

God Has Revealed Himself

April 9, 2017

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 12:1-3

That promise flowed from Abraham to God's chosen people, and because of that promise, we too have been blessed. The Church does not replace Israel, but is an extension of the promise given to Abraham.

The Genealogy of Jesus. - Matthew 1:1-17

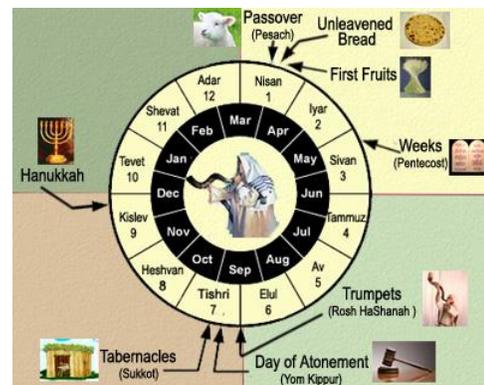
Being grafted in. - Romans 11:11-23

God's Church was God's plan from the beginning. - Matthew 16:13-18 and Acts 2:40-47

Today as we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we look back but also we look forward.

It was on Mount Sinai that God gave Moses the dates and observances of the seven feasts. Here are their names:

1. Passover (*Pesach*) - *Nisan 14-15*
2. Unleavened Bread (*Chag Hamotzi*) - *Nisan 15-22*
3. First Fruits (*Yom habikkurim*) - *Nisan 16-17*
4. Pentecost (*Shavu'ot*) - *Sivan 6-7*
5. Trumpets (*Yom Teru'ah*) - *Tishri 1*
6. Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) - *Tishri 10*
7. Tabernacles (*Sukkot*) - *Tishri 15-22*



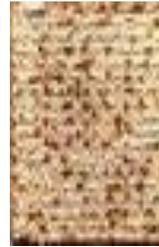
When do they happen? God's calendar is based on the phases of the moon. Each month in a lunar calendar begins with a new moon. Pesach falls on the first full moon of Spring. The first three feasts, Pesach, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits fall in March and April. The fourth one, Shavu'ot, marked the summer harvest and occurs in late May or early June. The last three feasts, Trumpets, Yom Kippur and Sukkot happen in September and October.

The Spring Feasts:

1. **Passover (*Pesach*)**. Leviticus 23:5 specifies that the festival year begins with Passover on "the fourteenth day of the first month" (Nisan 15). Passover is the Feast of Salvation. In both testaments, the blood of the Lamb delivers from slavery – the Jew from Egypt, the Christian from sin. Think about the tenth plague in Exodus 12:5 when Egypt's first born sons died while the angel of death "passed over" the Jewish homes with the blood of the lamb on their door posts. In the *B'rit Chadashah*, Jesus serves as the sacrificial lamb. It is no coincidence that our Lord Himself was sacrificed on Passover. In Egypt the Jew marked his house with the blood of the lamb. Today the Christian marks his house – his body, "the house of the spirit" with the blood of Christ. Passover, then, represents our salvation.



2. **Unleavened Bread (*Chag HaMotzi*)**. Leviticus 23:6 puts the second feast on the next night: "On the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread." Leaven or yeast in the Bible symbolized sin and evil. Unleavened bread, eaten over a period of time, symbolized a holy walk, as with the Lord. Unleavened bread, in the B'rit Chadashah [New Testament] is, of course, the body of our Lord. He is described as "the Bread of Life" (*Lechem haChayim*). He was born in Bethlehem, which, in Hebrew, means, "House of Bread" (*Bet Lechem*).



Look at the matzah and see that it is striped: "By His stripes we are healed"; pierced: "They shall look upon me whom they've pierced," and pure, without any leaven, as His body was without any sin. And the Passover custom of burying, hiding and then resurrecting the second of three pieces of matzot (the middle piece), presents the Gospel (*Afikomen*).

3. **First Fruits (*Reshit Katzir*)**. "On the morrow after the Sabbath" following Unleavened Bread, Leviticus 23:11 schedules First Fruits, the feast for acknowledging the fertility of the land He gave the Israelites. They were to bring the early crops of their spring planting and "wave the sheaf before the Lord." The modern church has come to call this feast "Easter," named after *Ishtar*, the pagan goddess of fertility. We continue to revere objects of fertility such as the rabbit and the egg, but the First Fruits celebration was to be over God's replanting of the earth in the spring. Today this feast celebrates the resurrection of the Lord on First Fruits, which indeed occurred (plus, eventually, the resurrection of the entire Church!)



4. **Pentecost (*Shavu'ot*)**. Leviticus 23:16 says, "Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord." In late May or early June, Shavu'ot marked the summer harvest. Leviticus 23:17 requires an offering of two loaves of bread, *baked with leaven*. These loaves symbolize the church being comprised of both Jew and Gentile.



A review of the first four [spring] feasts reveals that Yeshua was crucified on Pesach, buried on Unleavened Bread, raised on First Fruits and sent the *Ruach Hakkodesh (Holy Spirit)* on Shavu'ot. Because we have not yet seen the fulfillment of feast number five - Trumpets - we remain under the orders of Shavu'ot.¹

Just like Israel, the Church was not an afterthought, but God's plan to carry the light to a dark world and for us to grow and encourage each other.

Prayer Focus:

- Be reminded of the rich history of Israel and the rich history of God's Church and overall plan.
- Express thankfulness that you are a part of God's Church if you are a Believer.
- Commit to being an important part of God's Church.

¹ <http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Holidays/Introduction/introduction.html>