



Topic: "YHWH's Appointments" Pt 23
Scripture: Leviticus 23:15-22; Deut 26:1-11
Definition: "Shavuot - Historical" pt 1

YHWH'S APPOINTMENTS

Leviticus 23:1 "Yahweh said to Moshe, 'Tell the people of Israel; The designated times of Yahweh which you are to proclaim as holy convocations are my designated time.'"

Observed in the late spring (late May or early June). It does not fall on a given date. It is simply 50 days from First Fruits. And will always be a Sunday



Leviticus 23:15, 16 " And you shall number to you from the next day after the Sabbath, from the day you bring in the omer of the wave offering; they shall be seven complete Sabbaths; to the next day after the seventh Sabbath, you shall number fifty days; and you shall bring near a new food offering to YAHWEH;



Shavuot in Biblical Times

There are three passages of Scripture that outlines the biblical observance for Shavuot: 1) Leviticus 23:15-21, 2) Numbers 28:26-31, 3) Deuteronomy 16:9-12

- The feast of Shavuot begins 50 days after 'First Fruits.' Lev 23:15, 16
- In the time of The Temple, over 2,000 years ago, Shavuot was celebrated by bringing the best of the first fruits to Jerusalem. As such, Shavuot is the middle of the three pilgrimage holidays when Jews from all over the world gathered in Jerusalem to offer their first fruits to God to celebrate together as a people. The offering of the first fruits was seen as a token of gratitude to God for providing a bountiful harvest.
(note: There are 7 divinely appointed feasts given to Israel. Three of the seven were declared as "solemn feasts" by the Lord [Ex 23:14-17, Dt 16:16, 2 Chr 8:13; cf. Ex 34:22-23])

- It is not to be a normal working day but rather likened unto the Sabbath day. A day of Holy Convocation and no work is to be done. Lev. 23:21
- They were to bring a new grain offering before Yahweh. Lev. 23:21
- You are to bring a sacrifice to Yahweh. Lev. 23:21
- Be joyful and rejoice in the presence of Yahweh. "...You, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, the *L'vi'im* living in your towns, and the foreigners, orphans and widows living among you—in the place where *YHWH* your Elohim will choose to have his name live. ¹² Remember that you were a slave in Egypt; then you will keep and obey these laws." Dt 16:11, 12



A Change in History

Customs and traditions were added to the feast of Shavuot as was the other appointed times of Yahweh.

To better understand these changes let's take a quick look at some Jewish history.

- Roman rule was never accepted in ancient Judea.
- Although resistance was active for almost a century, it never seriously challenged Roman rule until 66 AD.
- For three years Jerusalem was cleansed of Roman rule and had a limited Jewish independence.



- A Roman general, Titus, was dispatched to quell the uprising. In 70 AD he was successful in sacking Jerusalem leveling the Temple and Jews were pushed out of their capital.

- In 117 AD a new emperor, Hadrian promised to restore Jerusalem and the holy Temple.

- It was short lived and in 130 AD Hadrian abandoned his promise. Jerusalem was rebuilt for a Roman city and pagan worship was put on the temple mount. Hadrian outlawed circumcision, Sabbath observance, and synagogue prayers in an attempt to erase Jewish distinctive and assimilate the sons of Israel into Roman empire.



- In 132 AD Jerusalem was liberated by Jewish forces once again. The man who led the revolt was Simon Bar Kochba. He was elevated to be called the 'Messiah' and thought by many to usher in the 'golden age.' There was inner turmoil and fighting that led to division.

- In 133 AD a Roman Legion counter attacked and steadily squeezed the life from the zealot resistance movement. A three year ordeal that in 135 AD led to Jerusalem once again taken from the Jews. Some 50 fortresses and 985 villages lay in ruins. Death toll of Jews was topped at 580,000 lives and hundreds more died from starvation and disease. Tens of thousands sold into slavery.



- Jerusalem once again was in control by the Romans. It was given a pagan name and once again the Temple Mount had a temple to Jupiter (Satan) established there, desecrating the site of the holy Temple.

Responding to this crisis:

- The Sanhedrin convened in 140 AD in the village of Usha (near the modern city of Haifa). There they decided to divert the focus of Shavuot observance away from agriculture and instead associate it with a historical event to keep the holiday alive.



- The rabbis suggested that Shavuot was the day that the Torah (Moshe's Law) was given on Mount Sinai. This was not done arbitrarily.

- The idea quickly caught on as evidenced in ancient Jewish literature Shabbat 86a and Jubilees 6:19. This is the dominant motif of modern Shavuot.

Next week: "Shavuot 2000 Years Ago"

