

WHY I DON'T CELEBRATE EASTER?

I INSTEAD CELEBRATE THE BIBLICAL "PASSOVER"

INTRODUCTION

So often I am asked, "Why do you Celebrate Passover" ("Pesach" in Hebrew) rather than the Christian Easter? The query is also often accompanied by grave disappointment (on the part of the one asking the question) and sometimes even a bit of anger (usually from family members).

My answer is simple, but often misunderstood, therefore I undertook this article to provide a detailed, Biblical explanation to my decision that dates to the 1980's.

Firstly, I believe the Bible (all of it – at a minimum the entire 66 books of the Protestant Version of the Bible), presents a direct, straight forward set of (8) "Appointed Times" ("mo'-adim" in Hebrew) presented by Father God Himself. These eight "Appointed Times" (often called "Feasts" or "Festivals" to God) are delineated in Leviticus ("Vayikra" meaning "and he called") chapter 23 and are demonstrated (as being celebrated) throughout the remaining books of the Bible. One should also note there is ample evidence in the New Testament ("B'rit Chadashah" in Hebrew) that Yeshua (Jesus) celebrated most of these Levitical "Appointed Times".

I further believe (with all my heart) that these "Appointed Times / Feasts" provide a rich symbology of our Savior, who was (as declared by John the Baptist) "the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world" (linking John's proclamation of Jesus to the Passover). Indeed, all the "Appointed Times" typify, symbolize, and instruct about Jesus, the Lamb of God (title for His First Coming) and the Lion of Judah (title for His Second Coming).

GOD PRESCRIBED CELEBRATIONS THAT INVOLVE HIM

In short, this is why I celebrate the Biblical "Appointed Times / Feasts" and not the holidays established by mankind (easter and christmas).

These Biblical "Appointed Times" are:

1. First and foremost, the weekly “**Sabbath**” (“Shabbat” in Hebrew), on the seventh (7th) day of every week
2. The “Spring Feasts Grouping”:
 - a. **Passover** (“Pesach” in Hebrew), celebrated on the evening of the 14th day of the first month of the Hebrew Year
 - b. **Unleavened Bread** (“matzah” in Hebrew) celebrated for seven days, from the 15th day through the 21st day of the first month of the Hebrew Year (which immediately follows Passover).
 - c. **First Fruits** (“bikkurim” in Hebrew) celebrated the day following the Sabbath immediately after Passover (meaning, on a Gregorian Calendar “Sunday”). This is what modern Christians refer to as “Resurrection Day”, as Jesus Christ (Yeshua ha Moshiah, in Hebrew) was the “First Fruits Risen from the dead” (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-28).
3. The early summer Feast – “**Shavuot**” (in Hebrew) or what Christians call “Day of Pentecost”, 50 days after First Fruits (in the Spring).
4. The “Fall Feasts Grouping”:
 - a. **Day of Trumpets** (“Yom Teruah” in Hebrew) on the 1st day of the seventh month of the Hebrew Calendar
 - b. **Day of Atonement** (“Yom Kippur” in Hebrew) on the 10th day of the seventh month on the Hebrew Calendar
 - c. **Feast of Tabernacles** / In-Gathering (“Succot” in Hebrew) on the 15th day through the 22nd day of the seventh month (an 8-day celebration)

All the “Appointed Times”, Shabbat, the “Spring Groupings”, Shavuot (Pentecost), and the “Fall Groupings” present a complete, symbolic picture of God’s “Plan of Salvation” for sinful, rebellious mankind as found in Yeshua (Jesus) – both during His first earthly ministry and His future “Second Coming”. “How?”, you may ask. Here is a quick summary:

- Shabbat is a weekly reminder (instituted in Chapter 2 of Genesis by God Himself) to cause us to joyfully and thankfully reflect on what a great Creation God built, just so we “bags of dirt, filled with life-giving blood” may live (we were meticulously formed / molded from the dust / dirt of the earth and then God Himself “breathed into our nostrils the breath of life”- Genesis 2:7). We are daily blessed with life, so long as God chooses for which we should ever express our joy and gratefulness. Without the Creator, creation would disintegrate into the formless void (“tohu” and “bohu” in Hebrew) before God’s intervention.
- The “Spring Grouping” of “Appointed Times” clearly “foreshadowed” what Christians call the “First Coming of Messiah”:
 - Christ Came (the first time) and ministered as a Human without sin
 - He was rejected

- He was scourged (horribly) and crucified (as prophesied), died and was buried
 - His shed blood covers the sins of those that earnestly “faith” in him (yes, I turned an English noun into a verb on purpose), just as the blood from the “Passover Lamb” covered the ancient Hebrews from the “angel of death” during the original Passover period in Egypt.
 - The Passover Sacrifice clearly correlates to the Crucifixion of Yeshua (Jesus)
 - The “smearing of blood on the doorposts and lintels” is emblematic of the “Blood of Jesus” that, when appropriated in Faith, is spiritually smeared on the figurative “doorposts and lintels (symbolic structure) of our hearts”, thereby atoning for our sins
- Christ remained in the “belly of the grave” for 3 days and 3 nights (as Christ Himself described as the “sign of Jonah”)
- After the 3 days and nights in the grave, Christ was Resurrected as the “First Fruits from the dead” (spoken of by Paul in I Corinthians 15:20-28).
 - This “First Fruits from the dead” is the same as the “Resurrection of the Christ” after 3 days and 3 nights in the grave (“the belly of the earth”) – the Christian “Resurrection 1st day of the Week”
- During the “Last Supper” (which was a Hebrew Passover Celebration, according to Leviticus), Jesus instituted what Christians call “Communion” (or for others, the “Eucharist”).
 - Since Passover also commemorates the ancient Hebrews very hasty “Exodus” / Leaving of Egypt under the direction of God Himself, they took what food item they could carry with them (raw, unfermented / unleavened dough for bread)
 - Legend says that for 7 days, they only had “unleavened bread” to eat (or in the words of my sons, when they were young, “boring crackers”).
 - “Leaven” is emblematic of “sin” (being puffed-up, full of oneself)
 - Jesus and his disciples clearly ate “unleavened bread” as prescribed for all Passover meals, meaning, Jesus “blessing of the bread and symbol of his soon-to-be-broken body” was unleavened bread – a sinless body – broken for my sins (and yours)
- Yeshua (Jesus) was sinless (unleavened) and we are also to be “unleavened”. The 7 days of eating unleavened bread is a dedicatory act to remind us of that goal.
- Now, following Christ’s Resurrection, he appeared and taught many, and specifically on the 40th day after his Resurrection, He instructed His disciples to

“remain in Jerusalem” for the “Promised Counselor” (Holy Spirit). Then He majestically ascended to Heaven as they watched.

- 10 days after His Ascension, in the upper room, where the disciples were praying (and hiding from the temple authorities), the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples. “Tongues of Fire” appeared on them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign languages (“tongues”) – “Pentecost” in Greek, “Shavuot” in Hebrew, which now presents a Dual Symbolism:
 - The giving of Torah (instructions for proper living) at Mount Sinai 50 days after leaving Egypt AND...
 - The giving of the “Great Counselor – Holy Spirit”, 50 days after Christ’s Crucifixion.
- The “Spring Grouping” of “Appointed Times” along with “Shavuot” have already occurred (soon to be) 2,000 years ago (as best we can measure).
- The remaining 3 “Fall Groupings” of “Appointed Times” are yet to be fulfilled in the future, when Christ Returns, not as the “Seh Ha Elohiym” (lamb of God) but as the “Lion of Judah” / a Conqueror that will defeat the enemies of God on Earth as a “Rescue Mission” during the “Great Tribulation”. Their symbology is as follows:
 - **Yom Teruah – Day of Trumpets:**
 - Listen! Get Ready! It is Close (the 2nd Coming of Christ)
 - **Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement**
 - It seems to me; this is emblematic of the “Day of the Lord” spoken of by the prophets – also known to Christians as the “Day of Judgement” which we must all face.
 - NOTE – This mo’ adim (appointed time) is not a joyous celebration, but a somber, God-seeking fast / denial of oneself
 - **Succot – Feats of Tabernacles** – also known as the **Feast of the In Gathering**
 - A very joyous celebration, since this appears to be the first “Feast” to be Celebrated with Yeshua (Jesus) when he Returns, and the Day of Judgement is behind us

Now, given the above Biblically prescribed “Appointed Times” and their symbology, let me ask a few questions of the reader

1. What does the Crucifixion, Death, and Resurrection of the sinless (unleavened) Yeshua (Jesus) have to do with Rabbits (an animal God declared to be ceremonially “unclean”)?

2. What do “Dyed Eggs” have to do with a Repentant attitude (to turn from sin) that must precede one’s confession of Faith, and thereby claim the Salvation provided by God through Faith in the “Lamb of God”?
3. How does the word “Easter” correlate (or symbolize) any of the most-blessed acts of Yeshua (Jesus) during His first earthly ministry?

I do not seek to change anyone’s belief system. Firstly, celebration of NEITHER Levitical “Appointed Times / Feasts” NOR mankind’s holidays is a “Salvation Issue” to a believer. Salvation is from God by Grace through Faith in Yeshua (Jesus) and what He did during His first earthly ministry. I merely seek to present the Word of God as accurately as I am able.