

PASSOVER

A Guide for Christian Understanding and Celebration

JOIN US FOR THIS YEAR'S
PASSOVER MEAL
CALL FOR
RESERVATIONS
TELEPHONE:
(740) 387-4080

Discover The Last Supper for the First Time

A HOLIDAY THAT SPANS THE AGES

PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD BEFORE CHRIST - AN INTRODUCTION

The first Passover occurred over 3500 years ago in Egypt. It is, by far, the oldest celebration continually kept by any group of people in the history of mankind. Exodus 12:18-20 instructed the people of God to sacrifice a lamb, place its blood on the doorpost of the house, and eat it

Continued on Page 2

PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD AT THE TIME OF CHRIST - ORIGINS OF 'COMMUNION'

During His last week on earth, our Lord took portions of the Passover meal of His time and extended the meaning of the elements of the meal to remind us that God not only intends to protect His people in this life, but He also intends to save our eternal souls from death.

Continued on Page 3

PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD IN THE FUTURE

Will we celebrate Passover when Christ returns?

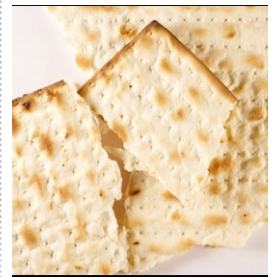
Continued on Page 4



Placing blood on the doorpost before the first Passover



The Passover Lamb



Unleavened Bread

The primary symbols
of Passover are the
sacrificial lamb,
unleavened bread and
bitter herbs.

“When I see the blood,
I will pass over you.”

A PROMISE TO THE FAMILY OF GOD

PASSOVER BEFORE CHRIST (from page 1)

with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Each part of the Passover meal symbolized something that was important for the people of God to remember about His plan of redemption.

To appreciate the background of the feast, read Exodus 12:1 - 13:10. There you will find that **Passover**, which was an evening meal that took place as the sun went down on the 14th of the Hebrew month of Abib (also called ‘Nisan’), and **Unleavened Bread**, which was a subsequent week-long festival that began as the Passover meal was eaten, were originally a commandment from God to mark and save His people from the death that would befall others who did not have a heart to heed His words.

The first **Passover** was not simply a spiritual lesson for the people of God, but was a promise connected with a commandment to act. Without actually displaying obedience to God’s commandment to mark their houses with the blood of the sacrificed lamb, they would suffer death in their ranks just the same as any others who did not take His words seriously. Passover demonstrates that God expects faith to produce action and obedience.

Therefore, redemption was a one sided covenant with a required response: God provided the way, and it was required of the people to consummate the salvation He offered through the physical act of

marking their homes with the blood and then leaving Egypt when told to do so.

This covenant offer of deliverance was not limited to native Israelites. Plenty of evidence had been given to all the people of Egypt concerning the Lord’s ability to save and to destroy. This was demonstrated in the plagues sent through Moses and the protection afforded the Israelites (see Exodus 7-11). In fact, as a result of these great signs, not only did the subsequent exodus from Egypt include native Israelites, but the “Israelites” were a “mixed multitude”, including Egyptians who followed God’s path away from Pharaoh, meaning both Jews and Gentiles were included as God’s story continues (see Exodus 12:37-38). Whosoever was given the desire to trust and follow the Lord would celebrate this great deliverance, remembering it through the Passover we celebrate even to this day.

In the Land, the Lord would lead His people to inhabit, it would be challenging to remain committed to Him and His ways. Gracefully, He offered that “mixed multitude” a commandment to annually partake in a Passover feast that included three symbolic elements: lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. These elements were the essence of the Lord’s prescription for recalling the deliverance He had provided for the people. The lamb was used to represent



the means by which He may consider a person or household worthy of relationship with Him. The Unleavened Bread symbolized the way in which His people should live their lives - “quickly following” His voice as they immediately left “without waiting for the bread to rise”, and “without sin”, since yeast (leaven) is a symbol for sin throughout the Scriptures. Bitter herbs provided a reminder of the bitter life of slavery to anyone other than the Lord Himself, therefore causing them not to “look back” from whence they had come.

The commandment to remember the great deliverance was issued to the people immediately after the deliverance had occurred (Exodus 12:42-49). Note that the Scriptures command not only the “native Israelite” to keep the Passover, but also the “stranger” (us) who decides to follow the Lord (verses 48-49). The message in this is clear: To all who would put their faith and hope in the Lord, He will deliver and would come to expect the life they live to reflect obedience to His voice. All such people should celebrate the Passover.

More can be read of the original Passover in Leviticus 23:1-8, Numbers 9:1-14 and Deuteronomy 16:1-8, 16.



“Do this in remembrance of Me.”

(DO “WHAT” IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM?)

PASSOVER AT THE TIME OF CHRIST (from page 1)

Over the next 1500 years, by the time Jesus came, some traditions had been added to the original three elements of the Passover meal as described in the Scriptures. It is notable that our Lord did not shun these particular added features, but used some of them to reveal His role in our spiritual redemption.

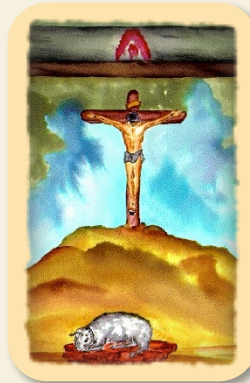
The Passover Seder (Hebrew, “order”) took its extended form about 200 years before the coming of Messiah. By the time of Christ, the rabbis had established a prevailing “Haggadah, that is, a routine or “telling” of the story of the exodus that was read during the Passover meal each year. Typically, there were variations on the basic telling by each rabbi or sect of Judaism. The final Passover meal our Lord shared with His disciples was where He established the telling of the Passover meal we have today as Christians. As is true in different denominations of the Christian faith, different degrees of fidelity to Scripture were represented among the various Jewish teachers at the time of Christ with regard to Passover. We may obviously be confident that, if we refer to the Old Testament Scriptures and allow Jesus, our “rabbi” as He is called in Scripture, to guide our thinking from there, we will do well.

So how does Jesus teach us at His “Last Seder” to celebrate this Passover meal? The points made by the Lord in instructing His disciples how to “Do this (Passover meal) in remembrance of Me” was to add to the already understood remembrance of God’s deliverance from physical bondage, an appreciation and remembrance of the spiritual deliverance He would soon offer mankind on the cross. He had previously explained in John chapter 3 that “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so too must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life”.

In the Passover, our Lord shows us that what was previously true for people’s physical salvation would now be true in Him for their spiritual salvation. He was not saying that the commandments were not effective for guiding our life as we live

on earth, but because of sin, there is an even deeper spiritual truth with regard to our soul where His deliverance is needed too. That aspect of deliverance may be seen in the elements of Passover when we come to know Jesus as Messiah.

So, Passover, the feasts and other commandments serve to remind us in this life of how God delivers us physically and spiritually. We look back at how obedience to God delivered His people in the past.



It is important to recall God’s great works and to remember His miracles by looking back while celebrating the feasts. However, it would be entirely incomplete to think that there is not an even greater message of deliverance from judgement and death itself that we should remember as well. This is how Christ asked us to celebrate the feast of Passover.

Consider our Lord’s instructions as they pertain to the elements of the Passover meal as it stood in His time:

He identified Himself as the **Lamb** (John 1:29). Not only was the lamb of the Passover the element that provided the blood that caused the angel of death to “pass over” God’s people in Egypt, but Jesus’ blood shed on the cross is the mark that every believer trusts will deliver them from punishment and death in the lake of fire.

He used the bitter herbs as a sign of turning back to sin and the bitterness of such a turn. Judas was the one who “dipped” the bread in bitter herbs and then betrayed the Lord. In like fashion, the same element was to remind those coming from Egypt of the bitterness of turning back to the life from which they had been delivered.

The Passover element of **Unleavened Bread** is broken, hidden away, and brought back later, much as Jesus was at His death, burial and resurrection. This is the same bread we use at the communion table.

“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes.”

EZEKIEL 36:27

Following this bread, a *third cup* of grape juice is used in the seder meal and is called the “cup of redemption”. Likewise, Jesus used this cup to establish it as the cup of the “New Covenant in His blood (Jeremiah 31: 31-34, Ezekiel 36: 24-32), shed for all for the forgiveness of sins”. Not only was that third cup significant for the redemption of God’s people from slavery in Egypt, it was now a remembrance of His people being delivered from eventual judgement and death.

In the “abbreviated Passover meal” we share throughout the year and call “communion”, the broken, unleavened bread and the Cup of Redemption are shared. These two elements take on primary significance to the Christian as they relate to the Lord’s redeeming sacrifice.

Truly, the Passover had become not only a meal of historical truth by recalling the physical protection God has afforded His people, it had also become a meal recalling the continual protection He would offer their very souls through the blood of an even greater Lamb, His Son and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

PASSOVER IN THE FUTURE (from page 1)

After the Lord’s death, the Temple stood for an additional 40 years. During those years, what do you think occupied the minds and hearts of the believer’s? Consider the Passover feast one year after His death: People once again went to Jerusalem with their lambs, offered them in sacrifice, gathered with family and friends at homes and enjoyed the fellowship remembrance of God’s deliverance. Would the disciples have done the same? Recall what the Lord’s instructions were to them before His death? Were they to disobey the “everlasting ordinance” written by Moses because of Messiah’s atoning death on the cross, or were they to follow both the “everlasting” commandment spoken by Moses to keep the Passover as well as obey the commandment of Jesus Himself as He told them to “Do this (Passover with additional meaning and significance) in remembrance of Me.”? To be obedient to the everlasting ordinances given them by God in Scripture and to celebrate the Passover rightly, they would have done both. Taking their lambs to the temple,

they already had the Lord on their minds. Imagine the conviction and remembrance that flooded their hearts during those first few annual festival years. The lessons taught by the Master, the pain and suffering He endured on their behalf all came rushing back, driving them to a greater desire to tell others about Him during and following the feast. Should we do any less than those first believers? Try to place yourself this year at the Last Supper for the first time.

Looking to the future, Scripture tells us that much will be the same. Ezekiel writes of a time when the Temple will be rebuilt (Ezekiel 40-47), where Messiah, the prince, will reign and where all Israel and all peoples will come to worship the King of Kings. Sacrifices will once again be offered, not for general atonement, but in remembrance of Him by those who once rejected, but now receive, Him as Lord and God.

Enjoy this Passover for how it may remind you of the hand of the Lord in the past, present and future. Recall the exodus, look forward to the future, but, most of all, rejoice in your salvation.

Marion Bible Fellowship

Spring Holiday Guide

While many traditional days initiate a new year in different cultures, the biblical new year is the first day of the month of Aviv/Nisan, the same month in which Passover occurs. Passover is the first of the Spring Festivals that both recall the exodus miracle of the past and illustrate the events of Messiah's first coming. The Fall Festivals recall God's faithfulness to dwell among the people of Israel in the wilderness and look forward to Messiah's return to dwell with us again.

Below is a description of the basics of each spring festival and the key components to celebrating the biblical aspects of each feast.

OVERVIEW

Passover is an evening meal, not a day-long celebration. As the evening approaches, preparations for the meal and the week-long celebration of Unleavened Bread are made.

Unleavened Bread begins at sundown on Nisan 14 when the Passover meal is eaten.

Unleavened Bread continues for seven days. The first and last days of Unleavened Bread are sabbath days (small "s"). In the descriptions of these sabbaths, work should not be done, but there is no prohibition against cooking or home duties as opposed to the regular weekly Sabbath. So, they essentially amount to a day off regular work and a command to gather with other believers. The first of these gatherings occurs with the Passover meal; the second gathering would be on the last day of Unleavened Bread, a week after the Passover meal.

PREPARING FOR PASSOVER AND UNLEAVENED BREAD

Remove all leaven-containing items from your home. Leaven is "yeast" on product labels. A couple of days before the Passover, all such products should be removed from the house to symbolically remove sin from our lives—even to the crumb for fun! Obviously, not all remnants of yeast can truly be removed, so make it enjoyable yet serious in the effort given.

ATTEND A PASSOVER MEAL (SEDER)

This ordered meal primarily uses three biblical and additional traditional elements to recall the story of Exodus and the salvation offered through faith in Yeshua/Jesus, the Messiah. The first element is that of the lamb, which symbolizes God's provision of a sacrificial substitute whose blood marks us as redeemed children from slavery and death. The bitter herbs symbolize the bitterness of the slavery (to the world and to sin) we once experienced before God chose, marked, and redeemed us. The unleavened bread reminds us of how we are free to devote ourselves to a life apart from sin. Recalling the exodus and the last Passover Messiah celebrated, as well as His death on our behalf, is the primary intent of this meal.

AVOID YEAST FOR THE WEEK OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

There are only three things to remember during the week after Passover: don't eat yeast-containing items, keep the house free of items containing yeast, and eat a bit of unleavened bread each day to recall the life of obedience to which you are called. You will find that yeast is offered to you by the world wherever you turn: a great reminder of the value of keeping the feast as a reality check that you cannot let your guard down to the pervasiveness of sin in the world.

ATTEND A CELEBRATION ON THE DAY OF FIRST FRUITS (RESURRECTION DAY)

This is traditionally celebrated as Easter, but we avoid the term “Easter” because it has almost undeniable roots in the name of a pagan goddess whose festival was held in April of each year on the Roman calendar. “Eoster” or “Ishtar” is the likely root of this term, and the festival was created to celebrate fertility. Other hangovers from this and other pagan traditions include bunny rabbits and the gathering and coloring of eggs. We therefore discourage their display in your homes at this time. Permitting such things takes attention off the Savior and blends and incorporates habits of the religion of other gods. To include things such as these on the day our Savior rose to defeat sin seems very wrong

We gather on First Fruits to remember our Lord’s resurrection and thank God for His continued provision in our lives. He is, as Paul states, the “First Fruits” of those who are redeemed, meaning that He rose and conquered death first, allowing us to receive the same gift of victory over death and new life through Him.

COUNTING THE DAYS TO PENTECOST/CELEBRATING PENTECOST

Beginning the evening after the Passover meal is eaten, we begin counting seven weeks plus one day (49+1=50 days) and come to a day called Pentecost (“50th day” in Greek). So, the day carries the name “Pentecost” to emphasize the 50 *days* passed since the Passover. It alternately carries the name “Shavuot” (“weeks” in Hebrew) to focus on the seven *weeks* (plus one day) since Passover. This is the same day on which Moses received the Law on Mount Sinai and that the Holy Spirit was given to believers in Messiah. Therefore, we faithfully count the days as commanded and gather on the day of Pentecost to recall these gifts and events and consider how we should further apply them in our lives.

Preparation Guide

Passover/Unleavened Bread

1. Clean yeast-containing items from the home 1-2 days before the evening of our Passover meal. Involve the whole family and let them know the symbolism of the activity. Make it enjoyable, not demanding. Bag up the items and remove them from the house. If you are worried about waste, cut back on purchasing so many extra yeast-containing items a week or so before and plan meals to consume such items before the time of the cleaning.
2. Plan to attend the Passover meal with others at MBF. You need to bring nothing except a rested mind.
3. Plan to take the day after the Passover meal off work and another day off seven days later. If that is not possible this year, consider the meaning of the day while at work and do not work when you get home. Concentrate on enjoying Christian and Jewish friends and family on those days. Be together, go for a walk, nap, read Scripture, watch a biblical movie, or pray.
4. Buy some matzah bread beforehand, or take some from the Passover meal and eat a piece with your family each day to remember the week and the importance of keeping our lives free of sin. Remember the great things God has done in your life and the lives of the people of God in the past. Call a friend and talk about such things. Write an e-mail to a friend who does not know the Lord. Enjoy and remember the benefits of a pure life in Messiah.
5. We plan to gather in the evening on the final day of Unleavened Bread. We will share some Matzah for the last time, enjoy one another, and talk about the Lord and the holiday experience. We end the holiday intending to continue faithfully walking with the Lord.

First Fruits/Resurrection Day

1. Plan to attend the celebration of Resurrection Day/First Fruits after Passover. We will celebrate our new life in Messiah and concentrate on His resurrection from the dead as the First Fruits of the new creation. Although the name we use for the holiday is different, the subject and celebration are much the same: Messiah has risen and fulfilled this holiday of First Fruits through His resurrection from the dead.

Pentecost

1. Plan to take a day off work to gather for worship. No special preparation is needed, except maybe to bring a list of praises for His provision in your life and spend some preparation time thanking Him for His Laws and for the gift of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer. We will speak of how the Holy Spirit provides us with the ability to follow His commands and live an effective life of service to God.

MARION BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

590 Forest Lawn Drive, Marion, OH 43302 office@marionbible.com

2024 FESTIVAL DATES

The days listed below are a combination of biblical and traditional holidays celebrated at Marion Bible Fellowship (MBF). The Torah declares that no work may be done on certain festival Sabbaths. These sabbaths are denoted below with “*Festival Sabbath Reminder*.” You may wish to provide your employer with a request for time off well in advance (**only six weekdays this year**). Since the biblical day begins in the evening, these holidays span two civil days, beginning shortly before sunset and ending shortly after sunset the following day. Sunset times for your particular city may vary.

SPRING FESTIVALS

*Times to Recall Salvation: The Exodus and
Messiah’s First Coming, Death, and Resurrection*

Purim

Marion Bible Fellowship hosts a traditional holiday reading of the book of Esther, with themed costumes worn by all participants. Purim celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from a wickedly schemed destruction during the time of the Persian empire. This observation recounts the sometimes silent faithfulness of God in preserving his people. Nothing happens by chance. God’s hand moves powerfully, yet often silently, in human history.

Purim Celebration: Saturday evening, March 23, 7:00 pm at MBF

Passover and Unleavened Bread (Hebrew: *Pesach* and *Chag HaMatzot*)

Passover is an ordered evening meal (Hebrew: *seder*), while Unleavened Bread is a seven-day-long festival. Preparation for Unleavened Bread begins ahead of time by cleaning all food containing leavening agents from the home. During the festival, one abstains from all food containing leavening agents beginning with Passover eve until after sunset, the final day of the holiday week. The first and seventh days are sabbaths, with gathering times prescribed in the Torah. On the seventh day, MBF has adopted the tradition of gathering for a “Messiah Banquet” that anticipates Messiah’s coming (return).

Passover Seder Meal: Monday evening, April 22, at sunset.

Seder activities this year are in private homes or at MBF as a group event at 6:30 pm. Reservations are required by emailing office@marionbible.com.

Unleavened Bread: Begins at sunset, Monday, April 22, at the Passover meal and continues through Monday, April 29, at sunset.

Messiah Banquet: Monday, April 29, 7:00 pm at MBF

Festival Sabbath Reminder: Tuesday, April 23, and Monday, April 29

First Fruits / Resurrection Morning (Hebrew: *Yom HaBikkurim*)

First Fruits is a one-day celebration of the first products of the barley harvest. It coincides with Messiah’s resurrection as the “first fruit” of the New Covenant—He is the first to rise from the dead. For Messianic believers, First Fruits, as a celebration of Messiah’s resurrection, parallels “Easter,” but it is biblically scheduled three days after the Passover meal on the Hebrew calendar, so it does not always coincide with Christendom’s resurrection celebration.

Empty Tomb Celebration: Wednesday, April 24, 8:00 pm at MBF

Second Passover (Hebrew: *Pesach Shenì*)

The Second Passover is for those who cannot attend the Passover Meal due to travel away from home or ritual uncleanness, which is no longer relevant. Contact the pastor if you need us to provide an opportunity for this alternative celebration for you.

Alternate Passover Meal: Tuesday evening, May 21 (Call MBF for needed reservations)

Ascension Day

Ascension Day occurs on day 40 of the Omer Count. It is MBF's remembrance of the ascension of Messiah to the right hand of the Father.

Ascension Celebration: Sunday, June 2, 8:00 am
(on the lawn of the Harding Memorial or at MBF in case of rain)

Pentecost / Festival of Weeks (Hebrew: *Shavuot*)

Pentecost is a one-day celebration of the first products of the wheat harvest, occurring fifty days after First Fruits. This day is traditionally reckoned as the date God gave the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai and the day God gave the Spirit to believers in Messiah (Acts 2).

Pentecost Celebration: Tuesday, June 11, 7:00 pm at MBF

Day Celebration and Scripture Sharing: Wednesday, June 12, 10:00 am. Lunch following.

Festival Sabbath Reminder: Wednesday, June 12

FALL FESTIVALS

*Times of Repentance, Preparation, and
Anticipation of Messiah's Return*

Festival of Trumpets (Hebrew: *Yom Teruah*)

The Festival of Trumpets is a day of blowing trumpets (ram's horn or Hebrew *shofar*) to alert believers to ready themselves for the upcoming Day of Atonement and the coming of Messiah. The day is a mixture of anticipation and begins a ten-day period of daily repentance and self-searching that terminates in the Day of Atonement. The traditional title of the day in Judaism today—*Rosh Hashanah* ("New Year")—is distantly secondary at MBF since the Bible marks the religious new year as the Hebrew month in which Passover occurs (Exodus 12:1-2).

Trumpets Celebration: Tuesday evening, October 1, 7:00 pm at MBF

Trumpets Prayer Service and Activities: Wednesday, October 2, 10:00 am at MBF, followed by a fellowship meal at MBF and then **Tashlich Service** mid-afternoon at Steve and Charlene Long home, 2626 Gooding Road, Marion, OH 43302

Festival Sabbath Reminder: Wednesday, October 2

Ten Days of Awe

MBF has adopted the tradition of observing the ten Days of Awe that begin on the Feast of Trumpets and end on the Day of Atonement. During these ten days, believers may use our printed Guide to consider various portions of their life in repentance. We bring these areas of our lives before the Lord in prayerful consideration on the Day of Atonement.

Day of Atonement (Hebrew: *Yom Kippur*)

Day of Atonement is called the "holiest day of the year" and is a day of serious and resolute rest, prayer, repentance, and gathering from evening sunset to evening sunset.

Atonement Opening Service: Friday, October 11, 7:00 pm at MBF

Atonement Prayer Service and Activities: Sabbath, October 12, 10:00 am at MBF

Atonement Prayer Closing Service and Break Fast: Sabbath, October 12, 7:00 pm at MBF

Festival Sabbath Reminder: Sabbath, October 12

Festival of Tabernacles / Booths (Hebrew: *Sukkot*)

The concluding festival of the year recalls Israel's wilderness experience while waiting to enter the Land. It also reminds us that God dwells in the midst of His people and cares for them, even in the most humble of circumstances. A third and the greatest focus of the festival anticipates God sending His Messiah to dwell with His people. Believers embrace this anticipation as we await Messiah's return, the establishment of the Temple in Jerusalem, and His reign as king over all nations. For additional fellowship opportunities during the week-long festival, MBF has a tradition of sharing a "Progressive Meal" where celebrating members visit several homes for a progressively complete evening dinner. Specific host homes are announced ahead of the event.

Tabernacles Opening Celebration/Foods: Wednesday, October 16, 7:00 pm at MBF

Tabernacles Prayer Service: Thursday, October 17, 10:00 am at MBF

Bible Storytelling: Sabbath, October 19, 2:30 pm at MBF

Progressive Meal: Tuesday, October 22, 6:00 pm

Tabernacles Great Deliverance Service: Wednesday, October 23, 7:00 pm at MBF

Eighth Day of Tabernacles Celebration: Thursday, October 24, 10:00 am at MBF

"Rolling back the Scroll": Readings from the end and beginning of sections of Scripture

Festival Sabbath Reminder: Thursday, October 17, and Thursday, October 24

WINTER FESTIVALS

*Two traditional festivals occur in the winter months.
Scripture refers to these festivals but does not mandate them.*

Festivals of Light

MBF traditionally celebrates the light of God by combining *Hanukkah* traditions, which recall God's light in the world in the Temple menorah, with *Christmas* traditions, which recall the Light of the World in the birth of Messiah (traditional date). We combine song, biblical readings, and candlelight to recall and anticipate the Light of God in our lives in both the restoration of the Temple and the birth of the Messiah. While unfamiliar to many Christians, *Hanukkah*, which means "dedication," is a traditional eight-day festival that prompts us to rededicate our lives to God and hope for a rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. MBF encourages the use of our devotional in the lighting of a *hanukiah* (Hanukkah "menorah") at home. Yeshua (Jesus) Himself observed God's deliverance in this "Feast of Dedication" (John 10:22-23), and we follow in His footsteps by doing so as well. As to Christmas, we share the narratives of the birth of Messiah, prophecies fulfilled in His coming, and the deliverance He brought to those who believe. A festival full of Scripture, song, and prayer is the theme of our Christmas gathering.

Christmas Festival of Light: Tuesday, December 24, 5:30 pm at MBF

Hanukkah Festival of Light: Thursday, December 26 – Thursday, January 2

Opening service: Wednesday, December 25, 7:00 pm at MBF

NEW MOONS

*Monthly Time of Rededication.
From creation on, there has been a monthly cycle of renewal.*

Rosh Chodesh (The Beginning of the Month)

Scripture instructs us to observe the New Moon (Hebrew *Rosh Chodesh*) each month and use it as the basis for determining the times of the biblical festivals. Since the lunar year differs from the solar year and our modern calendars, biblical festivals occur on different dates on our calendars but always occur on the same day of the lunar calendar.

Besides the additional Temple sacrifice, Torah does not designate specific activities for observing the new moon, so we must rely on Pharisaic traditions or personal reasoning. Whereas the modern identification of a new moon observes the dark phase of the moon, ancient Israelites regarded the new moon as the first visible crescent that occurs one or two days after the astronomical new moon. In any event, not only is the exact definition of the New Moon left to tradition, but the activities the holiday prescribes are also dependent on tradition.

At MBF, we believe the announcement of the New Moon at a gathering is an integral part of following the commandment to observe the New Moon. When we gather to celebrate the New Moon, we have a tradition of corporately reading Scriptures relating to the heavens, keeping Festivals based on the New Moon, and to renewing our commitment to serving the King more diligently in the month to come.

MBF has chosen to refer to the month by number as opposed to the usual Babylonian names in observance of the commandment: “Do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth” (Exodus 23:13). The Hebrew Bible provides us with the Hebrew names for three of the months.

NEW MOON DATES

Hebrew Calendar Month

Month 11
Month 12
Month 13
Month 1 (Hebrew *Aviv*¹)
Month 2 (Hebrew *Ziv*²)
Month 3
Month 4
Month 5
Month 6
Month 7 5785 (Hebrew *Etanim*³)
Month 8 (Hebrew *Bul*⁴)
Month 9
Month 10
Month 11
Month 12

Gregorian Calendar Dates

January 11, 2024
February 10, 2024
March 11, 2024
April 9, 2024
May 9, 2024
June 7, 2024
July 7, 2024
August 5, 2024
September 4, 2024
October 3, 2024
November 2, 2024
December 2, 2024
January 1, 2025
January 30, 2025
March 1, 2025

¹ Exodus 13:4; 23:15; 34:18; Deuteronomy 16:1

² 1 Kings 6:1, 37

³ 1 Kings 8:2

⁴ 1 Kings 6:38