

# The Feast Days ... Times for Revival

No one can study the history of Israel as recorded in the Scriptures without becoming impressed with the fact, that whenever Yahweh's people chose to break His law they suffered the consequences.

And if they persisted in their rebellion by refusing to forsake the path of disobedience, then the Almighty invariably withdrew His blessings and allowed their enemies to rule over them.

This tragic sequence of **disobedience (sin) always being followed by punishment of one kind or the other** happened over and over again in Israel's past; and it happened in direct fulfillment of the divine pronouncements made through the patriarch Moses.

A survey of Deuteronomy 28 will prove this point and a study of the books of Judges, Kings and Chronicles will fix the lesson in your mind for life.

In short, when Yahweh's people disobeyed Him, they were punished - often very severely - but when they repented of their sins and turned back to the pathway of obedience they were blessed;

blessed in a measure that was quite breathtaking in its effect and out of all proportion to their obedience.

The Almighty literally showered upon His people the spiritual riches of heaven and the bounties of the earth.

**When they obeyed His commandments they prospered in all that they did, and when they refused to obey they suffered the consequences.**

In a sentence, that summarizes Israel's history.

Now bear in mind that **Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel** has not changed. (Mal. 3:6)

He still blesses those who obey Him and punishes those who sin.

No matter how people try to ignore this fact, it will not go away, because it is a fundamental teaching of the Scriptures.

If you trust and obey the Most High you will be blessed.

But if you persist in sinning you will be punished; it's as basic as that.

Let us now look at four revivals recorded in the Scriptures to illustrate this point.

## 1. The Revival under King Hezekiah

Before Hezekiah came to the throne, the Temple in Jerusalem had been tragically desecrated.

The holy lamps had been put out and the Temple doors shut.

Organized worship of the Creator had been more or less suspended.

As a result the Kingdom of Judah was spiritually bankrupt.

But when Hezekiah came to the throne a great change took place. On the **first day of the first month** in the sacred calendar - the **real** New Year's Day - he ordered that the doors of the Temple be opened and the filth that lay in the Holy Place removed. (2 Chron. chapters 29 & 30)

This cleansing work was soon finished and royal invitations to come to Jerusalem for the Passover were sent out by special couriers to every corner of the Promised Land.

The record reads:

2 Chronicles 30:5 *"So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-Sheba even to Dan, that they should **come to keep the Passover unto Yahweh, Elohim of Israel** at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it is written.*

*6. So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying. Ye children of Israel, turn again unto Yahweh, Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.*

*7. **And be not ye like your fathers**, and like your brethren which transgressed against Yahweh, Elohim of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.*

*8. Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto Yahweh, your Elohim, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.*

*9. For if ye turn unto Yahweh, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for Yahweh your Elohim is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, **if ye return unto him.**"*

The vast majority of the Israelites treated this invitation with blasphemous contempt.

**"They laughed them to scorn and mocked them."** (verse 10).

Nevertheless a great multitude of believers humbled themselves and assembled in Jerusalem to keep the Passover.

Thus began one of the greatest revivals in Israel's history.

The Spirit of the Almighty was present at that **sacred season, the Passover**; and there followed a great outpouring of blessing on the assembled worshippers.

A revival shook the city of Jerusalem and it sent spiritual vibrations to the furthestmost corners of Israel.

The nation once again began to obey Yahweh's commandments and to remember His sacred Feasts.

For His part the Almighty in His great mercy pardoned their sins and blessed them abundantly.

When did that extraordinary revival begin?

It began, as pointed out above, on New Years Day (1st Abib) and it came to a climax at the sacred season called the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**.

Bear that little known fact in mind because it has deep spiritual significance.

## 2. The Revival under King Josiah

After Hezekiah died, the nation of Judah under their next king (Manasseh) soon slipped back into the ways of heathenism.

2 Chronicles 33:1 **"Manasseh** was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: 2: But did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom Yahweh had cast out before the children of Israel. 3: For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. 4: Also he built altars in the house of Yahweh, whereof Yahweh had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever. 5: And he built altars for all the **host of heaven in the two**

***courts of the house of Yahweh. 6: And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he **observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of Yahweh, to provoke him to anger.*****

The spiritual repercussions of these blatant sins came with frightening severity. verse 11.

*"Whereupon Yahweh brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. "*

Tremendous confusion broke out in Judah and when Manasseh died his twenty-four year old son ascended the throne; but he was murdered in the palace after reigning only two years.

It was the same old story: **sin degrades a nation and punishment always follows disobedience.**

Then onto the stage of time came **Josiah**, one of Judah's greatest kings. Josiah was only eight years old when he came to the throne; but he accomplished more for the truth of Yahweh by the age of twenty five than all the kings of Israel and Judah before him.

The reformation under Josiah was swift and astonishing in its effect. With terrifying ruthlessness he demolished the altars of Baal and cut down the Asherim (heathen poles) in the high places.

He literally purged the land of paganism and humbly reinstated the worship of Yahweh in accordance with His commands. (2 Chron. 34)

King Josiah then organized the Passover celebrations and invited the whole nation to Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 35:17 *" And the children of Israel that were present kept the Passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. 18: And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 18. And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet: neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept..."*

Once more revival swept the nation and Yahweh blessed Josiah with a blessing that will clothe him with honor and glory throughout the endless cycles of eternity.

### When did that nation-wide revival begin?

The answer is, it began at the sacred season of the **Passover in the month of Abib.**

Bear that little known fact in mind because its significance will be explained later in this study.

### 3. The Revival under Ezra and Nehemiah

After Josiah's death the nation again sank into grievous sin.

It seemed as though a devilish addiction for disobedience had gripped the people.

They simply refused to obey the Almighty and continued to follow the practices of the heathen around them.

**As for the Almighty's sacred Sabbaths, they totally forsook them.**

The lessons of the past were all forgotten and the warnings of Yahweh's prophets were treated with blasphemous contempt.

2 Chronicles 36:14 " Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of Yahweh which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. 15: And Yahweh, Elohim of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

**16: But they mocked the messengers of Yahweh, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of Yahweh arose against his people, till there was no remedy.** 17: Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. 18: And all the vessels of the house of Yahweh, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Yahweh, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. 19: And they burnt the house of Yahweh, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all

*the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.*

*20: And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: 21: To fulfill the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, **until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years.**"*

The prophet Jeremiah lived during this period of rebellion and his book of Lamentations is, perhaps, the saddest book in the Bible.

### **What did Jeremiah say about Yahweh's feasts?**

He said this:

Lamentations 1: 4 *"The ways of Zion do mourn, **because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.** 5: **Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for Yahweh hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions...**"*

The tragically misunderstood prophet Jeremiah could not imagine anything more distressing than his country's destruction, her capital city burned to the ground and her beautiful Temple reduced to a pile of rubble.

Yet he knew within his bones that a mocking disregard for **Yahweh's Torah and especially His Feasts** was the forerunner of national catastrophe.

Jeremiah could see, and that very plainly, that Yahweh's Torah - **the irrevocable constitution of the mighty universe** - was being contemptuously set aside by the masses; who were being deluded by their blind and stubborn religious leaders.

**The nation of Israel rejected Jeremiah's call to repentance and in the course of time the inevitable happened.**

Yahweh, Elohim of Israel allowed the city of Jerusalem to be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.

**His well disciplined but ruthless battalions stormed the capital and literally tore it apart.**

Thousands of terrified half-naked captives were brutally deported to Babylon and the land of Judah was subdued and lay desolate for seventy years.

**Note that significant reference to the Sabbath which even the land was to keep every seventh year. (Lev. 25:1-7)**

Time passed, the predicted seventy year captivity ended and the returning exiles came back in waves to the Promised Land.

Under **Zerubbabel** the governor, **Nehemiah** the prophet and **Ezra** the priest, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of Yahweh were rebuilt.

There followed a revival of mighty significance and one which caused the enemies of truth to tremble throughout the Middle East.

With astonishing speed the wall of Jerusalem and the Temple of Yahweh were rebuilt and the **sacred feast days of the Almighty** proclaimed.

A holy spirit of dedication swept the country and all pagan associations and alliances were broken off.

Multitudes of believers attended the sacred feasts and the blessings of the Almighty poured down on the nation.

These events are recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah and what thrilling reading they make.

Yahweh's people after a long and painful exile return to the land of promise and to the city they love.

The spiritual lessons for the assembly of today are too numerous to tell, though thousands of worthy sermons have been based on them.

What is not generally known is this fact, that all those recorded experiences of ancient Israel and Judah:

- The slavery in Egypt
- Salvation through the blood of the Lamb
- The exodus under Moses and the giving of the law at Sinai
- The entry into Canaan under Joshua (Yahshua)
- The nation's repeated backslidings and the revivals at the sacred seasons
- The punishment during times of apostasy
- The blessings during times of obedience
- The defeats and the dispersion because of national sin
- And finally the return to the Promised Land.

Yes all those experiences were **figures, types, dramatized real-life examples** and **prophetic illustrations** of what was later to happen to Yahweh's assembly on a world scale in days to follow.

Here is proof of this amazing fact.

1 Cor. 10:11 *"Now all these things happened unto them for **ensamples**: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. "*

**Yes, believe it or not, the Christian church, for all its boasted knowledge and wealth, is, in fact, repeating those ancient experiences on the spiritual plane in this very day:**

and what is even more amazing is that she is doing so according to a **divinely appointed schedule** which parallels those revivals of long ago.

May we Messianic Believers not join them in this tragic mistake.

In this revival under Nehemiah and Ezra take special note of these points.

- The burnt offerings to the Eternal were resumed on the 1st day of the seventh month - the Feast of Trumpets. (Ezra 3:6)
- Ezra, the scribe of the law of Yahweh, set out from Babylon on the 1st day of the New Year (1st Abib - not 1st January) and arrived at Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month. (Ezra 7:9)
- A program of separation from pagan alliances began on the 1st day of the tenth month and was completed exactly 3 months later, by the 1st day of the first month. (Ezra 10:16-17)

**Are these facts and times significant?**

**I believe they are.**

Indeed if you were to take a concordance and read every text in the Scriptures where the word **month** is mentioned your eyes will be opened to this astonishing truth:

**that Yahweh is working to a carefully planned schedule in which every future stage of the plan of salvation has already been prefigured by a *literal event, a 'type', a 'shadow', a 'miniature demonstration', a 'spiritual blueprint'* which has already taken place in the history of His people at an appointed time.**

And those appointed times of long ago - all of them - are directly linked to end-time events in the Almighty's calendar.

**We refer to it as The Sacred Calendar of the Elohim of Israel.**

- The exact moment when the Abyss burst open in Noah's day (Gen. 7:11) and the tops of the mountains appeared (Gen. 8:5)
- When the covering of the ark was removed (Gen. 8:13)
- The date of Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:13)
- The date the Tabernacle was erected in the wilderness (Exodus 40:17)
- The day Moses re-iterated Yahweh's law to Israel (Deut. 1:3)

All these and numerous other events are specifically referred to **by date**: which means that the details of those ancient events **and their dates** should be closely studied by believers living in the closing days of this age. (1 Cor. 10:11)

### Why?

Because when the **spiritual realities portrayed by those ancient events** occur in our day, we can be certain that they will occur on the **same dates** in the sacred calendar as their Tanakh counterparts did in days gone by.

**In other words, future events have not only been foreshadowed, but the dates on which they will occur have also been specified.**

Just as Noah removed the covering from the ark on New Year's Day (1st Abib) after having being shut in by Yahweh for almost a year (Gen. 8:13), so too will the Almighty remove - **on an appointed day** - the covering that is draped over the minds of millions.

Isaiah 25:6-8 *"And in this mountain shall Yahweh of Hosts make unto all people a **feast** of fat things, a **feast** of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the **face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and Yahweh Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces: and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for Yahweh hath spoken it."***

## 4. The Revival under the Apostles

No revival in the history of the assembly can compare with the one which began on the Day of Pentecost (Shavuot) in the year of the Messiah's resurrection.

**For forty days after His resurrection the Master appeared several times to His disciples and proved that He was alive.**

During those days He talked with them about the **Kingdom of Yahweh** and gave them this specific order:

Acts 1:4 *"And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which, saith he, ye heard of me. 5. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be **baptized with the Ruach HaKodesh** not many days hence. "*

Here the Savior was commanding the Apostles to wait for the **Feast of Shavuot**, to gather and stay in Jerusalem till that sacred season arrived.

**In obedience to His command they stayed in the city and awaited the day of Shavuot and the promised gift.**

Acts 2:1 *"And when the Day of Shavuot was fully come they were all with one accord in one place. 2. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them. 4. And they were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to speak with other tongues as the Ruach gave them utterance."*

This outpouring of Yahweh's Spirit was, and still is for that matter, accompanied by **power to witness effectively**; not merely to perform miracles. Note these words:

Acts 1:8 *"You shall receive **power** after that the Ruach HaKodesh is come upon you: and you shall be **witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**"*

This prophecy began to come to pass within a few days of being spoken with an experience on the Feast of Shavuot that transformed the early Messianic assembly from a small timid group of believers into a spiritual dynamo that lit up the whole civilized world with the glorious gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Then for the very first time, the real significance of Yahweh's Feast Days became apparent**; for here indeed was the Almighty setting before His obedient assembly a **spiritual banquet** of undreamed-of content; a divine infilling so glorious that the finest feast of literal food could only be a faint shadow.

**Here was spiritual nourishment for the soul:** a banquet of power for the whole assembly that was scheduled to come at the **appointed time** in Yahweh's program: **supernatural power which would enable the disciples to take the Gospel to the civilized world.**

Now, let no-one suppose that the mighty outflow of spiritual power which came on the assembly at **this Shavuot** some two thousand years ago was all that the Eternal has planned for His people.

**Oh no!**

The prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 goes far beyond the happenings on that memorable day in Jerusalem.

The events recorded in Acts chapter 2 are by comparison only the '*appetizers,*' the '*starters,*' the '*foretaste*' and '*beginnings*' of a much greater **Banquet of Power** still to be set before the obedient assembly in the near future.

On some coming Feast Day - any year from now – Yahweh, Elohim of Israel is going to astound the universe with the next great event in His Program of Salvation.

**And we can be certain that it will be an event more spectacular, more wonderful, more powerful and more effective than all the sons of men have hitherto seen or even remotely imagined.**

Now pause a while and consider - yea analyze the revivals recorded in the Scriptures.

Did you notice that they were **all** directly linked with the **sacred seasons** in the Almighty's calendar?

That they all either began with or climaxed on one or the other of the **Feasts Days**?

**And why not?**

For that is exactly why the Eternal, at the creation of the world, ordained His feasts.

The Feasts are His **appointed times and sacred seasons**, and are entered in His diary as days of special significance, days to keep, days to look forward to, **days to remember**, sacred memorial days set aside to mark the times when He would perform His greatest acts in the Program of Salvation.

That is why He has commanded His followers to remember them, to celebrate them with feasting, joy and gladness; **for they are the sacred memorial days of our salvation.**