

### Jewish Holidays

In Leviticus 23, God commanded Moses to set apart specific times of rest and celebration. These festivals were either one or seven days long, and centered on remembering what God had done and will do for His people. Each feast has great significance to the Jewish people as well as to each believer in Christ Jesus, for each feast pointed to Christ Himself. The first four feasts have been fulfilled in Christ's first coming and the last three will be fulfilled with His second.

**Passover** commemorates God's protection of the Israelites' firstborn sons in Egypt. For Christians, Christ who was crucified at Passover is our "Passover Lamb."

**Feast of Unleavened Bread** immediately following. is a remembrance where Jewish people eat bread without yeast, recalling how they had to leave Egypt in haste. For believers, it represents Christ's sinless body that was placed in the tomb yet didn't see decay.

**Firstfruits** is a celebration where the Jews bring to God the first and best from their grain. For Christians, Christ is our firstfruits (1 Corinthians 15:20-23), because He rose from the dead, and we will, too.

**Feast of Weeks (or Pentecost)** is celebrated 50 days following Firstfruits to show thankfulness for the completion of the wheat harvest. Believers relate this holiday to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5, 2:4).

**Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)** which means "the head of the year" and includes the blowing of trumpets, is a time of reflection and resolution. This holiday has many connotations for Christians, including the coming of the Messiah to rapture His Church.

**The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)** is a holy, somber day when the priests atone for the sins of the people and send a scapegoat into the wilderness. This holiday relates directly to Christ's second coming and the final judgment.

**The Feast of Tabernacles** celebrates the time of God's protection in the desert wilderness. Christians look to the promise that one day we will be gathered to the Lord and dwell with Him forever.

The Jewish people later added two other celebrations to commemorate God's mighty hand of protection—**Purim**, where God protected His people through Queen Esther; and **Hanukkah**, where the Temple was restored in 167 B.C.