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The Three Pilgrimage Festivals

16: 1-17



Along with the giving of tithes, celebrating the Year of Release, dedicating their firstborn animals to **YHVH**, these three **feasts** represent part of the worship due to **ADONAI**. These **feasts** were so important to **Isra'el's** religious life that after the Diaspora some Jews living far from Palestine still attended one or more of these festivals whenever possible. Attending these festivals gave **the Israelites** opportunity to acknowledge **the LORD** as **their Deliverer** and **Provider**. It also gave **them** the opportunity to express **their** faith in **Ha'Shem** as **they** left **their** families in **God's** care to journey to the sanctuary. These festivals demonstrated that worshiping **YHVH** should be a joyful experience in which **the people** gratefully shared in the bounty of **His** blessing (**16:11** and **14-15, 12:7, 12** and **18, 14:26**).³⁶⁹

Three times a year all your males are to appear before ADONAI your God in the place He chooses (Jerusalem) - at the Feast of [Pesach] Matzot, the Feast of Shavu'ot, and the Feast of Sukkot. No one should appear empty-handed, the gift of each man's hand according to the blessing ADONAI your God has given you (16:1-17).

A. Each of these feasts' points to the beginning of a new dispensation.

The festival of Pesach points to the Dispensation of Torah (see the commentary on Exodus, **to see link click [Da](#) - The Dispensation of Torah**).

The festival of Shavu'ot points to the Dispensation of Grace (see the commentary on Hebrews **[Bp](#) - The Dispensation of Grace**).

And the festival of Sukkot points to the Dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on Revelation **[Fh](#) - The Dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom**).

B. Furthermore, these three feasts point to the three offices of the Messiah.

At His death at the festival of Pesach, Yeshua fulfilled the office of prophet (see **[Dk](#) - A Prophet Like Moses**).

At the birth of the Church at the festival of Shavu'ot, Yeshua fulfilled the office of priest. The Spirit of God could only come after **the Son of God** was sitting at the right hand of **the Father**, fulfilling **His** role as our mediator. **He** is our **Great High Priest forever** (see the commentary on Hebrews **[Bc](#) - We Have This Hope as an Anchor for the Soul**).

During the Messianic Kingdom when the festival of Sukkot is celebrated, Yeshua will fulfill the office of King. During **His** thousand-year reign, **Yeshua** will rule and reign from the Most Holy Place in **Jerusalem**, fulfilling **His** office of King (see the commentary on Isaiah **[Db](#) - The Nine Missing Articles in the Messiah's Coming Temple**).³⁷⁰

C. In addition, these three feasts are part of the seven feasts of Isra'el.

The first four feasts were fulfilled by the program of **the First Coming of Christ** and occur within fifty days of each other.

Passover or Pesach: This **feast** was fulfilled by the death of **Messiah**.

Unleavened Bread or Hag ha'Matzah: It was fulfilled by the sinlessness of **His** sacrifice.

First Fruits or Rasheet: This **feast** was fulfilled by **Yeshua's** resurrection to life.

Pentecost or Shavu'ot: It was fulfilled by the birth of the Church.

Between the first four **feasts** and the last three **feasts**, there is a four-month interval mentioned in passing. **When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the foreigners residing among you. I am ADONAI Your God (Leviticus 23:22).**

During the pause between **the** two sets of **feasts**, life is to continue as normal. This interval is pictured as a summertime of labor in the fields in preparation for the final harvest of the summer and before the fall harvest. This verse is not related to any **feast**. Unless one understands what is really happening, it almost seems like an unnecessary interruption. However, it is the pause between **the feasts** that fulfilled the program of the First Coming as opposed to the festivals to be fulfilled by the program of the Second Coming. This interval of four months does have a messianic implication.

The messianic implication is the insertion of the Dispensation of Grace interrupting the program of **feasts** of **Isra'el**. Indeed, **the gleanings for the poor and the foreigner residing among you** is a very good picture of the mission of the Church itself in gospel evangelism. For example, **Jesus** states: **Look to the fields! They are ripe for harvest (John 4:35)!** Thus, it becomes a fitting symbol of the obligation of the Church to do the work of gospel evangelism. **Leviticus 23:22**, being a parenthetical verse interrupting the discussion of **the feasts** of **Isra'el**, is significant in that it symbolizes the present age in which we now live and in which the program of **the feasts** of **Isra'el** has been temporarily interrupted.

The last three **feasts** in the second cycle of festivals also come close together, even closer than those of the first cycle of **feasts**. In fact, they all come within two weeks of each other. The last three **feasts** of the second cycle are to be fulfilled by the program of **the Second Coming**.

Trumpets or Rosh ha-Shanah: will be fulfilled by the Rapture of the Church.

The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur: will be fulfilled by the future affliction of **the Jews** in the Great Tribulation.

Tabernacles or Sukkot: will be fulfilled by the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom.

*Dear Great and Powerful Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that **You** are **the Almighty King of***

kings and You will reign forever! **You** are greater than any power and **You** also have infinite love for **Your** children. Thank **You** for blessing us with these festivals. They remind us of **Your** greatness. **Your** holiness is shown at **Yom Kippur (Leviticus 23:26-32)**. **Your** great power is remembered on **Sukkot**. **You are to live in sukkot for seven days. All the native-born in Isra'el are to live in sukkot, so that your generations may know that I had Bnei-Yisrael to dwell in sukkot when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am Adonai your God" (Leviticus 23:42-43).**

Your greatness and power is shown by what you will do on these holidays in the future. After **You** rapture your church on a future Day of Rosh ha-Shanah, comes **seven years** when you seek to draw **Isra'el** back to loving **You**. They will be years of great affliction for **Isra'el (Mark 13:5-25)**, but when **she** recognizes **You** as the Jewish **Messiah (Isaiah 53)** **You** return and rescue **Isra'el**. Then **You** will reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years in the Messianic Kingdom.

As sure as your death on **Pseach** and **Your** rising from the dead on **Rasheet**, will be the fulfillment of **Your** promises on the fall Jewish Festival days. We know **You** will return soon, though we do not know the year and so we set no dates. We have heavy hearts for our family, friends, and neighbors who though they are nice, have not yet chosen to bow the knee to worship you. **He is being patient toward you - not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance (Second Peter 3:9)**. We love you dearest **Father**, and we so desire **You** to work in the hearts of our family and friends that they see how wonderful **You** are and how short the time is for them to respond. Please let them know that they need a personal relationship with **You** to enter heaven. May they move from knowledge about **You**, to heart love for **You**. May we use these few years till **You** come being busy for **You**. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen