

Jewish Holidays, Week 1: Jewish Calendar

“I know Weinstein's parents were upset, but it sounded so made up. I mean, Yom Kippur?” - Principal Skinner, The Simpsons

Introduction

Today I'll be covering the origin and development of the Jewish calendar.

Next week, we're scheduled to look at the most commonly occurring Jewish holiday: the Sabbath.

The following week, I plan to cover the high holidays (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur).

The last week I'd like to go over the Passover.

In the beginning

Genesis 1:1

Today's date is June 1, 2008 (for us) and 27 Iyar, 5768 (for a Jew).

The Jewish calendar begins approximately one year prior to _____.

Genesis 1:1-5. God defined a day as an _____ and a _____.

Our first observation is that the Bible dictates the Jewish calendar.

Our second observation is that a day is defined as _____ to _____.

New Moon

Genesis 7:11. The Hebrew word for month is *chodesh* (KHO-desh) and it means, “_____.”

The Gregorian calendar

Does every year have that many?

Why not?

How many months do we have?

Every year?

How many days in each month?

Do the number of days in each month change?

Months in the Bible

Several times in the Bible (**Genesis 8**; **1 Chronicles 27**) months are identified by number _____.

There are verses commanding certain things at the beginning of a month (**Numbers 10:10**; **28:11**).

The Jewish calendar

The Jews use a _____ calendar (phase of the moon and solar positions are important).

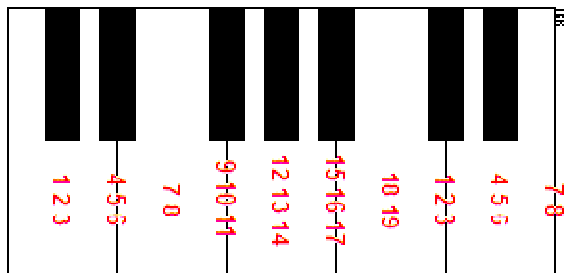
#	Month Name (Modern)	Month Name (NKJV)	Bible Reference	Meaning	Days	Gregorian Equivalent
1	Nisan	Abib* Nisan	Exodus 12:2; 13:4 Esther 3:7	fresh young barley ears their flight	30	Mar - Apr
2	Iyar	Ziv*	1 Kings 6:1	brightness	29	Apr - May
3	Sivan	Sivan	Esther 8:9	their covering	30	May - Jun
4	Tammuz				29	Jun - Jul
5	Av				30	Jul - Aug
6	Elul	Elul	Nehemiah 6:15	nothingness	29	Aug - Sep
7	Tishrei	Ethanim*	1 Kings 8:2	enduring	30	Sep - Oct
8	Cheshvan	Bul*	1 Kings 6:38	increase, produce	29/30	Oct - Nov
9	Kislev	Chislev	Zechariah 7:1	his confidence	29/30	Nov - Dec
10	Tevet	Tebeth	Esther 2:16	goodness	29	Dec - Jan
11	Shevat	Shebat	Zechariah 1:7	a rod	30	Jan - Feb
12	Adar I (leap)				30	Feb - Mar
13	Adar II	Adar	Esther 3:7	glorious	29	Feb - Mar

*denotes names recorded prior to the Babylonian captivity

Complexities of the Jewish calendar

The number of days in a 12 month lunar calendar is _____ days shorter than in a solar calendar. This would cause major problems, since many of the holidays are seasonally specific. To compensate, the Jews decided on a _____ to make up the difference.

An easy way to remember what year is a Jewish leap year is to use the following picture:



www.jewfaq.org

JewFAQ.org: If you are musically inclined, you may remember this pattern of leap years by reference to the major scale: for each whole step there are two regular years and a leap year; for each half-step there is one regular year and a leap year.

Application

1. God is a god of _____
2. God commands that we pay _____ to things
3. We should strive to have a _____ knowledge of Biblical history, culture and life in the Bible if we are to ever interpret and apply Scripture to our lives properly
4. We should be aware of the _____ on our Jewish friends

Jewish Holidays, Week 2: Sabbath

Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week. – Alice Walker

1. Etymology (Sabbath/Shabbat)

Our word 'Sabbath' comes from the Hebrew word *Shabbath* (shaw-BATH). When used as a noun, it simply refers to the day called Sabbath. When used as a verb, it means to cease, desist, rest, or put an end to (typically translated '_____'), it more literally means, 'to _____').

The Sabbath is not meant for _____. It is meant as _____ abstaining from work in order to do good, to enjoy life, and to identify with the seven-day-a-week rhythm of life.

Examine the balance in your life between working and not working.

2. Old Testament Examples

- a. God stopped: [Genesis 1 & 2](#)

- b. Sabbath balance: [Leviticus 23](#)

- c. Sabbath preparations: [Exodus 16:22-30](#)

- d. Violations of the Sabbath: [Numbers 15:32-36](#); [Nehemiah 13:15-22](#)

- e. God 'refreshed': [Exodus 31:16-17](#) – literally, 'taking a breath'

3. New Testament Examples

- a. Jesus speaking: [Luke 4:16](#)

- b. Jesus healing: [Matthew 12:1-13](#); [Luke 13:10-17](#)

4. Modern Applications

Wikipedia: Shabbat is a day of celebration as well as one of prayer. It is customary to eat _____ festive meals on Shabbat. These include dinner on Friday night, lunch on Saturday and another meal before the conclusion of Shabbat later in the afternoon.

Things to do during the Shabbat:

Recitation of *kiddush*, or "sanctification," over a cup of wine before the first meal

Meals begin with a blessing over two loaves of bread. It is customary to serve meat or fish, for Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch. The third meal, eaten late Saturday afternoon, is generally a light meal.

Recitation of *Havdalah*, or "separation," at the conclusion on Saturday night (over a cup of wine, and with the use of fragrant spices and a candle)

Prohibited activities

Observant Orthodox and Conservative Jews do not perform the ____ categories of activity (39 *melachot*) listed in Talmud Tractate Shabbat 7:2: sowing, ploughing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, selecting, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking, shearing wool, washing wool, beating wool, dyeing wool, spinning, weaving, making two loops, weaving two threads, separating two threads, tying, untying, sewing stitches, tearing, trapping, slaughtering, flaying, tanning, scraping hide, marking hides, cutting hide to shape, writing two or more letters, erasing two or more letters, building, demolishing, extinguishing a fire, kindling a fire, applying the finishing touch, and transferring between domains

Permitted activities

Spending Shabbat together with others; Synagogue attendance for prayers; Visiting family and friends (within walking distance); Hosting guests; Singing *zemirot* (special songs for the Shabbat meal); Reading, studying and discussing _____ and commentary, Mishnah and Talmud, learning some Halakha and Midrash; _____ between husband and wife

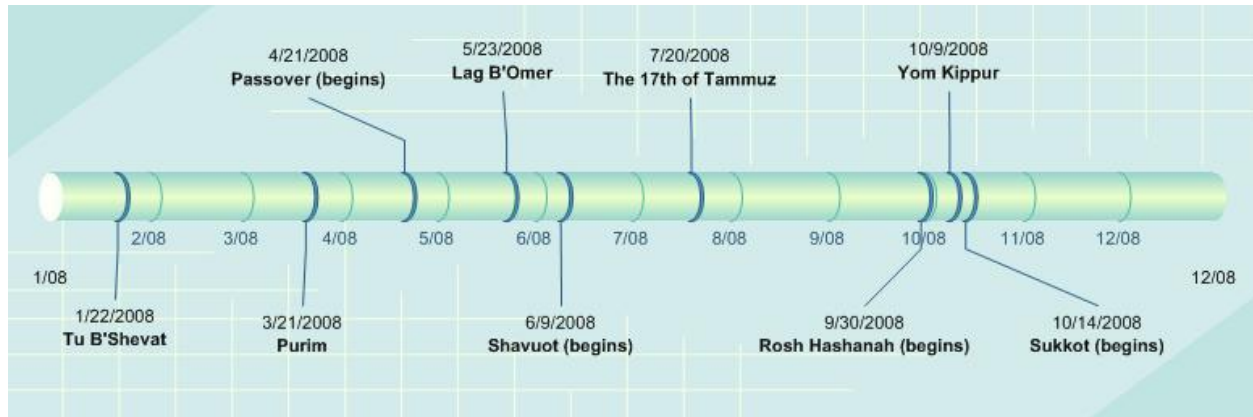
5. Are Christians required to keep the Sabbath today? (by David Guzik)

_____: ____ - _____. The Sabbath observed by Israel was a **shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ**. However, though we are free from the legal obligation of the Sabbath, we dare not ignore the importance of a day of rest as God has built us so that we _____ one.

What about Saturday as opposed to Sunday? Sunday is the day Jesus rose from the dead (Mark 16:9), and first met with His disciples (John 20:19), and a day when Christians gathered for _____ (Acts 20:7).

Jewish Holidays, Week 3: High Holidays

The high holidays (also known as the 'Days of Awe') cover a _____ day period (Ten Days of Repentance) from Rosh Hashanah (literally, head of the year, the Jewish New Year) to Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). The timeline below shows some of the Jewish holidays this Gregorian calendar year.



The Jews believe that God makes a decision about each individual's life on Rosh Hashanah but that the decision is not _____ until Yom Kippur. Therefore, the ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are a crucial period when your fate hangs in the balance and you have a chance to mend your ways to alter the judgment in your favor (through _____, prayers, charity, etc.). During these Ten Days of Repentance, the Jews engage in introspection and repentance.

Biblical Basis: Leviticus 23:23-32

Calendar Confusion

The Jewish year has _____ distinct starting points. The first month of the year per **Exodus 12:2** is Nisan (Mar/Apr). The first of Tishrei (the seventh month of the year) is the beginning of the civil year (when the year in the calendar advances by one—Sep/Oct). The new year for counting animal tithes is Elul (the sixth month of the year—Aug/Sep). The new year for agricultural tithes is the 15th of Shevat (the eleventh month of the year—Jan/Feb).

Rosh Hashanah

Shofar Sounds

Per **Leviticus 23:24**, Rosh Hashanah includes blowing a _____ (shofar). The shofar is meant to arouse the Jews from spiritual slumber and to represent the sobbing Jewish heart at their sins.

Tashlich Thanks

The Tashlich prayer is said on the first afternoon of Rosh Hashanah by a pool of _____. These prayers are symbolic of the casting away of mistakes. This is the text of the prayer **[from Aish.com]:**

Who is like You, God, who removes iniquity and overlooks transgression of the remainder of His inheritance. He doesn't remain angry forever because He desires kindness. He will

return and He will be merciful to us, and He will conquer our iniquities, and He will cast them into the depths of the seas. Give truth to Jacob, kindness to Abraham like that you swore to our ancestors from long ago. From the straits I called upon God, God answered me with expansiveness. God is with me, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me? God is with me to help me, and I will see my foes (annihilated). It is better to take refuge in God than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in God, that to rely on nobles.

Dietary Directions

A popular food-related custom is apples and bread dipped in honey to symbolize a _____ new year.

Present Practices

Aish.com: It is customary to greet others with the words: “For a good year—You should be written and sealed in the good (Book of Life).”

Yom Kippur

Kippur is the Hebrew word for ‘_____.’ It is similar to the Hebrew word *kippah* (or *yarmulke* in Yiddish), which is a head covering worn by Jewish men.

Yom Kippur is observed by many secular Jews who may not attend synagogue on other days of the year. Most Jews will fast and attend synagogue on Yom Kippur.

_____ prayer services occur at the synagogue on Yom Kippur, starting with Kol Nidre (the evening service where all vows are annulled between oneself and God).

Historical Highlights

In Bible times, the High Priest (Kohen Gadol) conducted a sacrificial ceremony on Yom Kippur. He confessed his sins, the sins of the priests and the sins of the people, speaking the name of God as he did. Then he went into the Holy of Holies and sacrificed and offered incense.

Four things came together:

1. _____: High Priest
2. _____: Holy of Holies
3. _____: Tetragrammaton
4. _____: Yom Kippur

Religious Restraints

There are five things that Jews do not do during Yom Kippur

1. eating and drinking
2. washing
3. applying oils or lotions to the skin
4. marital relations
5. wearing leather shoes

It might be easy to think that Yom Kippur is a _____ holiday since there are several things you do not do, but to an observant Jew, it is a time of _____ due to the reconciliation with God and others.

Jewish Holidays, Week 4: Passover

Passover is from the Hebrew word, *pacach* (paw-SAKH), meaning to ‘_____’.

The First Passover (Exodus 12)

The Israelites were slaves to the _____ and Moses went to the Pharaoh to have his people freed. God sent a series of plagues to change Pharaoh’s mind. That brings us to [Exodus 12](#).

The Subsequent Passovers

Old Testament: [Numbers 9](#), [Deuteronomy 16](#), [2 Chronicles 30 & 35](#)

New Testament: [Matthew 26](#), [Mark 14](#), [Luke 2:41](#), [Luke 22](#), [John 2](#), & [John 19:14](#)

The Modern Passover

Preparation

Chametz (leavening—anything made from the five major grains or anything that has fermented) must be removed from the house. Many Jews spend _____ cleaning in preparation for Passover.

Wikipedia: The oral Jewish law requires the elimination of _____-sized or larger quantities of leavening from one’s possession, but most housekeeping goes beyond this.

A _____ is done for any leftover chametz the night before Passover.

Gifts

Since Passover is a time of getting together for family and friends, gifts are regularly exchanged. Traditional gifts include boxes of fruits and sweets, wines and flowers.

Seder

The Seder is the _____ held on the first and second night of Passover. ‘Seder’ means ‘_____’ in Hebrew.

Wikipedia: Seder customs include drinking of four cups of wine, eating matzo and partaking of _____ symbolic foods placed on the Passover Seder Plate and _____ placed on its own plate.

_____ cups of wine are drunk during the Seder. Their meanings are derived from God’s statements in [Exodus 6:6-7](#): “**I will bring you out,**” “**I will rescue you,**” “**I will redeem you,**” “**I will take you.**”

Seder (from JewFAQ.org)

1. **Sanctification** (first cup drunk)
2. **Washing**
3. **Vegetable**
4. **Breaking**
5. **Story: A retelling of the story of the Exodus and the first Pesach. This begins with the _____ person asking four questions.** (second cup drunk)

From HappyPassover.net:

- i. **Why do we eat only Matzo on Pesach and not all kinds of breads and crackers like other nights?**
 - ii. **Why do we eat bitter herbs at our Seder?**
 - iii. **At our Seder, why do we dip the parsley in salt water and the bitter herbs in Charoset?**
 - iv. **Why do we lean on a _____ while eating tonight and do not sit straight like other nights?**
6. **Washing**
 7. **Blessing over Grain Products**
 8. **Blessing over Matzo**
 9. **Bitter Herbs (Maror)**
 10. **Sandwich**
 11. _____
 12. **Afikomen**
 13. **Grace after Meals** (third cup drunk)
 14. **Praises** (fourth cup drunk)
 15. **Closing**

The Passover Music (HappyPassover.net)

Passover music is _____ in its mood and the songs are meant to lighten the mood.

- ***He is Mighty.*** Sung as the Seder comes to a close. This hymn expresses hope that the age of Messiah will return and the sacred Temple will be rebuilt.
- ***It Would Have Been Enough for Us.*** Describes some of the many favors that God bestowed upon the Israelites when He led them to freedom from Egypt.
- ***Elijah, the Prophet.*** This song is to be sung when the Cup of Elijah is poured and the door is opened in anticipation of his return.
- ***Why is it Different?*** Sung when reciting the Four Questions.

Passover Lamb

John 1:29 & **1 Corinthians 5:7** show us that there is no longer a need for a Passover lamb.