Slowly add milk to the flour mixture, using hands to mix the dough into a ball.
4. Roll dough into a flat loaf and put onto the prepared baking sheet.
5. Bake in preheated oven until lightly browning along the edges, 15 to 20 minutes.

What is the Feast of First Fruits?

The Feast of First Fruits, also known as Bikkurim in Hebrew, is one of the feasts of God that was celebrated a little differently in ancient times based on the commandments found in the books of Leviticus and Exodus in the Hebrew Bible.

The holiday is celebrated on the day after the Sabbath during the week of Passover and marked the beginning of the barley harvest in Israel. According to Leviticus 23:10-11, the Israelites were commanded to bring the first sheaf of their barley harvest to the priest, who would then wave it before the Lord as an offering of thanksgiving. This offering was known as the Omer, and it was presented to God as a symbol of the Israelites' gratitude for the harvest that He had provided.

Exodus 23:19 also commanded the Israelites to bring the first fruits of their harvest to the Temple in Jerusalem as an offering to God. This included the first fruits of their barley, wheat, grapes, figs, and pomegranates, which were presented to the priest as a sign of thanksgiving.

The Feast of First Fruits was a time of great celebration and joy, as it marked the beginning of the harvest season and the abundance of God's blessings. The holiday was also seen as a reminder of the Israelites' dependence on God for their sustenance and the importance of expressing gratitude for His provision.

Although the Feast of First Fruits is no longer celebrated in its original form today, the day is still marked as a special occasion by reciting certain prayers and blessings during the Passover holiday. In the Hebrew Roots movement, the Feast of First Fruits is sometimes associated with the Resurrection of Yeshua, as it is believed that Yeshua rose from the dead on the day after the Sabbath during the week of Passover, which is also the day when the Feast of First Fruits was celebrated.

Today as a believer you can celebrate this feast by giving an extra offering to God as a form of gratitude. You can bless someone with a special gift of with money that you sow into their lives, this is to thank God for His provision that He has blessed you during the past year. "Tithing" off the top of your income is a kind of giving back First Fruits. The people were not to eat any bread or grain from the harvest until they'd offered the First Fruits to God. We can honor God as the provider of our increase by also looking to Him first before partaking of our material blessings ourselves.

How to Celebrate the Feast of First Fruits According to the Word of God

Reading of Scripture is a wonderful way to celebrate this feast. You can specifically look at events in the Bible that relate to this time of year:

- Israel crossed the Sea of Reeds during First Fruits, and they were also the First Fruits of many to come! (Ex. 3:18& 15:3)
- Israel eats the first fruits of the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12)
- Temple is cleansed and sacrifices reinstated under King Hezekiah (1 Chron. 29:17-18)
- Queen Esther foiled the plot of Haman (Esther 3:12, 5:1)
- Noah's Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat after the flood
- The resurrection of Messiah Yeshua (Matthew 28)
- The walk to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-15)

This feast is also the celebration of the resurrection of the Messiah as the First Fruits of those who will rise from the dead.

It is a time for being grateful for the provision of God, giving an extra offering or tithe to thank Him for His faithfulness. This also redeems the rest of your financial fruit for the coming year.

You can even prepare a feast and a feast's table so that you and your family can enjoy the provision and abundance of God.

Summary:

- Bible study
- Tithing / giving an extra offering
- Preparing a feast
- Honoring God as your provider

Counting the Omer

The commandment to count the Omer is found in *Leviticus 23:15-16*

“From the day after the day of rest — that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving — you are to count seven full weeks,¹⁶ until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to Adonai.”

This verse instructs the Israelites to count seven weeks, or 49 days, starting from the day after the Sabbath that falls during the week of Passover. On the 50th day, which is the holiday of Shavuot, a new meal-offering is to be presented to God as an offering of thanksgiving.

The counting of the Omer serves as a spiritual practice for believers today, as each day of the counting is marked with a special blessing and it is a time for personal growth and reflection.

The practice of counting the Omer is significant because it connects the themes of Passover and Shavuot, which are two of the most important Jewish holidays. Passover commemorates the Exodus from Egypt, while Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. The counting of the Omer serves as a bridge between these two holidays and reminds believers of the connection between freedom and the spiritual journey of receiving the Torah.

The counting of the Omer also serves as a preparation for the holiday of Shavuot, which marks the end of the Omer period. Shavuot is a time for celebrating the giving of the Torah, and the spiritual preparation during the Counting of the Omer helps believers to approach this holiday with greater focus and intention.

When does the counting of the Omer start?

The counting of the Omer starts on the day of First Fruits.

Leviticus 23:15

¹⁵ *“From the day after the day of rest — that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving — you are to count seven full weeks,*

Starts at sunset 23 April 2024 – Ends at sunset 24 April 2024

Note: Most Messianic Jewish congregations observe First Fruits on the day after the High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or 16 Aviv. Many others observe it on the day after the weekly Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which will change from year to year but always fall on the first day of the week (Sunday). The Counting of the Omer begins on this day.

Day 1 Nisan 16	Day 2 Yom HaBikkurim	Day 3 Yeshua's Resurrection	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6 Meal of Messiah	Day 7
Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14
Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21
Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	Day 28
Day 29	Day 30	Day 31	Day 32	Day 33 Lag B'Omer	Day 34	Day 35
Day 36	Day 37	Day 38	Day 39	Day 40 Yeshua's Ascension	Day 41	Day 42
Day 43	Day 44	Day 45	Day 46	Day 47	Day 48	Day 49
			Day 50 Shavu'ot			

How do we count the Omer?

There are no clear guidelines in the Bible, it simply says to count the Omer. Traditionally the Omer is counted at night, and one would say something to the effect of: "today is one day of the Omer, today is two days of the Omer...today is eight days of the Omer, etc. "). This usually goes with the reading of Psalm 67.

Why Psalm 67? This Psalm consists of seven verses, and in the original Hebrew, 49 words, just like the number of days of the counting of the Omer.

1. God, bless us with Your grace and care, and make Your face smile on us!
2. For then the earth will recognize Your presence, and all the nations will know Your saving power.
3. May all nations praise You, O God, may all nations praise You!
4. Let the nations shout and sing for joy, You grant justice to the peoples, on earth You guide the nations.
5. May all nations praise You, O God, may all nations praise You!
6. The soil has given its harvest; our God has blessed us.
7. May G-d continue to bless us; and let God be embraced to the very ends of the earth

The daily blessing that is recited with the counting of the Omer is as follows (remember you can make this your own, alter the words or adjust it as the Holy Spirit guides you):

"Blessed are you, Eternal One our God, source of all life, who has made us holy with Your commandments, and command us concerning the counting of the Omer."

Why should we count the Omer?

Firstly, because God commands us in His Word to do so. But hold more significance to those who believe in Messiah Yeshua, as it is the time that His Disciples will especially recall as the 40 days from His crucifixion to His ascension. Another 10 days later, we have the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, this coincides with the feast of Shavuot.

Each one of the 49 days of the counting of the Omer also signifies a time of soul searching and repentance, before the revelation of the Torah and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that comes with Shavuot.

As we count the days, each day has its own unique spiritual awakening that takes place during that day. We tap into this spiritual awakening by drawing near to God our Father, and allowing Yeshua to develop His grace within us. After the Father refines us for 49 days, we are ready to receive His Word and His Spirit, to fill us anew with His Divine revelation.

Each of the seven weeks represent seven spiritual graces, this is highly significant as the Spirit of God also manifests as seven!

- Week 1: Chesed – Mercy, which acts as lovingkindness in us
- Week 2: Geurah – Might, which acts as restraint and awe in us
- Week 3: Tiferet – Beauty, which acts as harmony in us
- Week 4: Netsach – Victory, which acts as perseverance in us
- Week 5: Hod – Glory, which acts as humility in us
- Week 6: Yesod – Foundation, which acts as bonding or cleaving in us
- Week 7: Kingdom of Sovereignty, which acts as nobility in us

Teachings

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[Playlist: The Feasts of the LORD](#)