

THE SACRED FEAST DAYS OF YHWH ELOHIM

A GLORIOUS TEMPLATE OF YHWH'S ENTIRE PLAN OF REDEMPTION FOR THE EARTH

BY YA'ACOV NATAN (LAWRENCE) BEN ALAS OF HOSHANA RABBAH MESSIANIC COMMUNITY
(503) 570-3376 • hoshanarabbah@earthlink.net • <http://home.earthlink.net/~hoshanarabbah/>

If you had to sum up the entire message of the Bible in one word what would it be? Probably words such as love, hope, salvation, eternal life or heaven are coming to your mind. But I challenge you to find a better word than the following: r-e-c-o-n-c-i-l-i-a-t-i-o-n. The dictionary defines *reconciliation* as “to restore to friendship or harmony, to settle or resolve a quarrel, to make consistent or congruous.” When man chose to rebel against YHWH and to give in to sin at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil at the very beginning he chose the path of separation from his Heavenly Father. Sin causes man to be separated from a totally holy, righteous and sinless Creator. Since that time YHWH has been endeavoring to reconcile man to himself. He has laid out criteria for man to follow for this to occur — for man to once again have a friendly, loving and intimate relationship with his Heavenly Father as did Adam before he sinned.

The Holy Feast Days of YHWH are prophetic shadow-pictures or symbols of the steps man must take to be reconciled to his Heavenly Father. They are the complete plan of salvation or redemption rolled up into seven easy-to-understand steps. Though a child can understand these steps, the truths contained therein can at the same time be expanded and unfolded until one literally has rolled out before oneself the entire message of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation — a message which to the human comprehension is staggering, deep and rich beyond understanding. These Feast Days are literally the skeletal structure upon which the truths of the entire Bible hang. The message of redemption, sanctification, salvation, the atonement, glorification, eschatology, the history of Israel, the entire Gospel message, the covenants, the marriage of the Lamb, the Bride of Messiah and Yeshua the Messiah are all prefigured within the glorious spiritual container of YHWH's Holy Feast Days contained in seven steps — seven being the biblical number of divine perfection and completion.

Quite assuredly, without a deep, walking-it-out comprehension of the Feast Days of YHWH, no matter how learned one is in biblical understanding, or how academically astute and mentally acute in biblical erudition one may be, one will not have a deep understanding of those scriptural subjects listed above. For example, there is no way to understand end-time events such as the Second Coming, the Great Tribulation and the rapture unless one understands the Feast Days from a deep Hebraic perspective. One simply cannot have *just* a knowledge of Greek, the Gospels, the Apostolic Writings along with a surface understanding (i.e., traditional Christian perspective) of the prophecies of the “Old Testament” and expect to understand eschatology (the study of end-time events) unless one understands and keeps the Feast Days of YHWH. Spiritual pride may not allow one to handle this truth, but it is the truth, none the less, so deal with it! One cannot throw out the foundation or the skeletal structure and expect to have a body of understanding that amounts to anything at all. Simple logic and common sense and the very truth and character of YHWH Elohim demands and dictates this so.

At Mt. Sinai YHWH gave to his people Israel what is commonly called the “Ten Commandments.” These words from the mouth of YHWH himself were and are literally the foundation and cornerstone to the rest of the 613 commandments from YHWH given to man through Moses contained in the Torah or Pentateuch. The Jewish rabbis have understood this for thousands of years. For example, the prohibition against adultery includes not only marital infidelity, but all manner of sexual sin, for the cornerstone of sexual holiness is a righteous and undefiled marital union. The same can be said of all the other commands. From these ten statements or foundational principles are prefigured and spring forth all 613. Similarly, within the confines of the fourth commandment, the seventh day Sabbath, are contained all the High Sabbath Holy Feast Days of YHWH as well as the land Sabbaths,

sabbatical and jubilee years. We are talking Hebraic thought here. If we are to understand Scripture we had best get accustomed to Hebraic thought, for the entire Bible was written by Hebrews who thought Hebraically! The point is, the Feast Days are embodied in the very “Ten Commandments” themselves. These Sabbaths were so vital in YHWH’s eyes and so fundamental to his relationship with his people that he said that they would be, in essence, the wedding ring that he and Israel would wear around their respective fingers symbolic of their covenantal (marital) agreement, for we read the following in Exodus 31:13,

Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am YHWH that doth sanctify you.

Please note that the word *Sabbaths* is in the plural. It refers not only to the weekly, seventh day Sabbath, but to all the Sabbaths of YHWH, including his holy Feast Days. These days are so important that they would actually form the basis for his reconciliatory relationship with his people throughout their generations which means FOREVER!

Now with these preliminary statements made we encourage you to read on to further explore the rich truths of these days. You will be blessed. How can you not be, the words and truths of YHWH Elohim, your Creator and Heavenly Father in whose image you were created and who loves you beyond your wildest comprehension — his words are words of life and truth. Be blessed!

Why Study and Celebrate the Feast Days?

- 1) The Feasts are a prophetic shadow-picture of things to come (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:1). When they were given to ancient Israel they pointed forward to future events that would occur to the nation of Israel. The spring Feast Days, for example, pointed to Messiah’s first coming while the fall Feast Days point to his second coming leading into the Messianic Age (Millennium) and into eternity beyond.
- 2) All the Feast Days point to Yeshua. The name *Yeshua* means *salvation* and these days all point to the various steps of the path of salvation that Believers find themselves on.
- 3) Many of the Feast Days point back to historical events that occurred in Israel’s history from which we can learn lessons and which are representative of our own spiritual journey (1 Cor. 10:1-6,11).
- 4) The Scriptures call the Holy Day festivals *appointed times* that the people of YHWH are commanded to observe. They are times when he will meet with his people (Lev. 23:1-2,4). It is at these festivals or commanded assemblies that YHWH teaches his people about his wonderful plan of salvation or redemption of the world through Yeshua the Messiah.
- 5) The Feasts are in the Bible and the whole Bible is the inspired word of Elohim (2 Tim. 3:16).
- 6) The Feast Days set forth the pattern of heavenly things on earth (Heb. 8:1-2,5; 9:8-9,23; Exod. 25:8-9,40; 26:30; Num. 8:4; Ezek. 43:1-6, 10-12).
- 7) We as physical beings need physical means and methods to help us understand spiritual things. YHWH gives us the natural to help us to understand the supernatural (spiritual) (1 Cor. 2:9-13).

The Feast Days Represent the Seven Steps of YHWH’s Plan of Redemption/Salvation For Mankind — A Quick Overview

- 1) **Passover (Pesach)** — The first Feast Day in YHWH’s glorious lineup in the steps of redemption is Pesach which occurs in the early spring of the year at the time of the rebirth of the creation after a long and dead winter season. Likewise, it was the time of the birth of the nation of Israel. The Children of Israel had been enslaved in Egypt for many years, but they could not extricate themselves from the death grip of Pharaoh, a picture of Satan, without some help from above. YHWH heard their cries of anguish, told them to sacrifice a lamb and smear the blood on the doors of their homes. This they did by faith and YHWH extended his grace and mercy upon them, caused the angel of YHWH to pass over their homes and as they were delivered from the wages of their sins which is death at the same time the Egyptians received judgment unto death because they were not under the blood of the lamb. Israel was now free to leave Egypt.

Spiritually one must leave the world (spiritual Egypt), a place of spiritual oppression and slavery, darkness and false religion. It is the realm or kingdom of Satan, the prince of death. One cannot leave the kingdom of darkness on one's own strength. One cannot free oneself from slavery to the strong tyrants and masters of this world, the flesh or the devil. A greater power than these must deliver us from these slave masters who maintain humans in their death grip. Only by the blood of the Lamb of YHWH smeared on the doorposts and lintels (our actions and thoughts) of our houses (our lives) will the death angel pass over us, for Yeshua the Lamb of YHWH defeated the enemy at the cross and defeated the death sentence or death grip of sin by resurrecting from the grave on the third day after his death (Col. 2:12-15). The Israelites, by faith, trusted in the blood of the Lamb and by YHWH's grace their sins were not credited to their account, but were forgiven causing the death angel to pass over. At that time they physically began to leave Egypt.

- 2) **Days of Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzot)** — The Israelites left Egypt on the first day of this seven-day long festival. Leaving Egypt was a relatively simple process, but now began the process of “getting Egypt out of them.” Dying to self and overcoming all the sinful habits in our lives is a process. We cannot do this of our own efforts but need the redeeming work of Messiah. This is illustrated during this feast by YHWH's command to remove all the physical leavening from our homes. Leavening is a type of sin and pride since yeast causes bread to rise and puff up. The sin of pride and hypocrisy leads one to believe that one is in a better spiritual state than one actually is. This is the state of spiritual delusion in which humans naturally find themselves. YHWH has given men six days (6000 years) to come to realize this. The seventh day of this week-long festival is a High Sabbath day which pictures YHWH's Messianic Age (Millennium) when humans will be living in harmony with YHWH and resting in the saving work of blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. It represents victory over sin (leavening). Israel celebrated the Passover in the promised land then marched around Jericho for six days. On the seventh day, the walls of Jericho came down!
- 3) **The Feast of Weeks, Feast of First Fruits or Pentecost (Shavuot)** — This is the third of the seven festivals of YHWH and occurs in the late spring of the year. Humans are not able to remove sin from their own lives by their own efforts anymore than one can pull oneself up by one's own bootstraps. Sin is too much a part of our mind, will and emotions. We need the working and enabling power of the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) in our lives to bring sin to light and to help us to overcome it. This happens as we begin to feed upon the Word of YHWH/Yeshua the Messiah and little-by-little our lives come into conformity with that Word or with the life of Yeshua — the Word of YHWH made flesh (John. 1:14; Rom. 8:29). This is pictured by the Children of Israel receiving the words and instructions on how to live a holy and sanctified life (contained in the Torah-law) of YHWH Elohim at Mt. Sinai during the Feast of Weeks. This was repeated during the Apostolic Era on the Day of Pentecost as Yeshua promised to send the Comforter to live inside of Believers aiding them at arriving at the truth of YHWH (John. 14-16). This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts. 2).
- 4) **The Day of Trumpets (Yom Teruah or commonly called Rosh Hoshana)** — This is the fourth Holy Day festival of YHWH Elohim and hence the fourth step in his plan of salvation. Yom Teruah occurs in the late summer or early fall season of the year. The spring Feast Days all relate to the work Yeshua accomplished on the earth at his first coming while the fall Feast Days (of which Yom Teruah is the first) picture the work he will do on earth prior to and after his second coming. This day pictures the beginning of the Great Tribulation period just prior to the return of Yeshua the Messiah. This festival also pictures the time when Messiah is calling his bride, born-again Believers, to ready themselves spiritually for the return of Yeshua, the Bridegroom. The call will go out for her to come out of the world, to fill her lamp with the oil of the Ruach HaKodesh and to put on robes of righteousness in preparation for the marriage supper of the Lamb. During the ten-day period between this High Day and the next High Day (Yom Kippur) is when the Great Tribulation occurs and when many will be saved out of this tribulation (the Great and Innumerable Multitude — Rev. 7:9). After the tribulation period — which terminates with the blowing of the seventh trumpet (in Hebraic thought called *the Last Trumpet*) the resurrection of the righteous dead and the catching away of the righteous living occurs (Rev. 11:14-18 and 12:10 with Matt. 24:29-31). This occurs before the Wrath of Elohim (the Bowl Judgments of Rev. 15-16).
- 5) **The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)** — This fifth of the seven festivals of YHWH occurs ten days after the Day of Trumpets. This day pictures when the end of the age (man's 6000 years upon earth to live in sin

and rebellion against YHWH) will come to a completion. This period of grace will terminate. All who are saved will have been saved and removed from this earth as YHWH pours out his final judgment (called the Wrath of God and which is different than the Great Tribulation which occurred just prior to this) upon the wicked and godless rebels left upon the earth. This period will culminate with the Battle of Armageddon at which time Yeshua the Messiah will return to earth as the Conquering King to defeat his enemies, marry his bride — the righteous saints — and rule the earth with a rod of Iron for 1000 years. At this time Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit.

- 6) **The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (Sukkot or Succot)** — This Festival represents the time period when the harvest of souls is completed (therefore, it is a harvest festival occurring at the beginning of the fall season when the agricultural harvest of the fruit of the earth is completed, as well) and a great feast occurs called the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. King Yeshua will have put down all of his enemies (the Beast, the False Prophet, the Antichrist, Satan and all else who opposed YHWH Elohim). This festival is a time of great rejoicing and merriment and is often referred to simply as “the Feast.” YHWH commanded his people to celebrate it for seven days. It is a picture of the 1000 year reign of King Yeshua on earth (called the Messianic Age or Millennium) from his headquarters in Jerusalem. This will be literally a time of paradise on earth.
- 7) **The Eighth Day (Shemini Atzeret)** — This is the seventh and final Feast of YHWH and occurs the very next day after the last day of Sukkot. Eight is the biblical number of new beginnings and this day pictures what occurs after the Messianic Age and after man’s 7000 years on this earth. It is at this time that eternity in YHWH’s kingdom occurs. This is the time of the New Heaven and the New Earth; the time when New Jerusalem comes down from heaven. We find this time period described in Revelation 21 and 22. Scripture does not give many details about eternity, but just enough to whet our appetites and inspire our hopes to press onward to be overcomers with Yeshua so that we will be participants in his glorious and everlasting kingdom.

The Feast Days Were Ordained At Creation

And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. (Gen. 1:14)

Here we see the linking of the astrobodies with the sacred seasons and Feast Days of YHWH Elohim. The word *signs* (#226 = *owth*) means *a distinguishing mark, banner, a remembrance, a proof, an omen, a warning, a token, an ensign, a miracle*. The heavenly bodies were created as signs or signals of something. The word *seasons* (#4150 = *moed*) means *a congregation, feast, season, appointed time, assembly*. What is being taught here is that the sun, moon and stars are signals which set the appointed times, sacred assemblies or Feast Days of YHWH for his people. In Leviticus 23:4 we see further proof of this point: “These are the feasts of YHWH, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons” (emphasis added). Please note the possessive pronoun *their* indicating that the Feast Days “own” or “possess” the seasons and thus predate the seasons which are determined by the astral bodies. In other words, YHWH created the heavenly bodies and seasons for the Feast Days which are a shadow-picture of his plan of salvation or redemption for the world. It could be said that the entire physical creation was made in order to have a place where in to implement and showcase YHWH’s glorious plan of salvation.

The Feast Days Are Forever

- And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to YHWH throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever. (Exod. 12:14)
- [I]t shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings (see also verses. 21 and 31). (Lev. 23:14)

Forever (Strong’s #5769 = *olam*) means *everlasting, perpetual, evermore, always, continuous, unending future, for eternity*. Is it possible that Yeshua had the created purpose of the heavenly bodies as well as this earth in mind as well as the eternal nature of the Feast Days contained in the Torah-law of YHWH when he made the following statement?:

Yeshua addresses the permanent and inviolate nature of YHWH's Torah-law, of which the Feasts are a part, in Matthew 5:17-19,

Think not that I am come to destroy the Torah, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

The Feast Days Were Observed In the Renewed Covenant/Apostolic Period

- Acts 18:20-21 **But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem...**(one of the Pilgrimage Festivals; namely Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread or Pentecost or Feast of Tabernacles)
- Acts 20:6 — Unleavened Bread
- Acts 20:16 — Pentecost
- 1 Cor. 5:7-8 — **Therefore let us keep (celebrate) the feast** (referring to Pesach and Hag Ha Matzot), **not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**
- Acts. 27:29 — the Day of Atonement
- Acts 21:24 **...thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the Torah** (which includes Feast Days observance).

The Feast Days In the Messianic Age (Millennium)

- Zech. 14:16,18,19 — The Feast of Tabernacles
- Ezek. 45:17 — *The Sabbaths* (plural, includes the weekly and annual Sabbaths; i.e., Holy Day festivals) and *solemnities* (moedim) or appointed times (see also v. 9).
- Ezek. 45:21 — Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread
- Ezek. 45:25 — The Feast of Tabernacles
- Ezek. 46:1 — The weekly Sabbath
- Ezek. 45:9 and 11 — solemn or appointed times (moedim) and feasts (#2282 = *chag* = pilgrimage feast, festival, celebration, holy day, time of dancing, cyclical/yearly seasonal event; i.e., the feast days)

THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF YHWH'S FEAST DAYS — A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT EACH ONE

There are seven annual Festivals in YHWH's plan of salvation or redemption. Biblically, seven is the number of completion or perfection. They are: Passover (Pesach), the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzot) which lasts for seven days, Pentecost (Shavuot), the Day of Trumpets (Yom Teruah), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) which lasts for seven days and the Eighth Day (Shemini Atzeret). There are seven annual Sabbaths or high Sabbaths as well, which are different than the weekly, seventh day Sabbath. These Sabbaths, contained within the annual festivals may fall on any day of the week and, like the weekly Sabbath, are days of rest and YHWH commands that a holy convocation be held on these days. They are: the first day of Unleavened Bread, the seventh or last day of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles (a seven-day long festival), and the Eighth Day (which occurs immediately following the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles).

Pesach (Passover)

- 1) Pesach is the first of the seven annual festival observances and occurs at the beginning of the Biblical new year as ordained by YHWH. It first occurred in Ancient Egypt when YHWH commanded each family of the Israelites to kill a sacrificial lamb and smear the blood of the lamb on their door posts. As a result of the blood of the lamb, when YHWH went through the land of Egypt killing all the firstborn as a judgment against Egypt for their refusal to obey, YHWH “passed over” the Israelites doors who had the blood thereon (Ex. 12).
- 2) Pesach is a wonderful prophetic shadow picture of what each Believer must face before he chooses to turn his back on the world (Egypt), and cease rebelling against YHWH, and put his faith in the Lamb of YHWH and the blood of the Lamb for the remission of his sins. Therefore the sting of death as a result of the penalty of sin (the wages of sin is death [Rom. 6:23] and the soul that sins it shall die [Ezek. 18:4,20]) no longer has any legal claim on the person’s life and this person now becomes the recipient of the saving grace of YHWH Elohim who has delivered us from the death penalty.
- 3) Egypt is a type of the world. The Hebrew word for Egypt is *Mitzraim* which means *distressed* or *besieged*. All non-Believers exist in a state of being distressed and besieged by the world, the flesh and the devil. All are under a death penalty and need deliverance by some, more powerful, outside force. Pesach is a picture of YHWH delivering his people out of “Egypt.”
- 4) The death of the Passover lamb and the smearing of the blood on the doorposts prefigured Yeshua the Messiah’s death on the cross at Calvary (Golgotha) and his delivering believers from slavery to sin and the resulting consequences which are judgment and eternal death (John. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7).
- 5) Believers in the Renewed Covenant time period participate in the reenactment of the Pesach story by partaking of the unleavened bread and the wine in remembrance of the death of Yeshua, the Lamb of Elohim on the cross, annually at Pesach (Luke. 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). Pesach is a memorial and like a birthday or anniversary must occur each year on the anniversary of the event’s occurrence; namely, on the fourteenth day of the first month of YHWH’s holy calendar.
- 6) Pesach occurs at the beginning of the year, in the spring, which corresponds in the natural creation to the beginning of new life after the long, dead, dark winter months. This corresponds spiritually to the Believer’s coming out of the deadness and darkness of their sinful lives of enslavement to the rudiments of this world, the flesh and the devil and coming to new life spiritually in Yeshua the Messiah through faith in his shed blood at the cross and receipt of his mercy and forgiveness for our sin and rebellion against our Creator.
- 7) Pesach has a future fulfillment, as well. Just prior to the Believer’s entry into the Messianic Age (Millennium) Yeshua will marry his spiritual bride (the Saints who have been washed clean of their sins in the blood of the Lamb and have put on the robes of righteousness [or righteous acts — Rev. 19:7-9]). At that time there will be a marriage feast to celebrate this event. Yeshua spoke of this event during his Passover meal with his disciples in Luke 22:15-16.

How Yeshua the Messiah Perfectly Fulfilled the Passover (Antetypes and Types)

- 1-
 - a) The death angel comes at midnight (Exod. 11:4; 12:29).
 - b) The “death angel” comes for Yeshua late at night (after the Passover seder) in the Garden of Gethsemane where he is betrayed and arrested (Luke. 22:53).
- 2-
 - a) The first born to die at the hand of the death angel (Exod. 11:5).
 - b) Yeshua is the firstborn of Elohim and the first man born of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit). In ancient times, as the firstborn was the head, priest and patriarch of his household and thus bore the judgment meted out by the death angel, so Yeshua bore the judgment of our sin which is death which is the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:56).
- 3-
 - a) A perfect, blemish-free lamb was to be chosen for the Passover lamb (Exod. 12:5; Deut. 15:21).
 - b) Yeshua guiltless (Matt. 27:4). Pilate’s wife pronounced Yeshua guiltless (Matt. 27:19). Elohim, the Father of Yeshua, pronounced him guiltless and without sin (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:19).

- 4-
 - a) This perfect lamb was marked for death and was set aside for a special purpose (Exod. 12:3-6)
 - b) Yeshua was such a lamb (Isa. 53:7; 1 Pet. 1:19-20).
- 5-
 - a) The lamb was to be a year old; i.e., a mature adult (Exod. 12:5).
 - b) Yeshua died for our redemption in the fullness of his manhood.
- 6-
 - a) The lamb was separated out on the tenth day of the first month (the Passover was on the fourteen day of the first month) (Exod. 12:3).
 - b) On the same day Yeshua came to Bethany (John. 12:1) where on the evening of the tenth day of the month Mary anointed Yeshua with spikenard (John. 12:2-37), the very day the Passover lamb was to be separated.
- 7-
 - a) The lamb was to dwell with the Israelites in the family's house until the Passover day when the lamb was then slaughtered (Exod. 12:5-6)
 - b) Yeshua, our Passover Lamb, wants to dwell in our spiritual house.
- 8-
 - a) The blood from the lamb was to be painted on the doorposts and lintels on the door of each family's house (Exod. 12: 22-23).
 - b) So Messiah's blood (mark) must be placed on our foreheads (thoughts) and hands (actions) for us to be redeemed from the penalty of sin and protected from the destroying angel of death (Satan, the adversary) and Elohim's judgment against sin (Rev. 7:3; 9:4; 22:4; Exod. 3:9, 16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18).
- 9-
 - a) In order for one to be saved from the death angel on Passover eve, one had to enter the blood-painted door and be inside the house (Exod. 12:22).
 - b) Yeshua is the door to salvation and to the Father in heaven and no one can be saved without coming through His blood for the remission of sins. There is salvation through no other "door" (John. 10:9; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:22; 1 John. 1:7).
- 10-
 - a) Hyssop was used to paint the blood onto the doorposts.
 - b) Yeshua was given sour wine (a figurative symbol of blood) on hyssop while hanging on the cross. Hyssop was an aromatic "paint brush"-like herb. It was used in purification ceremonies in the tabernacle (Lev. 14:4, 6, 51-52) and was used as a metaphor of inner cleansing in Psalms 51:7. Blood can symbolize many things, yet add to it hyssop and its cleansing powers from the stain and condemnation of sin and death are emphasized.
- 11-
 - a) Later, a lamb was taken to the tabernacle/temple to be sacrificed.
 - b) Yeshua was condemned to die by the Jewish priests in the temple in Jerusalem
- 12-
 - a) The lamb was roasted by fire (Exod. 12:8-9)
 - b) Fire = judgment. Yeshua suffered the fire of his Heavenly Father's wrath and judgment for man's sins (Matt. 27:46; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- 13-
 - a) No bones of the lamb were broken, or else it would not have been blemish-free.
 - b) No bones of Yeshua were broken while hanging on the cross, although it was customary for the Romans to break the legs of the crucified to expedite their death (John. 19:31-33).
- 14-
 - a) Each Israelite was commanded to take a lamb and eat of it. (Exod. 12:3).
 - b) Salvation is an individual matter. Each must partake of the Lamb of YHWH individually.
- 15-
 - a) The Pesach lamb was roasted whole over an open fire spit with a pomegranate skewer running through in its mouth and out its vent (like a rotisserie).
 - b) Yeshua was "impaled" on a wooden cross — whole, and suffered the "flames" of sin's judgment.

- 16- a) The Pesach lamb's blood was placed on the lintel and door posts of the Israelite's doors.
- b) Yeshua was pierced in the hands and head and bled therefrom. The blood on the door was a perfect outline of the blood on Messiah's body.

Hag HaMatzot (The Feast of Unleavened Bread)

Hag HaMatzot or the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the second annual festival event on YHWH's sacred calendar occurring the very next day after Pesach on the fifteenth day of the month of the Abiv. Because both events are back-to-back the Jews often refer to Passover and Unleavened Bread simply as *Passover Week* or some such similar term which places the main emphasis on the Passover event. But it must be noted that though related these two festivals are separate in meaning and purpose. Pesach pictured Israel coming out of Egypt and then once out of Egypt YHWH commanded them to put all leavened food products out of their houses and to eat unleavened bread (yeast-free flat bread) for seven days. As noted earlier, the first and seventh days of this week-long event are High Holy Days or Annual Sabbaths and YHWH commanded his people to hold a holy convocation on these days.

What, you may ask, is the purpose of putting leavening out of one's home and eating unleavened bread products such as matzah for one week? Once again, YHWH was/is teaching his people an object lesson, for this was the next step in his plan of redemption which will make perfect sense once explained. Israel had just left Egypt and we know that Egypt represents the world and Satan. It may be easy to "get out of Egypt," but now begins the arduous process of "getting Egypt out" of the life of the new Believer. The old sin habits die hard and lie waiting to be exposed and cast out from the recesses of one's mind, will and emotions — one's spiritual houses. This is not an easy process, not unlike ridding our physical homes of leavening products, such as bread crumbs, which find their way into the nooks and crannies of our homes. In Scripture leavening usually represents sin, pride, hypocrisy and false doctrine.

The Days of Unleavened Bread last seven days. Seven in YHWH's spiritual economy represents completion or perfection. YHWH has given man 7000 years on this earth to get rid of sin completely and totally in preparation for admission into his eternal kingdom as revealed in Revelation 21 and 22. For 6000 years YHWH has left man to his own sinful devices. The seventh thousand year time period, called the Messianic Age or Millennium, will be different than the previous 6000 years, for Yeshua will be ruling over the earth with a rod of iron as King of kings and Lord of lords, Satan will be bound in the pit for this time period and all flesh on earth will be taught the Torah-truth of YHWH Elohim without the evil influences of the devil and the world as we know it today. During the Messianic Age the earth will be at peace and rest, men will love YHWH with all their heart, mind and strength and their neighbor as themselves. This time of peaceful rest is the seventh thousand year time-period of man's tenure on this earth which corresponds to the seventh day of the week — the Sabbath. It will be a Sabbath on this earth for 1000 years. The Days of Unleavened Bread picture this, for the first day is a Sabbath representing the first Sabbath when YHWH rested after creating a perfect, paradisiacal and sin-free world. The last day or seventh day of the Unleavened Bread festival is also a Sabbath which corresponds prophetically to the Messianic Age — when a sin-free (leaven-free) paradise on the earth will have been restored.

Eating unleavened bread is a memorial, remembrance or reminder (Exod. 13:6-9) of our coming out of our spiritual Egypt, for the Israelites left Egypt early in the morning as they were making their morning bread and because they left in haste the bread was not able to rise (Exod. 12:34). Therefore, they were forced, by circumstances, to leave their leavening or sin behind in Egypt, so to speak. Believers are commanded to eat unleavened bread to remind us that we have left our old sinful ways behind us in Egypt as we press onward to the Promised Land or Eternal Kingdom of YHWH Elohim.

The Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost)

Shavuot is the third festival in YHWH's cyclical parade of annual Sacred Holy Days. It is also known as the Feast of the Harvest of the First Fruits (Exod. 23:16), Day of First Fruits (Num. 28:26) and the Feast of Weeks (Exod. 34:22; Deut. 16:10, 16; 2 Chr. 8:13) and falls on the fiftieth day after the Sabbath which falls during the Days of Unleavened Bread, hence the name *Pentecost* ("count fifty") in the Apostolic Writings (Acts. 2:16).

Ancient Israel was an agricultural society which had a spring harvest of grain and a fall harvest of fruit. The spring harvest consisted of the smaller barley harvest which occurred during the Days of Unleavened Bread and the much larger wheat harvest occurring fifty days later at Shavuot. Both the barley and later wheat harvest were prophetic shadow pictures symbolizing new life and new creation and both were presented to YHWH by the priests (a sheaf of barley on wavesheaf Sunday during Hag HaMatzot [Lev. 23:10-11] and two loaves of leavened wheat bread on Shavuot [Lev. 23:17]) for his acceptance. In the first presentation of the wavesheaf of barley which the priests waved or lifted heavenward we see a shadow picture of Yeshua who upon his resurrection late Saturday afternoon just before the setting of the sun ascended to heaven on the first day of the week to be accepted by the Father (John. 20:17). Literally, Yeshua was the first of the firstfruits of the resurrection from the dead. Fifty days later Pentecost occurred upon which day the priests offered to YHWH the two loaves of leavened wheat bread made of wheat from the larger of the two spring harvests. This foreshadowed the larger harvest of souls during the time-period from Yeshua's resurrection until his second coming. We are at the close of that time-period now as the end of the age draws near. The Feast of Pentecost in Acts chapter two ushered in this time-period with the harvest of thousands of souls (Acts. 2:41,47). It must be inserted here that an even larger harvest of souls for the kingdom of YHWH is yet to occur during the fall Feast Days which corresponds with the largest harvest of the entire year — the fall fruit harvest. This will occur just prior to and after the return of Yeshua as an innumerable multitude of people get saved out of the Great Tribulation and when many more will be saved during the Messianic Age (Millennium) itself.

The two loaves of bread that the priests lifted or waved on Shavuot represent the House of Judah and the House of Ephraim or Israel, the two olive trees of Zechariah 4:3, the two sticks of Ezekiel 37, the two witnesses of Revelation 11, Moses and Elijah of Malachai 4:4-6 and the twofold path of spirit and truth which leads to the Father in heaven to which Yeshua makes reference in John 4:23-24. The fact that these two loaves of bread contain leavening represent the fact that all the people of YHWH have sin in their lives and to one degree or another and have absorbed pagan traditions of men by which YHWH's word has become of non-effect (Matt. 15:6; Mark 7:7-9) for which the command to the people of YHWH is made to come out of Babylon (Revelation 18:4). Both the House of Judah (the rabbinic Judaism of today) and the House of Ephraim/Israel (modern "Gentile" Christianity) have strayed from the truth of YHWH's word (the former have rejected Yeshua, the Living Torah and the latter has rejected the Written Torah given to Moses) and contain the leavening of religious doctrines of men.

Not secondary to what we have already discussed regarding important things which occurred on Shavuot was the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai which occurred on this day, as well. YHWH gave his people the words of life to live by, but because of the hardness of their hearts they were not able to be faithful to him. Like a wife who says "I do" in response to her wedding vows, but cannot remain faithful to her marriage covenant agreements, so Scripture likens Israel to such a woman. On Pentecost in the book of Acts however, Yeshua betrothed Israel all over again and this time gave her a heart of flesh to replace her heart of stone, by filling her with the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) empowering or enabling her to keep his Torah-commandments. In other words, Yeshua, the Living Torah-instructions of YHWH, came to take up residence within the very hearts and minds of Believers through the indwelling and empowering presence of the Ruach HaKodesh thereby living out Torah from within each born-again Believer even as he lived out the Torah-Word of YHWH when he walked this earth. Isn't this a beautiful picture of YHWH's love and care for his bride, his people? This is all part of the wonderful plan of salvation/redemption that YHWH laid out thousands of years ago to bring people into a life-giving relationship with himself through his instructions in righteousness, the Torah, all through his Son, Yeshua the Messiah, the Living Torah who now leads and guides his people through the wilderness of life not via a pillar of fire over a physical tabernacle, but through the fire of the Ruach HaKodesh living in the spiritual temple of each individual believer's life and guiding them from within.

On Pentecost the first century Believers were empowered from on high with Ruach HaKodesh, called the immersion in the Ruach HaKodesh (baptism of the Holy Spirit) (Acts 1:5,8). As a result we see Peter being transformed from a spiritual mouse (John. 20:23 and 21:3) into a spiritual lion or dynamo (Acts 2:14-41). The purpose of the immersion or saturation in the Ruach (a different and subsequent event than being simply born again) was for the purpose of being empowered with supernatural gifts and empowerments (the gifts of the Ruach, see 1 Cor. 12) in order to be equipped to go out into the harvest field of human souls spiritually empowered ready to bring in the spiritual harvest of souls.

In review, on Pesach we come out of our spiritual Egypt and are saved at the cross by the blood of the Lamb from the angel of death. At Unleavened Bread we learn that now begins the process of sanctification — of getting Egypt and sin (leavening) out of us. Yet on our own strength we will fare no better than did ancient Israel in conquering or gaining the mastery over sin in our lives. Enter Pentecost where each Believer is now empowered by the Ruach of YHWH to lead a spirit-filled victorious life of defeating sin and walking in obedience to his commandments in order to enter into a holy and righteous and victory-over-sin intimate and anointed relationship with him. There is a lot here and it is a very rich picture. Who but the unsearchable and all-wise mind of our Creator could have created such a wondrous plan of redemption?

Yom Teruah (Day of Blowing Trumpets – Commonly Called Rosh Hashanah)

Very little is said in the Tanakh about Yom Teruah. In fact, it is mentioned in only two places:

- Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. (Lev. 23:24)
- And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you. (Num. 29:1)

Yom Teruah is observed on the first day of the seventh month at the sighting of the first sliver of the crescent new moon. It is the first of the four fall festivals and it begins the fall harvest season in the land of Israel. Prophetically the fall Holy Day Festivals picture the time period leading up to the return of Yeshua, including the tribulation and wrath of Elohim upon the earth, the resurrection of the saints and the establishment of Yeshua's Millennial kingdom on earth. Specifically, Yom Teruah pictures the beginning of the tribulation period followed by the resurrection of the righteous saints.

Although Scripture gives us but a paucity of details about this day we are nonetheless able to extrapolate a great deal of information from elsewhere in Scripture to arrive at the following understandings.

On Yom Teruah Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai the second set of stone tablets containing the Ten Statements (“Commandments”) to replace the ones that had been broken earlier at the golden calf incident. After this, Israel remained faithful to YHWH and never again built and worshipped a golden calf until the time of King Jeroboam hundreds of years later. Similarly, on the day of Pentecost in the first century the Torah of YHWH was written into the hearts of the Messianic believers at that time by the “pen” of the Ruach of YHWH, yet well before the middle of the second century the church had begun to go apostate, had separated from its Hebraic and Torah-obedient roots and was well on its way to becoming the sun-worshipping or Baal-worshipping Catholic Church that we know today.

When Yeshua returns on or near Yom Teruah at the end of the age he will be ready to marry a bride that is without spot and wrinkle who has come out of the Babylonish religious whore system (Rev. 18:4). This bride who will be wearing the robes of righteousness of Torah-obedience (Rev. 12:17; 14:12; 19:7-9) will be ready to receive and enter into a covenantal agreement — a wedding contract or ketubah — with Yeshua, the Bridegroom— ever to remain faithful to him and never to stray into Baal/golden calf worship again. He will lead his wife, even as he lead in the pillar of fire the younger generation in the wilderness into the Promised Land of the Messianic Age or Millennium. This is the main picture of the Yom Teruah.

Here are some additional thoughts about Yom Teruah — the Day of the Memorial of the Blowing of Trumpets:

- Without the life-giving breath of YHWH we are dead both physically and spiritually. As YHWH breathed the breath of life into Adam who then became a living being (nephesh), so when Yeshua breathed on His disciples (John. 20:22) they came alive spiritually. YHWH breathed on the first century Messianic believers through the wind of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:2 and the renewed covenant Messianic assembly was born. Similarly, on the day of Messiah's second return (Feast of Trumpets), the shofar (called the Last Trumpet in Jewish thought which comes just prior to the Final or Great Trumpet/Shofar Gadol of Yom Kippur) will sound and the dead in Messiah will be resurrected. Again the breath of YHWH will revive the dead saints who will be given their spiritual, glorified, second Adam body.

(Similar to the Ezek. 37 Valley of Dry Bones account).

- When YHWH breathes or blows on man the supernatural pierces the natural dimension and the supernatural breaks the mundaneness of the natural and supernaturally empowers one to do that which he could not do in his own power naturally.
- In anticipation of Rosh Chodesh (the new moon sighting each month) and hence the beginning of Yom Teruah there is a sense of expectancy and excitement among the saints. It is a time of watching and praying, for the renewal of the moon (*new* in new moon in the Greek New Testament is *kainen* meaning *renewal* or *restoration of something which already exists* and not the word *neos* which means *brand new*) represents new beginnings, good tidings, the renewal of the individual as well as the community. The shofar's blowing is a call to awaken out of sleep, lethargy, stagnation, and slumber. No man knows the day or the hour of the new moon's arrival each month (though one certainly knows the season and year), so the human tendency is to grow weary in waiting. Yet when the New Moon is sighted and the shofar sounds, this is the signal for the slumbering to awake, for hope to arise, renewal to occur and action to be taken.
- The word *teruah* (*Strong's #7321*) signifies *to split the ears by sound, to break, shout or sound an alarm for joy*.
- Yom Teruah signifies a day of new beginnings or renewal, to wake up from lethargy and slumber, to be broken out of that sleepy, comfort zone state and to be awakened to action. Remember the 10 virgins who slept in anticipation of the Bridegroom's arrival. When the shout went forth that he was coming they were all awakened. Some were prepared to go into the marriage supper of the Bridegroom and some were not.
- Yom Teruah occurs at the end of the summer months ("church age") and marks the beginning of the fall harvest (festival) season. During the hot, lazy days of summer many have fallen asleep growing weary in waiting for the return of the Messiah. So the first day of the seventh month at the new moon when the shofar sounds is Yom Teruah which is the first day of the fall (festival) harvest season and is the time when the call goes out for the spiritual drowsy to awake, and to hear the voice, the breath or voice of the shofar which is symbolic of YHWH's prophetic word or oracle extant on the earth in the Last Days. Bend yourself like a curved rams horn in humility and contrition before YHWH and repent of spiritual lassitude and inaction and awake to action and preparation for the endtime prophetic fulfillment of the fall festivals. It is a time to be refreshed by the breath of YHWH, a time of new beginnings. Let YHWH breath on you, revive you and empower you.
- Yom Teruah is the time of the reaping of the summer harvest. The fall harvest reaping occurred between Yom Teruah and Sukkot. Spiritually fulfilled this period will be the time of the reaping of the righteous to their reward (Rev. 14:4) and the harvest of the wicked to the great winepress of God's wrath (14:14-20). It is the time of the resurrection of the dead in Messiah Yeshua at the end of the tribulation (Mt. 24:29) and the beginning of Elohim's wrath being poured out upon the nations (see Joel 3:11-13). This begins the wrath of Elohim time pictured by Yom Kippur.

Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement)

Part 1 — Main Themes

- Yom Kippur is a day of contradictions and contrasts: Joy and sorrow. Rewards for the righteous and judgments for the wicked rebels. Joy for the righteous when Satan and his demons, death and Babylon are destroyed by the King of Kings.
- The word *Kippur* (*Strong's #3725*) is a form of the Hebrew root word *kapar* (*Strong's #3722*) which according to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT #1023)* means *to make an atonement, make reconciliation, purge* and the mercy seat – the golden "lid" covering the Ark of the Covenant located in the D'veer (i.e., the inner shrine of the Tabernacle of Moses) – which in Hebrew is the word *kapporet* (*Strong's #3727, TWOT #1023c*) was *the place of atonement or the place where atonement was made*. The *TWOT* defines what happened at the *kapporet* as follows:

“It was from the... Mercy Seat that [YHWH] promised to meet with the men [of Israel] (Num. 7:89). The word, however, is not related to mercy and of course was not a seat. The word is derived from the root ‘to atone.’ The Greek equivalent in the LXX is usually *hilasterion*, “place or object of propitiation,” a word which is applied to [Messiah] in Romans 3:25. The translation ‘mercy seat’ does not sufficiently express the fact that the lid of the ark was the place where the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement. ‘Place of atonement’ would perhaps be more expressive.”

The writer of Hebrews (Heb. 9:11ff) describes the importance of blood in Tabernacle/Temple ceremonies of ancient Israel, how it relates to the remission of sins and how it pointed to Yeshua’s shedding of his blood on the cross for the atoning of man’s sins:

- 11 But Messiah being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;
- 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.
- 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:
- 14 How much more shall the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to Elohim, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?
- 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the Renewed Covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.
- 18 Whereupon neither the first covenant was dedicated without blood.
- 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the Torah-law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,
- 20 Saying, This is the blood of the covenant which YHWH hath enjoined unto you.
- 21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.
- 22 And almost all things are by the Torah-law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.
- 23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.
- 24 For Messiah is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Elohim for us:
- 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year [on Yom Kippur] with blood of others;
- 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.
- 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:
- 28 So Messiah was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

- It is a day to *afflict our souls* or literally to *humble ourselves*. The purpose of fasting is not to torture or punish ourselves for the sins that we have committed during the past year. Rather, fasting helps us to transcend our physical natures and focus without distraction upon YHWH.

- On this day the High Priest of ancient Israel went into the Holy of Holies. There he sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat (Kapporet) and the ground seven times. Atonement was made for the high priest himself, his family as well as for all Israel. On this day the Sanctuary/Tabernacle/Temple, the priesthood and the whole body of Believers (Body of Messiah) was cleansed. It represented corporate or community cleansing. The Passover and the Day of Atonement are related though different.

Pesach (Passover) is the time of the sacrifice or atonement for personal sin — initial repentance from sins committed before being born again.

Yom Kippur is the time of the atonement or covering of the individual's as well as the corporate sins of Israel committed in ignorance (Heb. 9:27) during the past year. On-going repentance is needed by Believers and the community of Believers to stay in right-standing (righteousness) before YHWH (1 John. 1:9).

- The Jubilee Year started on Yom Kippur. All slaves were set free, debts were forgiven, and the land was returned to its original owners (Lev. 25:8-9).
- The Two Goats (Lev. 16):
 - (1) YHWH's goat (offered by the High Priest as a sin offering) represents Yeshua's sacrificial atonement for our sins.
 - (2) The Azazel Goat is *the scape goat or goat of departure*. Spiritually this represents the entire removal of sin's defilement from the Tabernacle and camp of Israel out into the wilderness. (Psa. 103:12—YHWH removes our sins from us as far as the east is from the west.) The Azazel goat is not Satan. Lev. 16:10 says that this goat "makes atonement for our sin." It is blasphemy to say that Satan makes atonement for our sin. Only Yeshua did this, not Satan!
- **Prophetically:**
 - Yom Kippur is the day when:
 - (a) YHWH's judgment upon the earth will occur prior to the Second Coming of Yeshua the Messiah culminating in the battle at Megiddo.
 - (b) The beast and false prophet are thrown into the Lake of Fire
 - (c) Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit.
 - Yom Kippur is the day of completion: What aspects of YHWH's plan of redemption for the earth have been completed?:
 - It is the time when YHWH will have the last word on man's 6000 (rebellious and sinful) years on earth.
 - Rewards and punishments are meted out.
 - Satan is judged.
 - The *Babylon the Great* system is judged.
 - The earth is cleansed and readied for Messiah to "touch down" upon the Mount of Olives.
 - The restitution of all things talked about in Acts 3:21 occurs.
 - It is the time to REJOICE AND CELEBRATE if you're right with YHWH! Or to WEEP AND MOURN and repent if you're not!
 - According to Jewish tradition, Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to receive the second set of stone tablets containing the Ten Statements (Commandments) on Yom Teruah/the Feast of Trumpets. Ten days later on Yom Kippur he descended from the mountain carrying with him the second set of tablets as a sign of YHWH's forgiveness of the Children of Israel after the golden calf incident. This signaled YHWH's renewed relationship with Israel after they had repented of golden calf worship. Prophetically, Scripture tells us that the saints of Yeshua are to be resurrected and to meet

the returning Yeshua Messiah in the air at the seventh or last shofar blast on the Feast of Trumpet/ Yom Teruah (1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 11:15-18) — literally the Day of the Awakening Blast. The ascension of the saints to meet King Yeshua in the air corresponds to Moses' ascension of Mt. Sinai on Yom Teruah, and his descending with the stone tablets — the tokens of a renewed covenant between YHWH and Israel on Yom Kippur. This corresponds to Yeshua returning to earth with his just resurrected saints. As Moses saw the glory of YHWH in the cleft of the rock the second time he ascended Mt. Sinai (Exod. 33:18-23; 34:5-9) and as he descended in a glorified state with his face shining with the glory of YHWH, so the saints will resurrect to meet Yeshua, in the air, see his glory and will return with him in a glorified state with glorified immortal bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-54; 1 Thes. 4:16-17). First John 3:2 says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of Elohim, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." These resurrected saints are those who have heeded YHWH's call to come out of Babylonish (golden calf) religious systems (Rev. 18:4) where paganism has been mixed with the truth of Scripture and who are now willing to enter into an everlasting (marital) covenant with YHWH-Yeshua. Many Israelites along with those who have been grafted into Israel will turn from golden calf worship in the tribulation period leading up to the Feast of Trumpets and will wholeheartedly repent and receive the covering of the blood of Yeshua for their sins, as pictured by the Day of Atonement. This will be the rebirth of the nation of Israel containing both houses of Israel at last reunited into one olive tree or one new man in Yeshua (Rom. 11; Ezek. 37; Eph. 2:11-19). This all occurs at his second coming prior to and on the Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur.

Part 2 — Parallels Between the Lev. 16 Event and the Apocalypse Event of Rev. 15-16

- Smoke and fire in the Temple of YHWH before the Mercy Seat:
 - Leviticus 16:13
 - Revelation 15:8
 - Revelation 8:3-4 — Incense on the Golden Altar before the throne of YHWH are the prayers of the Saints.
- No man could enter the Tabernacle/Temple while the High Priest made Atonement:
 - Leviticus 16:17
 - Revelation 15:8 — No one could enter the Temple until the seven last plagues were completed; i.e., there was no access to the Mercy Seat/no prayers to YHWH/no salvation granted. Men had their chance to repent from the wicked ways up to and during the 30 days of teshuvah (the thirty days of the sixth month preceding Yom Teruah) and during the ten days of awe (Tribulation period) between Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur.
 - The Mercy Seat and the ground were sprinkled seven times for cleansing.
 - Leviticus 16:14 — The blood of the bull is sprinkled on the Mercy Seat and on the ground seven times. The four horns of the altar represent the whole earth or the four corners of the earth— north, south, east and west.
 - Revelation 16 — YHWH cleanses the earth via the seven bowl judgments (called "Wrath of YHWH"). The blood of the wicked rebels is poured out on the ground (14:20).
 - Why must this happen? The soul that sins shall die (Ezek. 18:4, 20) and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Either one is held accountable for his own sin and suffers the consequences of his sin or he receives the *kippur* (covering) of the blood of Yeshua for the remission of sins. There are no other avenues for sinners. For those who reject Messiah and his sin offering they are under the penalty of death and there is no way out.
 - The earth has been defiled by so much unrepentant wickedness that a great cleansing process must occur — unrepentant men dying for their own sins.

- This proves the truth of YHWH’s divine justice. There is divine retribution for sin — a price must eventually be paid for sin.
- The earth will be prepared or cleansed for Messiah’s arrival.
- The earth will be ready to receive Messiah and his kingdom.
- Messiah, blessed be his holiness(!), cannot set foot on a defiled earth without becoming defiled himself. This is proof that Messiah cannot set foot on this earth until after the wrath of YHWH is poured out — i.e., after Yom Kippur and at the beginning of Sukkot when he will tabernacle with his bride, the saints, who has made herself ready by putting on robes of righteousness.
- Acts 3:18-21 “The restitution of all things” (King James Version) or “Fullness of times” (Hebrew Roots Version). Messiah can’t return until after the earth is cleansed and restored.

Part 3 — Miscellaneous Prophetic Concepts

- **The Fall Harvest:** This time period lasts from Yom Teruah to Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) (lasting 15 days). Revelation 14 speaks of two endtime “harvests” of which the fall festivals are a shadow picture:
 - Harvest of saints to their reward — Revelation 14:4-5 (and Matt. 24:30-31) and Matthew 25:31-46 (the sheep and goats judgment pictures both groups).
 - Harvest of wicked to their reward — Revelation 14:15-20
- There is no mention of the Saints during the Seven Bowls Wrath of YHWH. They’ve already been “harvested” and are gathered into YHWH’s “barn” for safekeeping.
- The Seventh Bowl Judgment is poured out on the Babylonian (Rev. 18:23; 19:2) anti-YHWH system — the deceiver and corrupter of the world from the very beginning at the Tree of Knowledge.

Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles, Ingathering or Booths)

Sukkot (also spelled “Succot”) is the sixth of the seven annual Feast Days in YHWH’s plan of redemption for mankind. It occurs on the fifteenth day of the seventh month on YHWH’s Hebrew calendar — fifteen days after Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets) and five days after Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). We see in the early Fall a rapid succession of Feast Days, one coming right after another. It is a time of great energy, excitement and anticipation both in the natural and prophetically. We also observe a transition from the somber and repentant, even frightening, mood of Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur to the joyous and celebratory mood of the Feast of Sukkot and no wonder, for the first two fall festivals of YHWH, as we have already seen, represent a very dark and ominous time in human history — the end of the age with the judgments of Elohim being poured out upon the earth (Great Tribulation, Wrath of Elohim, Battle of Armageddon, and Satan being bound and cast into the bottomless pit). But this same period culminates in the return of the Messiah, Yeshua, to rule the earth during the Messianic Age as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures this glorious epoch in the history of humanity’s tenure upon this earth — a time of unspeakable joy and triumph of good over evil, righteousness over wickedness, the children of light over the children of darkness, love over hate, and the truth of YHWH (epitomized by Yeshua) over the lies of Satan.

The word *sukkot* (plural of *sukkah*) is Hebrew for *tabernacles*, *booths*, or *any tent-like temporary dwelling*. The Tabernacle or Mishkan that YHWH commanded Moses to construct in the wilderness was a *sukkah* — literally, a portable tent or habitation for YHWH himself. In fact, the time period of the Feast of Sukkot marks the beginning of Israel’s construction of the Mishkan, for Moses received the second tablets containing the Ten Statements of YHWH on Yom Teruah and it was immediately after this that the Torah records that the Israelites began building the Tabernacle.

The *sukkah*, a flimsy, tent-like dwelling, represents the frailty of man’s physical life, for the physical body of man is nothing more than a “temporary dwelling” in which mortal man lives (1 Cor. 6:19-20) until physical death occurs followed by the resurrection of the saints into eternal life. While in this physical state man must totally depend upon his Creator for everything, without whom we would perish both physically and spiritually in this

wilderness in which we find ourselves called *life*. This is exactly the lesson we learn from the Children of Israel's experience during 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. They depended totally upon YHWH for food, water, clothing and protection from the heat, cold and their enemies. But YHWH desires to dwell among his people. He does not choose to dwell in a mansion or castle, but a tent, just like his people: the Tent of Meeting, or Tabernacle in the wilderness, as it is variously called. Literally, YHWH sukkah-ed over his people in the pillar of fire which rested over the Tent of Meeting or Mishkan. This is a beautiful picture of YHWH sukkah-ing *in* his people on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two when the same spiritual fire of YHWH came to dwell this time in their hearts as Yeshua predicted (John. 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7,13; Acts 1:5,8). In fact, Yeshua's first coming was YHWH sukkah-ing with his people, for we see that Yeshua is none other than YHWH of old who lead the Children of Israel in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:1-4) while sukkah-ing with them. Likewise in John 1:14 we read that "the Word [YHWH-Yeshua] was made flesh and dwelt among us..." The word *dwelt* (*Strong's G#4637*) literally means *to tent or tabernacle*, i.e., *to sukkah*. Yeshua was Emmanuel, or El (God) with us, (Mt. 1:23), that is, tabernacling with us. To emphasize this point Scripture tells us that Yeshua, who was given a mortal body (Phil. 2:7), or sukkah, and was literally born in a sukkah ("manger") during the Feast of Sukkot. Then, to cap off this wonderful symbolism, the Holy City of New Jerusalem will descend to this earth (like a sukkah over the people of YHWH) after the conclusion of the Messianic Age (Millennium) and Revelation 21:3 says, "Behold, the tabernacle [*Strong's #4633*, literally *sukkah*] of Elohim is with men and he shall dwell [*Strong's # 4637*, *sukkah* (same word as used in John. 1:14)] with them and they shall be his people, and Elohim himself shall be with them, and be their Elohim" (see also Rev. 7:15). Clearly, the sukkah plays a key role in YHWH relating to his people, his desire to commune and have relationship with them and the presence of his glory among his people. In fact, in Hebraic thought the cloud that covered Ancient Israel in the wilderness is viewed as a chuppah or wedding canopy in a Jewish wedding, which is nothing more than a talithe (prayer shawl) or little tent or sukkah. We see this marriage analogy in Ezekiel 16:8 where YHWH says that he spread his skirt over Israel and covered her nakedness. The word *skirt* is the Hebrew word *kanaph* which speaks of the "wings" or corners of a wedding chuppah or talithe (small tent or prayer shawl).

Some additional concepts regarding the sukkah:

- Yeshua tabernacled (sukkah) among his people (John. 1:14) and he was the true tabernacle (Heb. 9:11).
- Our bodies are likened to a physical sukkah (2 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Pet. 1:13-14).
- The Tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness is called the "Tent of Habitation" (Acts. 7:44; Heb. 9:2-8).
- The Patriarchs lived in tents (tabernacles) (Heb. 11:8-9).
- Scripture speaks of a heavenly tabernacle (Heb. 8:1-2; Rev. 13:6; 15:5). This tabernacle will come down to earth (Rev. 21:1-3).
- When the Children of Israel left Egypt they lived in tents or sukkahs (plural: *sukkot*) on their way to the Promised Land. This was to emphasize the fact that while the saints of the Most High live on this earth they are pilgrims and sojourners, they are in the world and not of the world (John. 17:11 and 14) and are just passing through on their way to a heavenly kingdom.

The Feast of Sukkot is also called the Feast of Ingathering (Ex. 23:16) and is literally a harvest festival where the celebrants are rejoicing over a successful and fruitful fall harvest. It marks the final ingathering of the year's produce. In the prophetic sense, this harvest pictures the spiritual harvest to occur at the end of the age — a harvest of souls. The book of Revelation speaks of 144,000 as well as a great and innumerable multitude who have been saved out of the Great Tribulation period just prior to the return of the Messiah (Rev. 14:1-5; 7:9-17). Furthermore, during the Messianic Age physical humans will inhabit the earth who will be having children. Many will be brought into the family of YHWH through Yeshua at this time, as well.

During the Millennium the wedding supper of the Lamb occurs. In Revelation 19:7-9 we read, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." This occurs during the Feast of Tabernacles when Yeshua the Bridegroom returns to earth to marry his bride, the Believing Saints, where he will rule

over the earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords along with his wife, the Bride of Messiah. The Saints will rule with him as kings and priests. The Millennium will literally be a 1000-year long marriage feast — literally the party to end all parties!

In general, Sukkot is a festival harvest which pictures the harvest of the nations in the Messianic Age when all nations will be brought into YHWH's kingdom. Peace, brotherhood and righteousness will characterize life on this earth. All nations will be expected to come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16-17). Should they fail to do so they will be punished.

Ceremonies Occurring During the Feast of Sukkot and Their Meanings

Building and Living In the Sukkah

In Leviticus 23:33-43 YHWH gave instructions to the Israelites concerning celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths)/*Sukkot*. One of the key aspects and the namesake of this Fall festival was the construction of booths, temporary dwellings or *sukkot* (plural of *sukkah*).

You shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths/*sukkot*: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths/*sukkot*, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am YHWH your Elohim. (Lev. 23:42-43)

The Hebrew word *sukkah* (*Strong's H#5521* means *tabernacle, booth, pavilion, cottage, tent, a rude or temporary shelter*: Typically the temporary booth was constructed of tree limbs as noted in Leviticus 23:40,

And ye shall take you on the first day [of the Feast of Tabernacles] the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before YHWH your Elohim seven days.

In Nehemiah 8:14-17 we read of the post-exilic Jews keeping the Feast of Tabernacles and building *sukkot*:

And they found written in the law which YHWH had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of Elohim, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

Other than the above noted Scriptures relating to the construction of the *sukkah* and the temporary nature of it Scripture is silent on the construction of a *sukkah*. For that we turn to the *Mishna* under *Appointed Time: Sukkah*. Here the ancient rabbis discuss the laws concerning the building of the *sukkah* at the Feast of Sukkot. For example, it is to be tall enough for a man to sit in, but not so tall as to be extravagant. It is to be a three sided structure. The roof, comprised of freshly cut tree limbs, is to allow 50 percent of the normal sunlight to pass through. Dead limbs or plant materials are acceptable as roofing material as long as they are not tied in bundles, though bundles sticks are permissible for the *sukkah's* sides. A minimal amount of timber roofing is permissible, as long as the boards are neither too wide nor plastered and as long as one does not sleep under a board. The rabbis teach that one should eat some meals in the *sukkah*, but disagree as to how many. Woman, slaves and minors are exempt from the religious requirements of dwelling in a *sukkah* (unless a male minor can take care of himself). All seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles a person is to treat his *sukkah* as regular dwelling and his regular house as his temporary dwelling. If the weather is inclement so that staying in the *sukkah* is uncomfortable, then one is permitted to sleep in a house since feasts are to be joyous occasions. Stolen or dried up palm, willow, citron or myrtal branches are invalid for use on the *sukkah*.

These are a few of the traditional requirements concerning the *sukkah*. In Messianic movement one will find many different interpretations as to the meaning of Leviticus 23:42-43 all the way from ignoring the command to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles and to build a *sukkah* to leaving one's home and making *aliyah* to a designated

(set-apart) place and keeping the festival for all eight days including building a sukkah. Some build a ceremonial sukkah in their backyard inviting friends to participate with them in “sukkah parties.” Some may even go so far as to actually sleep and eat in their sukkah for all or part of the seven-day celebration. For those who go away for the Feast of Tabernacles some build a sukkah and actually live in it, taking YHWH’s commands quite literally. Some camp in a tent for a week while others stay in motels viewing this as their temporary dwelling. For Messianics Feast of Tabernacles organizers it is very common to allow festival participants to choose their own lodging (be it sukkah or condo, or somewhere in between), yet build a large community sukkah encouraging the feast-goers to participate in activities therein, thus fulfilling the spirit of the Torah command to dwell for seven days in a sukkah. In some parts of the country where the weather is mild and sunny in the fall, living in tent or sukkah is more conducive. For those living in the mountains where the weather can be subfreezing at night, or in the coastal areas where it can be wet and stormy, living in a sukkah may not be possible. Remember, the land of Israel is approximately the same longitude as northern Baja California and the weather is similar. Living in a sukkah in Baja California in the fall is very different than doing so in Washington state, Montana or Maine!

The point of dwelling in a sukkah during the Feast of Sukkot is to remind us that we have left (spiritual) Egypt and that we are passing through the wilderness of life on our way to the Promised Land of the kingdom of Elohim. The wooden branches from which the sukkah is constructed represents humanity. Many times in Scripture trees or wood is an allegory for humans. The most notable example of this is the Tabernacle in the wilderness where many of the posts and other furnishings of the Tabernacle were constructed of acacia wood capped in silver or covered in gold representing redeemed and spirit-born humanity. We live in frail bodies (temporary dwellings) awaiting the resurrection when our mortal tents (bodies) will be transformed into glorified spirit bodies. Life is fragile and humans are frail. We are totally dependent upon YHWH for all of our needs, both physically and spiritually. Living in a sukkah teaches us that our security is neither in what this life has to offer, nor in ourselves, but in our Maker. The sukkah is a flimsily structure to signify the fragility of life without the grace, provision and protection of YHWH. The sukkah is not a permanent house, neither is life on this earth, nor our human bodies. The roof of the sukkah is open to the stars in heaven. Likewise, we must never stop looking heavenward to the dwelling place of our Creator in whom we live and move and have our being.

Furthermore, living in a sukkah reminds us that YHWH himself chose to commune with the Israelites in a tent, chose to come earth to dwell or *sukkah* in the body of a man, and that eventually YHWH will dwell or *sukkah* with his people forever in the New Jerusalem.

The Water Libation Ceremony (Simchat Hasho-ehvah) and Hoshana Rabbah:

During Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles), the intense anticipation of rain came to be reflected in the Temple Services. “Many of the the observances and prayers of Succo[t] are associated with water and rain — including the water drawing, the prayer for rain, and the Four Species, which are agricultural products that require plentiful water. The reason for this is that, as the *Mishna* (Rosh Hashanah 1:2) states: ‘On the Succo[t] festival they [i.e., the world] is judged for water’ (see Rosh Hashana 16a) [See Zech. 14:17 where it is prophesied that during the Millennium YHWH will punish the the nations who refuse to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot with deprivation of rain.] Moreover, Succo[t] celebrates the harvest and comes shortly before the next planting season. Thus, it is a time to thank God for His past kindness and to beseech His continued benevolence in the form of plentiful rain for crops” (*Artscroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 897).

Each morning of Sukkot, a water libation ceremony was offered to YHWH as a visual prayer for rain. The water was poured through pipes at the top of the southwest corner of the altar. The Water Drawing Ceremony, known as *Simchat Hasho-ehvah* or Celebration of the Place of Water-Drawing, was performed every evening, accompanied by an intense, night-long festivity, which was led by the most distinguished scholars and righteous men (*tzaddikim*) of Israel. The Talmud says that one who never witnessed the joy of the water drawing never saw a true celebration in his life (*Ibid.*, pp. 896-897).

This ceremony was considered by the Rabbis as bearing a subordinate reference to the dispensation of the rain, the annual fall of which they imagined was determined by YHWH at that feast, its main and real application was to the future outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as predicted – probably in allusion to this very rite by Isaiah (Isa. 12:3). Shortly after dawn each morning, while the many sacrifices were being prepared, the high priest was accompanied by a joyous procession of music and worshipers down to the Pool of Siloam. The high priest carried

a golden pitcher capable of holding a about a quart of water. He carefully dipped the pitcher into the pool and brought it back to the Temple Mount.

At the same time, another procession went down to a nearby location south of Jerusalem where willows of the brook grew in great abundance. There they gathered the long, thin willows and brought them back to the Temple. At the Temple, the willows were placed on the sides of the altar so that their tops formed a canopy of drooping branches over the altar.

Upon arriving at the Water Gate (the southern gate of the Temple complex) the High Priest carrying water and his procession would be met with three blasts of the silver trumpets and the words of Isaiah 12:3 would be proclaimed: "Therefore, with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."

Once in the Temple, into a basin the High Priest would pour out the water libation while simultaneously pouring wine into another basin. Three blasts of the silver trumpet would follow the pouring which signalled the start of the Temple music. The people listened as a choir of Levites sang the Hallel (i.e., the praise Psalms, 113-118). The outpouring of the water and wine represents the outpouring of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) and that follows the redemption of YHWH's called out ones by the blood of the Lamb (1 Pet. 18-19). Scripture speaks of the blood and water in several places:

- But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (John. 19:34,)
- For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people. (Heb. 9:19)
- This is he that came by water and blood, even Yeshua the Messiah; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. (1 John. 5:6)
- And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (1 John. 5:8)

At the proper time, the congregation waved their palm branches (lulavim) toward the altar and joined in singing: "Save us now, I pray, O YHWH; O YHWH, I pray, send now prosperity" (Psa. 118:25). At the same time, the priests with the palm branches in hand, marched once (seven times on the Seventh Day of Sukkot or Hoshana Rabbah/the Last Great Day of the Feast) around the altar.

Hoshana Rabbah, the seventh day of the Feast is, in itself, a festival of its own and is observed solemnly as an extension of the Day of Atonement. On this day, the rabbis tell us that the Gates of Judgment finally close and the decrees pronounced by YHWH on the Day of Atonement take effect. Hoshana Rabbah is viewed as the end of the cycle that started on the first day of the sixth month: the 30 days of self examination and repentance (in preparation for the return of Messiah), the Ten Days of Awe picture the judgment of the wicked and the final cleansing of the saints before the Bridegroom's (Yeshua's) arrival. These ten days occur between Yom Teruah/ Feast of Trumpets and Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement followed by Sukkot which ends at Hoshana Rabbah.

On Hoshana Rabbah the congregates march with lulav and etrog in hand seven times (instead of one, as before) around the bimah or altar. Three sets of seven blasts of the trumpets occur in place of the three blasts on the previous days. This is done in remembrance of how the walls fell at Jericho as Israel was about to enter the Promised Land – a foreshadow of the Eternal Kingdom of YHWH the preaching of which figured so prominently in the Gospel accounts of Yeshua's ministry. As the walls of Jericho fell, so it was anticipated that by YHWH's direct interposition, the walls of heathenism would fall before Messiah at His coming and that the land would lie open for His people to go in and possess it. Indeed, this will occur at Yeshua's Second Coming.

Hoshana Rabbah, also pictures the final stage of YHWH's plan of salvation, The Last Great Day or the Great White Throne Judgment to occur at the end of the 1000 year Millennium (Rev. 20:11-15). It pictures the final day of judgment and the sealing of those who will receive eternal life as opposed to those who will suffer the second and final death.

Psalm 118 was viewed as a messianic psalm and as such gave the feast a messianic emphasis. This is why Yeshua was greeted by the crowds shouting "Hosanna/Hoshana" (Hebrew for "Save now" in Psa. 118:25) and

waving palm branches on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:8-9; Luke. 19:38; John. 12:13). They viewed Him as the Messiah King, come to deliver (“save now”) Israel in fulfillment of Psalm 118 and they hailed Him with the messianic imagery of palm branches from the Feast of Tabernacles. This same imagery is in view in Revelation 7:9-10 where redeemed saints worship, with palm branches in hand, around the throne of the Father and the Lamb.

Against this backdrop of great excitement and anticipation of both temporal rain and the prophetic spiritual rain of the Messianic age, on Hoshana Rabbah, Yeshua the Messiah made His famous declarations recorded in John 7:37-9

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Yeshua stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Set-apart Spirit was not yet given; because that Yeshua was not yet glorified.)

The Temple Menorah Lighting Ceremony:

This ceremony was observed each evening of Sukkot. It was known as the *Simchat Bet Hasho'ayva* (*The Rejoicing of the House of Water Drawing*). This ceremony occurred on the second evening of Sukkot (the evening of the First High Sabbath Day). The Levites would gather in the inner court of the Temple (the Court of the Israelites) where four 75-foot tall Menorahs (each holding gallons of olive oil) with stairs ascending to them were lit by young boys amidst the sounds of musical instruments. The Psalms of the Fifteen Degrees (Psa. 120-134) were sung. All night long, the Levites and Elders performed impressive torch dances, while the steady yellow flames of the menorah oil lamps flooded the Temple and the streets of Jerusalem with brilliant light.

The celebration was repeated every night until the final night as a prelude to the water drawing in the morning. Nothing in ancient Israel compared to this light celebration. It was so spectacular that the ancient rabbis said: “he that hath not beheld the joy of drawing water (of which the Menorah Lighting Ceremony prepared the hearts and expectations of the people for the next morning) never saw a true celebration in his life.

The light celebration was reminiscent of the descent of the Shekinah glory in Solomon’s day and looked forward to the return of the Shekinah in the days of the Messiah (Ezek. 43:1-6) as well as the time when the light of truth would shine upon the Gentile world as prophesied in Isaiah 9:2, “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” and 60:1-3, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of YHWH is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but YHWH shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”

John recorded that it was the day after Sukkot (on the eighth day), a Sabbath, when Yeshua proclaimed: “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12, 9:14).

The Four Species and the Lulav Waving Ceremony:

Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the YHWH seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the YHWH your Elohim seven days. (Lev. 23:39)

The Hebrew word *lulavim* means *palm branches* and is a general reference to all four species, of which the palm frond is the largest. The command to wave the lulavim comes from this verse in Torah. Not only was the Sukkah itself to be made of these materials, but it became the tradition to actually wave them in joyous celebration at specific times during the week-long Sukkot celebration. Every worshiper carried the etrog (citron) in his left hand and in the right hand the lulavim (or palm, with myrtle, and willow branches). It was customary to hold the etrog upside down (stem down) and then after a blessing is spoken, turn it right side and join it to the other three species in the other hand. This tradition is supposed to signify that separated and alone and without YHWH

we are spiritually upside down and as spiritual Gentiles we were estranged from the commonwealth and covenants of Israel, until regathered and reunited with our lost Israelite brethren through Yeshua the Messiah (Eph. 2:11-19).

There can be no doubt that the four species were intended to remind Israel of the different stages of their wilderness journey, as represented by the different types of vegetation they would encounter along their journey. The palm branches recall the valleys and plains, the “boughs of thick trees,” the bushes on the mountain heights, and the willows from the brooks from which YHWH had given his people to drink, while the etrog was to remind them of the fruits of the good land which YHWH had given them.

Indeed, as spiritual pilgrims and sojourners passing through the wilderness of life who, as Yeshua said, are in the world, but not of the world, we encounter good times and bad, hills and valleys, fruitful plains and barren hillsides, yet we must never take our eyes off of the hope that YHWH has set before us — that of the Promised Land and the glorious kingdom of YHWH that awaits those who have faith and are faithful who overcome and pass through the trials and obstacles the wilderness of this life has to offer.

The lulav was used in the Temple on all of the seven festive days and even children, if they were able to shake it, were expected to carry one.

On the Seventh Day of the Feast the Lulavim (and/or willow branches) were beat against the altar so that all the leaves would fall off. This was called the *Day of Beating the Branches*.

The Eighth Day (Yom HaShemini) or Shemini Atzeret

The final Feast Day in YHWH’s spectacular cavalcade of glorious annual festivals which speak of the seven great steps of redemption or salvation is the Eighth Day (Yom HaShemini) or, as commonly called, Shemini Atzeret (or literally *the Eighth Solemn Assembly*). This Set-apart Day is a Shabbat and occurs immediately after the seventh or final day of Sukkot. It is a day when a commanded assembly occurs (Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35; 2 Chron. 7:9; Neh. 8:18). Not much is known about this day, but if one possesses a thorough understanding of Scripture it is not hard to ascertain what this day signifies. If seven is the biblical number of completion or perfection, then eight is the number of new beginnings, eternity or infinity. If the Feast of Sukkot is a prophetic shadow-picture of the Messianic Age (Millennium) then what does Scripture tell us comes after this?

We find the answers to this question at the end of the book of Revelation. At the end of the 1000-year long Messianic Age occurs the Second Resurrection where the unrighteous dead (those whose names are not found in the Lamb’s Book of Life) are briefly resurrected to appear before the Great White Throne Judgment of YHWH Elohim (the Just and Righteous Judge of the earth) only to be judged worthy of eternal separation from YHWH or spiritual death and tossed into the Lake of Fire (See Rev. 20:11-15). They will join the devil, the beast and the false prophet who have proceeded them (Rev. 20:11). But after YHWH has conducted this final business and dealt permanently with the last vestiges of evil begins Olam Haba – or eternity in YHWH’s glorious spiritual kingdom. We find this described in the last two chapters of Holy Writ, Revelation 21 and 22, where we find a description of the New Heaven and the New Earth and the descent of New Jerusalem to this newly created spiritual dimension. Read these chapters for yourself and try to imagine what it will be like for eternity in the presence of the Creator of the universe whose habitation will be with spiritually regenerated and glorified men. This is the ultimate reward of the saints.

This section is brief, for Scripture says little about this time, but Scripture’s terse description of eternity should underscore the utter inability of the human mind to comprehend the unsearchable riches that YHWH has in store for those who trust and obey him and remain faithful to the end for Scripture says, in 1 Corinthians 2:9, “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which Elohim hath prepared for them that love him.”