A Survey of Israel's Calendar

An extension study from our History of Israel mini video series

A 4-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These are the four lessons of A Survey of Israel's Calendar, an extension study from the History of Israel mini video series. Israel's calendar was given by God to set forth, through its feasts and holy days, the major progression of events during the climactic stages of Israel's program. Two essential matters must be understood for the calendar to make sense: the shadow substance or image principle of the law contract, and God's Jehovahness. The seven major feasts foreshadow events in the days of the Messiah — the final two installments of the 5th course of punishment — and the seven compound Jehovah names match up with them. The study closes by showing that Acts 2 could never be the birthday of the church, the body of Christ.

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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
L1	The Climactic Stages and the Seven Feasts — Leviticus 26 and 23; Matthew 3; Hebrews 10: Courses, Installments and Feasts
L2	Shadows of Good Things to Come — Hebrews 8–10; Colossians 2; Acts 2:1; Exodus 3: the Shadow Substance Principle
L3	God's Jehovahness: the Name and the Blank Check — Exodus 3 and 15–17; Psalms 90 and 22–24; Genesis 22; Judges 6: Five Compound Names
L4	Matching the Jehovah Names with the Feasts — Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 48; Isaiah 9, 12, 26; I Peter 2: Seven Names, Seven Feasts

Lesson Summaries

L1

The Climactic Stages and the Seven Feasts *Leviticus 26 and 23; Matthew 3; Hebrews 10: Courses, Installments and Feasts*

Leviticus 26: Five Courses of Punishment

- Leviticus 26 is an outline of the history of God's program and dealings with Israel in view of her failure under the law contract; beginning in verse 16 God

sets forth five courses of punishment

- The 1st course began coming on the nation after they crossed the Jordan; the 3rd is recorded in II Kings 1:1 to 10:31; when the captivity began, the 5th began
- The progression of the courses of punishment is important to understand for the calendar to make the sense it is supposed to make

The Final Two Installments: the Days of the Messiah

- The 5th and final course would be composed of five installments — not developed fully in Leviticus 26, but later by the prophets raised up when the 5th course came
- The gospel accounts and the opening chapters of Acts are in the 4th installment; the final installment is the day of the Lord with the tribulation period
- Everything comes to a head in those final two installments, called by the prophets the days of the Messiah — His meek and lowly coming and His coming in power and great glory; everything God designed the calendar to do focuses on them

Matthew 3: the Kingdom of Heaven at Hand

- John the Baptist, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, announces that the time has arrived when the kingdom of heaven established in Israel is on the doorstep
- Israel had never had a message preached that the time was at hand; a time schedule was given to Daniel so they would know, and the expression "at hand" tells them they are in the climactic stages
- John tells them the Messiah is in their midst in a meek and lowly appearance, not in power and great glory; His powerful manifestation of His day comes in the 5th and final installment

Leviticus 23: the Weekly and the Annual

- The whole of Leviticus 23 sets forth the calendar, in two categories — the weekly and the annual; on a weekly basis they are reminded that their performance won't cut it and that God's grace is what they need
- Seven major feasts follow in orderly progression from verse 5: Passover, unleavened bread, firstfruits, the feast of the 50th day or Pentecost, trumpets, the day of atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles
- Two are clustered at the beginning, then two separated from the first cluster and from each other; the last three all take place in the seventh month. Tabernacles is described in two sections because it has two facets, yet is the same feast

Two Essentials: Shadow Substance and Jehovahness

- Two essential things must be understood for the calendar to make sense: what is called here the shadow substance or image principle of the law, and God's Jehovahness — a word Keith coined
- In Hebrews 10 the apostle, dealing with the remnant of Israel, shows the sacrificial system was only a shadow of a perfect sacrifice — what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross
- Each of the seven holy days served as a shadow — a mini-picture — of a reality yet to come in God's purpose with Israel; the shadow and the substance were to meet in the days of the Messiah
- There are seven because of the seven aspects of God's Jehovahness that God told Israel He would have to put into effect for them to get the kingdom

L2

Shadows of Good Things to Come *Hebrews 8–10; Colossians 2; Acts 2:1; Exodus 3: the Shadow Substance Principle*

The Seven Feasts and the Two Essentials

- Everything Israel's calendar foreshadows takes place in the days of the Messiah, in the final two installments of the 5th course of punishment
- The seven major feasts are Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, bracketed into three sections by their timeframe and proximity
- Two essential issues are integral to the calendar's comprehension and application: the shadow substance or image principle of the law contract, and God's Jehovahness

Shadows of Good Things to Come (Hebrews 10)

- Writing to the Hebrew remnant, the apostle shows that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the end of what the sacrificial system foreshadowed; the sacrifices were only shadows of that good thing to come
- A great number, if not almost all, of the law contract's ceremonies, rites and rituals operate on the shadow substance principle; the feasts, Passover to Tabernacles, foreshadow real substance to come in God's dealings with Israel
- The good things to come are real events in the days of the Messiah — seven things God works for Israel that result in her getting the kingdom; Israel was rehearsing for them on an annual basis

The Tabernacle a Shadow of Heavenly Things (Hebrews 8–9)

- The tabernacle was a shadow of a true tabernacle in heaven and of the true tabernacle on earth when the kingdom is established; its dimensions and rooms followed a pattern of a tabernacle in the third heaven
- Entry into the holiest of all only once a year, only by the high priest, only by blood, signified something; the principle permeates the entire law contract; the calendar isn't being mentioned, but it is implied — they offered sacrifices on the calendar also

Holy Days a Shadow (Colossians 2)

- A favorite tactic of the satanic policy of evil is to get Christians to think they ought to be employing aspects of God's program with Israel — from the Bible, but not from the right division of the Bible
- It confuses two programs God has, Israel's program and the program of the mystery; when things from Israel's program are brought into this dispensation of grace, believers are spoiled
- In Colossians 2:16–17 Paul focuses on the calendar issue, not the sacrifices; the holy days are shadows of substances yet to come in Israel's program, not being fulfilled with us today

Fully Come (Acts 2:1)

- "When the day of Pentecost was fully come" describes the calendar's shadow and the substance of its reality historically coming together; the 4th installment was continuing on following the cross
- Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits had already had their reality meet the shadow — the real lamb was dying while rebellious Israel was slaying a shadow; when the shadow and the substance met, that holy day fully came to pass

God's Jehovahness (Exodus 3)

- There are seven holy days because of the seven major Jehovah compound names God gave to Israel; each holy day on the annual calendar memorializes and commemorates one of them
- In Exodus 3:14 the name is set forth in a long form, "I AM THAT I AM," and a short form, "I AM," indicating two major issues of understanding conveyed by that name
- Until Israel is brought out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, God educates them in the first aspect of His name Jehovah

L3

God's Jehovahness: the Name and the Blank Check *Exodus 3 and 15–17; Psalms 90 and 22–24; Genesis 22; Judges 6: Five Compound Names*

The Second Essential: God's Jehovahness

- God's Jehovahness permeates every aspect of God's program with Israel; seven compound Jehovah names declare the execution of His power and operation in Israel to make them fit to be utilized in His plan and purpose
- The seven compound Jehovah names are the reason there are seven feasts; each feast is a commemoration, a memorial, a foreshadow and a doctrinal lesson in connection with one of them
- When Moses raises the problem, the Lord's first response concerns His name; Jehovah is the English form of the verbal expression in Exodus 3:14, a name designed to have doctrinal significance to Israel

Timelessness: I AM THAT I AM

- The name is set forth first in a five-word expression, "I AM THAT I AM"; the first doctrinal issue, wrapped up in the long form, is timelessness — time has no effect on God or on His plan and purpose
- In Genesis 15 God told Abraham about 400 years would go by; His message is that four hundred years is nothing to Him — it hasn't weakened His resolve or made Him change His mind
- Moses expressed appreciation for this first aspect in Psalm 90; it becomes a key issue in the 5th and final installment of the 5th course, the Lord's day of wrath

I AM Blank: Fill in the Blank

- The second issue, which figures into the calendar the most, is set forth by the shortened form, "I AM": subject and verb with nothing after it — an incomplete form of His name
- As the lesson puts it, God's message to Israel is "You fill in the blank, Israel. Whatever you need me to be, I'll be for you" — like God giving Israel a blank check
- From the wilderness of Shur to Mount Sinai God gives Israel five trials for their education; the compound part of each Jehovah compound name fills in the blank, identifying God as the fulfiller of Israel's various needs

Seven Major Compound Names

- All God's dealings with Israel yield about 16 compound forms of the name Jehovah; boiled down, there are seven major Jehovah compound names, and those seven names match up with the seven feasts
- Through Hosea God declares that by her performance of the law contract Israel has destroyed herself; but God has made an unconditional covenant with their father Abraham — they will exist — and through His name Jehovah

He will be what they need in every predicament

Five Names: Jehovah Jireh to Jehovah Raah

- The first, given to Abraham, is Jehovah Jireh (Genesis 22:14) — literally, I am your provider: God telling Abraham, and Israel, that He will provide Himself for a sacrifice for them
- After the poisoned waters, Exodus 15:26 gives the Jehovah Ropheka concept; Exodus 17:15 gives Jehovah Nissi — as the lesson puts it, victory in the sense of a conquering: I am your victory
- Israel's only deliverance from their enemies would rest on Jehovah Nissi, not their own strength; the final destruction of their enemies will be accomplished by the visible performance of that name by Adonai Jehovah in human flesh
- The fourth is Jehovah Shalom, Judges 6:24, with Gideon; the very first verse of Psalm 23 sets forth Jehovah Raah
- All seven compound Jehovah names are extolled in Psalms 22, 23 and 24: Psalm 22 the first, Psalm 23 the next five, Psalm 24 the last

L4

Matching the Jehovah Names with the Feasts *Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 48; Isaiah 9, 12, 26; I Peter 2: Seven Names, Seven Feasts*

The Sixth and Seventh Names

- Jeremiah 23 sets before Israel the sixth name, the Lord our Righteousness — the Jehovah Tsidkenu concept — focused especially on the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ on this earth
- No one in Israel reigns with power and control and can administer righteousness; individually and nationally she needs righteousness, and the name I am your righteousness is designed to solve that predicament
- The seventh, Jehovah Shammah, is "The LORD *is* there" (Ezekiel 48:35): God taking up residence once again in the nation, whose own conduct drove Him away

The Davidic Covenant: the Mechanics

- The mechanics for implementing God's Jehovahness and grace to Israel is what the Davidic Covenant is all about: Adonai Jehovah enfleshes Himself in the line of the seed of David to be what Israel needs
- In Isaiah 9, against the horrors of the 5th course, Israel's total package of deliverance is provided for in the Messiah; Israel can perform none of it — "The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this"
- In Isaiah's two songs, chapters 12 and 26, the name Jehovah is the central matter extolled; when the kingdom is established, Israel's song will praise that name — He became their provider, their healer

Israel's Perspective: Passover to Pentecost

- Viewing the timeline from Israel's perspective, one has to kind of pretend the mystery dispensation of Gentile grace isn't there, because it was a mystery when these things were given to Israel; the 4th and 5th installments are Israel's last days
- Passover matches Jehovah Jireh: Israel's predicament of sinfulness rectified by God Himself providing Himself for a sacrifice; its shadow and substance met at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Unleavened Bread foreshadows the Jehovah Ropheka, the healing concept — in I Peter 2 a healing of the disease and corruptive effect of sin in the

remnant; it commemorated their sanctified position, leaven typifying sin

- Firstfruits is paired with Jehovah Shalom, God the peace giver; the feast of firstfruits fully came to pass in connection with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead
- Pentecost is Jehovah Raah, I am your shepherd: it foreshadowed the commencement of the harvest of the remnant of Israel, with God the Holy Spirit entrusted with shepherding them

The Gap and the Remaining Three Feasts

- Passover through Pentecost have fully come, from the cross to the day of Pentecost; God suspended His dealings with Israel at the very point when the 5th installment was ready to begin; the remaining three feasts will have their shadow and substance meet together
- That gap of time on the calendar stands for the gap of the majority of the time in the 5th installment; Trumpets is Jehovah Nissi, I am your conquering hero — the battle alarm and the regathering of Israel
- The Day of Atonement's shadow meets its substance after the Lord returns, when all the righteousness Israel needs is bestowed; finally, Tabernacles is Jehovah Shammah — the Lord is there; I will be there with you

Closing: Jehovahness, Us, and Acts 2

- God's Jehovahness and grace is Israel's only hope; for us also, the only way we could ever be made fit to be utilized by God is for His Jehovahness and grace to be put into effect
- Understanding the calendar shows that Acts 2, "when the day of Pentecost was fully come," could never be the beginning of a new dispensation of Gentile grace or the birthday of the church, the body of Christ

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel's Program vs. the Dispensation of Grace

Israel's program is in abeyance in this dispensation of grace; the things in Leviticus 26 are not describing what is going on today. Paul's epistles are the portion of God's word dealing with what is going on today; Hebrews through Revelation pertain to the resumption of Israel's program once the mystery dispensation of grace is concluded. God has a program and a purpose in Christ that He said nothing about since before the foundation of the world, and only revealed it to the Apostle Paul; when the Lord raptures the body of Christ, God will resume and fulfill His purpose with Israel.

Israel's Calendar Not for Us Today (Colossians 2)

In Colossians 2 Paul focuses especially on the calendar issue; Paul gives the warning not to let anybody judge in connection with those things because they don't apply to us today — they are shadows of substances yet to come in Israel's program, not being fulfilled with us today. Bringing them into this dispensation confuses two programs — Israel's program and the program of the mystery; the one doing it is scriptural, but not dispensational.

Written to the Remnant

The apostle in Hebrews writes to the Hebrew remnant; Peter writes in connection with the time before the dispensation of Gentile grace came into effect, and the I Peter 3 passage is identified as Israel's program. Psalm 23 is not designed for funeral handouts; it is designed for the remnant of Israel during the day of the Lord.

Israel's Feasts vs. Paul's Analogy for Us

Leaven typified sin, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread commemorated a sanctified position; Paul understood the significance of all that, and in I Corinthians 5 applies the basic concept in an illustrative analogy to us in the dispensation of grace.

Israel's Works vs. God's Jehovahness and Grace

By their own works Israel could not come close to making themselves a kingdom of priests and holy nation; having signed a law contract to do so on the basis of their own performance, they learn the hard way that God's Jehovahness and grace is their only hope. Their performance of the law contract destroyed them; if it were not for God's unconditional covenant with Abraham, they would no longer exist.

Fully Come vs. Yet to Come

For Israel's program, Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits and Pentecost have fully come, from the cross to the day of Pentecost. The ones Peter doesn't talk about are left to transpire in the day of the Lord that was on the doorstep when Peter wrote; the remaining three feasts will have their shadow and substance meet together.

Acts 2: Israel's Program, Not the Body's Birthday

With the "fully come" expression of Acts 2:1, without a shadow of a doubt you are in Israel's program. Acts 2 could never be the beginning of a new dispensation of Gentile grace; the Lord came down, confronted Saul of Tarsus, raised him up as the apostle Paul, and ushered in this dispensation of Gentile grace.

Key Scripture References

Genesis 15	God told Abraham about 400 years would go by
Genesis 22:14	"Jehovahjireh": the first compound name, given to Abraham — I am your provider
Exodus 3:13–15	The Lord's first response concerns His name, designed to have doctrinal significance to Israel: "I AM THAT I AM" and the short form "I AM"
Exodus 15–18	God gives Israel five trials for their education, from the wilderness of Shur to Mount Sinai

Exodus 15:26	"I *am* the LORD that healeth thee" — the Jehovah Ropheka concept
Exodus 17:15	"Jehovahnissi": I am your victory
Leviticus 23	The whole chapter sets forth Israel's calendar: the weekly Sabbath and seven major annual feasts from verse 5
Leviticus 26	An outline of God's program with Israel in view of her failure under the law contract; five courses of punishment from verse 16
Judges 6:24	"Jehovahshalom": the fourth name, with Gideon — I am your peace giver
Psalms 22–24	A triplet of connected Psalms extolling all seven compound Jehovah names
Psalm 23:1	"The LORD *is* my shepherd": Jehovah Raah, for the remnant during the 5th installment
Psalm 90	Moses' appreciation for the first aspect of the name Jehovah
Psalm 124	David extols the name, especially its second doctrinal issue
Isaiah 9:4–7	Total deliverance in the Messiah; "The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this"
Isaiah 12 and 26	Two songs in which the name Jehovah is the central matter extolled
Jeremiah 23:5–6	The sixth name, set before Israel: "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"
Ezekiel 48:35	The seventh name, Jehovah Shammah: "The LORD *is* there"
Hosea 13:9–14; 14:1–5	Israel has destroyed herself; Jehovahness and grace the two concepts
Matthew 3:1–2	"at hand": John announces the climactic stages
Acts 2:1	"fully come": the shadow and the substance of Pentecost met
I Corinthians 5:6–8	Paul applies the basic concept — leaven typified sin — in an illustrative analogy to us
I Corinthians 15	Paul sees the resurrection like a harvest of victory over death
Colossians 2:16–17	The holy days "a shadow of things to come" in Israel's program
Hebrews 8:1–5	Two tabernacles; the earthly one an "example and shadow of heavenly things" (Hebrews through Revelation pertain to Israel's program)
Hebrews 10:1–7	To the remnant: the sacrificial system a shadow of the perfect sacrifice
I Peter 1:18–20	The remnant understood Christ as the lamb without blemish and without spot
I Peter 2:11–25	Healing of sin in the remnant; the shepherd and bishop of their souls
I Peter 3:18–22	Christ's victory over death provides an understanding of peace between the remnant and God; this is Israel's program