The Feasts of the Apocalypse

The Apocalypse is framed by a conceptual framework of Jewish Feasts and it seems that we are dealing with a cycle of three-and-a-half years of feast days. Of course the book of Revelation covers a time period that exceeds many thousands of years – the vision is prone to prophetic "breaks" and not all the visions are sequential (some are partially retrospective, others look to the future). For example, the millennium has a nominal time period of a thousand years so how can a conceptual framework cover a mere three-and-one-half years?

Nevertheless, the Apocalypse (and Daniel) stresses a period of 1260 days or 42 months, the equivalent of three-and-one-half years. This is a "special" time period that has symbolic resonance – there were 42 campsites in the wilderness before the people of Israel reached the Promised Land, Matthew organises his genealogy of Christ to total 42 generations. When the Tabernacle was dedicated gifts weighing 2 x 1260 shekels were offered. The ministry of Christ lasted 3½ years as did the ministry of Elijah (42 children were killed for mocking Elisha) and so forth (there are many more examples). The number 42 and associated time periods depict a time of trial before the arrival of the kingdom.

In *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship*, Aileen Guilding[1] examines the relationship between the ancient Jewish lectionary system and John's gospel. Unlike today, the Bible - or more accurately that portion known as the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) was not readily available to everyone. Apart from the fact that literacy was limited, few copies existed. The Pentateuch was read aloud in the synagogue every Sabbath. This was done over a three and a half year period known as the triennial cycle (see the Excursus at the end of this chapter). Her thesis is that John's gospel was specifically written for the purpose of worship, '*a plan of the gospel for three and a half lectionary years'* (pg.47). The events in John's gospel are all structured around feast days (like Revelation) and she shows that many of the discourses recorded in his gospel actually match the reading for the Sabbath in the Jewish lectionary system. This is not as strange as it seems, for Jesus (the word made flesh) often used the occasion of the Sabbath to demonstrate miracles or for exposition, it would be natural for him to base that on the current reading. Besides the Torah, the Jews also read the Haftarah (prophets) and a Psalm (150 Psalms cover three years with the cycle sometimes interrupted with special feast readings).

[1] Aileen Guilding, The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship: A Study of the Relation of St. John's Gospel to the Ancient Jewish Lectionary System,(Clarendon Press, 1960)

She comments that, "*the Johanine 'chronology' is determined by liturgical rather than historical considerations"* (pg.47). This may explain why, for example, John places the clearing of the Temple (John 2.13-25) at the first Passover, whereas others place it later in his ministry. Whether or not we agree with this analysis, it would make sense for our first century brethren, to read a portion of John's gospel alongside the Sabbath Torah reading – especially if the gospel reading *highlighted the true meaning of the Torah lesson.* We can imagine then, how this might be done, particularly on special occasions (see the comparisons that she offers between John 14 and the Jewish readings for the New Year on page 87). It seems then, that the spirit continued to use this mechanism for structuring Revelation. The answer to our question is that Revelation has probably been constructed the way it has for liturgical reasons i.e., it was meant to be read over a cycle of three and a half years of Sabbaths. We can imagine, for example, Rev 5 being read at the feast of the Passover alongside the Torah Passover readings. The question now becomes; are both John's gospel and Revelation structured this way for purely liturgical purposes? Is this period literal? The ministry of the Lord (and the Baptist?) was three and a half years, as was the ministry of Elijah. This is the *only* example that we have, interpreting scripture with scripture; we have no other option but to accept this period as literal at least for the ministry of Christ and this suggests a literal 3½ year cycle for the witnessing mission as indicated by Rev 11. If this is the case Jesus literally became the "word made flesh", teaching and doing miracles that highlighted the "daily readings" an example of putting the "word" into practice.

Is it realistic to presume that all these events will commence or end on Jewish feast days? Scripture associates the Passover with the nation's deliverance from Egypt, with the deliverance of Hezekiah from the Assyrian and with *our* deliverance, which lest we forget, was also at a Passover. Other feasts (fasts) are associated with national disasters, the post-Mosaic fast on the 9th of Ab (5th month). This is the day before the Temple was burned by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer.52.12 cf. Ezk.40.1; 2Kgs.25.8), when Herod's Temple fell, for according to Josephus, '*it was on the tenth day of the month of Ab, upon which it was formerly burnt by the King of Babylon'* (B.J.W.vi.4.5.). The Jews also associate the fall of Bether, the centre of the Bar Kochba rebellion, with the 9th of Ab. Some of these associations are probably legendary, but for whatever reason they all focus on the 9th of Ab.[2] The fast of the fifth month was already kept in the time of Zechariah (8.19), probably originating during the Babylonian captivity. In more modern times the nation of Israel

[2] According to Jewish tradition the fortress was betrayed to the Romans by a Samaritan, who showed them access to a secret entrance. This happened on the 9th of Ab, which is possible, for the Romans may have viewed this as an auspicious date.

was attacked on a feast day – the 'Yom Kippur War' of 1973, the enemy no doubt benefiting from the nation's unpreparedness. Once again, scripture demands that we must take the feast days and the fast days seriously. The time periods between the feast days are obviously related to Daniel in God is Judge (250-252) the following observation is made:

Conservative interpreters often regard the time periods as referring to the future revelation of the "man of sin" or to the in-breaking of the eschaton. An example of an "end time" application is the kind of approach proposed by Seventh Day Adventist interpreters, who understand the 2,300 evenings and mornings as 2,300 days, which are then equated with 2,300 years. They believe that Jesus did not enter the holiest in heaven until 1844 AD some 2,300 years after Cyrus issued his decree to rebuild the temple. The validity of this approach is questionable as the time period of 2,300 evenings and mornings[3] concerns the "daily" (*tāmīd*). The *tāmīd* was offered every evening and morning – twice daily and therefore the period is most certainly 1,150 days. This period is shorter than the 1,260 days of Dan. 7:25 but is close to the actual period of the profanation of the sanctuary recorded in I Macc.1:54, 59 and 4:52, 59 that lasted three years. Therefore the dates find a rough correspondence with the historical facts – the problem is that the both the desecration and restoration of the temple and the nation occurred in stages and it is difficult to know precisely when the days commence and terminate, although the purification at Hanukkah is certainly one termination and the death of Antiochus another.

It is proposed that the time periods have a symbolic significance beyond their initial historical fulfilment during the Antiochene crisis. The time periods reflect the number of days in the Jewish Festal Calendar reckoned from the destruction of the temple on the 9th of Ab. The differing numbers are accounted for by the leap year cycles. The Hebrew Calendar is a lunisolar calendar. It is a complex system, where a year can have any of six different numbers of days in it (353, 354, 355, 383, 384, or 385) and referred to as 'deficient, regular or complete' and 'common (350s) or embolismic (380s)'. On average a leap year (383/4/5) would need to be added every three years in order for the calendar to synchronise with the harvest seasons; in practice this meant that sometimes no leap years were added during the three years and at other times two leap years may have been added almost consecutively in order to balance a calendar based on observation rather than calculation. The table below calculates the number of days from the destruction of the temple (9th of Ab) until a prominent feast day, allowing for different combinations of deficient, regular and leap years:

[3] The Greek and Latin versions mistakenly read twenty-three hundred days.

Year 1 Days from the 9th of Ab to the end of the year	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Total**	**Feast**
226	354	383	187		1,150	Atonement
258 (leap year)	355	385	262		1,260	Hanukkah
258 (leap year)	385	385	262		1,290	Hanukkah
258 (leap year)	353	384	340		1,335	Purim
258 (leap year)	354	354	355	14	1,335	Passover

It is surely not coincidental that from the destruction of the temple to the feasts of Purim and Passover covers a period of 1,335 days – as both feasts celebrate deliverance. Moreover, Hanukkah can be calculated by two different methods delivering a period of either 1,260 or 1,290 days. That the number 1,260 is associated with the dedication of the temple is reflected by the total weight of the vessels brought in Numbers chapter 7 at the dedication of the tabernacle, which is 2,520 shekels (2 x 1,260). The number 1,260 is also associated with measuring (dedicating) the temple in Revelation (11:1-3) and the feast of Purim is also alluded to in Rev. 11:10.

The Chronology of the Feasts

The chronology of the feasts is difficult to determine (for the reasons enumerated in the introduction) but here follows a list of the feasts alluded to in the Apocalypse in the order that they are mentioned which does not always imply sequential chronological order (depending on whether the vision is parallel/sequential/retrospective) etc. See the respective chapters in this exposition for further explanations.

Rev 1 - Day of Atonement (probable): **Year One**
Rev 5 and 6 –Passover (partially retrospective)
Rev 7 – Tabernacles
Rev 8 and 9 -Day of Atonement: **Year Two**
Rev 11- Dedication and Purim (looking backwards and forwards)
Rev 12 – Passover and Pentecost (looking backwards and forwards)
Rev 14 – Tabernacles
Rev 15 and 16- Passover (looking forwards to Rev 19) and Day of Atonement: **Year Three**
Rev 19 –Passover

Rev 20-21 –Tabernacles

Although this is a conceptual framework of 3½ years it spans historical time from the cross to the end of the millennium.

Tabernacles and the Kingdom

The **Feast of Tabernacles** is the feast of the ingathering of the harvest. Tabernacles is **the Feast** of the kingdom: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zech.14.16). This does not mean that blood sacrifice will be part of the Tabernacles ritual, but the building of booths, reading of scriptures, enjoyment of the harvest fruits, rejoicing and worship will form part of the festival. The last two chapters of Revelation [4] reflect this experience;

- The Tabernacle of God is with men (21:3)
- God will wipe away all tears (21:4)
- I will give to him that is a thirst (21:6)
- A pure river of water (22:1)
- Twelve manner of fruits (22:2)

[4] See Isa.25.6-8: 'And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined….the Lord will wipe away tears from all faces.' This is the Feast of Tabernacles, when death is finally 'swallowed up' (cp.Isa.25.7; Rev 20.14, 21.4). The dedication of Solomon's Temple was in the seventh month (1Kgs.8.2), when the house was filled with the *Shekinah* glory (v.10) and the people celebrate a Feast of Tabernacles lasting *twice* the proscribed time. (v.65) Sending the people home after the second seven. (v.66)

Excursus: Triennial reading Cycle of the Old Testament

The encyclopaedia Judaica comments as follows: **Triennial Cycle**, term denoting the custom according to which the weekly Pentateuchal readings on Sabbaths are completed in a three-year cycle. The triennial cycle was practised in Palestine and in Egypt as late as A.D.1170, whereas in Babylonia the reading of the Pentateuch was completed in one year, from Tishri to Tishri. The latter became the accepted traditional custom the world over (Meg.29b; Maim.Yad, Tefillah, 13:1).

The masoretic text of the Pentateuch has 154 divisions, known as *Sedarim.* According to other traditions, however, the Pentateuch consists of 161 and even 175 portions (Sof.16: 10); the Yemenites divide the Pentateuch into 167. It has been suggested that the 154 – division correspond to the minimum number of Sabbaths in the triennial cycle and 161 to the maximum. The difference is due to the occurrence of festivals on Sabbaths when the regular Pentateuch portions were suspended by special Pentateuch readings appropriate to the festivals. The 175-division stems from the practice of completing the reading of the whole Pentateuch within a cycle of three and a half years (twice within seven years).

On the following page is a *reconstruction* of the triennial cycle culled from the encyclopaedia Judaica, to this table I have added the Psalms. The reading for the end of Elul in the second year of the cycle (the commencement of the witnesses ministry) is Lev.5.1-6.1 ; the chapter starts with the theme of witnessing , the next reading is Psalm 79 – extensively alluded to in Rev 11 and a haftarah reading of Zech.5.3-6.19. The previous chapter to this (Zech.4) is *also* extensively quoted in Rev 11. The present author believes that Zech.2.14 – 4.7 was probably the original Haftarah, which, at some time was displaced to the first Sabbath in Hanukkah as it was appropriate to the dedication of the Temple. The motif's for Hanukkah are the same as those at the end of Elul, namely witnessing and dedicating (measuring Rev.11:1) the Temple. I have allocated the Psalms in parenthesis; the gap in the third year at Tevet is artificial and has been done for ease of numbering. Psalm 119 was probably split into three portions, read over three consecutive Sabbaths – this would obviously shift all the Psalms after 119 downwards in the table.

It must be remembered that this table is a *reconstruction* made from references and comments in Jewish literature. Aileen Guilding also includes a lectionary calendar in her book, which varies

slightly from the one here. For example the reading for the first Sabbath in Elul of the first year, would be Gen.27.28 (to 28.1), not Gen.26.11 (to 27.1). She freely admits that the reconstruction is an *approximation.* Also discussed is whether the reading cycle began in the first year at Nisan (beginning of months) or at Tishri (the New Year = civil New Year). She argues for Nisan, which seems likely, though different communities may have well opted for Tishri. From studying the lectionary we can obtain some remarkable insights into our New Testament. For example according to the above table the reading on (or around) the seventh Sabbath after Passover (=Pentecost) is Gen.11.1 (to 12.1) this is the tower of Babel incident – where language was confused, in the New Testament we find this process reversed at Pentecost by the spirit gifted witnesses (the apostles), recorded in Acts 2.1-13!

Aileen Guilding observes the following: "Further, it is striking that the two New Testament passages which tell of the *Lord's birth,* Revelation 12 and Luke 2, seem to depend on Genesis 37, Leviticus 12, and Isaiah 66, all of which are lectionary readings for Tabernacles (2nd and 3rd Sabbaths in Tishri – this is only slightly out from our table – author). Luke 2 combines *'Mary kept all these sayings pondering them in her heart'* (compare Gen.37.11) with a reference to the law of circumcision as it is given in Lev.12. In Rev.12 the mention of the sun, moon, and stars recalls Joseph's dream. In Rev.12.4 the dragon waits to devour the woman's child. In Genesis 37 Jacob says when he sees Joseph's blood stained coat, "An evil beast has devoured him, '*a wild beast has snatched away Joseph'"* (pg. 100- 101). Such correspondences are not coincidental, however the theme for Rev.12 is that of Passover and Pentecost; the Exodus delivery from Egypt (birth of a nation, birth of the Lord, etc), this could well be explained by a reading cycle beginning in Tishri (at Gen.1.1) this would make the above, Passover readings, instead of Tabernacle readings. It is quite possible that both lectionary cycles were practised, one by the *Diaspora*, and one by *Erez Israel.* The triennial cycle has obviously influenced the structure of the Gospels and Revelation amongst others. The Sabbath readings also determined and structured the Lord's preaching and healing ministry – for he was *'the word made flesh.'* The triennial cycle probably stems from the Babylonian exile, and must have been in existence at least 280 years before Christ, for the LXX already has the Gen.33.17 reference to booths, a Tabernacles reading in the Nisan cycle. There follows two further tables, the current table for yearly scriptural readings on the Sabbath, and a table for the readings on feast days. Although the last two tables are (relatively) modern, it must be remembered that the ordinary Sabbath reading was either supplemented or displaced by special readings on Sabbath feast days. The current table of feast day readings no doubt reflects very old traditions.

Reconstructed Triennial Readings:

	FIRST YEAR			SECOND YEAR			THIRD YEAR		
	PENTATEUCH	HAFTARAH	PSALM	PENTATEUCH	HAFTARAH	PSALM	PENTATEUCH	HAFTARAH	PSALM
N	**GENESIS**								
I	1 : 1	Isa.42:5	(1)	12 : 29	Isa.21:11	(55)	6 : 22	(not extant)	(105)
S	2 : 4	(not extant)	(2)	13 : 1	Isa.46:3	(56)	8 : 1	Zech.4:14	(106)
A	3 : 24	(not extant)	(3)	13 : 21	Isa.45:24	(57)	9 : 22	(not extant)	(107)
N	5 : 1	Isa.30:8-15	(4)	15 : 21	Isa.49:10	(58)	11 : 1	(not extant)	(108)
I	6 : 9	Isa. 54:9-10	(5)	16 : 25	Isa.58:23	(59)	12 : 1	---	(109)
Y	8 : 1	Hab. 3:1-5	(6)	18 : 1	Isa.6;61:6-10	(60)	13 : 1	Josh.2:1; Judg.18:7	(110)
Y	8 : 15	Isa. 42:7-21	(7)	21 : 1	Jer.34:1	(61)	14 : 1	---	(111)
A	9 : 18	Isa. 49:9-13	(8)	22 : 26	Isa.49:3	(62)	15 : 1	---	(112)
R	11 : 1	(not extant)	(9)				16 : 1	1 Sam.11	(113)
S	12 : 1	Josh. 24:3-18	(10)	24 : 1	Isa.60:17-61:9	(63)	17 : 16	Ezk.44:15	(114)
I	14 : 1	Isa.41:2-14;1Kgs.10:9	(11)	25 : 1	Isa.66	(64)	18 : 25	Ezk.44:29	(115)
V	15 : 1	Zeph.3:9-19;Isa.1:1-17	(12)	26 : 31	Ezk.16:10-19	(65)	20 : 14	Judg. 11	(116)
A	16 : 1	Isa.64:1	(13)	27 : 20	Hos.14:7;Ezk.43:10	(66)	22 : 2	Mic.5:6	(117)
N				29 : 1	Isa.61:6	(67)			
T	17 : 1	Isa.63:10-11	(14)	30 : 1	Mal.1:11-2:7	(68)	23 : 2	(not extant)	(118)
A	18 : 1	Isa.33:17-34:12;2Kgs.4	(15)	30 : 12	2 Kgs.12:5	(69)	25 : 10	Mal.2:5	(119)
M	19 : 1	Isa.17:14-18:7	(16)	31 : 1	Isa.43:7-21	(70)	26 : 52	Josh.17:4	(120)
M	20 : 1	Isa.61:9-10	(17)	32 : 14	2 Sam.22:10-51	(71)	28 : 1	Ezk.45:12	(121)
U	21 : 1	1 Sam.2:21-28	(18)						
Z									
	22 : 1	Isa.33:7-22	(19)	34 : 27	Jer.31:33-40;1Kgs.18:27-39	(72)	30 : 1	Jer.4:2	(122)
	23 : 1	1 Kgs.1:1	(20)	37 : 1	1 Kgs.8:18	(73)	32 : 1	Jer.2	(123)
A	24 : 1	Judg.19:20	(21)	38 : 21	Jer.30:18	(74)	33 : 1	(not extant)	(124)
V	24 : 42	Isa 12.3-14:2	(22)	39 : 1	Isa.33:20-34:8;1Kgs.7:13	(75)	34 : 1	Ezk.45:1;Josh.21:41	(125)
	25 : 1	2 Sam.2:21-28	(23)				35 : 9	Josh.20:1	(126)
	26 : 11	Isa 65:23-66:8	(24)	**LEVITICUS**			**DEUTERONOMY**		
E	27 : 1	Isa 46:3-6	(25)	1 : 1	Isa.43:21;Jer.21:19;Mic.6:9-7:8	(76)	1 : 1	Jer.30:4;Amos 2:9	(127)
L	27 : 28	Micah 1:1;5:7-13	(26)	3 : 1	Ezk.44:11;20:41	(77)	2 : 1	(not extant)	(128)
U	28 : 10	Hos. 12:13	(27)	4 : 1	Ezk.18:4-17	(78)	3 : 23	Jer.32:16	(129)
L	29 : 31	Isa 60.15	(28)	5 : 1	Zech.5:3-6:19	(79)	4 : 1	(not extant)	(130)
				6 : 1	Jer.7:21	(80)			
T	30 : 21	1 Sam. 1:11	(29)	6 : 12	Mal.3:9	(81)	5 : 1	(not extant)	(131)
I	31 : 3	Jer.30;10-16.Mic.6:3-7:20	(30)	8 : 1	Ezk.43:27	(82)	6 : 4	(not extant)	(132)
S	32 : 4	Obad.1:1	(31)	9 : 1	1 Kgs.8:56-58	(83)	8 : 1	Jer.9:22-24	(133)
H	33 : 18	Nah.12-2:5	(32)	12 : 1	Isa.66:7	(84)	9 : 1	Jer.2:1;2Kgs.8:30	(134)
R									
I									
	35 : 9	Isa. 43:1-7	(33)	13 : 29	2 Kgs.5	(85)	10 : 1	2Kgs.13:23	(135)
B	37 : 1	Jer. 38:8	(34)	14 : 1	2 Kgs.7:8	(86)	11 : 26	Isa.54:11-55:6	(136)
U	38 : 1	Isa.37:31-37	(35)	15 : 1	(not extant)	(87)	12 : 20	Jer.23:9	(137)
L	39 : 1	Isa.52:3-9	(36)	16 : 1	Ezk.44:25	(88)	15 : 7	Isa.61:1-2	(138)
K	40 : 23	Amos 1:3-15; 2:6	(37)	17 : 1	(not extant)	(89)	17 : 14	1 Sam.8:1	(139)
I	41 : 1	Isa.29:8	(38)	18 : 1	Ezk.22:1	(90)	17 : 24	1 Sam.10:24	(140)
S	41 : 38	Isa.11:2-9	(39)	19 : 1	Amos 9:7	(91)	18 : 1	Jer.29:8	(141)
L	42 : 18	Isa.50:10-52:11	(40)	21 : 1	Ezk.44:25	(92)	20 : 10	Josh.24:1	(142)
E									
V									
T	43 : 24	Jer.42:12-17;43:12-14;		22 : 1	(not extant)	(93)	21 : 10	Isa.54:1-10	(143)
E		1 Kgs 3:15	(41)	24 : 1	(not extant)	(94)	(not extant)	(not extant)	
V	44 : 18	Josh 14:6;Ezk.37:10	(42)	25 : 1	Jer.36:6;Ezk.34	(95)	(not extant)	(not extant)	
E	{ 47 : 28	{ 1 Kgs.13:14	(43)	25 : 39	Isa.24:2	(96)	26 : 1	Isa.60:1-22	(144)
T	{ 48 : 1	{ 1 Kgs.2:1	(44)						
	49 : 1	Isa.43:2	(45)						
S	49 : 27	Zech.14:1;Mic.2:12	(46)	26 : 3	Jer.16:19;Ezk.12:20	(97)	29 : 9	Isa.55:6-58:8;Mic.7:18-20	(145)
H	**EXODUS**			**NUMBERS**			31 : 1	Jer.12:15	(146)
E	1 : 1	Isa.27:6;Ezk.16:1;20	(47)	1 : 1	Hos.2:1	(98)	31 : 14	Judg.2:7	(147)
V	3 : 1	Isa.40:11;2 Kgs.20:8	(48)	2 : 4	(not extant)	(99)	32 : 1	Ezk.17:22	(148)
A	4 : 14	Isa.55:12	(49)	3 : 14	Isa.24:2	(100)			
T	6 : 2	Ezek.28:25-29:21	(50)						
A	7 : 18	Joel 3:3	(51)	4 : 17	1 Sam 6:10	(101)	33 : 1	Josh.1:1-18	(149)
D	8 : 16	Isa.34:11	(52)	4 : 21	Judg.13:2-25	(102)	34 : 1	(not extant)	(150)
A	10 : 1	Isa.19;Jer.4:6;1Sam.6:6	(53)	5 : 11	Hos.4:14	(103)	Shekalim		
R	12 : 13	Jer.46:13-18	(54)	6 : 1	Judg.13:2	(104)	Zakhor		
							Parah		
							Ha - Hodesh		

Table of Scriptural Readings on Sabbaths (modern annual lectionary)

PENTATEUCH		PROPHETS
	GENESIS	
Bereshit	1:1—6:8	Isa. 42:5—43:11(42:5—21)[1]
No'ah	6: 9—11:32	Isa. 54:1—55:5 (54:1—10)
Lekh Lekha	12:1—17:27	Isa. 40:27—41:16
Va-Yera	18:1—22:24	II Kings 4:1—37 (4:1—23)
Hayyei Sara	23:1—25:18	I Kings 1:1—31
Toledot	25:19—28:9	Mal. 1:1—2:7
Va-Yeze	28:10—32:3	Hos. 12:13—14:10 (11:7—12:12)
Va-Yishlah	32:4—36:43	Hos.11 :7—12:12 (Obad. 1:1—21)
Va-Yeshev	37:1—40 :23	Amos 2:6—3:8
Mi-Kez	41:1—44:17	I Kings 3:15—4:1
Va-Yiggash	44:18—47:27	Ezek. 37:15—28
Va-Yehi	47:28—50:26	I Kings 2:1—12
	EXODUS	
Shemot	1:1—6:1	Isa. 27:6—28:13;29:22,23 (Jer. 1:1—2:3)
Va-Era	6:2—9:35	Ezek. 28:25—29:21
Bo	10:1—13:16	Jer. 46:13—28
Be-Shallah	13:17—17:16	Judg.4:4—5:31 (5:1—31)
Yitro	18:1—20:23	Isa. 6:1—7:6; 9:5, (6:1—13)
Mishpatim	21:1—24:18	Jer. 34:8—22; 33:25,26
Terumah	25:1—27:19	I Kings 5:26—6:13
Tezavveh	27:20—30:10	Ezek. 43:10—27
Ki Tissa	30: 11—34:35	I Kings 18:1—39(18:20—39)
Va-Vakhel	35: 1 —38: 20	I Kings 7:40—50 (7:13—26)
Pekudei	38:21—40: 38	I Kings 7:51—8:21 (7:40—50)
	LEVITICUS	
Va-Yikra	1:1—5:26	Isa. 43:21—44:23
Zav	6:1—8:36	Jer.7:21—8:3;9:22,23
Shemini	9:1—11:47	IISam.6:1—7:17(6:1—l9)
Tazri'a	12:1—13:59	II Kings 4:42—5:19
Mezora [2]	14:1—15:33	Il Kings 7:3—20
Aharei Mot	16:1—18:30	Ezek. 22:1—19 (22:1—16)
Kedoshim	19:1—20:27	Amos 9:7—15 (Ezek. 20:2—20)
Emor	21:1—24:23	Ezek. 44:15—31
Be-Har	25:1—26:2	Jer. 32:6—27
Be-Hukkotai	26:3—27:34	Jer. 16:19—17:14
	NUMBERS	
Be-Midbar	1:1—4:20	Hos. 2:1—22
Naso	4:21—7:89	Judg.13:2—25
Be -Ha'alotkha	8:1—12:16	Zech. 2:14—4:7
Shelah Lekha	13:1—15:41	Josh. 2:1—24
Korah	16:1—18:32	ISam.11:14—12:22
Hukkat	19:1—22:1	Judg.11:1—33
Balak	22:2—25:9	Micah 5:6—6:8
Pinhas	25:10—30:1	I Kings 18:46—19:21
Mattot	30:2—32:42	Jer.1:1—2:3
Masei	33:1—36:13	Jer.2:4—28; 3:4 (2:4—28; 4:1,2)
	DEUTERONOMY	
Devarim	1:1—3:22	Isa. 1:1—27
Va-Ethannan	3:23—7:11	Isa. 40:1—26
Ekev	7:12—11:25	Isa. 48:14—51:3
Re'eh	11:26—16:17	Isa.54:11—55:5
Shofetim	16:18—21:9	Isa. 51:12—52:12
Ki Teze	21:10—25:19	Isa. 54:1—10
Ki Tavo	26:1—29:8	Isa.60:1—22
Nizzavim	29:9—30:20	Isa. 61:10—63:9
Va-Yelekh	31:1—30	Isa. 55:6—56:8
Ha'azinu	32:1—52	II Sam. 22:1—51
Ve-Zot ha-Berakhah[3]	33:1—34:12	Josh. 1:1—18 (1:1—9)

[1] Parentheses indicate Sephardi ritual. [2] Italics (and Italics bold) indicate portions that are sometimes combined.
[3] This portion is not read on Sabbath but on Simhat Torah

The Annual Jewish calendar

MONTH	APPROX.	FESTIVAL	SEASON
1. **ABIB** or **NISAN** Ex.23:15; Neh.2:1; Jos. *Antiq.*i..3, 3; iii. 10, 5. 30 days.	APRIL	1. New Moon* 14. Passover in the evening, the beginning of the 15th day (Ex. 12:18,19; 13:3-10),introducing 15-21. Feast of unleavened bread (Lev.23:6) 16. Sheaf of first fruits of the harvest presented (Lev. 23:10-14; cf.Josh.5:11; Jos. Antiq. iii. 10,5).	Latter or spring rains. Flax harvest at Jericho (Josh.2:6). Jordan at flood (Josh.3:15;IChron.12:15;Ecclus.24:26). Barley harvest in Sharon, wheat in the Jordan valley. Pods on the carob tree. Dry season starts – n.w. winds
2. **ZIV** or **IYAR** I Kings 6:1,37; Jos.*Antiq*.viii. 3,1. 29 days	May	14. Passover for those who could not keep the regular one (Num. 9:10, 11).	Barley harvest in uplands (Ruth 1:22) Wheat in lowlands.
3. **SIVAN** Esth.8:9. 30 days	June	6. Pentecost, or feast of weeks or of harvest, day of first fruits. Loaves as first fruits of gathered harvest presented . (Ex.23:16,19; 34:22; Lev.23:15-21; Num.28:26;Deut.16:9,10).	Apples on seacoast. Early figs general. Oleander in bloom. Almonds ripe. Intense heat (Jos. *War* iii.7,32)
4. **TAMMUZ** 29 days	July		Wheat harvest in high mountains. First grapes ripe. Heat increases.
5. **AB** Jos. Antiq. iv. 4, 7. 30 days	August	9. Fast day – destruction of Temple.	Olives in lowlands.
6. **ELUL** Neh.6:15 29 days	September		Dates and summer figs. Vintage general (cf. Lev. 25:5; Num.13:23)
7. **ETHANIM** or **TISHRI** I Kings 8:2; Jos. Antiq. viii. 4,1. 30 days	October	1. Memorial of trumpet- blowing (Num. 29:1). Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashana) 10. Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur (Lev.16:29-31). 15-21. Feast of ingathering or Tabernacles. First fruits of wine and oil (Ex.23:16 ; Lev.23:34; Deut.16:13) 22. Solemn Assembly (Lev.23:36; Num.29:35; Neh.8: 18; cf. John7:37)	Pomegranates ripe. Season changing to winter (Jos. *Antiq*. iii. 10, 4) or rainy season, with prevailing w. s.w. wind. Former or early rains. Pistachio nuts ripe. Plowing.
8. **BUL** or **MARHESHVAN** I Kings. 6:38; Jos. Antiq. i. 3, 3. 29 days (in regular or defective year) 30 days (in perfect year)	November		Olives gathered in n. Galilee.
9. **CHISLEV** Zech.7:1;cf.Jos.*Antiq.* xii. 5,4; 7,6 29 days (in a defective year) 30 days (in a perfect year)	December	25. Feast of dedication (I Macc.4: 52 ;John 10:22)	Winter figs on trees. Rainfall increases (cf. Ezra 10:9, 13).
10. **TEBETH** Esth. 2:16; Jos. *Antiq*. xi. 5, 4. 29 days	January		Hail: snow on higher hills and occasionally at Jerusalem. In lowlands grain fields and pastures green, wild flowers abundant.
11. **SHEBAT** Zech. 1:7; I Macc. 16:14. 30 days	February		Almond trees in blossom. Appearance of blossom, or perhaps of young fruit, of the fig.
12. **ADAR** Esth. 3:7; Jos. *Antiq.* iv. 8,49. 29 days; 30 in leap year.	March	14, 15. Feast of Purim (Esth. 9:21-28)	Carob tree in blossom. Oranges and lemons ripe in the lowlands. Storax blossoming and pomegranates showing their first flowers. Barley harvest at Jericho.
13. **VEADAR** Intercalary month in leap years. 29 days			

* In every month the new moon falls on the 1st. day of the month. Defective year = 353 or 354 days. Perfect year = 355 days. Leap year = 385 days.

Table of Holiday Scriptural Readings for the Diaspora and for Erez Israel

	PENTATEUCH		PROPHETS
Rosh Ha-Shanah			
1st Day	Gen. 21:1—34; Num. 29:1—6		I Sam. 1:1—2:10
2nd Day	Gen. 22:1—24; Num. 29:1—8		Jer. 31: 2—20
Shabbat Shuvah	**Weekly portion**		**Hos. 14:2—10: Micah 7:18—20 or Hos. 14:2—10; Joel 2:15—17**
Day of Atonement			**(Hos. 14:2—10; Micah 7:18—20[1])**
Morning	**Lev. 16:1—34; Num. 29:7—11**		**Isa. 57:14—58:14**
Afternoon	**Lev.18:1—30**		**The Book of Jonah; Micah 7:18—20**
Sukkot			
1st Day	Lev. 22:26—23:44; Num. 29:12—16		Zech. 14:1—21
2nd Day	Lev. 22:26—23:44; Num. 29:12—16 [Num. 29:17—19][2]		I Kings 8:2—21 [none]
3rd Day	Num. 29:17—22 [29:20—22]		
4th Day	Num. 29:20-28 [29:23—25]	Erez Israel	
5th Day	Num. 29:23-31 [29:26—28]	portion read	
6th Day	Num. 29:26-34 [29:29—31]	four times	
7th Day	Num. 29:26-34 [29:32—34]		
Shabbat during the Intermediate Days	Ex. 33:12—34:26; Daily portion from Num. 29		Ezek. 38:18—39:16
Shemini Azeret 8th Day	Deut. 14:22—16:17; Num. 29:35—30:1 [as for Simhat Torah]		I Kings 8:54—66 [as for Simhat Torah]
Simhat Torah 9th Day	Deut. 33:1—34:12; Gen. 1:1—2:3; Num. 29: 35—30:1 [none.]		Josh. 1:1—18(1:1—9) [none]
Hanukkah			
Day	Num. 7:1—17		
2nd Day	Num. 7:18—29 [7:18—23]		
3rd Day	Num. 7:24—35 [7:24—29]	Erez Israel	
4th Day	Num. 7:30—41 [7:30—35]	portion read	
5th Day	Num. 7:36—47 [7:36—41]	three times	
6th Day	Num. 7:42—53 [7:42—47]		
7th Day	Num. 7:48—59 [7:48—53]		
8th Day	Num. 7:54—8:4		
First Shabbat Hanukkah	Weekly and Hanukkah portions as for Erez Israel		Zech. 2:14-4:7
Second Shabbat Hanukkah	Weekly and Hanukkah portions as f or Erez Israel		I Kings 7:40-50
Rosh Hodesh during Hanukkah	Weekly and Hanukkah portions as for Erez Israel and Num 28: 1—15		
Rosh Hodesh and Shabbat Hanukkah	Weekly Rosh Hodesh, and Hanukkah portions as for Erez Israel		Isa. 66:1-24
Shekalim	Weekly portion. Ex. 30:11—16		II Kings 12:1-17
Zakhor	Weekly portion. Deut 25:17 —19		I Sam 15:2- 34 (15:1- 34)
Purim	Ex.17:8—16		
Parah	Weekly portion. Num. 19:1— 22		Ezek. 36:16—38 (36:16—36)
Ha-Hodesh	Weekly portion. Ex. 12:1—20		Ezek. 45:16—46:18 (45:18—46: 5)
Shabbat Ha-Gadol	Weekly portion.		Mal. 3:4—24

Passover

1st Day	Ex. 12:21—51, Num. 28:19 —25	Josh. 5:2—6:1
2nd Day	Lev. 22:26—23: 44, Num. 28:19 —25	II Kings 23:1—9; 21—25 [none]
3rd Day	Ex. 13:1—16, Num. 28:19 —25	
4th Day	Ex. 22:24—23:19, Num. 28:19 —25	
5th Day	Ex. 33:12—34:26, Num. 28:19 —25	
6th Day	Num. 9:1—14 ; 28:19 —25	
Intermediate Shabbat	The order changes to allow for the reading as on the 5th day above	Ezek. 36: 37—37:14 (37:1—14)
7th Day	Ex. 13:17—15: 26, Num. 28:19—25	II Sam. 22:1—51
8th Day	Deut. 15:19—16: 17 , Num. 28:19—25 [none.]	Isa. 10:32—12:6 [none.]

Shavuot

1st Day	Ex. 19:1—20: 23, Num. 28: 26—31	Ezek. 1:1—28; 3:12
2nd Day	Deut. 15:19—16:17[3] , Num. 28:26—31 [none]	Num. 3.1—19 (2:20—3:19)

Ninth of Av

Morning	Deut. 4:25—40	Jer. 8:13—9:23
Afternoon	Ex. 32:11—14; 34:1—10	Isa. 55:6—56:8 (Hos. 14:2—10; Micah [7:18—20]

Other Fasts

Morning and afternoon	Ex. 32:11—14; 34:1—10	Isa. 55:6—56:8
Rosh Hodesh .	Num 28:1—15	
Shabbat and Rosh Hodesh	Weekly portion. Num 28:9—15	Isa. 66:1—24
Shabbat immediately preceding Rosh Hodesh	Weekly portion.	I Sam. 20:18—12

*Parenthesis indicate Sephardi custom, square brackets indicate Erez Israel custom.