

The Appointed Times of the LORD

Download PDF ↓

Leviticus 23, walked one feast at a time

Leviticus 23 gathers Israel's sacred calendar into a single chapter. The LORD calls these moedim — appointed times. Each feast had a date, a meaning, and a ritual; together they shaped Israel's year and prefigured what Christ would accomplish. This spoke walks each feast as Scripture describes it. New-Testament correspondences are named only where Scripture itself names them.

The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying, *Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD's appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations — My appointed times are these.'*

Leviticus 23:1-2 · NASB

The Sacred Calendar at a Glance

Leviticus 23 · ordered by month, with the Sabbath named first

Feast	Date	Season	What Happens
Sabbath	Every 7th day	<i>all year</i>	A day of complete rest; the weekly rhythm under which all the others sit
Passover	Nisan 14	<i>spring</i>	The lamb killed at twilight; Israel remembers Egypt
Unleavened Bread	Nisan 15–21	<i>spring</i>	Seven days; no leaven in the house; the haste of the exodus
Firstfruits	Day after the Sabbath	<i>spring</i>	A sheaf of the barley harvest waved before the LORD
Weeks (Pentecost)	50 days later	<i>late spring</i>	Two loaves of new grain waved; the wheat harvest
Trumpets	Tishri 1	<i>fall</i>	A blast of trumpets; a holy convocation; no work
Atonement	Tishri 10	<i>fall</i>	The whole nation afflicted; the high priest enters the Most Holy
Booths (Tabernacles)	Tishri 15–22	<i>fall</i>	Seven days dwelling in temporary shelters; the fall harvest gathered

EVERY 7TH DAY

The Sabbath

Shabbat · the rest

Leviticus 23:3 · Genesis 2:1–3 · Exodus 20:8–11

Leviticus 23 begins not with an annual feast but with the weekly Sabbath. Six days work shall be done; the seventh is a complete rest, a holy convocation. The Sabbath was instituted at creation when God rested from His work and sanctified the day; it was given a second time at Sinai as the fourth commandment.

Every other appointed time in Leviticus 23 sits inside this weekly rhythm. The harvest sheaf is waved on the day after the Sabbath. Pentecost is counted out by Sabbaths. The Sabbath is the cornerstone of the calendar.

For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.

— Leviticus 23:3

WHAT THE NT NAMES

Hebrews 4 takes up the Sabbath theme and identifies the *true rest*: *there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His* (Heb 4:9–10).

The author of Hebrews reads the weekly Sabbath as a shadow of the rest believers enter through Christ.

NISAN 14 · SPRING

Passover

Pesach · the passing-over

Leviticus 23:4–5 · Exodus 12

On the tenth day of the first month each household took a lamb without blemish. On the fourteenth at twilight the lamb was killed and its blood applied to the doorposts and lintel. That night Egypt's firstborn died; Israel's firstborn lived under the blood of the lamb.

Leviticus 23 condenses Exodus 12 into one verse: *the LORD's Passover is in the first month, on the fourteenth of the month at twilight*. The fuller account is given there; the calendar names the date.

WHAT THE NT NAMES

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7). Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Christ was crucified on Passover. The Nisan 10–14 sequence Israel walked every year was the rehearsal of His final week.

III

NISAN 15–21 · SPRING

Unleavened Bread

Hag haMatzot · the feast of unleavened cakes

Leviticus 23:6–8 · Exodus 12:15–20

For seven days Israel ate no leaven. On the fifteenth of the first month — the day after Passover — the feast began; the first day and the seventh day were holy convocations with no work. The bread of haste, eaten on the night of the exodus, was eaten again every year for a week.

Leaven in Scripture often represents what permeates and spreads silently. To put leaven out of the house for seven days was to act out a thoroughgoing separation — not just one symbolic step but a sustained cleansing.

For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.

— Leviticus 23:6–7

WHAT THE NT NAMES

Paul cites this feast directly: *Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:8).* The feast is read as a picture of the kind of life that follows Passover — the life Christ's death brings about in His people.

IV

DAY AFTER THE SABBATH · SPRING

Firstfruits

Bikkurim · the first sheaf

Leviticus 23:9–14

When Israel entered the land and reaped its harvest, they were to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of their harvest to the priest. The priest waved the sheaf before the LORD on the day after the Sabbath. Until that sheaf was waved, no one in Israel ate of the new grain.

It was the first installment of the barley harvest — the pledge that the rest of the harvest was coming. The single sheaf consecrated the whole field.

He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

— Leviticus 23:11

WHAT THE NT NAMES

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep... But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming (1 Cor 15:20–23). Christ rose on the day after the Sabbath — the very day the firstfruits sheaf was waved. His resurrection is the pledge that those who belong to Him will follow.

V

50 DAYS AFTER FIRSTFRUITS · LATE SPRING

Weeks (Pentecost)

Shavuot · the feast of weeks

Leviticus 23:15–22

Seven full weeks were counted from the day of the firstfruits sheaf. On the fiftieth day Israel brought a new grain offering — two loaves of fine flour, baked *with leaven*, waved before the LORD. The barley harvest had begun with one sheaf; the wheat harvest closed with two loaves.

The Greek name *Pentecost* means simply *fiftieth*. The feast was a harvest celebration and a holy convocation; no laborious work was done. Verse 22 closes with the LORD's command not to reap to the corners of the field — the harvest is for the poor and the foreigner.

WHAT THE NT NAMES

Acts 2 opens: *when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.* The Spirit was poured out, three thousand were added to the Lord, and the New Testament church began — on the same day Israel had been bringing the two loaves of the new grain for centuries. The first installment of one harvest became the first installment of another.

VI

TISHRI 1 · FALL

Trumpets

Yom Teruah · the day of blowing

Leviticus 23:23–25 · Numbers 29:1–6

On the first day of the seventh month, the trumpets sounded. It was a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation; no laborious work was done. An offering by fire was presented to the LORD. The trumpets summoned the people to the assembly and announced the most solemn month of the calendar — the month that held both the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Booths.

In the seventh month on the first of the month, you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.

— Leviticus 23:24

WHAT THE NT NAMES – AND DOES NOT NAME

The New Testament does not identify a specific event in Christ's ministry or in the apostolic church with Trumpets the way it does with Passover, Firstfruits, and Pentecost. Trumpets do appear in resurrection and end-time passages (1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16; Rev 8–11) but Scripture itself does not draw the line from those trumpets back to *Yom Teruah*. The honest reading is that Trumpets stands in Leviticus 23 as part of the sacred calendar without an explicit NT fulfillment narrative.

VII

TISHRI 10 · FALL

The Day of Atonement

Yom Kippur · the day of covering

Leviticus 23:26–32 · Leviticus 16

The most solemn day of the year. Israel humbled their souls; no work of any kind was done; anyone who did not afflict his soul was cut off from the people. The high priest performed the great atonement at the mercy seat — two goats, the bull, the blood, the scapegoat, the cleansing of the sanctuary. The whole nation stopped while the priest went in.

Leviticus 23 names the day; Leviticus 16 details the ritual.

WHAT THE NT NAMES

Hebrews 9–10 reads the Day of Atonement as the type fulfilled in Christ's once-for-all sacrifice. *He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption* (Heb 9:12).

Booths (Tabernacles)

Sukkot • the feast of booths

Leviticus 23:33–43

For seven days Israel dwelt in temporary shelters of branches — *sukkot* — to remember that the LORD made their fathers live in booths when He brought them out of Egypt. The fall harvest was gathered; the year's produce was secured. The first day and the eighth day were holy convocations.

It was the most joyful of the appointed times. The LORD commanded Israel: *you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days* (Lev 23:40). The booths were a deliberate remembering — the gathered harvest sitting alongside the picture of homelessness, lest Israel forget who brought them in.

You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt.

— Leviticus 23:42–43

WHAT THE NT NAMES – AND DOES NOT NAME

Christ taught at the Feast of Booths in John 7 and made the day's great water-pouring ceremony the occasion of His cry: *if anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink* (John 7:37–38). But the NT does not identify Booths with a specific event in Christ's death-and-resurrection week the way it does with the spring feasts. Some have read John 1:14 (*the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us*) as an echo of the Tabernacle, not of *Sukkot* specifically. The honest reading is that Booths stands in Leviticus 23 with a powerful theology of pilgrim joy and harvest, without an explicit NT fulfillment narrative.

Shadow and Substance

What the apostles taught about these days for the church

The Old Testament gives us the calendar. The New Testament gives us the verdict on what these days mean for the church.

For four of the appointed times — Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost — the New Testament names an explicit fulfillment, on the very day, in the events of Christ's death, resurrection, and the founding of the church. For the others — Sabbath, Trumpets, Atonement, Booths — the NT speaks more broadly: Hebrews 4 (Sabbath rest), Hebrews 9–10 (Atonement), and the inferential resonances of Booths. Trumpets stands without a named fulfillment.

What Scripture does not do is build an elaborate end-time scheme on top of the unfulfilled feasts. The apostles' one explicit teaching on the calendar for Christians is Paul's:

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink, or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day — things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

— Colossians 2:16–17

Paul names the calendar — festival, new moon, Sabbath — and reads the whole of it as *shadow*. The substance is Christ. Where Scripture names a fulfillment in Christ, we read it gratefully. Where Scripture does not name one, we do not invent one.

The appointed times of the LORD are gifts. They taught Israel to mark the year by what the LORD had done; they pictured what the Messiah would do; and they pointed forward to a substance now arrived.

Notes on this study — framing, language, and what was deliberately left out

Why the title is “The Appointed Times of the LORD”

Leviticus 23:2, 4, 37, and 44 all call these days *moedim YHWH* — the LORD's appointed times. That is the title the chapter gives itself. Some traditions emphasize a count (“seven feasts”) and build prophetic schemes around it. The Sabbath is named first in Leviticus 23 and stands apart from the seven annual feasts; the count is biblical (seven annual *moedim*) but the prophetic scaffolding popularly built on it is not. This study uses the chapter's own title to keep the focus on what is in the text.

What was deliberately left out

Two streams of teaching go further than this study does: (1) a prophetic mapping of the fall feasts to the second coming (Trumpets = rapture, Atonement = Israel's national repentance, Booths = the millennial reign), and (2) a prescriptive claim that Christians remain obligated to observe the calendar. Neither stream comes from the text of Leviticus 23 or from the apostles' teaching. Both are added later. They are honest topics for further study but they belong in a separate conversation, not in a walk through Leviticus 23.

What about the Trumpets and Booths question?

The honest answer is: Scripture itself does not name an explicit fulfillment for these in Christ's first coming, and Scripture itself does not predict an explicit fulfillment in His second coming. The trumpet that sounds at the resurrection (1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16) and the trumpets of Revelation are not connected by any NT writer back to *Yom Teruah*; the connection is inferred. We can say what Scripture says with confidence and leave the rest as honest uncertainty.

Companion spokes

The **Lamb God Provides** spoke traces the Passover lamb image from Abel through Calvary. The **Day of Atonement** spoke steps through the Leviticus 16 ritual in detail. The **Tabernacle** spoke shows the floor plan where every offering of this calendar took place. **The Last Week of the Lamb**, on this site, examines Christ's death in light of Exodus 12 chronology.

Primary Source: The Holy Bible — Leviticus 23; Leviticus 16; Exodus 12; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8; 1 Corinthians 15:20–23; Acts 2; Hebrews 4, 9–10; Colossians 2:16–17

A deep-dive companion to the Noble Mind Study Old Testament Timeline · [The Lamb God Provides](#) · [The Day of Atonement](#) · [The Tabernacle](#) · [Return to the timeline](#)