

Watching and Waiting for the Messiah's Return

STRENGTHENING YOUR CHRISTIAN FAITH WITH THE TORAH OF JESUS

BY VICTORIA SARVADI, TH.D.

Watching and waiting for God is more than just biding time as the world goes by. There is an actual purpose in waiting on God's timing and watching him perform. In fact, there are two aspects of waiting on God.

One is personal, as trusting believers present their personal petitions and prayers before God and then wait and watch in expectation for his help and his answers.

"We are waiting for *Adonai*; he is our help and shield. . . . Now, *Adonai*, what am I waiting for? You are my only hope. . . . *Adonai*, in the morning you will hear my voice; in the morning, I lay my needs before you and wait expectantly" (Psalm 33:29; 39:8; 5:3, CJB).

EXPECTATIONS AND APPOINTED TIMES

The second aspect of waiting on God has a corporate element and is connected

to his overall plan for mankind. God is not random. His plan for the redemption of those who have faith in him and the setting up of his Kingdom on earth can absolutely be expected and by many witnessed in his right time.

We must have faith and believe that his Word will become reality. For his covenant believers, faithful expectation is measured and monitored by his watchful eye, and is connected to his *prophetic actions* that occur at his *appointed times*. A great deal of Scripture teaches us about these "appointed times," the *moedim* in Hebrew. "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S **appointed times** (*moedim*) which you shall proclaim as **holy convocations** [rehearsals]—my appointed times are these'" (Leviticus 23:4, NASB).

Feasts or appointed times can be translated as *signals*. In Hebrew, "convocations" are known as *mirra*, but for this instance, a better translation in English would be *rehearsal*. In essence, therefore, we are to watch for the *signals* of the Lord, while we rehearse his instructions (in order to show and instruct others) thereby *signaling* what he will soon *perform*.

God did not create a random universe, and the major events of this earth are not random. His prophetic Word has already been written and has power in due time to bring about the circum-



stances necessary to manifest all that he has intended. God has this blueprint of events encrypted in the *moedim*—the feasts—the *appointed* times. He wants us to be watching and waiting when he begins to accomplish them.

GOD ACCOMPLISHES HIS WORD

The Hebrew language is unique. A word can be pronounced in a slightly different manner to change meanings; however, at the base (or *shoresb*) these words are predicated on each other—intertwined and connected, containing progressively deeper levels of meaning. In keeping with this unique nature of the Hebrew language, God had an interesting conversation with Jeremiah.

“The word of the Lord came to me: ‘What do you see, Jeremiah?’ ‘I see the branch of an *almond* (*sheked*) tree,’ I replied. The Lord said to me, ‘You have seen correctly, for I am *watching* (*shakad*) to see that my word is fulfilled’ (Jeremiah 1:11-12, NIV)

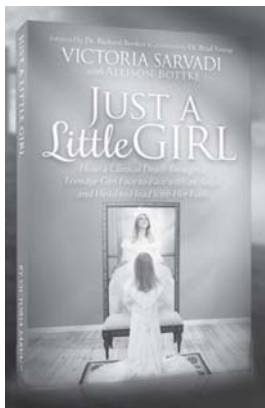
The word *sheked* is the Hebrew word for “almond,” and “*shakad*” is the Hebrew word for watching, watching, or arising. Interestingly enough, the almond tree is the first tree to wake up, bud, and produce fruit after winter in Israel. In other words, it is the first to *perform*.

Jeremiah was young, fearful, and insecure when God called him. God used the picture of an almond tree to show Jeremiah how he **watches** over his Word until the appointed time comes, when it is awakened, at which time, he (God, himself) **performs** it.

THE FIRST ACT OR PERFORMANCE—THE FEAST OF PESACH/PASSOVER

God’s first major accomplishment of the *moedim* is listed in Leviticus 23. The first festival is called the Feast of *Pesach*, which means “Passover.” The crucifixion of Jesus (*Yeshua* in Hebrew) happened on this appointed day, the fourteenth day of the month Aviv. Until that year on Aviv 14, the Jewish people had annually “practiced” this festival with traditions associated with the Exodus of the Hebrew children from Egypt. On a particular Passover day some 2,000 years ago, the Almighty “awaken” to perform his Word. At that appointed time, Yeshua was crucified and given as the *Passover Lamb of God*—and, this was not a rehearsal. God did the actual performance through a perfect sacrifice on the *appointed* day, thereby accomplishing the first act of God indicated by Leviticus 23 that advanced his Kingdom forward toward its goal. This first major act of God was for the purpose of redeeming fallen humanity unto himself.

It is not a coincidence that at the appointed time of the first act when *Yeshua* was in the Garden of Gethsemane, he asked his disciples several times to “watch with him” for one hour. “Then he said to them, ‘my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with me’” (Matthew 26:38, NHEB).



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For what were they watching for? Yeshua had explained it earlier to his twelve disciples: “And taking the twelve, he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise’” (Luke 18:31-34, ESV).

Yeshua knew that he first would be delivered over to the Gentiles. God was about to perform this “delivery to the Gentiles” through Judas, and he wanted the others to wait and watch as God “awakened” to accomplish his plan just one hour after their arrival to the garden.

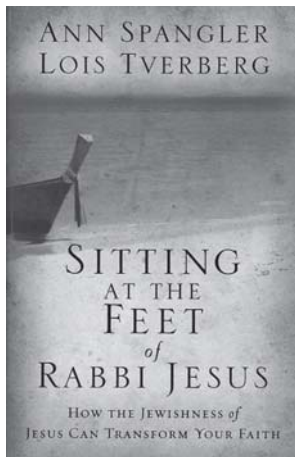
After praying three times for strength and vision, Yeshua continually found his disciples not watching but instead, sleeping. He used this opportunity in the garden to teach them to not fall asleep but be *watching* for what God is about to do lest they fall into the temptations and cares of the world. “Watch and pray, that you don’t enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Luke 18:41, WEB).

Yeshua was then arrested in an act that continued the process of betrayal that led to the suffering and death of the real Passover Lamb according to his Word recorded in Luke 18. It is no coincidence that Yeshua was put on the cross at the exact time of the morning sacrifice and died at the exact time of the evening sacrifice. Our God is a God of order and perfect timing. Everything recorded in Leviticus 23 occurs according to his perfect *moedim*—appointed times—an example of divine prophecy that is seen throughout Scripture.

THE SECOND ACT—THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

To perform the Feast of Unleavened Bread that had been a rehearsal of fasting leaven until this

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time, Yeshua took our sin (leaven) into the grave before the festival began at sundown on Aviv 15. This he did, as witnessed by his death on the cross and burial at the appointed time of The Feast of Unleavened Bread.

THE THIRD ACT—THE FEAST OF FIRST FRUITS

In order to perform or fulfil the Feast of First Fruits, Yeshua had to arise from the grave to become the first fruit of the dead. And he did this on the actual *moed* of God’s calendar of appointed times—on the day of the Feast of First Fruits, that is the Day of Resurrection.

THE FOURTH ACT—THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

The fourth festival recorded in Leviticus 23 is called the Feast of Pentecost or *Shavu’ot* in Hebrew which is observed fifty days after the Feast of First Fruits. At this appointed time, the glorified Yeshua gave another command like he did in the garden to his disciples. This time, he was talking to the 120 followers who, as a result of his command, were to gather together to “wait” for God to “awaken” to perform his promise in Jerusalem. At one of these gatherings, he instructed them not to leave *Yerushalayim* but to *wait* for “what the Father promised, which you heard about from me (Acts 1:4, CJB).

Just as God comforted Jeremiah, assuring that he would awaken to carry out his Word, these faithful followers were waiting for God to do what had only been a rehearsal in the years preceding this day. Historically this was the day the Jewish people celebrated God’s sending the blueprint of the Word

called the Torah. He promised Jeremiah that one day, the Torah would be written in the hearts of man (Jeremiah 31:33). This promise was manifested (“awakened”) just as Yeshua told them it would be. On the very day of Pentecost, they were gathered together *watching and waiting* in the Upper Room when God wrote the Torah on the fleshly hearts of mankind. God performed on the exact appointed time, the fifth feast day as recorded in Leviticus 23.

FUTURE PERFORMANCES

Just as God fulfilled his festival days in the past, he beckons believers today to *watch and wait* for the remaining *moedim*—the three acts that are associated with his return.

“Blessed are those servants whom the master finds on *watch* when he *returns*. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve and will have them recline at the table, and he himself will come and *wait* on them (Luke 12:37, BSB).

THE CRITERIA OF WAITING

The practice of waiting on God to perform includes several criteria. Believers must examine themselves by confessing where they have fallen into temptation. They must be in right relationship with others, asking forgiveness where they have offended or been offended. Waiting is a time of taking inventory, humbling themselves before God and ridding themselves of pride and offense. It is also being in awe (having the appropriate fear of God) as they realize that God is about to *awaken* to judge first his own and then the whole earth.

“For the time has come for judgment to begin, and to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who reject God’s Good News” (1 Peter 4:17, WNT). “We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we continue *waiting* eagerly to be made sons — that is, to have our whole bodies redeemed and set free (Romans 8:23, CJB).

God’s judgment determines who are his sons—that is who are his bride. God is looking for his people to put him in his rightful place in their hearts. “But *Adonai’s* eyes *watch over* those who *fear* him, over those who wait for his Grace” (Psalm 33:18, CJB). “*Adonai takes pleasure* in those who *fear* him, in those who wait for his grace” (Psalm 147:11, CJB). “Watch yourselves, so that you do not lose what we have worked for, that you may be fully rewarded” (2 John 1:8, BSB).

THE FIFTH ACT—THE FALL FEASTS—*ROSH HASHANAH (YOM TERUAH)*

Like the four Spring Feasts (Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and Pentecost) the Fall Feasts consist of *moedim* that God must “awaken” (*shekad*) to fulfill as well. The first one, *Rosh*

Waiting is a time of taking inventory, humbling themselves before God and ridding themselves of pride and offense.

Hashanah (head of the New Year) is also known as *Yom Teruah* (Day of Trumpets) and involves the blowing of the shofar. Believers today are now watching and waiting for God to “awaken,” in order to bring about the breaking of the seven-sealed scroll by the Lamb of God (Revelations 5). This performance prompts seven angels to blow the seven trumpets introduced in the of Revelation 8 which bring judgment upon the earth but, at the same time, operate as alarms to awaken all those who will hear the call of God to repent.

THE WAIT BEFORE THE SIXTH ACT—YOM KIPPUR

Yom Kippur means “Day of Covering” and is understood to be predictive of the future performance of God when he will bring judgment upon the apostate church, as well as the whole earth. Believers today wait for the ten days between the *moedim* of The Day of Trumpets (*Rosh Hashanah*) and *Yom Kippur*. Like the ten days before Pentecost (Acts 1:4), these ten days are heralded as the customary time of repentance—a time of making things right with God and man. This also points to the day when the Messiah will come with the saints of heaven, reveal the sons of God, and destroy his enemies. Revelation 18 records more on this sacred time. Yeshua further explains this act as well: “But in those days, *after that tribulation*, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the *Son of man coming in the clouds* with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and *shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven*” (Mark 13:24-27, KJV).

This gathering is the revealing of God’s sons, also known as his Bride. The creation *waits* eagerly for the sons of God to be revealed (Romans 8:19).

THE SEVENTH AND FINAL ACT

Believers eventually will be waiting for the most exciting performance of all as they watch God “awaken” to bring heaven to earth. “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them *and be* their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (Revelations 21:3-4, KJV).

WATCHING AND WAITING IN THE PRESENT TIME

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shown us ahead of time, in His Word, what he intends to do so we should not be caught unaware. “But you, brothers, are not in the darkness so that this day should overtake you like a thief. For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day; we do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not sleep as the others do, but let us remain awake and sober” (1 Thessalonians 4:4-6).

May we heed the words of Yeshua, those words that that he spoke to his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane) as a warning to *stay awake and watch* lest we fall into temptation. Let us offer ourselves each morning as a burnt offering unto God that we may be his servants, bearing his light. Rest assured, he will “awaken” to perform his Word. Therefore, when you see the signs or the signaling of his return, look up, be **watching**, for your redemption is coming very soon! 

Dr. Victoria Sarvadi is co-founder and vice-president of The Nathaniel Foundation in Kingwood, TX. She received her doctoral degree from The Center of Biblical Research in Redlands, CA, and has served the Messianic community as teacher and administrator. As a licensed minister, she is also Director and Minister of the Nathaniel Fellowship, a Hebraic community in McKinney, TX, where he and her husband Paul reside.



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