

God's Appointed Times – Part 1

As I mentioned earlier, observant Jews and Messianic Believers will be celebrating the Fall Feasts of the Bible beginning next week. It is my intent in this series to provide the scriptural and traditional background on each of the appointed times that God has asked us to remember and to point out how each of them points to the Messiah Yeshua. I will be posting a separate description of each as they occur throughout the year.

Date in 5775 Hebrew Calendar (2014-2015)	Name	Brief Description
September 25 th *	Rosh HaShanah (Yom Teruah)	<p>The Jewish New Year, observed for two days in Israel as well as the Diaspora, marks the commencement of the Ten Days of Penitence which reach their climax on Yom Kippur. An important observance of Rosh Hashanah is the sounding of the shofar (ram's horn).</p> <p>Rosh Hashanah is also known as 'Yom Hadin,' the day of judgment, since, according to tradition, on Rosh Hashanah, mankind is judged by God for its actions during the past year.</p>
October 4 th *	Yom Kippur	The Day of Atonement. Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. Marked by fasting and prayer, it is the day to ask forgiveness from man and from God and to offer restitution for any wrongdoing. According to tradition, one's fate for the coming year is sealed on this day.
October 9 th *	Sukkot	The Festival of Tabernacles or Booths (Hebrew 'sukkot'). One of the three pilgrim festivals (the others being Pesach and Shavu'ot) when, in ancient times, Jews made pilgrimages to the Temple in Jerusalem. It derives its name from the 'sukkah' or booth, a temporary structure in which time is spent during the holiday to commemorate God's protection of the Children of Israel during their 40 years in the wilderness.
December 17 th	Hanukkah**	The 'Festival of Dedication' also called 'The Festival of Lights' commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians in 165 B.C.E and the re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem which had been defiled by them. Each night of the festival an additional candle is lit until on the last night, eight candles are burning. According to tradition, when the Temple was re-captured, only one small vessel of consecrated oil -- enough for just one day -- was found. Miraculously, it sufficed for eight days until new oil could be prepared and the festival was established for this length of

		time to commemorate the miracle.
March 5 th	Purim**	<p>Commemorates the deliverance of Persian Jewry from their intended destruction by Haman, the chief minister of King Ahasuerus (circa Fifth Century B.C.E.). The holiday is marked by the reading of the Megillah (The Biblical Book of Esther) which recounts the details of how Queen Esther and Mordecai managed to thwart Haman's plot.</p> <p>Because of its uniquely joyful nature, Purim is the occasion for parties and other festivities. It is customary to send food gifts ('mishloach manot') to friends and to distribute charity to the poor. A special festive meal ('purim seudah') is held on Purim afternoon.</p>
April 4 ^{th*}	Pesach	<p>Eight-day observance (seven in Israel) commemorating the Exodus from Egypt and the liberation of the Israelites from slavery. The first two and last two days (in Israel, the first and seventh days) are full holidays. The intermediate days, 'Hol Hamoed,' are half holidays. Matzah, unleavened bread, is eaten during the entire holiday period.</p>
May 24 ^{th*}	Shavu'ot	<p>One of the three pilgrim festivals (the others being Passover and Succot) which were marked by pilgrimages to Jerusalem to participate in the special Temple celebrations. It is known as 'The Feast of Weeks' because it falls seven weeks after Passover. It is also called 'The Festival of First Fruits.' Shavuot is a two-day observance (one in Israel). In Jewish tradition it commemorates the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai which took place on this date.</p>

For dates indicated with a '*' the holiday actually begins at sundown on the previous evening.

Technically, Hanukkah and Purim are not included in God's appointed times, but each is a part of our Jewish heritage and both have implications for the coming of Yeshua. In addition, to these times, we can also include the weekly Sabbath observance and the monthly Rosh Chedosh (New Moon) observance as times of remembrance.