

God's Appointed Times & The Meaning of Life

If you have started studying the Bible with a real interest in what it is saying, suspecting that maybe this truly is the inspired Word of God, you will sooner or later come across things that seem to be saying something contrary to what you have been taught in church or by others. One of the first contradictions many people find is God's command to keep the Sabbath on Saturday instead of Sunday. Not long after that you may find the command to keep certain Feasts to God, which you had assumed only pertained to Jews, being kept by Jesus and the disciples after Jesus had supposedly done away with the need for the law. And maybe you realize that you can find no command to keep the traditional days of Christmas and Easter that you have always kept. You may really start wondering why the churches teach one thing when the Bible seems to say another.

Why?

So why are the Sabbath and Feasts so different in the Bible than what you have been taught? The short answer is that Satan has put his filthy little paws into these things and corrupted them into something more palatable to the masses because he knows that keeping things correctly can lead to incredible knowledge about God's plan for us, our salvation and, yes, the very Meaning of Life! The long answer is just the same, but gets into a lot of the specifics of Church history and dealings in corruption by people who did not put seeking God as their first priority, but rather

thought of how to increase the fullness of the offering plate. It is not my intention to go into those details here.

What I will talk about instead is what was actually commanded and why it is important. Then I will lay out some of the Biblical patterns that will help understand what it all means. The *why* part of the answer is very simple, 1 John 5:2-4;

² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

And Ecclesiastes 12:13; “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”

Those are two very straightforward, easy to understand statements. It should be difficult to find a way to change their meaning, even reading them in context. One is from the old covenant and one is from the new, and they are saying the same thing. I could point to plenty more verses that say the same thing, also. All we should be concerned with then is what those commandments are. Amazingly, though, many people actually do try to change their meaning, so please allow me a little digression to talk about why His commandments, or the law, are still very important to us. The most common way people try to change the meaning of the statements above is to claim that what was commanded changed in the new covenant when Jesus died. There is a lot of talk in Paul's letters about the freedom found in Christ's grace and of not being bound by the law. Paul is absolutely right about that, but we have to be careful in our understanding here. Does that mean that the law is not there, or that we should not use it as a guide to our actions? The change

that Paul is referring to is not that of the law being done away with because of Christ. Jesus very clearly stated, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” - Matthew 5:17. Jesus fulfilled the law – but only part of it. An atoning sacrifice for sin has been necessary since Adam and Eve brought sin into the world. The system of sacrifices instituted by God in the Old Covenant were set up to be a constant reminder to this need, but could not actually atone for sin of itself. There is tremendous symbolism in those sacrifices that I don’t have time to get into right now, but it all points towards Christ and the events that would happen surrounding His first and second comings. When He died, He fulfilled the sacrificial aspect of the law, because, being clean and perfect, He *could* actually take away sin, so we do not need to do again what Christ has already done for us. But the rest of the law is still there and has *not* been completed. These laws were put into place “forever, throughout your generations.” What changed was that we are now able to see the spirit of the law as well as the letter, and the spirit of it gives it much more meaning. The law was written to those who had very little concept of what it meant or pointed to. We now have had Christ come and explain these things much more clearly. He has also given us the ability to have His spirit grow in us, to act as a guide and helper to us. But the law is still there as a very important tool for us to use in our growth. It is a measuring stick to hold up to our life and see if we are on the right path. Yes, we are under grace, but if that means that we veer off of the track far enough that God’s commandments are no longer being kept, then that grace is completely lost on us. The law was absolutely not done away with. It is as important now as ever, but, being partially fulfilled, the nature of certain parts of it has changed.

The Meaning of Life - An Overview

God didn’t waste time giving us the point of it all in the Bible. He told us why we are here in the very first chapter of Genesis. In most Bibles it is even on the first page.

Before we go there, though, I want to impress on you one very simple thing that many people miss. For every physical thing you read of in the Bible, or see daily in God’s Creation, there is a spiritual counterpart. All of these physical things are put there for the sole reason of pointing to what will one day be, spiritually. Everything. He tells that to us in Romans 1: 20 “For the Unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things made, both His eternal power and Godhead, for them to be without excuse.” Having this thought floating around in your head all of the time can be an invaluable asset in understanding the workings of God, and is, in fact, exactly the way that the Patriarchs knew and understood God’s laws before they were given at Mt. Sinai.

So back to the first chapter of the Bible. It is worth walking through this whole first chapter, because it is all pertinent to the appointed times. This is the way things were supposed to be and will one day be again, and the appointed times are the path to get us back to it. The Creation is described as a process: The first things happen then subsequent things happen that could not exist without the prior things.

We start out with a dark void and the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters. This is the starting point for creation, but the creation week hasn’t started yet.

The first thing created was light, which is critical to all life, and then it was divided into night and day, which is critical to setting up the whole concept of calculating time - the days of creation could not be numbered without this step.

Next, on day two, the “firmament” divided the waters from the waters – “Heaven” it was called, the sky and even all of space. These waters already existed before day one of Creation, as you can read in verse 2.

Day three saw dry land appearing, which created the seas as well. And now that there was land, stuff could start to grow, so God also created plant life that could reproduce “after its own kind” by bearing seed. This is an important concept introduced here. It may sound basic to us that things reproduce after their own kind, but if we remember how every physical thing has a spiritual counterpart, we can start to see a pattern emerge in the rest of the creation sequence that will lead to an amazing understanding. (It also is apparently not as basic of a concept as I think; as this is the first thing that the theory of evolution tries to distort – claiming that each of these kinds can change into other kinds over time.)

On day four, God created the sun, moon, and stars – the “lights in the firmament of the heavens.” They are there for “signs and seasons, and for days and years.” He is telling us their purpose; people will need to look to them to figure out what time it is - daily, seasonally, and yearly, and also to discern other special events (signs) that may happen at God’s will. (As an aside, I find it quite interesting that plants, which rely on sunlight for photosynthesis, were created before the sun! But remember, light was already around in a different form. What was that form? Well, at the complete other end of the Bible, in Revelation 21: 23 we read about the New Jerusalem, “The city had no need of sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.” This will be the spiritually perfected version of the physical Creation we now know.)

On day five, God created animals to inhabit both the sea and the air, again stating that He created them “according to their kind.”

They would not evolve into something else over the eons. They would be fruitful and multiply themselves. Fish would continue to be fish and birds would continue to be birds.

Day six saw land animals brought forth, each according to its kind. In the two verses (Gen 1:24-25) that mention these animals, the phrase “according to its kind” appears five times! This must be important! And, as the creation from every prior day also stated, “God saw that it was good.” But day six does not end there. He saves the best for last. Verses 26-28:

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

It didn’t mention men reproducing after their kind, did it? No, we were made after the kind of something else that already existed. We were made after the image and likeness of God. We are certainly commanded to reproduce, but man has a different and very special status. We are made to be like God. God is reproducing after *His* Kind. For some reason the simplicity of this can escape us. The point to our being here – yes, the very meaning of life - is to become like God. To be Gods! If this is the first time you have heard this, it probably sounds like sacrilege to put us on the same level as our Creator. But think about it for a while in the sense of this physical creation being after the pattern of the spiritual. Right now we are not God’s equals, but one day we will be. Right now we are like small children, growing and learning the ways of our parents. We are not yet adults, but we will grow up one day. How humbling is that thought! If it is not

apparent now, hopefully the rest of this study will make it apparent – God is creating a family, and we are being prepared to become part of it! And not just in some symbolic sense, but in a very literal, real sense. After creating man, “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was VERY good.”

The Sabbath

Day seven brings us to the Sabbath, the first appointed time mentioned in the Bible. It was sanctified (set apart as holy) at the creation. Genesis 2, 1-3:

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

This happened long before the law was given to Moses at Mt. Sinai in Exodus 20. This should be our first indication that the law that was given had actually always been around in spirit. Paul's letters about freedom from the law were actually talking about going back to this time before the law when God's Spirit made these things evident. When the law was finally given, God was just writing down things that should have been evident to those who had set their eyes on Him. Abraham, Noah and many of the other Patriarchs had done so. They knew and kept God's law even though they lived long before Moses. The Sabbath was no exception.

What the Sabbath pictures is so important to God that we have a reminder of it every week. We work hard for six days, and then get a day of rest, just as God did. If we change the Sabbath to Sunday, we suddenly have our rest before our work. We would be eating our dessert first! This may sound tempting, but that is

exactly why a Sunday Sabbath is used by Satan to deceive us and keep us from this important understanding.

But it is not just this reminder of the creation week that the Sabbath is picturing; it is the entire course of creation, from beginning to end. If you add up all of the generations listed in the Bible (yes all those boring genealogies are there for a reason), you will find that there is a complete list from Adam through to Jesus, and the years will total somewhere around 4000 years. From Jesus lifetime until the present, there have been about another 2000. This makes about 6000 years from the creation until now. 2 Peter 3:8 says the following, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” So these 6000 years could be likened to the first 6 days of a 7-day (or 7000 year) week. What happens during the Sabbath, or last thousand years, then? Revelation 20:1-6 talks of a time when Satan will be bound up and Christ will return to set up his Kingdom on earth for a period of 1000 years. Christ being with us on earth with no Satan around to tempt and destroy? Talk about rest! And if you are thinking, “hmmm...6000 years have gone by already, and Christ will have a 1000 year period of rule on earth at the end of the 7000 year week...doesn't that mean that it should be happening pretty soon?” Yes, you are right! This end time is upon us. Nobody worth listening to will tell you the exact date that these events will happen, but it is getting harder and harder to not realize that we are very close to the end of the work week. TGIF! The point here is that this is what the Sabbath is pointing to. After 6000 years of labor, there will be rest for humanity. We will be able to live as God originally intended, without the influence of Satan! What a time to look forward to! And what a beautiful thing to have a reminder of every week! Those who think that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday or that we don't need to keep any Sabbath just aren't able

to see this, because they are not living the command of God to keep the weekly Sabbath.

The Appointed Times: a Story

Listen to a story:

There is a Father, a mighty King, who has a Son. The Father is ready for His Son to start a Family. He really wants Grandchildren, but as of yet, there is no woman, no bride to be found to help Him out who is suitable, who lives up to the high standards that the Father has set for His Son. This Father decides to choose a very large pool of potential suitors for His Son - an entire nation, actually. He knows that no one, even in this large group, is good enough, though. In fact they are quite a filthy group, so He sets them aside to be cleansed, and to learn and grow in His ways. He does not hide His Son from them during this time, but rather has His Son be the one to lead and teach them. Once they have been cleansed, He takes them on a long journey, showing them how to stay clean, and how to behave in such a way that He can one day find a Wife from among them. He gives them laws and statutes and ordinances to follow. It is a long journey, however, and very few can actually follow the rules to make the cut, but there are a few, and a bride is chosen from among them. So the Father sets up a wedding, and has a ceremony for His Son and the chosen bride. Finally, the Son has a Wife and Helper, and can have the children that He and His Father have always wanted. But there is also a lot of work to be done first. They still live in this nation where most of the people didn't live up to Their standards. In fact many of them are quite violent and upset at this Son and His new bride. Something would have to be done to create a safe home for His Family. He had spent much time trying desperately to teach them how to live a better life, but they just would not listen, being influenced instead by a few strong rebels. So after a brief

Honeymoon, The Son and His bride have no other choice than to come back and fight with those who were against Him, who refused to live by His Father's house rules. Using the special sword and shield and armor that His Father had supplied Him, He and His bride are victorious in this battle, destroying the worst offenders and rebels so they could no longer influence those who are left. Yet it is a sad day to have to have bloodshed, and those that are left from the battle need to again be cleansed and separated from the evil they had done. They all fast to reflect on this and rededicate themselves to the Father's ways. Afterwards, there is again time for joy and peace. For a long period the Son and His bride are able to teach to a now very receptive nation about Their ways. There is much healing and tremendous spiritual growth. Then there is another sudden surge of rebellion against the Father's ways. The rebel leaders assemble an army to send against the new family. But before these rebels can lay a finger on the Son or His bride, a disaster swallows up and destroys them, and their leaders are put to death. The Son and His bride again have peace all around, and at last give birth to their first child, who is given a special place in the household, helping to teach the many younger siblings who are to come. They all live happily ever after, with no more pain, sorrow or tears, just like the Father had planned from the beginning.

So there is the story. It is a good story, and it is told over and over again in the Bible. But it is not usually told in order, which is what tends to make us stumble. Sometimes a chapter is told here and another one is expounded upon over there, so we don't always "get it" that this is the story. But that is God's method for teaching us. Isaiah 28: 9-10 tells us:

⁹ "Whom will he teach knowledge?
And whom will he make to understand the message?
Those just weaned from milk?
Those just drawn from the breasts?

¹⁰ For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little.”

¹¹ For with stammering lips and another tongue
He will speak to this people, [*This is why we stumble. He is speaking to us in a way not easily understood, but putting the information out there for those willing to spend the time to seek it with the method that He explains here.*]

¹² To whom He said, “This *is* the rest *with which*
You may cause the weary to rest,”
And, “This *is* the refreshing”;
Yet they would not hear.

¹³ But the word of the LORD was to them,
“Precept upon precept, precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line,
Here a little, there a little,”
That they might go and fall backward, and be broken
And snared and caught.

But God did give us a way to find out the whole story, or at least a framework to hang those precepts and lines upon when we find them, and that is through His appointed times, which tell, in order, the story I have just told you. Keeping those times as instructed also gives us a way to make this story into much more than just a story. Living this story over and over every year helps us to understand what it truly means for us. We begin to see the pattern of this story laid out in more and more places in the Bible, and those new places give us more information about the story, and our knowledge grows, “precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

There are multiple places in the Old Covenant that give a list of the appointed times. The first place we see them commanded talks about them as three Feasts, and is found in Exodus 23:14-17.

¹⁴ “Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: ¹⁵ You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened

bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); ¹⁶ and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in *the fruit of* your labors from the field. ¹⁷ “Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

They are the three Festival seasons, not a complete list of each individual day. It is not until Leviticus 23 that we see a list of all of the appointed times (commonly called the Holy Days), which is also the chapter most commonly turned to for instructions about them. Leviticus 23: 4 says:

¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: “The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, these *are* My feasts.

³ “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day *is* a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work *on it*; *it is* the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

⁴ “These *are* the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.

Leviticus 23 starts going in to some detail on how to keep them as well. We were told how to figure out when these times fell back on the fourth day of Creation. Remember that the stars, moon and sun were given “for signs and seasons, and for days and years.”

There is nowhere in the Bible that gives all of the instructions for these days all together. Rather, in a fashion consistent with the way God gives us information on every topic, He puts some here and some there, so that we can glean a bit at a time. Numbers 28 and 29 fills in more of the information for us, this time with details on offerings and sacrifices. There is a wealth of information in all of these references. The symbolism of the sacrifices and offerings alone are incredible and one could study

them probably for a lifetime. If you haven't already, you should make yourself very familiar with these passages. The details that are contained in them, however, are not what I am talking about today. Rather, I want to show how these days fit into a pattern that God has worked into the Bible, and into His very creation, over and over again. These are the things that show us their universal truth, make them relevant to us today, and make us want to praise our Creator for the beauty and perfection He has revealed to us. If we do not have these things first, the study of what may seem to be boring details will have little meaning to us.

So before we get into a more in-depth study of each day, I will give you an overview of its meaning and how it fits into God's overall plan. I do not expect you to take my word that these are their true meanings, rather I hope to give you an idea of the big picture to be thinking about as we go through each day to better see how we arrived at that meaning. You should always be able to prove these things yourself, through your own studies one on one with the Word of God.

The meaning of life, as given in the first chapter of Genesis, is that the Gods (The Father and the Son – the word used in Genesis is “Elohiym” a Hebrew plural form of the word “El”, meaning God.) are starting a family. We were created in Their image, after Their own likeness, so that we can one day dwell in Their house, or Kingdom.

The creation took us through His original process for doing this. This process, however, had to be modified after Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. The creation that we just went over was the first plan, simple and straightforward. But after sin came into the picture, there had to be modifications made to it. It could no longer be so simple. With sin came death, and a unique program had to be put into place to conquer it so that we could live our lives out in the eternal God family. The original creation

was a simple birth process that did not involve a monthly menstrual cycle or a painful labor. After Adam and Eve sinned, however, God cursed them. Eve's curse says, “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children”. Adam's curse says, “Cursed *is* the ground four your sake; In toil you shall eat *of* it all the days of your life...In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread.” This cursing of Man and Woman is announcing God's modifications to His plan. The Creation of God's family would now involve pain and blood. Not even these very first people got to experience creating offspring or gathering their food as God originally intended – without difficulty or pain. The resulting plan goes by various names – God's appointed times, the Holy Days, the Festival Seasons, the Plan of Salvation, and maybe others (and they will be referred to in this study variously as each). There is more involved in these days now than in the original plan. The overall pattern shown in the Creation week still holds true, but pain and blood have been added to them, often disguising the original intent. I will point out where they match up and where they stray from each other, and why, as we proceed.

New Year

There is a Father, a mighty King, who has a Son. The Father is ready for His Son to start a Family. He really wants Grandchildren, but as of yet, there is no woman, no bride to be found to help Him out who is suitable, who lives up to the high standards that the Father has set for His Son.

In any cycle or story there has to be a beginning to start it, to set the stage. In the creation, this occurred with the first day. In the cycle of appointed times, it occurs with the sighting of the first visible crescent of the moon after the 12th or 13th month (remember the moon and stars are there “for signs and seasons, days and for years”). God does not command us to do anything on this day. It is not set aside as a special time, except to note that

it is the beginning from where we count the rest of the days. Biblically it was marked with the blowing of a trumpet, as was the beginning of every month.

Passover

This Father decides to choose a very large pool of potential suitors for His Son - an entire nation, actually. He knows that no one, even in this large group, is good enough, though. In fact they are quite a filthy group, so He sets them aside to be cleansed, and to learn and grow in His ways.

Before any family is started, there must be a husband and wife, male and female. There is no exception in God's plan. God the Father has set up His own firstborn son, Jesus the Christ, to be the Husband, or bridegroom, of His family, but He must find a bride for Him to bear fruit with. The Father has been calling people throughout history to have the opportunity to be Christ's bride, through being cleansed by His blood. This search started within the nation of Israel, and was later opened up to all the world.

The Passover day is about sanctifying (setting apart as special) and cleansing the ones called by the Father, from whom Christ will choose His bride. They must be made clean from the stains of living in this world before they will be worthy of such a privilege. This theme is threaded throughout many places in the Bible.

The Passover is NOT a Holy Day (a Holy Convocation, where no work is permitted – a special Sabbath), but is still an appointed time for those that have already been called.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

He does not hide His Son from them during this time, but rather has His Son be the one to lead and teach them. Once they have been cleansed, He takes them on a long journey, showing them how to stay clean, and how to

behave in such a way that He can one day find a Wife from among them. He gives them laws and statutes and ordinances to follow. It is a long journey, however, and very few can actually follow the rules to make the cut...

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is the journey we take in *staying* clean after having been cleansed. Leaven pictures sin so we must keep it out of our houses while completing the process of being chosen as the bride. It is a long, and often difficult, journey that will show us just how insidious sin is and thus how much we rely on God's grace for forgiveness. That grace is the offering that Jesus completed for us upon rising from the grave, called the Wave Sheaf offering.

The Wave Sheaf offering was and is made during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the day after the Sabbath, the day that Jesus rose. It starts the count towards Pentecost, also called the Feast of Firstfruits, and the Feast of Weeks.

The first and last day of this Feast are Holy Days. We are to do no work on them so that we can have a special day of rest to spend with the Father and Son and others of like mind.

The first two days of Creation gave us light and the heavens dividing the waters as their main symbolism. Israel was given a pillar of fire and of cloud as light to guide them through the Exodus and they were baptized in the divided waters of the Red Sea on the Wave sheaf day of this feast.

Pentecost/Feast of Firstfruits/Feast of Weeks

...but there are a few, and a bride is chosen from among them. So the Father sets up a wedding, and has a ceremony for His Son and the chosen bride. Finally, the Son has a Wife and Helper, and can have the children that He and His Father have always wanted.

Pentecost shows Jesus finally returning to claim His bride. She has been set apart and made clean, then kept herself clean, proving her faithfulness to Him.

This Feast takes place on the Fiftieth day from the Wave sheaf offering, so will always take place on the first day of the week. This is the where we are now in God's plan. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread have taken place, and we are nearing the end of the 50-day count towards Pentecost. The bride will have been chosen one by one over the course of this 7 week count until Her number reaches 144,000. They are chosen as the ones whom have excelled in the job description of being the ideal wife, given in Proverbs 31. Jesus, the second Adam, will have found a suitable helper for himself, made from His own body, just as Eve was made as a helper for the first Adam, from his own body. It is the marriage of the Lamb. His bride will accept all the duties and requirements of being part of God's household. The bride are the first people redeemed by God in His plan, and are thus called firstfruits.

Day three of Creation separated the dry land and the seas, so that the plants would have a place to grow. They were to bear fruit from their seed. These were the first fruits, the pattern of which was kept in the third holy day, the Feast of Firstfruits.

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost after Jesus death, as described in Acts 2, pictures the marriage of the Lamb and His bride as well, as the Spirit was many times described by Jesus as a Helper. Being a helper is the main duty of a wife. She is there to help her Husband in all he does. When the disciples received this spirit, they were able to have the spirit of a helper, symbolizing those who will become the true spiritual bride to Jesus at a coming Pentecost that will happen toward the end of this age (maybe soon...).

Day of Trumpets

But there is also a lot of work to be done first. They still live in this nation where most of the people didn't live up to Their standards. In fact many of them are quite violent and upset at this Son and His new bride. Something would have to be done to create a safe home for His Family. He had spent much time trying desperately to teach them how to live a better life, but they just would not listen, being influenced instead by a few strong rebels. [This is the situation we find on earth after the bride has been taken up. It will be the time of the great tribulation in-between Pentecost and Trumpets.] So after a brief Honeymoon, The Son and His bride have no other choice than to come back and fight with those who were against Him, who refused to live by His Father's house rules. Using the special sword and shield and armor that His Father had supplied Him, He and His bride are victorious in this battle, destroying the worst offenders and rebels, so that they could no longer influence those who are left.

Trumpets are used for ushering in the new moon, the beginning of months. This special day ushers in the beginning of the 7th month and the last of the three main Festival Seasons. It is the 4th High Holy day of the year. The 4th day of creation was the beginning of this pattern, giving us the stars, sun and moon for signs and seasons, days and years.

This day was also drastically changed with the addition of sin into the world. Instead of a simple announcement of the wonderful things to come, it is also now an announcement of war. In order for the amazing things pictured by this last Festival season to take place, Jesus must now come back with His bride to make war on the beast and the false prophet, who will be thrown into the lake of fire, and their armies, who will be killed with the sword that comes from Jesus mouth. It will be a great victory that paves the way for the next day in the pattern of our salvation.

Atonement

Yet it is a sad day to have to have bloodshed, and those that are left from the battle need to again be cleansed and separated from the evil they had done. They all fast to reflect on this and rededicate themselves to the Father's ways.

Atonement is the time when we will finally be separated from Satan. This is where Satan is thrown into the bottomless pit, where he will stay for a period of 1000 years. It was first instructed in Leviticus 16, with directions on choosing two goats. One goat was to be sacrificed as a sin offering (the one symbolizing Jesus Christ), and the other, the "scapegoat," would symbolize Satan. That one would have the sins put on his head and would be sent out of the camp (separated) into an uninhabited land (the bottomless pit).

There are many places in the Bible and in his creation that speak of this separation that we all look forward to.

When keeping this day, we are commanded to "afflict your soul" and do absolutely no labor. More than even other Holy Days we should be focusing only on God. Fasting and prayer brings us closer to God, as the food we are partaking of is strictly spiritual in nature. We are separating ourselves from the world, in order to separate ourselves from the sin that is in it.

This day would correspond to the fifth day of creation, where all birds and water creatures were made, but anything related to the concept of atonement is completely absent from that account. At the time there was absolutely no need for it. Its need was the single biggest change that entered into the world after sin. If there is relationship between our need for Atonement and this day of creation it will not be visible until after this day has been fulfilled when Satan is thrown into the bottomless pit.

The Feast of Tabernacles

Afterwards, there is again time for joy and peace. For a long period the Son and His bride are able to teach to a now very receptive nation about Their ways. There is much healing and tremendous spiritual growth.

Finally, through the cycle of all the other Holy Days, the stage has been set to start seeing the awesome promises that have been made in the Bible come to fruition. The Feast of Tabernacles shows people dwelling on the earth with the Son of God for a period of 1000 years, without the influence of Satan. This is a temporary Kingdom set up on earth to show people what the eternal Kingdom will be like. Satan will be bound up in the pit during this time. Those who previously qualified to be the bride will be teaching everybody else who is on the earth about God's truth. Christ and His bride will have dominion over the earth and will subdue it.

On day six of Creation the land animals were created. Then men were created to dwell in their temporary habitations of the earth and to have dominion over all other animals and to subdue them.

The Eighth Day

Then there is another sudden surge of rebellion against the Father's ways. The rebel leaders assemble an army to send against the new family. But before these rebels can lay a finger on the Son or His bride, a disaster swallows up and destroys them, and their leaders are put to death. The Son and His bride again have peace all around, and at last give birth to their first child, who is given a special place in the household, helping to teach the many younger siblings who are to come.

The day after the 7-Day Feast of Tabernacles is referred to in the Bible simply as the 8th Day, although you will hear some people refer to it as the Last Great Day or something similar. It is the Seventh Holy day and it corresponds to day seven in the Creation

week, the day of rest, a sanctified day long awaited for after much hard work. But just as the Sabbath is often used to test people, this day pictures the final testing of mankind. It is also their resurrection to the opportunity of accepting becoming members of God's family. This is the great white throne judgment of Revelation 20:11-15. Satan and death will be destroyed forever and God's plan of salvation for His creation will be complete.

We will finally be back to the same path we were on before sin entered, only now we will be ready to partake in the spiritual world. Everything is about to be created new: Heaven, Earth, Jerusalem and more. The cycle will start now one last time, and this time it will again resemble the original creation, as it was before any plan for salvation was needed, only now it will be the eternal spiritual version.

That is a rather condensed version of what these days mean. I haven't gotten into many of the scriptures pertaining to each in order to prove these things yet. What I've tried to do is simply to lay out the pattern for you in a visible way so that as you study on your own you might be able to see them more clearly. It is still up to you to prove things in your own relationship with Christ.

I have written a more detailed version of these days in another article (it used to be attached to this one, but has been separated to keep this version more straightforward). It is entitled "The Exodus Journey Through the Appointed Times". It takes readers on a trip through the Exodus, showing how Israel's travels set up the pattern for these days in striking detail. It gets into much more detail about these days and the doctrines pertaining to them.

Amen