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God's Appointed Times

23: 1-44

Counting the God's appointed times and the Shabbat's, the Israelites had a total of over eighty holy days a year, which was about 23 percent of the year dedicated to a time of fellowship with God. A foretaste of an eternity spent together with ADOANI.



A search for Jewish Roots: As Barney Kasdan writes in his book *God's Appointed Times*, something unusual is stirring among believers in **Yeshua** in our day. Throughout Church history there has been a chasm of misunderstanding between the Church and the Jewish people. Both Christians and Jews have falsely concluded that there is little real or practical connection between Christianity and Jewish life. However, these views are based on either ignorance or false presuppositions.

As one objectively studies the B'rit Chadashah (New Testament), one finds there is no escaping the inherent Jewishness of faith in **Messiah. Yeshua Himself** was a traditional Jew living in the land of **Isra'el. He** called other Jews to follow **Him** as

the Messiah, the anointed one from **God**. **His** early followers considered themselves to be Jews who had found the promised **Messiah**; hence, they naturally continued the Jewish expression of faith. It is a tragedy that the Christian community has not understood, for the most part, the rich heritage on which its faith is built. Many believers, however, rediscovering these connections, are wondering just how they can understand the Jewishness of their faith in a practical way. These **feasts** were revealed by **YHVH** for **His** own particular reasons, and through them all believers can be blessed, both Jews and Gentiles.

The purpose of God's appointed times: The Feasts of ADONAI, or **the biblical holy days**, teach us about the nature of **God** and **His** plan for mankind. A classic passage in regard to **God's appointed times (23:4)** is found in the New Testament. **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 (head of the month) or Shabbat. These are a shadow of things that are coming, but the body is of the Messiah (Colossians 2:16-17).** 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 **God's** children. The festivals are not antiquated tangents to faith but, on the opposite side, they are in fact legitimate shadows or models of **ADONAI's** truth. This is something that should be explored in a positive way, not shunned as legalism for each feast carries with it a message of salvation and rest in **the Lord**.

For example, **the Shabbat** has much to teach about our weekly lives. **Passover** is rich in the symbolism of **the Messiah's** death, burial and resurrection. **Rosh ha'Shanah** and **Yom Kippur** are not obsolete, but continue to declare the reality of **Yeshua's** return to this earth. In short, all of **the Feasts of ADONAI** were given to **Isra'el** and to **grafted in** believers to teach, in a practical way, more about **God** and **His** plan for the world. When analyzed with the right spirit, there are some exciting new truths waiting to be rediscovered through participation in **the Jewish/biblical holy days!**

The continuity of God's appointed times: Some believers understand, at least in a theoretical way, that **the feasts** provide excellent teaching for believers. Yet, because of certain popular theological positions, these believers question the value of continuing the celebrations today. Their contention is that **the appointed times** of **ADONAI** are no longer relevant because **Yeshua** fulfilled all **their** symbolism in **His** earthly life and ministry (**to see link click [Dv](#) - Holiness of the Seven**

Feasts). While there is a fulfillment to **the festivals**, there is also a continuation of the practical expression of these **feasts**.

Yeshua Himself observed **the** various **feasts** during **His** early life. The Gospel writers tell us that **His** custom was to worship on **the Shabbat (Luke 4:16)**. It was during **Sukkot (Tabernacles)** that **Yeshua** offered **living water** to the Jewish multitude (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Gp - On the Last and Greatest Day of the Feast**). One of **His** most powerful sermons, in which **He** proclaimed **His** Messiahship, took place in the Temple at **Hanukkah** (see **The Life of Christ Hj - Then came Hanukkah at Jerusalem and it was Winter**). The earthly life and ministry of **Messiah** show the continuity of **the** biblical **holy days**. This continuity didn't suddenly stop with the apostolic generation that followed. Although there are several statements in the B'rit Chadashah (New Testament) that cause us to think carefully about the proper balance concerning **God's appointed times**, there is clear indication that the early followers of **Yeshua** continued these practices.

It was at **Shavu'ot (Pentecost)** that the first believers gathered for worship to proclaim the risen **Messiah (Acts 2)**. In **his** discussion about the spiritual significance of **Pesach (Passover)**, **Paul** exhorts the **Corinthian** believers (a mixed group of **Jews** and **Gentiles**) to **celebrate the Seder (First Corinthians 5:8)** with right understanding. There is abundant evidence that the disciples understood and continued to celebrate the wonderful truth of **God** through **the holy days** explained in the Scriptures. This is an example for believers today. Much can be gained by continuing to observe **the feasts** in the present generation.

The freedom of God's appointed times: A final note needs to be made as we consider the celebration of **the** biblical **feasts** by believers. Hopefully you are excited about the positive reasons to understand and incorporate **God's appointed times** into your life. Of utmost importance is the emphasis upon our freedom in **the Messiah**. These days, as with any other biblical custom, are not meant to lead us into legalistic bondage. **Messiah Yeshua** is our total sufficiency when it comes to our spiritual standing before **YHVH (Galatians 5:1)**.

Yet, there are some compelling reasons to celebrate **the feasts**. I hope you will discover, as many believers have, that a balanced celebration of **the holy days** is a wonderful blessing. **The** biblical **festivals** teach much about who **God** is and **His** exciting plan for life. It is my prayer that this positive blessing will be yours as you better understand and celebrate **the appointed times** of **ADONAI**.⁴¹⁷

Whenever we see the number **seven** in the Scriptures, it is the number of completion (see the commentary on **Revelation Ag - The Importance of the Number Seven in the book of Revelation**). So here, we have a complete picture of **God's appointed times. The seven** appointed **festivals** all follow a basic structure. First, there is **the Biblical Practice**, second we look at **the Jewish Observance**, next we study **the Messianic Significance**, and lastly, we will offer **a practical guide for believers in Yeshua** to celebrate **the festivals** today.