

Easter 2024

There were 7 feasts in the Law of Moses that God commanded Israel to observe. Every one of them was prophetic of the earthly life of Jesus Christ. The ones we will focus on in this study are the spring Feasts: Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Firstfruits.

The first feast in the spring, Passover, was given to Israel as they were about to make their escape from slavery in Egypt.

Exodus 12:3, 6-7

³Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:

⁶And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

¹³And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall

not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Every house in Israel was to kill a lamb and put its blood on the doorpost of their houses. The blood would save the occupants in the house from death. Passover is an ordinance, a Law, that will be practiced for eternity.

Exodus 12:24-25

And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

All three of these feasts were given to Israel at the same time. Passover is the 14th of Abib, the Feast of Unleavened Bread starts on the 15th of Abib and lasts until the 22nd. The Feast of Firstfruits is the Sunday that falls during the 7 day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Leviticus 23:4-11

These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their

seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. And **on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD:** seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 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.**

Dates in the Jewish calendar start at sundown, or 6 p.m. and not midnight. That means that the Jewish holidays span 2 of our days.

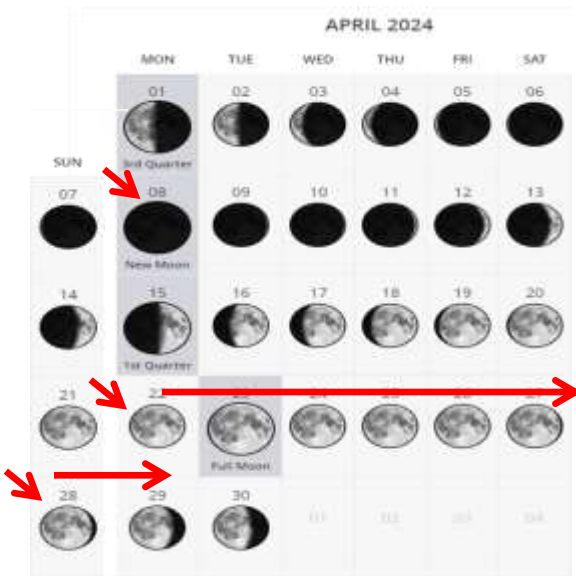
In 2024, these dates are:

First day of the month of Abib: April 8, 2024

Passover: April 21-22, 2024 (14th of Abib)

Feast of Unleavened Breads: April 22-29, 2024
(15th of Abib)

Feast of First Fruits: April 27-28, 2024 (Saturday
night into Sunday during Passover week)



Even though the dates for these Feasts change on our calendar from year to year, the dates for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread never changes in the Jewish calendar. They are always on Abib 14 and 15 respectively. The date for the Feast of Firstfruits is always the Sunday that falls during the week of Passover.

Passover was prophetic of the Lord Jesus Christ's death because, just like the lamb's blood saved

Israel when they were in Egypt, His blood would save all of Israel from the penalty of sin, which is death.

Hebrews 9:22

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood is no remission.**

The angel of the Lord confirmed to Joseph (Jesus' legal father) that Jesus was the one who would save His people from their sins.

Matthew 1:20

But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for **that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.**

Throughout prophecy, it was always Israel that would be saved by a redeemer. Jesus told the Gentile woman at the well:

John 4:22-24

Ye worship ye know not what: **we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.** But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Jesus specifically told His disciples to go only to Israel to save them, they were lost sheep.

Matthew 10:5-6

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

Jesus told a Gentile woman who wanted Him to heal her daughter that He was only sent to save Israel, not Gentiles (the Jews called them dogs.)

Matthew 15:24-28

But he answered and said, **I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came**

she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

If Jesus was sent to save only Israel, what changed?

The apostle Paul was given a mystery that had been kept hidden by God. The Gentiles would also be saved, like the Jews, by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:1

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of **the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery;** (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand **my knowledge in the mystery of**

Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Why was the salvation of the Gentiles kept a mystery? Because if Satan and the rest of the evil spirits (princes of this world) had known that the Gentiles would be saved to form the Church, the Body of Christ to rule with Christ in heavenly places, he would not have crucified the Lord. It is Satan and his followers who currently reign in heaven.

1 Corinthians 2:6-8

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: **But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,** even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: **Which none of**

the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Paul, our apostle, explains how we have our own Feast of Firstfruits was prophetic of Jesus' resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:20, 22-23

²⁰ **But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.**

²² **For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.**

Peter got the same information.

Acts 11:15-18

And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord

Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, **Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.**

Paul explained to the Jews that it was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken to Israel first. When Israel rejected Jesus Christ, the Lord took His word to the Gentiles. The Gentiles, understanding that salvation was now theirs, not just for the Jews, glorified the word of the Lord.

Acts 13:46-49

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, **It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.** For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, **I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord:** and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was

published throughout all the region.

This year, 2024, Passover and Easter celebrations are 3 weeks apart. Passover is April 21-22 and Good Friday is March 29. Why the difference? As Christians, we know these three observances as Good Friday (Passover,) Holy Saturday (Feast of Unleavened Bread,) and Easter (Feast of Firstfruits.) (Christ was crucified on a Thursday but we will continue to call it “Good Friday” to avoid confusion.)

Many think that this passage in Mark is talking about the regular Sabbath day, Saturday, so they think Jesus was crucified on Friday. But the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Abib is also a Sabbath, a holy convocation, when Israel was to do no servile work.

Mark 15:42-43

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, **the day before the sabbath**, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

Here is what happened:

- **Thursday**, Passover, Jesus was crucified
- **Friday**, the first day of the 7 day Feast of Unleavened Bread (a Sabbath.)
- **Saturday**, regular Sabbath Day.
- **Sunday**, the Feast of Firstfruits and Jesus' resurrection.

For Christians, Easter occurs the first Sunday after the full Moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox.

The spring equinox in 2024 is on Tuesday, March 19, at 11:06 p.m. That is when the earth sets straight on its axis, neither tilted toward or away from the sun. This causes 12 hours of sunlight almost everywhere on earth.

The full moon on or after the spring equinox is the next Monday, March 25. The Sunday after that, March 31, is Easter.

MARCH 2024

SUN. MON. TUES. WED. THURS. FRI. SAT.

