

## Shadows of Christ: Sabbath (Lev 23:1-3)

**Colossians 2:16-17** Festivals are “a shadow of things to come.”  
**Shadow** = shade, an outline of a substance, “foreshadowing”

Q: Should Christians celebrate Jewish feasts?  
A: **Romans 14:5-6** “Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.” Whether a Christian does or not is a matter of conscience. However, the substance is preferred over the outline.

### 1. Introducing the feasts (23:1-2)

All of Leviticus is a shadow, an outline of things to come. Hebrews is a commentary on Leviticus.

**Hebrews 10:1** “The law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities.”

- A. Feasts are **appointed**. God mandated these for the Jews.
- B. Feasts are **holy**. They are distinct from average work days.
- C. Feasts are **convocations**. They are a gathering of God’s people. Feast ≠ food. Feast = an appointed time of worship.
- D. Feasts are “**of the Lord**” and are not simply Jewish in origin.

### Feasts communicate Christ and His work:

**4 Spring** (Passover, Unleavened bread, Firstfruits, Weeks) These focus on the first coming of Messiah and His work. Jesus fulfilled each one on the day of its celebration:

**Passover & Unleavened Bread** (1 Cor 5:7) Jesus death/burial  
**Firstfruits** (1 Cor 15:20) Jesus rises from the dead  
**Pentecost/Weeks** (Acts 2) Jesus sends the Holy Spirit

**3 Fall feasts** (Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Booths) These correspond to Jesus’ future work.

**Trumpets:** The return of Christ (1 Thess 4:16-17)

**Day of Atonement:** The Kingdom of God (Revelation 20)

**Booths:** The new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21)

### 2. Introducing the Sabbath (23:3)

A. **Sabbath is for rest:** *Sabbath (sabbát) is an intermission, a rest.* Jews rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, at the 7 feast times, most of which are in the 7<sup>th</sup> month. Every 7<sup>th</sup> year is a sabbatical year. After 7, 7-year periods, it is Jubilee.

**Jubilee** “a blast from the horn” indicated a year of rest: The land rested, debts forgiven, people set free.

Jubilee describes Christ’s first coming (**Luke 4:18-19**).

Jubilee also describes His second coming (**1 Thess 4:16-17**).

God intends for man to observe cycles of work and rest. The first feast (interlude, intermission, rest) is the Sabbath.

**Exodus 20:9** Work 6 days and rest on the seventh

**Leviticus 23:3** The command is repeated as an official feast.

**Exodus 20:8-11** We rest each week because God rested in creation. Earthly life is not just about productivity, but worship.

### B. Sabbath is for Worship “*sabbath to the Lord your God.*”

Q: Are Christians to observe the Sabbath?

**Colossians 2:16-17** Christians are free to observe worship any day.

Q: What day did the NT church worship? A: Sunday

**Acts 20:7** “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together...” **1 Cor 16:2** “On the first day of every week each of you is to put something aside.

Q: Should Christians still reserve a day for rest and worship? Yes. However, not because of a law, but out of love for God.

It is possible to gather for worship in a purely mechanical way.

**Isaiah 1:13-14** God grew to hate the very feasts He ordained.

Sabbath was always meant to be a day of rest and worship.

The leaders in Jesus day made Sabbath the hardest day of the week.

**Mark 2:28** “Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

**Matthew 23:4** Religious leaders made that day burdensome.

**Hebrews 10:25** Prioritize gathering for worship, while still resting.

### C. Sabbath points to Christ. (**Matthew 12:8**) “Lord of Sabbath.”

**Hebrews 4:9-11** We enter a sabbath rest, which is through Christ.

We rest from working for a righteous standing with God

We rest from our labors eternally after death.

\*Man since creation, has always needed a weekly rest day.

**NIMH** published a study that the Amish were the happiest people in America. They focused on hard work, God and family.

Humans need patterns of rest from work, rest to worship God.