

God Ordained Christian Festivals And Holy Days

The Festivals and Holy Days given to Ancient Israel were affirmed by the example of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

They are memorials of God's great acts of salvation in the history of humanity past, present and future.

For every true Christian these Festivals and Holy Days are annual celebrations of God's power, love and saving grace.

2 Peter 3:18 [King James] *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”*

As Christians we are commanded to grow in knowledge as well as grace.

2 Timothy 3:16 [King James] *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”*

All scripture is profitable to correct and reproof us where we have through assumption, false teaching or prejudice been in error.

Let us, therefore, in willing submission to God's Word, the Christian Bible, free from prejudice, with an open mind that desires the truth more than our own way, trembling before the sacred and Holy Word of God. Ask for the direction of His Holy Spirit, as we study the direction He gives us pertaining to God's Festivals and Holy Days.

What we are about to study may be new to the vast number of readers and it will take courage to submit to this new truth.

Most people have supposed that all the Annual Sabbaths and Feast Days given to Ancient Israel are done away. Yet early Church history of the true Christian Church shows that Christians, after Jesus Christ's resurrection, **did** continue to keep and observe these annual Holy Days given by the Creator God.

What did end with Jesus Christ was the sacrifices that were attached to these Holy Days, not the days themselves.

When God gave these seven Annual Sabbaths, He in His great wisdom and purpose designed to keep in memory and understanding His great plan of redemption and reconciliation.

These annual days picture different epochs in the plan and picture their meaning.

How unfortunate that most Christians today have **not** had the opportunity to understand and participate in the celebration of the meaning of these feast days.

The Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread are only the start of God's plan. [Please download and study our article *'The New Testament Passover'* for a full explanation of the first essential part, listed under *'Religion.'*]

Exodus 12:15-20 [King James] *“Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be an holy*

*convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye **observe this day in your generations** by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.”*

These Days of Unleavened Bread were to be kept forever. [v17] **These days keep us constantly in the memory of the great fact of having had our sins forgiven by Jesus Christ’s blood, pictured by the Passover. Christians are then to remain in a sinless state.**

1 Corinthians 5:8 [King James] *“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”*

Leaven is a type of sin, as it puffs up, as does any sin.

Romans 6:4 [King James] *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

We are to walk in a new life that is free from sin, the old life of sin having died in the water of baptism. [verses 1-3]

Exodus 14:13-14 [King James] *“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”*

Just as the Israelites could **not** have come out of Egypt, a type of sin, under their own strength. God promised to fight for them.

In the same way Christians are helped to resist sin by the power of the Holy Spirit working in them. [Please download the articles on this website under the sub-heading ‘Holy Spirit’ to understand how this is accomplished.]

The next annual Feast Day given by God to the Israelites was the Feast of Weeks [Exodus 35:22], Pentecost or Feast of Firstfruits.

The New Testament Church continued to keep this annual Sabbath Pentecost as we will see.

God gave this Festival to His people in order to reveal and to keep them continually informed, that the present dispensation was only the first small “harvest” of people into His Kingdom or created family.

Isaiah 49:8 [King James] *“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;”*

Isaiah talks about “a” day of salvation, indicating more than one.

In the Holy Land there are **two** annual harvests. First, is a small spring harvest of grain. The second comes much later in the year and is much larger.

God intended to picture to His Church through this feast day the fact that those He calls at this time are but the small “firstfruits” of the great spiritual harvest.

Leviticus 23:9-11 [King James] *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.”*

The Israelites were **not** allowed to harvest any of the early spring grain crop until this particular ceremony of the wave-sheaf offering was made.

This pictures the resurrected Jesus Christ as the first of the firstfruits, being offered up to God the Father in His ascension.

1 Corinthians 15:20 [King James] *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”*

Jesus Christ the firstfruit as the first human being [Son of Man] of all who have died “*in Christ*” to be raised back to eternal life.

Colossians 1:18 [King James] *“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”*

In a normal birth the head is the first part of the baby to be born. [**Romans 8:29**]

James 1:18 [King James] *“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”*

All who have become Christians since the first coming of Jesus Christ, and all who received the Holy Spirit to fulfil a certain job of work for the Creator God before His first coming, are the firstfruits of the created family.

How was this Holy Day counted?

Pentecost is the Greek word used in New Testament, but **not** the Old Testament for this day, signifies fiftieth day.

Leviticus 23:15 [King James] *“And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:”*

“From” the Hebrew means **“on”** or **“beginning with.”** **The 50th day will be Pentecost.**

Leviticus 23:21 [King James] *“And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: **it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.**”*

A day that must be observed forever. Every other Holy Day comes on definite days and months of the Jewish calendar, but this day has to be counted.

Starting to count from the offering of the wave sheaf, the day after the next Sabbath will always be a Sunday but **not** always the same day of the Jewish calendar.

The meaning of this special day is fulfilled on the day of Pentecost after the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ with the giving of the Holy Spirit to all who obey Jesus Christ. [Acts 5:32]

Acts 2:1-4 [NIV] *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”*

This is the “*power*” that Jesus Christ had promised [Acts 1:4-8] to enable them to continue the work He had begun, of preaching the gospel message.

There are another group of Holy Days that come at the end of the Jewish year that symbolise tremendous events in God’s plan of redemption to occur, yet in the future.

Leviticus 23:23-24 [King James] *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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.”*

Here in this Feast Day of the Blowing of Trumpets is pictured the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 [King James] *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”*

The sound of the trumpet will announce the return of Jesus Christ, this time as King of kings, to rule this earth. [Revelation 19:16]

1 Corinthians 15:52-54 [King James] *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”*

Christians resurrected to eternal life. If there had been no resurrection then all of those who had died would perish. [v18]

Revelation 11:15 [King James] *“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”*

The seventh or last trumpet sound is the moment when Jesus Christ directly intervenes in world affairs, to avoid humanity destroying itself. [Matthew 24:21-22]

The trumpet is a symbol of war and Jesus Christ returns in a time of war.

All the Christians who have received eternal life will begin to rule with Jesus Christ to bring about a new world. [Revelation 20:6]

Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, pictured by the Feast of Trumpets, will mark several critical points in God’s plan for salvation.

The “*firstfruits*” of God’s created family, the Kingdom of God, will be resurrected and receive eternal life.

Jesus Christ will intervene to save humanity from destroying itself.

The ruling Kingdom of God will be established on earth, with Jesus Christ as world ruler.

What a wonderful time to be remembered each year by keeping the Feast of Trumpets.

Let us now read about the next Holy day, the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 23:26-28, 31-32 [King James] *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.” ... “Ye shall do no manner of work: **it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.** It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.”*

Again we see that this day is to be observed by God’s people in every generation, or forever. [**Leviticus 16:29-31, 34**]

The Day of Atonement, like the other festivals, ultimately points towards the work of Jesus Christ for our salvation.

But what, specifically, is the role of Jesus Christ in the Day of Atonement?

In the context of the Day of Atonement, we find described the special ceremonies ancient performed on that day.

Leviticus 16:2-10 [King James] *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on. And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.”*

These sacrificial rituals are now **not** to be kept, they are part of the ceremonial sacrificial laws that point towards the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. [Please download and study our articles under subtitle ‘Ceremonial Laws’]

However, these rituals do have symbolic meaning for us today.

The goat referred to in many English translations of God’s Word, the Christian Bible, as “scapegoat” is the Hebrew word “*‘azâzêl*” meaning “goat of departure.”

Leviticus 16:15-19 [King James] *“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.”*

After he had atoned for his own sins [v11-14] the high priest Aaron killed the goat that was **not** going to be sent into the wilderness [āzâzêl goat], but the “*Lord’s*” goat as an atonement for all the people.

This goat could only represent Jesus Christ our Saviour who was sacrificed for us.

Leviticus 16:20-22 [King James] *“And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.”*

This goat is symbolic of Satan, who from the very beginning of the history of humanity has been responsible for encouraging humans to sin, through deception and personal influence. [Genesis 3:1-6; Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4; John 8:44]

It is Satan who is bound by an angel and sent where he could not deceive people for 1,000 years. [Revelation 20:1-3]

Eventually Satan will be removed forever from any contact with human beings. [Revelation 20:7-10]

Satan’s binding will **not** remove all evil, sin will continue to exist in the hearts of some people during the 1,000 years of Satan’s first binding, and after his release, until all who refuse to accept Jesus Christ are eliminated with Satan’s influence in the lake of fire, the second death from which there is **no** resurrection.

These Day of Atonement rituals are also explained in the book of Hebrews, but little about the removal of Satan.

Hebrews 6:20 [King James] *“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”*

Jesus Christ is an eternal High Priest who entered into the Holy of Holies as did Aaron on the Day of Atonement.

Hebrews 7:27 [King James] *“Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”*

Jesus Christ did **not** need to make atonement for Himself, offering Himself as the sacrifice for all humanity.

Hebrews 9:11-12 [King James] *“But Christ 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; 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.”*

The Holy of Holies that Jesus Christ entered with His own blood was the heavenly throne of God the Father.

Hebrews 9:13-17 [King James] *“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: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, 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. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”*

We usually associate Christ's sacrifice with the Passover, but Christ's death and forgiveness are clearly pictured in the rituals of the Day of Atonement.

The Hebrew word translated "atonement" is "kâdhar" which is also translated "to reconcile," "to pardon," "to be merciful," so this day could be called "Day of Reconciliation."

Passover focuses on individual forgiveness and escape from eternal death.

Atonement focuses on communal reconciliation with God.

The primary fulfilment of the Day of Atonement is in the future for humanity in general, as we will see when we study the next two Holy Days. But Atonement is already effective for the people of God now.

Those who obey Him and seek to keep His Holy Days.

We now come to the Festival of Tabernacles, the sixth festival.

Deuteronomy 16:13-17 [King James] *"Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee."*

The Feast of Tabernacles is to be kept for seven days, and is a time when we make an offering of thankfulness to God.

Leviticus 23:33-35 [King James] *"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein."*

The first of these days is a holy convocation, a commanded assembly.

Leviticus 23:41 [King James] *"And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month."*

To be kept by every generation.

Pictured in this festival are the final culminating events in God's great plan for humanity.

After Jesus Christ died for our sins [Passover] and we seek to live without sinning [Days of Unleavened Bread] helped by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit [Pentecost] Jesus Christ's Second Coming [Feast of Trumpets] and His reconciliation work [Atonement] true Christians are now ready to work alongside of Jesus Christ as His wife [Revelation 19:7-9; Revelation 5:9-10] as priests [teachers] and elders/judges [kings].

This is the time of the larger "harvest" of human beings to become part of the created family [kingdom] of God.

This "harvest" will continue for 1,000 years. [Revelation 20:4]

Exodus 34:22 [King James] *“And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end.”*

Here the feast at the end of the year is called *“Feast of Ingathering.”*

Just as Pentecost pictures the early harvest, so the Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering pictures the much larger “harvest” of human beings to become part of the created family or Kingdom of God.

The book of Zechariah helps us to understand this future time more clearly. [**Zechariah chapters 12 and 13**]

The words *“in that day”* refer to the day of Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, this time to rule this world, beginning with Jerusalem that will become His headquarters.

Now notice what Zechariah tells us in the next chapter.

Zechariah 14:1-2 [King James] *“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”*

The cleansing of Jerusalem that had been polluted by Satan and the human beings he had used to do his will. [**Mark 13:14; Daniel 12:10-11**]

Zechariah 14:3-4 [King James] *“Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”*

Jesus Christ’s return to this earth with all the resurrected and living people of God [**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**] now having received eternal life and spirit bodies.

Zechariah 14:9, 11 [King James] *“And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.” ... “And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.”*

Jerusalem will be a place of safety and centre of rulership.

Zechariah 14:8 [King James] *“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.”*

“Living waters” is symbolic of God’s Word [Hebrews 10:22] and Holy Spirit [John 7:38], also literal water to make the soil as productive as it was intended to be.

Zechariah 14:16-19 [King James] *“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.”*

The keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles will be a test commanded assembly after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The Feast of Tabernacles is seven days long and as we see pictures the 1,000 year rule of Jesus Christ and resurrected Christians here on earth.

Leviticus 23:34, 36 [King James] *“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.” ... “Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.”*

This eighth day, is the last annual Festival or Holy Day, is observed immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles, and is known as the Last Great Day.

What does this final Holy Day represent?

John 7:37-39 [NIV] *“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”*

“Whoever,” this means every human being, even those who have never even heard of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20:4-5 [King James] *“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”*

At the end of this 1,000 years rule of Jesus Christ and resurrected Christians, the “*rest of the dead*” will still be “*asleep*” in their graves until a certain event happens.

Revelation 20:11-13 [King James] *“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”*

All who have ever lived and died never having known or understood God’s Word, the Christian Bible, will be resurrected back to physical life.

They will then be given their **first** opportunity to understand why they have received physical life by a Creator God.

“*The books were opened*” – this refers to the books of the Holy Word of God, the Christian Bible.

What these people will understand, for the first time, will be used to judge their response to the rulership of Jesus Christ as their Creator and Saviour, in their lives.

What these people decide will result in their final end.

Having their names placed in the book of eternal life, or end up in the lake of fire [verses 14-15] which is the “*second death*” from which there is no resurrection.

This will be the end of this earth as we know it.

2 Peter 3:9-13 [King James] *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”*

Peter talks about the destruction of the surface of this earth as a result of what happens in the heavens above it.

Jesus Christ showed the apostle John a vision of what would happen after this event.

Revelation 21:1-7 [King James] *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”*

A new earth in which all who are righteous in God’s eyes, having overcome the pull of sin, will live.

Revelation 21:8 [King James] *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”*

All who are rebellious unbelievers, who reject the salvation offered by Jesus Christ, will have already been burnt up in the cleansing fires that the apostle Peter spoke about.

Revelation 22:15 [King James] *“For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”*

Another group of people who will be outside the Kingdom of God, also in the form of ashes under the feet of Jesus Christ the “*Lord of hosts.*” [Malachi 4:1, 3]

Which Feast Days did Jesus Christ observe when He was on earth in His First Coming as our Saviour?

Luke 2:41-42 [King James] *“Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.”*

Notice that Jesus’ parents went up to Jerusalem annually for Passover and He was subject to them [v51]. Notice that Jesus kept days of Unleavened Bread “*fulfilled the days.*” [v43]

About 18 years later when Jesus was about 30 years old He continued in His parents’ practice.

John 2:13, 23 [King James] *“And the Jews’ passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,” ... “Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.”*

Passover and **Feast of Unleavened Bread.**

John 7:1-2, 14 [King James] *“After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.” ... “Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.”*

Jesus taught in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles.

John 7:37-38 [King James] *“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus 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.”*

Jesus explains the spiritual significance of the Pentecost and Last Great Day.

John 11:55-57 [King James] *“And the Jews’ passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.”*

People speculated as to whether Jesus would attend the Passover knowing about threats against Him.

Luke 22:15 [King James] *“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:”*

Jesus desired to keep this last Passover with His disciples.

Holy Days “nailed to the cross.”

Were the Holy Days done away with as many believe?

[Please download and study our articles on this website under sub-heading ‘Ceremonial Law’]

Matthew 28:18-20 [King James] *“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to **observe all things** whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

Notice the final instructions to His disciples, given by Jesus just before His ascension, was to *“teach all nations to observe **all things** I have commanded you.”*

That included the Holy Feast Days which He had taught by personal example.

There is no direct command by Jesus Christ in the New Testament to observe the Holy Days, however God commanded all Israel to keep them, and Jesus Christ did by personal example.

The Greek word translated “observe” in **Matthew 28:20** is “*tērēō*” translated over 50 times “keep” also means “guard” and “hold fast.”

1 John 2:6 [King James] *“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”*

To “walk” means to live as Jesus Christ lived.

1 Peter 2:21 [King James] *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”*

Jesus Christ left us an example to follow.

In other words, since Jesus Christ kept the Holy Days, the New Testament Church should follow His example.

The New Testament Church, both Jew and Gentile, **did** follow the example of Jesus Christ in keeping Holy Days.

Acts 2:1 [King James] *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”*

All the disciples were keeping Pentecost.

Acts 12:1-4 [NIV] *“It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. **This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.** After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.”*

Notice the **Days of Unleavened Bread still existed in the Church, and the Passover.**

Acts 18:21 [King James] *“But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means **keep this feast** that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.”*

The feast referred to was the **Feast of Tabernacles.**

Acts 20:6 [King James] *“And we sailed away from Philippi **after the days of unleavened bread**, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.”*

Obviously they had observed the Days of Unleavened Bread and looked forward to Pentecost. [v16]

Acts 27:9 [King James] *“Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,”*

The **“fast”** referred to is the **Day of Atonement.**

Remember Luke, the writer of Acts, who was a Gentile physician, 30 years after the crucifixion was using “Jewish” Holy Days to describe the time of year.

This was **not** strange to Theophilus or the disciples of Jesus Christ, but it would be strange to many people today who think they are following the example of Jesus Christ, but do **not** follow Him and His example concerning God’s ordained Holy Days.

About AD55 Paul sent a letter to the Church at Corinth that was mostly Gentile and referred to the Days of Unleavened Bread, and the spiritual leaven of sin.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 [King James] *“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”*

He also commanded them to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1 Corinthians 16:8 [King James] *“But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.”*

Paul, about 24 years after the crucifixion, intended to keep the Feast of Pentecost.

Zechariah 14:16-19 [King James] *“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.”*

Jesus Christ [v3-4] will command the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles every year.

Leviticus 23:41 [King James] *“And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.”*

The God-ordained Feast Days were commanded to be observed forever.

The question remains, do you also keep these New Testament Christian Holy Days?

God's Festivals and Holy Days

The seven annual festivals identified in the chart below depict the steps in God's plan of salvation for mankind

	Old Testament Reference	Description	New Testament Reference	Significance
Passover	Leviticus 23:25	A memorial of the Lord's deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt and the redemption of their firstborn.	Luke 22:14-20 John 13:1-5, 14-15 1 Corinthians 5:7	A memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, " <i>our Passover</i> ," that made possible the forgiveness of our sins.
Feast of Unleavened Bread	Leviticus 23:6-8	A remembrance of Israel's hasty departure from Egypt, and the Lord's deliverance of his people.	Romans 6:4 1 Corinthians 5:8	Pictures God's people – the Church – forgiven Christians – remaining spiritually unleavened as they " <i>walk in newness of life.</i> "
Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)	Leviticus 23:15-22	A joyous celebration of thanksgiving at the end of the spring harvest.	Acts 2:1-4 Romans 8:23	Depicts Christians as the firstfruits of salvation, and their receiving of the Holy Spirit.
Feast of Trumpets	Leviticus 23:23-25	Israel's New Year. Trumpets called the people to a time of repentance and a time of new beginnings.	Matthew 24:30-31 1 Thess. 4:16-17 Revelation 11:15	Celebrates the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to intervene in world affairs, resurrect the firstfruits, and establish the Kingdom of God on earth.
Day of Atonement	Leviticus 23:26-32	A day to seek atonement and forgiveness for sins.	Revelation 20:1-3	Portrays the reconciliation of man to God, and the work of Jesus Christ as our High Priest. Also portrays the binding and removal of Satan for 1,000 years.
Feast of Tabernacles	Leviticus 23:33-43	Israel remembers the Lord's goodness in bringing His people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.	Revelation 20:4, 6	Represents the 1,000-year rule of Christ and the resurrected saints on the earth, when salvation will be offered to all.
Last Great Day	Leviticus 23:36		Matthew 12:41-42 Revelation 20:5, 11-12	Symbolic of a time when the vast majority of humanity will be resurrected to mortal life and given their opportunity for salvation.