

The Feasts of Israel

Pastor Gerry Burney

[Target Truth Ministries.com](http://TargetTruthMinistries.com)

These feasts, or **appointments**, would appear to be a prophecy to fulfill a plan which God had foretold 1,500 years before Christ was even born into this world. God gave Moses a set of 7 “feasts” (actually the Hebrew word means “*appointments*”), to celebrate Israel being delivered from the bondage of Egypt, and their eventual arrival into the promised land, and these 7 feasts (appointments), it turns out, are also a prophecy of Jesus and His sacrifice, and perhaps even more. These 7 feasts (appointments), are a perfect picture of exactly what Jesus did 1,500 years later, when Jesus began to fulfill these appointments on the **exact** days which these feasts are celebrated according to God’s Word given to Moses.

Today, Israel actually recognizes 8 Feasts. The 7 given to Moses, and another which Israel added about 200 B.C., to recognize Esther for saving the Jewish people from a plot to kill them. This added feast is called Purim and it occurs around March before the 7 Feasts (appointments), given to Moses by God. Also, today there are many other celebrations, sometimes called feasts, such as Hannukah (the festival of lights), around December to celebrate the rededication of the Temple about 160 B.C. Today both Jewish people and Christians have missed the prophecy of mankind’s eventual salvation given by God to Moses to keep for all time recorded the 7 Feasts.

Jewish “people” sang Hosannahs to Jesus (Matt, 21:8-11). The Jewish “leadership” however were involved in the condemning of Jesus and therefore de-emphasized Jesus and any relationship with Jesus in their traditions. Jewish understanding is that the Messiah had to be both high priest and king. The king lineage came from tribe of Judah / David, which both Joseph and Mary were from (Matt. 1). But the priestly lineage had to come from the tribe of Aaron / Levi. They said Jesus could not come from both tribes. However, as stated in Psalm 110:4; Heb.5:1-6 – Jesus is a priest as Melchizedek – both priest and king.

Also Christians, in their effort to separate themselves from Israel, chose to not celebrate dates related to Jewish festivals. We will discover that “Easter” and “Christmas” have no accurate relationship with Jesus and the dates we celebrate them on, even though we dedicate them to Jesus.

So, it is very important for Christians to fully understand exactly what these “Harvest” feasts (appointments) mean. These feasts (appointments), as it turns out, are also prophetic...demonstrating the authority of the Bible to give us proof of its’ divine nature...being able to foretell the future in very exacting terms 1,500 years later at the time of Christ, and perhaps even more, pointing to Jesus’ return and delivering Christ’s followers into the promised land to come (Rev. 20-21 - see **2068** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

The very first feast is the Passover Feast...Pesach. Note that at the time of Jesus, and today, Israel celebrates these first 3 Feasts or appointments as one “week” of celebration called the Passover “week.” However, they in fact are given to Moses as 3 separate distinct appointments. In **Exodus 12**, God gives us the details of exactly how the people are to prepare for this feast, or appointment called Passover. This feast, or appointment, is held on the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan (also called Abib – our March or April). The first day of the month is determined by Israel watching for the new moon after the spring equinox (the equinox is when the sun is directly over the equator in the spring). This Passover date always changes on our western / Roman calendars, because we do not set our first day of the month by the new moon and the spring equinox. The Jewish people would begin counting days after the new moon, and they would count 14 and that would be the day of Passover. When we go to **Exodus 12:2**, we find that this month now becomes the first month for the Jewish calendar. The original first month was actually in the September / October time frame for Israel, and set by the autumn equinox. This goes back to the time of Noah. Today, Israel actually treats both times of the year as “New Year.” The autumn period is the “civil” new year, and the spring period is the “Holy Sacred” new year.

Passover is described in **Exodus 12**. For the Jewish people, this is a remembrance of being delivered by God from the bondage of Egypt. We read in **Exodus 12:3**, that a *lamb* was to be selected for the sacrifice, 4 days before the sacrifice, on the 10th of the month. In **Exodus 12:5**, note the lamb is to be without defect, in other

words, the best. Then we read in **Exodus 12:6**, that at sundown (the beginning of the 14th day – for the Jewish people, the day begins at sundown--6 PM, whereas our day begins after midnight – see Genesis creation of days...evening and morning, day 1), they were to kill the lamb. The lamb was to be killed on 14th (start of 5th day), *after* being held 4 days / 10th to 13th. The lamb is traditionally killed at 6 P.M., just *after* 13th daylight has ended (twilight)—the beginning of 14th (the 5th day). Jesus (the Lamb of God), began His ministry with the world at His baptism (28 A.D.), and at the end of 4 years (at the start of this 5th year—32 A.D.—fulfilling the “4 days” in a different way), Jesus is sacrificed like the lamb in the first Passover, just after the “4th day” (year) ends, and the next day (year) begins. Note that God changed the start of the Jewish year to Passover (**Ex. 12:2**).

The lamb was to be killed on 14th (start of 5th day), and Israel was to put the blood on the door posts (to show that they obeyed God, and recognize that blood must be shed to save), and then, they were to eat the lamb that night. That night, of course, Israel was saved, while Egypt suffered its first born being killed (**Ex. 11:5; 13:15**). This is the meaning behind Feast # 1, the sacrifice of the lamb “Passover.” The next feast began the next day, on the fifteenth, and it is called the feast of Unleavened Bread.

Let’s discuss just how Jesus fulfilled this first feast (appointment), Passover, and how He fulfilled it exactly. Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, on what we call The Triumphal Entry (**Luke 19:28-44**), or what traditionally is referred to today by Jews and Christians as “Palm Sunday” (actually, it was a Saturday – see the chart on Passover week), on the 10th of the month, exactly when the lamb to be sacrificed was to be selected (**Ex. 12**). This date of Jesus arrival was exactly foretold by Daniel in **Daniel 9:25-26**, hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Foretold to the very day - *exactly*. Jesus wept over Jerusalem (**Luke 19:41**), when He arrived because, as He said in **Luke 19:44**: “*You did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.*” Jesus, the Lamb of God (**John 1:29**), a perfect sacrifice (**Ex. 12:5**), who knew He had to wait until a certain appointed time (**Matt. 16:20-22**), arrived to be killed, exactly 4 days before He would die (**Ex. 12**), thus fulfilling exactly the prophecy of **Daniel 9:25-26**. Further, Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and a colt (**Matt 21:2**), thus fulfilling the prophecy of **Zechariah 9:9**, that the Messiah (the savior), would arrive like a king on a donkey and a colt (the traditional way a king or great prophet would ride into a city - **Judges 10:4, 12:14**). Jewish depictions of Palm Sunday show both a colt and a donkey.

Then, on the 14th of the month, Passover, when the lambs were being sacrificed for the Passover feast, Jesus was sacrificed at the exact same time, and died exactly when the lambs were being killed. The Lamb of God (**John 1:29**), died as the Passover Lamb for all those who will trust in Him. So, Jesus fulfilled exactly, to the very day, and the very hour, the prophecies of the prophets, as well as this feast commanded by God to Moses 3,500 years ago. Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 5:7**, that Jesus is our Passover, because Jesus, for all time, paid the price of sacrifice for sin. For those who trust in Him for their life, we are no longer in bondage to sin.

Some scholars have raised the question about whether this last supper of Jesus was, in fact, the same meal as the Passover. We read in **Matthew 26:18-19; Mark 14:14; Luke 22:8; and John 13:1-2**, that this meal Jesus celebrated with His followers was called the Passover meal. But, the problem pointed out by some modern scholars, is that Jesus Himself was also called the Passover (**1 Cor. 5:7**), meaning that He was supposed to be the sacrifice (The sacrificed Lamb, killed when the lambs were being killed on Passover). John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb which takes away the sins of the world (**John 1:29**), and in the book of Revelation, written by John the apostle, John declared that Jesus was the Lamb predestined to be the sacrifice for us from the beginning of the world (**Rev. 13:8**). And, in **Revelation, chapter 5**, Jesus is seen as that sacrificed Lamb. So, the question is, how could Jesus do both -- be the sacrifice for the Passover, and at the same time, share the Passover meal, or the Lord’s Supper, with the disciples?

We find in **Exodus 12** that the Passover Lamb was to be killed at the beginning of the Passover day, the 14th of the month – Easter season to us today. In the Jewish culture the day begins at sundown, about 6 PM, which means that the lamb was to be killed after 6 PM, and cooked, and eaten, all before morning. So, this agrees with Jesus sharing the Last Supper in the evening of the 14th, or Passover, as they would gather in the upper room, and the Lamb would be killed at the beginning of Passover, and cooked, and they would then eat it on Passover. But, somehow, Jesus was also supposed to be sacrificed at the same time the lambs were being killed

for the Passover meal, and this is why some modern scholars say that either Jesus did not actually celebrate the Passover meal -- that it was some other meal (meaning that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are wrong) or, that Jesus did not actually die on the cross when the Passover lambs were being sacrificed (as stated by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, or as stated by John in the Revelation, or as stated in the words of John the Baptist), meaning that Jesus did not fulfill the sacrifice for our sins -- dying as the Passover Lamb.

So, which is it? Did Jesus only fulfill one of these -- either sharing the Passover meal as the Lord's Supper, or actually dying on the cross when the Passover lambs were being killed? Is the record in the Bible wrong? How could Jesus do both?

I don't know about you, but I decided a long time ago that if Jesus has the power over death, and Jesus, Himself, referred to the creation (as stated in Genesis), as authentic, and the first 5 books of the Bible (as being authored by Moses), as authentic, and Jesus referred to Daniel, as authentic, and Jesus referred to Jonah (and his 3 days and 3 nights in the big fish), as authentic, and Noah and the flood, as authentic -- that even though some of these things seem improbable to some modern scholars, I'll trust in Jesus (the only person who ever showed evidence of power over death), knowing that sooner or later, some information will come along to prove that the Bible, as always, is correct, even though it may seem impossible. So, what about this Last Supper. How could Jesus be both -- the Lamb sacrificed for our sins at the same time as the lambs were being sacrificed for the Passover meal, and also, on that same day, share this Passover meal with His followers? One of the problems we have in understanding this is the way the Jewish people describe Passover. The term "Passover" is used primarily to mean the "week of the Passover feasts" (the whole week, all three feasts, or appointments). Thus, when in the Bible we read the term "the day of preparation" for the Passover, this is referring to the day of preparation for the next day, or the Sabbath day Feast of Unleavened Bread (**Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54**). Being a Sabbath day, the people had to prepare all their food on the day before the feast, as no work is allowed on the Sabbath day.

Originally, when the Passover was instituted by God (back at the Exodus with Moses (**Ex. 12** - 1,500 years before Christ came to us), the lamb was sacrificed after 6 PM (at the very beginning of the Jewish day -- **Gen. 1** - evening and morning, day 1). The lamb was killed, cooked, and eaten before midnight. Then, when the people received the commandments from God, in the desert, during their Exodus travels to Mt. Sinai, God commanded that they sacrifice the lambs at the tabernacle (Temple of God), and that the Priests were to be in charge of this sacrifice and remembrance of the Passover (**Deut. 16:1-8** -- note that sacrifices are to be made on an altar of earth with NO cut stones and NO steps -- **Ex. 20:22-26**). This went o.k. for a while. But, soon the population of the Jewish people got so large, that the Priests decided they couldn't sacrifice all the lambs necessary in the few hours after 6 PM. There were too many people -- too many lambs to cook and eat before morning. So the priests combined the Passover, and the next feast, the Unleavened Bread Feast (which occurs the very next day), into one celebration. The priests began killing the lambs early on Passover, and completed the sacrifices shortly after 3 PM -- in time for the meal to be prepared by 6 PM for the next day (which began at 6 PM -- the Feast of Unleavened Bread -- a high holy Sabbath day, where no work [cooking] was allowed (**Lev. 23:7**). This means that at the time of Jesus (1,500 years after the Exodus of Moses), the lambs were not all being sacrificed at 6 PM (the beginning of the Passover), as called for originally by God in **Exodus 12**, but the lambs were being killed starting at the beginning of Passover, and continuing up to 3 PM (during the daylight hours of Passover), and the meal was then being eaten not only during the Passover day, but also after 6 PM, at the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was the very next day.

Jesus, being God, being the High Priest (**Heb. 9 & 10**), chose to celebrate the Passover with His followers at the time originally given to eat the Passover, after 6 PM (at the beginning of the day of Passover), and then, Jesus also fulfilled the sacrifice of the Lamb for our sins, by dying on a cross at the exact time (3 PM -- **Luke 23:44-47** -- the 9th hour is 3 PM -- 9th hour from sunrise) during the daylight hours of the Passover day, exactly when the lambs were still being killed by the temple priests. Further, Jesus was sacrificed exactly as the lamb was to be sacrificed (**Ex. 20:22-26**). So, the Bible is correct after all -- imagine that!

Passover Days

Matthew, Mark, and Luke give us three witnesses to this week's events. Like any witnesses, they remember things slightly differently. Some scholars suggest there are errors in the Bible due to these different versions, however there are explanations.

One such seemingly contradiction is between Luke's account (Luke 19:45), and that of Matthew and Mark (Matt. 21:12; Mark 11:11). We Christians today, "condense" the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (and the cleansing of the Temple), into one event on a Sunday (tradition). Actually, as pointed out in the chart on the Passover week, the entry day was actually a Saturday Sabbath, and the cleansing occurred the next day, on a Sunday.

The Passover Days *Target Truth Ministries.com*

Box 1299, Ukiah, Ca. 95482

** *Note: the Jewish day begins at sundown (6 P.M.).*

(see Message *The Fourth Day*)

Thursday 8th - John 12:1 (6 days to Passover—long travel from Ephraim—John 11:54).

Friday 9th - John 12:2 (“supper”- supper is after 6 P.M. on Thursday—so this is now Friday).

Mark 11:4-6 (donkey and colt brought to Jesus—see also Matt. 21:2-6; Zech. 9:9 – donkey and colt)

Saturday – John 12:12 (“next day”) – Passover Week begins – **Feast (appointment) #1** of 3 this week.

10th Matthew 21:7-11 (Jesus entered Jerusalem—the *triumphal entry*).

Mark 11:7-11 (Jesus entered Jerusalem, “looked around and left” – Luke 19:44- “no recognition”).

Exodus 12:3-6 (**lamb for sacrifice to be selected** on the **10th** of the month). **Tradition** is to

John 1:29 (Jesus declared the *Lamb of God*—see also Rev. 5:6-14). recognize this as **“Palm Sunday.”**

Sunday 11th - Mark 11:12-14 (**next day** – tree cursed).

Mark 11:15-17 (overturned tables of money changers—see also Matt. 21:12-13).

Mark 11:19 (left city—see also Matt. 21:17).

Monday 12th - Mark 11:20; 14:1 (**next morning** – tree dead—**2** days to Passover - see also Matt. 21:18-19).

Tuesday 13th - Mark 11:27 (“**again**” returns to Jerusalem).

Luke 19:47-48 – He taught daily.

Wednesday – Leviticus 23:5-7 (**Passover** – the **4th day of Feast (appointment) #1** when **the lamb is killed** – the blood sacrifice - **on the 14th of the month**—begins at 6 P.M. of 13th).

Exodus 12:1-6 Lamb to be killed on 14th (start of 5th day), *after* being held 4 days / 10th to 13th – Lamb traditionally killed at 6 P.M., just *after* 13th daylight has ended (twilight)—the beginning of 14th (the 5th day). Jesus (the Lamb of God), began His ministry with the world at His baptism (28 A.D.), and at the end of 4 years (at the start of this 5th year—32 A.D.—fulfilling the “4 days” prophetically), Jesus is sacrificed like the lamb in the first Passover, just after the “4th day” (year) ends, and the next day (year) begins. Note that God changed the start of the Jewish year to Passover (Ex. 12:2).

Luke 23:54 (**Preparation day**—Passover—the High Holy Sabbath begins *after* 6 P.M. today).

14th Mark 15:42-47 (**Preparation day**--Passover--the day *before* the Sabbath of Unleavened

Bread—John 19:31—which is a “high day”—Luke 22:1—the names of these feast days are used interchangeably...Passover is the first feast, and Unleavened Bread is the High Holy day...so some people refer to “Passover” and others call it “Unleavened Bread—Lev. 23 delineates them...Passover is on the 14th, and Unleavened Bread begins the next day...the 15th, which begins at 6 P.M. on the 14th).

Prepare to leave exile & go to the Promised Land by killing the lamb selected on the 10th - - The blood sacrifice on 14th

as to the issue of Jesus sharing the Passover meal with disciples and also dying on Passover see book *Revelation, Apostasy, End-Times & This Generation*

Mark 15:25 (3rd hour – 9 A.M.) Crucified

Matthew 27:45-54 (6th to 9th hour—noon to 3 P.M. - darkness). Jesus died around 3 P.M. & Viel
1 Corinthians 5:7 (Jesus called our *Passover*). Torn

John 19:31-42 (Jesus prepared for burial, and placed in the tomb by 6 P.M.—the beginning of Thursday). The tomb sealed on Thursday.

Thursday 15th - Leviticus 23:6-8 (**High Sabbath** day--**Unleavened Bread**-no work allowed)- **Feast/appointment #2**

Luke 23:55-56a (The women say Jesus body laid in the tomb).

John 6:35 (Jesus claimed to be the *Bread of Life* – Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19).

Matthew 12:38-40 (3 *days* and 3 *nights* in the earth-Jonah 1:17).

Friday – Luke 23:54-56b (The women prepared spices for the body *before* the Sabbath - Saturday).

Mark 16:1 (bought spices *after* High Sabbath was over - purchased this day and prepared them).

Saturday – Luke 23:56c (*after* preparing spices, they rested on the Sabbath - Saturday).

Leviticus 23:3 (Saturday Sabbath – no work allowed).

Sunday – Luke 24:1-3 (*after* the Sabbath—Sunday). Jesus is risen!..... Jesus rose **“on”** the third day in the context of the tomb being

Mark 16:2 (first day of week—Sunday). sealed, and He rose **“after”** 3

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 (Jesus called the *“Firstfruit”*). days in the context of His death.

Leviticus 23:9-11 (**The Feast/appointment #3** of **Firstfruits**).

Why are these dates important? **Luke 16:31**-Listen to Moses (Leviticus), and the Prophets (Daniel & Ezekiel).

Leviticus 23 (The Seven Feasts of Israel—fulfilled by Jesus).

Daniel 9:24-26 (69 weeks fulfilled exactly on the 10th of Nisan, 32 A.D., by Jesus).

Ezekiel 4:5-6 (fulfilled *exactly* to the very year Israel became a country again in 1948, and also

fulfilled *exactly* when Jerusalem was restored to Israel in 1967--*fulfilled after 2,520 years* – Lev. 26:18).

See *“Great Prophecies”* Study—**Target Truth Ministries.com**

Passover, the death of Jesus, was on a *Wednesday*, not a Friday, even though that is our Christian traditional day to remember this event (Good Friday). The key to understanding the Passover week are Jesus' words in **Matthew 12:39-40** (3 days and 3 nights in the tomb, indicating 72 hours minimum). Everyone agrees that Sunday was the resurrection day (**John 20:1**). This means that Jesus must have been placed in the tomb at least 72 hours prior to the resurrection. Scholars agree that in the Hebrew understanding the phrase "the third day" can mean both, any part of three days, or the three full days. The reference in John 2:19 would agree with this understanding ("in" three days—a general time reference). However, Mark 8:31, 9:31 clearly states "after" three days (Greek Amplified, NAS, NIV), whereas Matthew 16:21, 17:23, 20:19, and Luke 9:22, 24:46, state "on" the third day. The Jewish day ends and begins at sunset (6 PM), not midnight like the western world. Whether "on" or "after" depends upon a person's point of view...whether the writer is writing from the point of view of the "death" of Jesus (Wednesday), or the point of view of the "*burial tomb being sealed by the Romans*" (beginning of Thursday—the burial). In other words, it all depends upon whether one's view is of Jesus being resurrected from the bodily death, or Jesus being resurrected from laying buried. It would be correct to say "on" the third day (from the point of view of the burial tomb being sealed by the Romans), and also correct to say "after" three days (from the point of view of Jesus' physical death). Since the phrase "the third day" can mean three full days and nights, and since Mark 8:31, 9:31 includes the clarification of "after," Jesus, therefore, rose *after* 72 hours of both His death, and His burial.

Why three full days, and three full nights? Pagan beliefs were that the soul of a person hovered by the body for three days, and that a person could come back to life. History does record several people being declared dead up to three days and still being alive. Jesus was sending a message to all people—biblical and pagan—that Jesus alone had power over death—thus four days (**John 11:1-17** – Lazarus – see **4th Day Study** @ Target Truth Ministries.com). Do you know of anyone pronounced dead who within 72 hours was alive?

Three hundred years later, the Christians went along with the Roman emperor to break away from the Jewish people, and their date of Passover, and today we've all but forgotten Passover, and also all but forgotten what the "Easter" season for Christians is truly about (see Queen of Heaven chapter in books **Science, Origins & Ancient Civilizations**, or **Eden to Evil** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

Jesus also fulfilled exactly to the very day Hanukkah, both the 3 years to the cleansing (1080 days), and the 8 days of light (the resurrection on the 8th day after cleansing the temple during this Passover week), Dan. 8:8-14, John 10:22-30 (see **Hanukkah** Study @ Target Truth Ministries.com). God has His own plan for saving us. During the Easter season (the Passover week), we see how it unfolds. This Plan of God's has been fulfilled, and fulfilled *exactly*. Moses wrote God's Words down 3,500 years ago. Jesus fulfilled the Word 2,000 years ago. God has a plan for every person's life also (**Psalms 139:16**). God's Plan for us is written within the Bible. Of course, many people aren't interested in what's about to happen. But, as we will discover as we go through these Feasts, God does keep His word, and He keeps it *exactly*, to the very day and hour. **The very next day**, the 15th [the Jewish day begins at sundown (about 6 PM), whereas our days begin at midnight], is the start of the next feast.

Is there a contradiction in **Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12; and Luke 22:7** ? These passages seem contradictory to all of Scripture because they seem to state that the lambs were being killed on the 15th - the Day of Unleavened Bread...not on the 14th. These passages seem to point to Thursday the 15th (still not "Good Friday"). After the Exodus, God commanded a 7-day celebration in remembrance of Passover Week to begin on the 14th, but the High Holy Day of Unleavened Bread was still on the 15th. **Acts 12:3-4** states Jewish leaders didn't hand over criminals during the Feast of Unleavened Bread – the 15th – a High Holy Day ...which means Jesus was handed over on Wednesday the 14th, not the 15th. These 7 days required unleavened bread so they became known as the week of unleavened bread beginning on the 14th. So, yes, the "celebration of remembrance" began on the 14th, but this "celebration" didn't change the requirement by God to select lambs on the 10th, and sacrifice lambs on the 14th, and have a High Holy Day on the 15th (**Ex. 12:18; Lev. 23:4-6; Numb. 33:3-4; Duet. 16:6**).

Feast # 2, the Feast of Unleavened Bread...Chag Hamotzi. This feast, or appointment, is one of the High Holy Days of the year, and all men were to be present at this feast in Jerusalem. This feast is described in **Leviticus 23:4-6**. At the time of Jesus and today, this Holy Day was included in the Passover “week” celebrations by Israel, even though it is a separate Holy Day. The meaning behind the unleavened bread, is to remind us of how Israel was allowed to leave Egypt. After the death of the Egyptians on Passover (the day before -**Ex. 11-12**), Israel didn’t have time to let their bread rise with yeast, and then bake it. They could only bake a little bread as unleavened, with no yeast (flat bread), and then wrap up the rest of the dough in linen to take with them, which meant that this dough also would eventually be baked up as flat, unleavened bread. They would eat unleavened bread for a week – 7 days – to remember this High Holy Sabbath Day (**Ex. 16:22-27**).

So, Israel was commanded by God to remember this day as a special High Holy Sabbath day (as we know, these Feasts, including “Easter,” are held on a different date of the month each year, depending upon what day of the week the moon is new (as we discussed in Feast # 1), and so usually this feast does NOT occur on a Saturday. It is usually a different Sabbath from the Saturday Sabbath which the Jewish people are commanded to worship on. This day is a High Holy Sabbath. Israel celebrates this day by placing 3 flat loafs of unleavened bread on the supper table, and then the middle loaf is broken, wrapped in linen cloth, and hidden away. Later on, this hidden bread is brought back. This middle loaf is called the bread of affliction by the Jewish people.

According to Rabbi Sperling in his book “*Reasons for Jewish Customs and Traditions*”, this tradition may go all the way back to **Genesis 18**, where Sarah prepared 3 measures of fine meal for the angels who visited. In the rabbinic traditions, these angels visited on the same date on which Passover later occurred. The reason the Jewish people hide the broken bread is in memory of the Passover lamb. When Jesus celebrated the Passover at His Last Supper (**Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19**), He broke the bread and said “*This is my body*”. After the bread is broken, it is wrapped in linen cloth and hidden, and then later on during the meal, brought back. This ceremony is called in the Hebrew the “*afikoman*” ceremony. Dr. David Danbe, professor at Oxford University states that this name is derived from “*aphikomenos*,” which means “*the one who has arrived.*”

For Christians this middle loaf being broken is symbolic of Jesus, the bread of life, God the Son, being afflicted for our sins, and broken. God sacrificed Himself, shed His own blood, in order to pay for my sins, and in order to save all those who will trust in Him. Three loafs of bread, to Christians, represent God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God reveals Himself to us in these three ways, thus three loafs. It was just before the beginning of this High Holy Day (the very end of the Passover Day, the 14th), that Jesus was placed in the Tomb, and the stone rolled in place to cover it. Thus, Jesus, the **Bread of Life (John 6:32-40)**, fulfilled this feast *exactly*, by being broken, being wrapped in linen, and finally hidden away--buried (the sinless Bread of Life), on the very day which the bread (unleavened, with no additives), was being wrapped in linen and stored away for the long trip. The unleavened bread is seen as pure bread, with no additives (no yeast – no sin), and so also Jesus is seen as the pure Bread of Life (sinless). Yeast is seen as “puffing up” the bread, symbolic of “puffing up” a person with pride. God wants a humble person, not a prideful person (**Psalms 51:16-17**).

God tells us in **1 Corinthians 5:7-8**, that Jesus is our Passover, and that we are to put the things of this world out of our lives, get rid of the leaven, the yeast, the impurities which puff us up.

The third feast – Feast # 3 – The Feast of First Fruits...Yom Habikkurim
(**Lev. 23:9-14**).

The Early Harvest

This feast, or appointment, even though it is a separate Holy Day, is also celebrated today as part of the Passover “week” by Israel, and it occurs on the Sunday just after the Saturday Sabbath (Saturday is when the Jewish people are commanded to rest every week). This feast was commanded by God to Moses to celebrate the first harvest of the land given by God to Israel. Israel actually began celebrating this feast with Joshua, and the arrival of Israel into their promised land, after the 40 years in the wilderness (**Ex.34:28**).

For Christians, this is the day we celebrate as “Easter today,” originally known as First Fruits, part of the Passover week, which is commonly called Passover.

The word “Easter” is not in the Bible. Now, there is a notation in my Bible in **Acts 12:4**, and it says the word Easter is used by some in reference to the Passover season. God’s Word calls this time of year Passover, not Easter. So, how did this use of the word Easter get started? And, where did all these Easter bunnies and Easter eggs come from?

Well, it turns out, that even in Samaria, (a district of ancient Israel), a thousand years before Moses, there was a goddess of fertility who had mythical bunnies that laid eggs (**Jer. 44** – the Queen of Heaven – Ishtar – see the Study on **Queen of Heaven**, or other books in this series, *Eden to Evil*, *Science, Origins & Ancient Civilizations*, and *God’s Plan / Satan’s Plan* @ Target Truth Ministries.com). The worship of this goddess of fertility actually began in Babylon, and spread to all the surrounding areas, including Israel. The season of celebrating the bunnies, and eggs, and the goddess of fertility, was in the springtime. The name of the Goddess is Ishtar, and the bunnies are Ishtar bunnies and the eggs are Ishtar eggs. Get it? Ishtar / Easter. Easter is the English version of Ishtar in the Babylonian language. This Ishtar day is kind of an “Earth day,” similar to our “Earth day” here in America, which, just so happens, to occur at this time of year also. So, we have “Ishtar,” “Easter,” and “Earth day,” all here in the springtime, complete with Ishtar’s bunnies and eggs. Here’s what happened to Passover to cause it to be called Ishtar, or today, “Easter.” Almost all the early Christians were of Jewish origin, and they celebrated the resurrection of Jesus at Passover time during a weeklong celebration called “Unleavened Bread” for the first 300 years after Jesus’ death and resurrection, because it was on Passover that Jesus was killed, and during the Passover week (Feast # 3 – Firstfruits), that Jesus also rose from the dead. All the disciples, all the apostles, all the original churches established by Paul, used the Jewish Passover week (which consisted of these 3 feasts of the Passover week - **Lev. 23**), as the days to celebrate life, the resurrection of Jesus.

Then, in 325 A.D., when the Christian council at Nicaea met, the Bishops were in agreement (with a little help from the emperor of Rome), that the Jewish people were at fault for Jesus death (**Matt. 26:47 – 27:25**), and the anti-Jewish movement began. This new movement sought to prohibit Christians from continuing to celebrate the resurrection at the same time as the Jewish Passover. Ironically, the Jewish leadership calling for Jesus’ death exactly fulfilled the requirement for the lamb to be sacrificed as it was done at the very 1st Passover during the time of Moses...the lamb was killed because Jewish leadership demanded (**Matt. 27:1-2**). So, after almost 300 years, there was now a movement to separate from the Jewish population, and the Christians adopted a celebration day, which turned out to be a similar day to the celebration of Ishtar (today’s Easter), as the new way to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. By doing this, the emperor of Rome also hoped he could unite all the various beliefs together under the Christian religion. In other words, all the pagan festivals of Ishtar, and bunnies, and Earth Day, as well as the Jewish Feast of First Fruits (the 3rd Feast / Appointment in this Passover week, otherwise known as the resurrection of Christ - **Sunday**), would now all be known as this new Ishtar day, which would be designed to never relate exactly to the same days as the Jewish Passover days, thus separating the Jewish people from all other Romans. God’s Word, His Festivals, had been fulfilled by Jesus. However, 300 years later, this movement, to move away from God’s festivals, festivals which were fulfilled by Jesus, occurred over who to blame. This has resulted in confusion over which day Jesus was sacrificed (Wed. / Thurs. / Fri.). Many celebrate “Good Friday” as the day Jesus was killed, which is the day established in 325 A.D. at the Council of Nicaea when the Roman emperor abolished the “Passover” because the Jewish priests caused Jesus to be sacrificed, and Rome wanted no part of the “Passover” (**Matt. 26:47-27:2**). This council of Nicaea established the 1st Sunday after the first fall moon on or after the vernal equinox (the day the sun is directly over the equator), instead of the 14th of the first month for the Jewish people beginning with the vernal equinox. Additionally, the day for the Jewish people begins a sundown (6 PM – **Gen. 1:5** – the days of creation – *evening* and morning). This Roman understanding of the day beginning at midnight compared to the Jewish day beginning at daybreak (6 AM), has further complicated our understanding of days because the Passover Law was established by God through Moses (Israel), to select the lamb on the 10th of the month and hold it for 4 days, and sacrifice the lamb at the beginning of the 14th day...and the Day of Unleavened Bread began the next day – the 15th when Israel was freed (**Ex. 12 & Numb. 33:3-4**). God, after

the Exodus, then changed the “celebration” of “Unleavened Bread” to a week of remembrance – 7 days – today included in the Passover Week (**Ex. 12:18**). Only by studying God’s Word can we separate ourselves from tradition.

In actuality, every sinner is at fault for the death of Jesus. If there were no sinners, there would be no need for God to sacrifice Himself. So, in fact, I am at fault for the death of Christ, because I am a sinner. Today, tradition requires “Palm Sunday” in place of the Saturday Sabbath, and “Good Friday” in place of Wednesday, and tradition requires Christians to totally ignore the Feast / Appointment #2 of Unleavened Bread – a High Holy Sabbath Day, which occurs the day after the actual crucifixion when Jesus was laid in the tomb and the tomb sealed (Matt. 27:62-66).

This Feast, or appointment, of First Fruits, Feast # 3 (a Sunday), is the exact day which Christ rose from death, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus Himself, when he told His followers that He would give them the sign of Jonah, and spend 3 days, and 3 nights, in the earth (**Matt. 12:39-40; Jonah 2:2-6**). This is the hidden prophesy that was given to Moses by God 1,500 years before Jesus was even born, the prophecy of the “First Fruits.” Jesus is the First Fruit of the harvest of souls. Paul called Jesus the First Fruit (**1 Cor. 15:20-23**). Others also are first fruits (Matt. 27:51-53; 1 Corin. 15:1-8). In John 21:1-14 we read of the third time Jesus appeared to His followers and the harvest of 153 fish. 153 in the Hebrew “alpha-numeric” system translates to “**sons of God.**”

So, Jesus fulfilled exactly, to the very day these appointments. (1) the Passover Feast (2) the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and also this third feast in this week of celebration, the Feast of First Fruits. These were commanded by God 1,500 years before Jesus walked this earth. Recall that the word “feast” is actually “appointment” in Hebrew. Israel experienced these events at the time of Moses and God commanded that Israel memorialize them as appointments to celebrate for all time. Then, Jesus began fulfilling these appointments exactly to the very day. The next appointment to be fulfilled is Pentecost.

Jesus also fulfilled exactly to the very day Hanukkah, both the 3 years to the cleansing (1080 days), and the 8 days of light (the resurrection on the 8th day after cleansing the temple during this Passover week), Dan. 8:8-14; John 10:22-30 (request the **Hanukkah Study** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

Many people today mock God. Many people today ignore how God has caused all these prophecies to be fulfilled. Many people today ignore the fact that God has warned us about our future, as well as the harvest which is ongoing, and which will end when Christ returns (see **2068 Study** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

The Feast of Weeks Feast # 4...Shavout (Lev. 23).

The Long Harvest

This Jewish Feast (Feast, or appointment, number 4 of 7), celebrates Moses receiving the commandments on Mount Sinai (**Ex. 19**), and 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits, after the Exodus, they are commanded when they enter their promised land to begin this appointment (**Lev. 23:15-22**). This Feast is also known as the Feast of the Long Harvest, because this Feast occurs at the beginning of the many weeks of the long harvest season to come. The harvest will last all summer long, for many weeks, and it occurs seven weeks after the Feast of First Fruits...thus it is called the Feast of Weeks.

Christians know this date as **Pentecost**, because this is a special day for Christians. The church was established 50 (pente) days after Jesus Resurrection (**Acts 2:1-4**), which occurs **exactly on this very day** that God established with Moses 1,500 years earlier. The Feast of Passover, as you will recall, involves unleavened bread, bread with *no* additives, symbolic of *no* sin (see Easter – Passover discussion). This Feast of Weeks (or as we Christians call it, Pentecost), however, is celebrated with LEAVENED bread, symbolic of sin, or additives to the pure bread. This feast uses 2 loafs of bread at the table of the Jewish family. To the Jewish people these two loafs symbolize the double portion of manna given to Israel during the Exodus in the wilderness before each Sabbath (**Ex. 16:22-26**). For the Christian, these 2 loafs symbolize the two groups of sinful (leavened) people in the world, God’s chosen (Israel), and the gentiles, which are all the other nations of the world. God has a provision for all people, Jew and gentile.

The date of this Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, never occurs on the same date each year. The reason for this is due to a variety of factors. First, the Bible tells the Jewish people how to pick the date. In **Exodus 12**, and **Lev. 23**, they are told that the date to celebrate the very First Feast of the year (Passover – Feast # 1), is to be based upon selecting the first day of the first month of the Jewish year, which is based upon the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, which is when the sun is directly over the equator. This means that all the feasts linked to that day will also occur on a different day each year. So, Pentecost, or the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which occurs exactly 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits, will also occur on a different day each year. Now, if you are not confused enough already, **stay tuned**. For several hundred years after the resurrection of Jesus, both Christians and Jews celebrated on the same days.

Then, at the Christian Council of Nicea, the Christian Church decided they no longer wanted to be using the same days as the Jewish people. So, they decided to make some rules so that in the future the Christian Church would never celebrate on the same day as the Jewish people. They decided that Easter (the Jewish Passover), for example, would occur for Christians on the first Sunday after the full moon, after the Spring Equinox. Still not confused enough, **stay tuned**. The Eastern part of the Christian Church did not like this method of picking a date, so they came up with still a different way of selecting a date. The Eastern Church decided to set the day to celebrate Easter (the Jewish Passover), by linking their date to the first Sunday after Passover, which is 14 days after the new moon (dark), after the Spring Equinox. So, today we have 3 different dates which are celebrated each year depending upon whether your Jewish, Western Christian, or Eastern Christian. And all these dates will change every year because they are all based upon the cycle of the moon, as per God's Word. **Is everybody happy now?** Please, don't make me repeat this again!

Jesus, after His resurrection spent weeks visiting hundreds of people on several occasions to prove to us doubters that He truly has the power over life and death. Jesus is God (**Matt. 28:18; John 10:30; Acts 1:1-8; 1 Corin. 15:1-8**). Jesus then rose to His kingdom, and then, 50 days after His resurrection to life, Jesus followers were gathered on this exact day of the Feast of Weeks (known today to Christians as Pentecost). We read in **Acts 2:1-6**, that God the Holy Spirit came to these followers of Jesus, and as evidence of this supernatural event, they began speaking in various languages, so that whoever they were talking to, no matter what language the other person understood, they were heard in that language. This is the day (Pentecost) that the Church was officially established, as the power of God the Holy Spirit came into the lives of these followers of Jesus. What happens next is what is so great about how God connects the dots. We read in **Acts 1:14**, that Peter related to all that God offers us eternal life if we trust in Jesus as our Savior, and that to deny Jesus is eternal separation. Jesus was recognized as God in the flesh, now speaking as God the Holy Spirit. So, this exact day given by God to Moses is the exact day the Christian church was established, just as foretold by Jesus. On this day “**about 3,000**” surrendered to Jesus (**Acts 2:41**)...just the opposite of the Exodus at the time of Moses when God was revealed to Israel and “**about 3,000**” fell (**Ex. 32:28**). The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost was fulfilled exactly to the very day by God. And, today, the Long Harvest has been underway for 2,000 years, and will continue until the day Jesus returns.

FEAST # 5 – Lev. 23:24 – TRUMPETS...Yom Teruah

The Final Harvest

(*Then... the Gleaning begins*)

This is New Year's Day for Israel, they call it **Rosh Hashanah**. New Year's day is not a party day like New Year in America—this is a solemn day. This day occurs the day after the new moon (dark-not full), after the autumn equinox. The autumn equinox is the day of the year when the sun is directly over the equator, which occurs in the September / October period. This is the only feast day selected by the dark moon. The rabbis called this day “*The day of which no one knows the day or hour*”— sound familiar (**Matt. 24:36**)? This is because the moon goes dark for about two and a half days, and the exact full day of darkness is not known to man, but only to God. The rabbis would pick one of these dark days as “the day,” not really knowing if it truly was “the day.” This appointment day was celebrated by Jesus when He walked the planet. The trumpets are called Shofar (or ram's horns), and they are used to call the people to worship, and to judgment. Cow's horns are forbidden because of the sin of Israel with the golden cow worship related to Egypt (**Ex. 32:1-5**). For Israel,

this feast day celebrates the calling of all Israel to prepare for the next feast (the atonement). Between this feast, and the next one, are ten days of affliction (sometimes called the ten awesome days), where Israel is to reflect upon its failures and sins, and seek reconciliation with God (see the Message “*When Will God Come?*” or “2068” @ [Target Truth Ministries.com](#)). This feast also celebrates the **final harvest** period at the end of the year – at the end of the summer season. Therefore, it is called the Final Harvest Appointment. **Colossians 2:16-17** states that these festivals / holy days / appointments are *a shadow of things to come*. Jewish **tradition** is that New Year celebrates **1) The creation of the Earth, 2) The creation of Adam** (to resolve problem with creation of Earth—Day 1, and creation of Adam—Day 6...occurring on the *same day* – this day of Trumpets, see the book **Eden to Evil** @ [Target Truth Ministires.com](#)), and **3) This is the date that Abraham was supposed to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22)**.

There are several things about which this day may be prophetic:

- 1) This is possibly the exact day, when the angels announced to the shepherds, that God had arrived, the birth of Christ (**Luke 2:1-14**), when Jesus (God, the Son), came the first time. Shepherds heard first because in **Ezek. 34:1-11** God foretold that He would send a new Shepherd. In Europe, this announcement day is known as Michaelmas. Michaelmas is an early Christian holy day, associated with the angel, Michael, announcing to the shepherds that the Savior has been born. Shepherds are not in the fields in December. In fact, in Europe, for hundreds of years, December 25th (Christmas) was forbidden as a day to celebrate as the day of Christ’s birth, because it was known that December 25th was not the true day of Christ’s birth. In fact, December 25th is the traditional day of ancient Rome celebrating all their pagan gods’ birthdays. The date of December 25th goes all the way back to Babylonian times with Nimrod, and the Tower of Babel. Michaelmas is celebrated on Sept. 29th in Europe, at the same general time of year as this Feast of Trumpets. The equinox, of course, changes every year as to which day of the month it falls. So also, the Feast of Trumpets changes each year. But, Europe adopted a set date of the 29th of September to commemorate Jesus’ birth. There is considerable evidence that Jesus was born on the 29th of September in 2 B.C. This date, the 29th of September, was also the date of this Feast of Trumpets, in 2 B.C. (request Study on **The Birth Date of Christ** @ [Target Truth Ministries.com](#)).
- 2) There is another prophetic possibility. Jesus tells us that at the end of time, the end-time events will be announced by trumpets (**Matt. 24:29-31**). This appointment is **TRUMPETS**. The trumpet call is a call to judgment, and worship, at the **end of this age**. The trumpet announces the intervening of God—that time when God is about to make His presence known (**Rev. 9** note the locusts – tribulation at harvest time). The trumpets historically announced the victory of Israel over its enemies in war, because of God’s intervention. Also, the trumpets announced the day of their deliverance from evil—the day God arrives to save, and to begin judgment. This is a picture of a **Final Harvest** at the end of time (**Zech. 14:1-3; Matt. 24:27-29; John 5:28-29; Rev. 8-Rev. 11**). Revelation 12 begins a new subject – creation.

If we carefully study God’s plan for the end times, we will see that the sacrifices, trumpets, and shouts, etc., are part of each of these harvest appointments in the fall—thus making it difficult to determine exactly which feast is Jesus’ return, and which feast is the judgment. See the Study **2068** @ [Target Truth Ministries.com](#).

2 Thess. 2:1-15 – we are told to keep these appointments (feasts) for all time.

Matthew 13: 24-30; 24:36-44 – Jesus will judge the wicked first.

There, of course, is no way of really knowing if Jesus will return at this season of the year, some year. But, it is very interesting that God, 3,500 years ago, gave these Feasts / Appointments for Israel to keep in celebration forever. Also, that GOD, 2,000 years ago, began fulfilling each of them on exactly the very day which God gave to Moses to celebrate them. One thing we do know, Jesus will return one of these days (**Acts 1:11**), and He is returning to judge the world...a **Final Harvest** (**Rev. 19:17-21, 20:1-6; Zech. 14:1-3; Matt. 24:27-29; Job 14:12**). So, this is possibly the day Jesus will return to begin judgment of the rebellious, and to bring an end to this age of Satan’s domain.

We come into this world already separated from God (**Eph. 1:4-5, 2:1-5; Rom. 5:12** – see book **Eden to Evil** @ [Target Truth Ministries.com](#)). God would like to reconcile with us and welcome us back. Jesus came

2,000 years ago, to pay for our sin with His blood, His life, so that it is now possible (if we *trust* in Christ), to spend eternity in heaven with our Savior, and our loved ones who also trust in Christ. This is a free gift—it is called grace. No works of any kind can earn us a ticket to God’s kingdom (**Eph. 2:8-9**).

Trusting in Jesus is the only way to God’s kingdom (**John 14:6; John 5:22-29**). God wants no one to be judged to hell, and He makes His gift of eternal life in His kingdom available, free to all who will trust in Him. But, one must trust (open the gift), and take it—not ignore it, or discard it. It is my prayer that every person with whom I cross paths, will also spend eternity in God’s kingdom. Hope to see ya there, one day. Who knows? Maybe, sooner than we think. When *the* New Year arrives this coming fall (and the possible return of Christ), it truly will be a Happy New Year for those who love Jesus!

NOTE - this Final Harvest is **NOT** the end of God’s Plan. It is the end of this physical age. The Book of Life is still open – it doesn’t close until the next appointment - #6.

Everyone ever involved in harvests knows that even after the final main harvest is over, that there is still an opportunity to **glean** a small portion. Between Feast 5 and Feast 6 is possibly the “**gleaning**” period which occurs after the final harvest. The books of life are not closed until Feast 6...**10** days later.

One curious note we should make. God established these Feasts / Appointments as **memorials** of what Israel experienced in the Exodus...being delivered from bondage, and arriving in their promised land, and the harvest that awaited them. **BUT**...God commanded that they celebrate these events as Appointments in a different order after they arrived in their promised land (Lev. 23). The events during the Exodus of Atonement (#6), and the Tabernacles (#7), actually occurred *before* the harvest feasts (#3,4 & 5), in the Exodus Israel experienced. The harvest feasts occurred *after* Israel arrived in their promised land. Why would God command a different order to commemorate these appointments? God wants us to commemorate them as appointments which point to Jesus and the future that Jesus will provide for **all humanity**. A harvest of **all nations** (**Matt. 24:14**), which will eventually be delivered to their Promise Land...the new heaven and earth (**Rev. 21:1-7**). So, today, we recognize that the harvest is of those who are “Born Again” (**John 3:1-7**), and it is ongoing right now – the Long Harvest (Pentecost - #4). Then, in the future, the final harvest (#5) will take place with the return of Jesus (the “rapture”)...and then after 10 “days,” the final judgment (#6) will take place. This is the 1st judgement (**Matt. 13:24-30**). The 2nd resurrection and judgement is Revelation 20. Jesus is the 1st and last (**Rev. 1:1-11**).

FEAST # 6 – Lev. 23:26-32 – ATONEMENT – Yom Kippur

This feast (or appointment), is also called **Yom Kippur**. There are **10** days of affliction between feast # 5 and this feast # 6, called the **ten awesome days**, where Israel is to reflect upon their sins, and their covenant with God (to humbly obey – **Gen. 17:1-14**). This is a period (**10**) of “**gleaning**” after the Final Harvest (#5). It is hoped that as the book of life is now sealed on this day (#6), that your name is recorded in it (**Ex. 32:31-33; Psalm 69:16-29; Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12-15, 21:27**). *After* these **ten** days of affliction, this feast (number six), is when God will finalize the judgement and close the book of life. There are also trumpets at the end of this feast (number 6).

All Jewish men are to be present in Jerusalem for this feast. This is the only day in the entire year when the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies (**Lev. 16**). Blood is sprinkled on the Mercy Seat, for the forgiveness of sin, and at the end of the sacrifice a trumpet is blown at this feast (**Matt. 24:27-29**). Then the priest says God’s name. This is the only time in the entire year the name of God is spoken. Man meets God for judgment. This is the day the sanctuary is cleansed (**Lev. 16:16-21**). Note in **John 7:1-10**, that Jesus is present at this feast, and also feast # 7 (the next feast to come 5 days later), but later during this feast, and part way through feast # 7, Jesus remained in seclusion so as not to be killed too soon, as *His time was not yet* (**John 7:6-8**).

Part of the process, or rituals, of this feast (appointment), is the selection of the scapegoat (**Lev. 16**). Two goats for the sacrifice are selected. One goat would be killed, to cover, or atone, for our sins (offered to the Lord), and the other would be sent into the wilderness, cast out, to carry the sins away to be forever forgotten (out of sight—the “scapegoat”). The two goats are considered one single offering (**Lev. 16:5**). Jesus fulfilled the

purpose of both goat's sacrifice. Jesus paid with His blood (goat #1), and Jesus (goat #2), eliminated our sins. They are forgotten (**John 1:29; Isa. 53:6, 12; 1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Corin. 5:21**). To select which goat would be "For the Lord," and which would be "cast out," the high priest would place one goat on his right, and one on his left, and then he would draw out two tablets from an urn. The tablets had written on them either "For the Lord," or "For Azazel," meaning wilderness, or cast out. The Hebrew people considered it "good" if the priest's right hand drew out the tablet "For the Lord." It should be noted that after Christ's death in about 32 A.D., until the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. (as foretold by Jesus—**Matt. 24:1-2**), the Hebrew Mishnah (the Jewish commentaries on the Torah), tells us the priest drew out the "For Azazel" tablet with his right hand every single year, and this had never occurred before, and it meant the people's sins were not forgiven by this sacrifice.

Also, as part of the rituals, a red, or crimson, cloth was to be tied to the other goat, the scapegoat's horns. When it was time for this scapegoat to be cast out into the wilderness, the priest would take the red cloth, tear it in two, and put one part back on the goat, and put the other half on the door of the temple. If the red cloth turned from red to white on the temple door (signaling that the goat had died in the wilderness), this meant that God had accepted their sacrifices, and that their sins were forgiven. The Hebrew Mishnah tells us that from the time after Christ's death, until the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., the red cloth on the temple door stayed red, meaning, to the Jewish people, that their sins were not forgiven by this sacrifice.

People often question about the blood sacrifice. To many people this practice seems uncivilized. And, in fact, many of these blood sacrifices ceremonies are uncivilized, such as the human sacrifices, which were practiced by groups of people from all parts of the world. The human sacrifice was an imitation of God's plan. It must be noted that God's plan is just the opposite. God's plan does not call for human sacrifices. God's plan also does not call for anything wasteful. The sacrifices were to show the people the value of life, and to provide for God's forgiveness, and also to provide the food for the priestly tribes of Levi, so that animals and grain offerings were not wasted (**Lev. 7**).

Love is the word used in **John 3:16**, about the sacrifice of Jesus, "for God so loved." And, we know from **Hebrews 10:19-25**, that since Jesus has died, and has become our High Priest, that each of us can now enter into a personal relationship with God. The veil of the Holy of Holies, which used to separate the High Priest and God from the rest of the people, has now been torn (**Matt. 27:50-51**), and been done away with by Jesus, who is now our High Priest, meaning that we can each, individually, now have a personal relationship with God. In fact, Jesus requires us to have that personal relationship (**John 3:1-7, 14:6**).

The blood offerings were to point out the sacred value of human life. Today we slaughter thousands of animals each day in slaughter houses across the world in order to feed people. Here in God's plan, this function was accompanied by the solemn act of recognizing that life is precious. The sacrifice was public, not hidden in slaughter houses, as it is today. God tells us in **Leviticus 17:11**, and **Deuteronomy 12:23**, that life is in the blood. When we sacrifice an animal, we should recognize that its life is given so that we may live. Today we buy our hamburger wrapped in plastic and paper, and don't even think about the animal's life. God's plan was for us to recognize how precious life is.

Also, the sacrifice has a purpose beyond conveying how precious life is, and even beyond providing food for the tribe of Levi to eat, because the sacrifice of life points towards an inheritance. In order for us to receive our inheritance of eternal life in the Kingdom of God, our Creator must first die (which He did 2,000 years ago). Just as we don't receive an inheritance from a family member, until that family member dies, so it is with our inheritance of eternal life promised to those who trust in Jesus. Our creator Jesus (**John 1:3; Coll. 1:16; Heb. 1:2**), had to die physically so that we can now receive our inheritance (**Heb. 9:15-18**). We must remember that it is our sin which causes the need for the sacrifices. Our sin causes death. We are personally responsible.

So, God's plan is much better than today's slaughter houses. Under God's plan they actually felt the importance of life, while feeding thousands in the tribe of Levi. And, under God's plan, we can understand the need for Jesus to die, to pay for the debt of sin we owe, and so that we can inherit the eternal Kingdom of God. That inheritance is ours the moment we trust in Jesus for our salvation. When we trust in Christ, we become part of His family. If we never trust in Christ, we remain separated, isolated, forever. Even while we still

struggle on this planet, we become part of His Kingdom the very moment we trust Jesus, and God will guide us, if we submit to Him, to rule and lead our life.

For Christians, this feast # 6 also may have been prophetic of the exact same day that Jesus would have been in Jerusalem for the first time, having just been born **ten** days earlier (see feast # 5 – Feast of Trumpets), and then having been circumcised according to the covenant two days prior to this Feast of Atonement (**Gen. 17:1-14; Luke 2:21-39**). The circumcision is a type of “atonement” (blood sacrifice), covenant, and in this case, Jesus, as a baby, would fulfill God’s command for both the circumcision, as well as fulfilling the **ten** days of atonement (fulfilling the covenant), between the Feast of Trumpets (#5—Jesus’ birth), and this Feast of Atonement ten days later. All Jewish men were to be present in Jerusalem for this Feast of Atonement.

Why was God so specific about **10** days? Numbers have meaning in God’s Word. Numbers such as 3, 7, and 12 are special numbers for Israel. But, why **10** ?

And, when was the Book of Life opened ? Jewish **tradition** is that the Book of Life is opened at Feast #5. But Scripturally, the Book of Life is opened at the 7 day creation after 1/3rd of the host of heaven fell from Eden / Paradise (**Rev. 12:1-4** - see the book **Eden to Evil** @ Target Truth Ministries.com). This physical creation period (the 7 day creation), was designed by God for reconciliation, and the Book of Life has been open for all these years.

For Christians today, this feast may be prophetic of **10** days of waiting (**10** centuries - the Millennium – **Rev. 20**), on Jesus’ **final decision** about who is to be saved before the Book of Life is closed forever and sealed. Feast 5 is the 1st judgement (Matt. 13:24-30). This 2nd resurrection and judgement is Revelation 20. Jesus is the 1st and last (Rev. 1:1-11). The Millennium, or **10** day period between appointment #5 and this appointment #6 (when the Book of Life is finally closed), is a period of **10** centuries of **gleaning**. Even after the Final Harvest (#5) has ended there is still a small portion to save – to harvest. Who might be part of this gleaning? Those who never heard the call to Jesus (**Matt. 22:8-14, 24:14** – note both good and bad are to be called and invited to the wedding – to be joined to Jesus for all eternity). These include the aborted, the deceived like Islam and many others (request Study on **Millennium** @ **Target Truth Ministries.com.**) **This is God’s infinite wisdom and love revealed to us by providing not only for our own personal reconciliation, but also providing an answer for our mistakes and blunders where no church or gospel is presented (Matt. 24:14).**

If we carefully study God’s plan for the end times, we will see that the sacrifices, trumpets, and shouts, etc., are part of each of these harvest appointments in the fall, which includes this feast (#6), which is the final judgment.

Zechariah 14:4-5 – ‘On that day’ (Hebrew reference for ‘the last day’). He will make Himself known to all the nations (verse 4). He will stand on the Mount of Olives.

Acts 1:1-12 – Jesus will come back the way He left, from the Mount of Olives.

Matthew 24:27-29 – Jesus will come back in judgment.

Revelation 1:7 – Every eye will see Jesus.

Revelation 16:17-21 – The Day of the Lord – Bowl number seven.

Revelation 19 – Jesus comes from heaven with the host of heaven. This is the last day – the day of final judgment.

The books of life are closed on this day—God’s judgment determination having been made. There are now 5 dark days until the next appointment (perhaps those determined to be unrighteous will be taken—**Matt. 13:30**). It is interesting that Jesus wasn’t to be found during these 5 days (**John 7:1-13**).

FEAST # 7 – Lev. 23:34-24:3; Ex. 25:37, 27:20-21

Ingathering - Sukkot / Tabernacles / Booths

This feast (or appointment), is commonly called “*The Ingathering*” or **Sukkot** by the Jewish people (Hebrew-Sukkot = ingathering, English = Booths, Latin = Tabernacles). This is the final of the seven feasts, commanded by God to Moses. It is held five days after the Feast of Atonement (#6), when man meets God to be judged. It

is interesting that Jesus wasn't to be found during these 5 days (**John 7:2-11**). For the Jewish people this feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles, celebrates the end of their 40 years of being in the wilderness, and **arriving at the Promised Land**, and the new harvest which awaited them. You'll recall that in **Numbers 13:25**, that God had given Israel 40 days to scout out their Promised Land, but Israel would not *trust* in God to provide, so God condemned Israel to one year in the wilderness for each day they were allowed to see the land (**Numb. 14:33-34**). Solomon dedicated the Temple of God during this feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles because it represents Israel's arrival to the Promised Land (**1 Kings 8:1-32**).

Ingathering, or Tabernacles, is a seven-day feast, with a special Sabbath Holy Day on the eighth day. While in the wilderness, the Jewish people lived in temporary dwellings (tabernacles, shelters). And, the Jewish people, even today, will build tabernacles, or tree houses, and small temporary shelters, in their backyards, to remember this day. Then, on the last day, the eighth day, they leave their temporary dwelling, and **go into their permanent home—The Promised Land**. The Hebrew Rabbis say that on Feast #6 (Atonement), the judgment period of mankind is ended, and the books of life have been closed, and 5 days later, this Feast #7 is when the actual reward takes place for those whose names are in the books of life. This appointment celebrates God's forgiveness, and people praise God for reconciling with them and their eventual arrival into God's Promised Land.

The number 7 is very significant with this celebration as the number 7 for the Jewish people is the number of perfection—the plan of God perfected with this last appointment—# 7. Sacrifices for this seventh appointment are in multiples of seven...70 bulls, 14 rams, 98 lambs, and 336 ephahs of flour. The 70 bulls are representative of *all* nations—the 70 nations from Noah (**Genesis 10**).

The Transfiguration with Jesus (**Matt. 17:1-8**), occurred during this feast, indicating that a transfiguration could be linked with it. Also, it was during this feast that Jesus declared He was the source of living water (**John 7:2, 37-38, 4:13-14, 25-26**). There is involved in this feast a daily procession from the temple to the pool of Siloam. This drawing of water from the pool was to commemorate the gift of water from God, at Mt. Horeb, while Israel was in the desert (**Ex. 17:1-7**). In **Isaiah 12:1-3**, God tells us that “In that day” (which is a common Hebrew reference to the last day -- the day the Messiah—the Christ, comes to end the suffering of this world), that “with joy we will draw water from the wells of salvation.” And, get this, the word “salvation” in the Hebrew, is the word *yeshua*—Jesus. It would seem that this feast period represents a perfect period of dwelling with Jesus, the living water—the promised land.

As night sets on day one of this appointment of Ingathering, four candlesticks which have been erected at the Temple (each 75 feet tall), with large bowls on top filled with tens of gallons of oil, are lit, and burn during the night hours (think Olympic Torch). These lite up the Temple area and the surrounding area of Jerusalem like daylight (no more night—**Zech. 14:6-9; Rev. 21:10,22-27**). It is during this feast that Jesus declared Himself to be the Light of the world, as well as the source of Living Water – the Water of salvation (**John 7:37-39, 8:12, 9:1-7** - see also **John 4:7-26**). Each day during this week, the priests bring the water from the pool of Shalom to the Temple, and circle the altar once, and pour the water on the altar. On the seventh (last), day, the priests circle the altar seven times, and pour the water out as the *trumpets* blow and they *shout* (**Josh. 6:1-5**—a reminder of how God delivered Israel to the Promised Land).

Then, after these seven days there will be an eighth day. The eighth day in the Jewish tradition is known as the day of “new beginnings,” or in this case, it possibly represents the new heaven and earth (**Rev. 21-22**). In **Ezekiel 45:21-25** and **Zechariah 14:16-19**, God tells us that in the millennium, all nations will celebrate this feast of tabernacles, or ingathering (a memorial of being delivered to salvation, from wandering lost in the world).

The fact is, that Jesus has actually already fulfilled the first *four* feasts (or appointments), exactly, on the very day that God gave them to Moses (3,500 years ago), to be celebrated by all generations. There is also the strong possibility that Jesus may have actually fulfilled these *last* three feasts, when He came the *first* time (Jesus birth announced on day of Trumpets—Feast #5--Jesus circumcision and presence at the Temple during the

Atonement—Feast #6--and this feast #7, when Jesus declared He is the Light and Water—**John 4:13-14, 25-26, 7:37-39, 8:12, 9:1-7**).

Let us recall that Jesus came to “tabernacle” (dwell) with us (**John 1:1, 14** – the word *dwell* actually means tabernacle), when God took the form of flesh, and came into this world (**Philip. 2:5-8; John 1:1-18**). Jesus, as a baby, most likely would have been in Jerusalem for this High Holy Day. All Israel was to be present in Jerusalem for this day. Also, in **Revelation 21:3**, Jesus tells us that He will “tabernacle,” or dwell, with us again in the age to come.

Jesus will also fulfill these last three feasts when He returns, to judge the world, to raise up the saved, and to usher in the millennium (the 1,000 years of His reign on earth). **Colossians 2:16-17** states that these festivals and holy days are *a shadow of things to come*. This means that God does expect us to be watchful, to be prepared, and to treat our sharing of the Word with others as **urgent**.

Some might say that if Jesus already fulfilled these last three feasts when He came the first time (His birth at feast # 5...and as an adult at this appointment of ingathering, declaring Himself to be the Light and Water--feast # 7, etc.), what would be the reason for fulfilling them again in a future judgment? It should be noted that these last three feasts, which begin with feast number five (New Year's - trumpets), are celebrated as both *the beginning and the end*. **Feast number five is recognized as the beginning (the New Year), but it is also recognized as the end -- the final harvest period**. So, perhaps, Jesus will fulfill it as both the beginning (His birth), and the end (His return), for the final harvest. Jesus called Himself the beginning and the end (**Rev. 1:8**).

At the end of this week of celebrating (on the 7th day), trumpets are blown (*the very last trumpets of these seven feasts*--just before the 8th day begins—**Zech. 14:6-9; Matt. 24:30-31; 1 Corin. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:15-18**).

So, what year will Jesus return? See **2068** @ Target Truth Ministries.com. Seems like it might be soon, doesn't it? Well, in **2 Thessalonians 2:1-3**, it states that the end will not come until the apostasy comes first. In other words, before Christ returns, many people will depart from faith in Jesus—churches will experience downsizing. As we look around our community, we see churches that were once filled—sometimes needing two services a day. But today the churches are struggling to keep the roof repaired. In Europe (once the very center of Christianity), the churches are so empty that many of them are now being converted to bed and breakfast inns, and even Islamic Mosques. Even so, God would have those of us who are left to persevere. We are to stand firm for Christ. The harvest is not quite complete. There are still a few left to harvest (see study **“True or False”** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

Whether you think of the end times (or the end of the world), as coming during your lifetime, or whether you will die one day from an accident, heart disease, or old age...your days are numbered. Each of us is in our personal “end of days.” God wants no one to be separated from the kingdom of God, and He has already paid the price of sin for all who will trust in Him. God freely offers us eternal life in His kingdom, if we will trust in Jesus (**John 14:6**). Trust is the key. Jesus will deny “good people” who don't put their trust in Him—those who don't place Jesus at the center and core--the priority of their lives (**Matt. 7:21-23, 25:1-13**—note that half of the so-called believers were not really ready...and they perished).

God loves you. And, thank God he loves me, too—a sinner saved by grace. God forgives any who will *trust* in Him, even me. God wants no one to perish. The question is, how much do we truly love God? For those of us who do *not love* God, and do *not trust* in Him, a divorce awaits—separation, isolation, living alone--forever.

It is my prayer that we will all “tabernacle” with Jesus—and none will be separated out at the ingathering.

One last thought...Islamic prophecy states the Christian Anti-Christ will actually be a future Jewish Messiah – (not Jesus). Islamic prophecy states we are in the last 120 years of this earth age. The end will be in the year 1,500 on the Islamic calendar (**2076** on the western calendar). The Last Days then for Islam began in 1956, exactly in the midst of 1948 and 1967. On, or before, the year **2076**, Islam expects that many living will see Jesus, or the 12th Iman (Mahdi), return to the earth, to conquer the Jews and Christians in the final holy war, and establish Islam as the rule of the earth. The year 2006 for Islam has seen the last generation born before the end

(as a generation is 70 years), and it is the duty of this generation to finish the command of Allah, and eliminate the Christian and Jewish presence. It has been declared that the final Imam was born in 2006, and is now in preparation for the final judgment. Present day Islamic teaching state that **Ezekiel 38:5-6** confirms that Iran / Persia, is to lead the assault on Israel...Iran, being the first country listed by God in this passage, and therefore the significant one.

Note...As to the period of time of this last generation, we read within the context of the biblical prophecy in **Matthew 24:37**, that the coming will be like the days of Noah, where God declared 120 years as the maximum limit of time which God would tarry with man, which means Jesus could return any time before **2068**, 120 years after 1948. Jesus said He will shorten the time of the end (Matt.24:22), so no one knows the time of Jesus' return, but we are to keep watch! **Islam** has a date of **2076** for the end. **NATO** alliance of nations has a treaty in place which is due to expire around **2030**. We need to keep watch...even if Christians, or Israel, might ignore this date...perhaps Islam won't!

Target Truth Ministries.com