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Deuteronomy’s Festival Calendar

The festival calendar in Deuteronomy 16 began as a short revision of the calendar in Exodus 23. As it was expanded to clarify and adjust its details, it merged its springtime Matzot festival with the Pesach offering, which was originally connected to the consecration of firstborn animals.

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15th century Pentateuch, Yemen, Or 9886, ff. 125v-126r. British Library

Deuteronomy 16:16–17 offers a brief overview of the festival calendar in ancient Israel,[1] identifying three festivals to be observed at “the place that YHWH will choose,” Deuteronomy’s name for the Jerusalem Temple. The author(s) of these verses created this calendar by revising an older festival calendar in Exodus 23:14–17, part of the so-called Covenant Collection:

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| שׁמות כג:יד שָׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים תָּחֹג לִי בַּשָּׁנָה. כג:טו אֶת־חַג הַמַּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב כִּי־בוֹ יָצָאתָ מִמִּצְרָיִם וְלֹא־יֵרָאוּ פָנַי רֵיקָם. כג:טז וְחַג הַקָּצִיר בִּכּוּרֵי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע בַּשָּׂדֶה וְחַג הָאָסִף בְּצֵאת הַשָּׁנָה בְּאָסְפְּךָ אֶת־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה. כג:יז שָׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶל־פְּנֵי הָאָדֹן יְ־הוָה. | דברים טז:טז שָׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחָר בְּחַג הַמַּצּוֹת וּבְחַג הַשָּׁבֻעוֹת וּבְחַג הַסֻּכּוֹת וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה רֵיקָם. טז:יז אִישׁ כְּמַתְּנַת יָדוֹ כְּבִרְכַּת יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָךְ. |
| Exod 23:14 Three times a year you shall hold a festival for Me: 23:15 You shall observe the Feast of Matzot—eating unleavened bread for seven days as I have commanded you—at the set time of the month (or: on the New Moon) of the Aviv, for in it you went forth from Egypt; and none shall appear before Me empty-handed. 23:16 And the Feast of the Harvest, of the first fruits of your work, of what you sow in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in the results of your work from the field. 23:17 Three times a year all your males shall appear before the face of the Lord YHWH.[2] | Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear [before] the face of YHWH your God in the place that He will choose—on the Feast of Matzot (Unleavened Bread), on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the face of YHWH empty-handed, 16:17 but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that YHWH your God has bestowed upon you. |

The purpose of these festivals in both books was to offer to YHWH a portion of the crops and firstborn animals.[3] A comparison highlights the similarities and differences between the two:

Three Times a Year—Deuteronomy takes the ending of Exodus 23 and opens with it, quoting it almost word for word:

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| שמות כג:יז שָׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶל־פְּנֵי הָאָדֹן יְ־הוָה. | דברים טז:טז שָׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה[4] יֵרָאֶה כָל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ... |
| Exod 23:17 Three times a year all your males shall appear before [or “see”] the face of the Lord YHWH. | Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before [or “see”] the face of YHWH your God… |

Deuteronomy has revised the designation for the deity: In contrast to “the Lord YHWH” in Exodus, Deuteronomy employs its usual designation for YHWH: “YHWH your God” (see Deut 6:4; 12:15, 18, etc.).[5]

Cultic centralization—The three festivals named in the Exodus passage were most likely observed at local sanctuaries in each community. The primary concern of the book of Deuteronomy, however, is to centralize Israelite cultic activity at a single cultic site.[6] To support this goal, after quoting Exodus 23:17, Deuteronomy adds its centralization formula—*bamaqom asher yivchar*,“in the place that He will choose.”[7] Deuteronomy 16:16 thus turns these local festivals into pilgrimages to the central cult site (Deut 12:13–14).

Timing—The passage in Exodus states the timing of each of the festivals, the month (or: New Moon) of the Aviv, the first cut of the harvest, and during the ingathering of produce at the end in the year. Deuteronomy just lists their names.

Festival names—Deuteronomy 16:16 lists the festivals in the same order as they appear in Exodus. Both texts refer to the first festival as Matzot, but have different names for the latter two:

* The “Feast of the (Early) Harvest” (*chag haqatzir*) becomes the “Feast of Weeks” (Shavuot), referring to the termination of the weeks between the beginning and the end of the grain harvest.[8]
* The “Feast of Ingathering” (*chag haʾasif*) becomes the “Feast of Booths” (Sukkot), referring to the huts that field workers lived in during the harvest and the ingathering of grapes.[9]

While the names in Exodus 23:15–16 are anchored in the world of agriculture, the designations employed in Deuteronomy 16:16 describe details of the ritual. Their matter-of-fact usage suggests that they were anchored in custom and were widely known.

A Required Contribution—Both Exodus and Deuteronomy include a stipulation about not appearing empty-handed:

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| שׁמות כג:טו ...וְלֹא־יֵרָאוּ פָנַי רֵיקָם. | דברים טז:טז ...וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה רֵיקָם. |
| Exod 23:15 …and none shall appear [before] Me empty-handed. | Deut 16:16 … They shall not appear [before] the face of YHWH empty-handed |

In the Covenant Collection the phrase appears in the first person, since YHWH is speaking to Moses and communicates the Law to him. The narrative of Deuteronomy, in contrast, presents Moses recounting what YHWH revealed to him at Horeb, thus it is in the third person.[10] The placement of the phrase is also different: In Exodus 23, this stipulation comes after Matzot and before the other two festivals, while in Deuteronomy it appears after all three are mentioned.

Reinforced Tithe Requirement. The conclusion of the short festival calendar in Deuteronomy has no parallel in Exodus.

דברים טז:יז אִישׁ כְּמַתְּנַת יָדוֹ כְּבִרְכַּת יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָךְ.

Deut 16:17 Each with his own gift, according to the blessing that YHWH your God has bestowed upon you.[11]

This represents a characteristic Deuteronomic elaboration on the previous verse, clarifying how each offering should reflect the prosperity of the festival participant.[12]

Summary: Deuteronomy Revises Exodus’ Calendar

The centralized festival calendar in Deuteronomy 16:16–17 turns out to be a self-contained, well-composed unit, whose content is completely explained by its use of Exodus 23:14–17 and by its context among the centralization laws of Deuteronomy. This reception and reformulation was a process of inner-biblical exegesis—that is, the interpretation of an earlier biblical text by a later biblical text.

The Deuteronomic authors take what YHWH revealed to Moses at Sinai (Exod 23:14–17) and recast it as what Moses recounts to the people in the land of Moab before entering the land. Consistent with their goal of centralizing the cult, they add the restriction that the festivals may only be observed at the one sanctuary “which YHWH will choose” (Deut 16:16).

A Closing Summary of a Long Calendar?

Deuteronomy presents this short calendar as a closing summary for a longer, more detailed version of the festival calendar that appears in the preceding verses (Deut 16:1–15). Deuteronomy 16:1–15 and 16:16–17, however, disagree in several important ways, suggesting that the latter is not a closing summary.

Pesach—The short calendar mentions only Matzot as the first of the three festivals, whereas the long calendar focuses much of its space on the Pesach, the paschal offering (vv. 1–8), with Matzot as a kind of subordinate ritual (vv. 3–4, 8), awkwardly intertwined and not mentioned by name.

Seven Days—The short calendar mentions the festivals of Matzot and Sukkot, but doesn’t say their length. In contrast, the long calendar speaks of both as seven-day festivals.

Feast—While the short calendar uses “feast” (*chag*) to refer to all three festivals—Matzot, Shavuot, and Sukkot (v. 16), in the long calendar, only Shavuot and Sukkot carry that description (vv. 9–15).[13]

Participants—In the short calendar, only the men are to appear at the central place of worship. The long calendar, however, includes the whole family or household in the pilgrimage festivals of Shavuot and Sukkot (vv. 9–15), while the Pesach-Matzot description says nothing about the participants (vv. 1–8).

The differences suggest that the two versions of the festival calendar in Deuteronomy 16 do not belong to a single original composition.[14] In the Torah as we have it, verses 16–17, when read in light of the provisions in verses 1–15, are understood as a résumé of the longer festival calendar. Nevertheless, verses 16–17 contain the original version of the festival calendar, which was subsequently expanded.

Moreover, the expansion found in vv. 1–15 represents the work of (at least) three different hands, each with its own agenda (see appendix for a reconstruction).[15] Let us begin with the most obvious cases.

1. Shavuot and Sukkot: Expanding Upon the Core Festivals

A later author wished to expand upon the three festivals mentioned in verse 16, explaining their timing and practices. For Shavuot and Sukkot the task was simple: the author added new material in similarly worded paragraphs, though each differed in order and emphasis.

Thus, we are told that the Feast should be held before YHWH (underlined), that it should be held at the very end of an agricultural season[16] (*italics*), in the Temple precinct (bold), enjoyed together with the weaker classes (red), and that the offering should come from YHWH’s bounty (blue).

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| Shavuot | Sukkot |
| דברים טז:ט *שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעֹת תִּסְפָּר־לָךְ* *מֵהָחֵל חֶרְמֵשׁ בַּקָּמָה* תָּחֵל לִסְפֹּר שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעוֹת. טז:י וְעָשִׂיתָ חַג שָׁבֻעוֹת לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִסַּת נִדְבַת יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן כַּאֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ. טז:יא וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבֶּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם. [17] | טז:יג חַג הַסֻּכֹּת תַּעֲשֶׂה לְךָ *שִׁבְעַת יָמִים* *בְּאָסְפְּךָ מִגָּרְנְךָ וּמִיִּקְבֶךָ*. טז:יד וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְּחַגֶּךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ. טז:טו שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תָּחֹג לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה כִּי יְבָרֶכְךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל תְּבוּאָתְךָ וּבְכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ וְהָיִיתָ אַךְ שָׂמֵחַ. |
| Deut 16:9 *You shall count off seven weeks,* *when the sickle is first put to the standing grain* *start to count off seven weeks*. 16:10 Then you shall hold the Feast of Weeks for YHWH your God, offering your freewill contribution according as YHWH your God has blessed you. 16:11 You shall rejoice before YHWH your God with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your communities, and the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your midst, at the place where YHWH your God will choose to establish His name. | 16:13 You shall hold the Feast of Booths *for seven days,* *after the ingathering from your threshing floor and your vat*, 16:14 You shall rejoice in your festival, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your communities. 16:15 You shall feast for YHWH your God seven days, in the place that YHWH will choose; for YHWH your God will bless all your crops and all your undertakings, and you shall have nothing but joy. |

While adding expansive discussion of the second and third festival was a relatively simple affair, revising Matzot was much more difficult, since the redactor found what he considered to be a parallel festival already occupying Matzot’s place.

2. Integrating Pesach into the Calendar

As Shimon Gesundheit of Hebrew University has shown, the Paschal ordinance in Deuteronomy 16:1–8 was not originally part of a festival calendar, but a self-contained, independent unit in Deuteronomy about one specific offering and its centralization. This unit was originally not followed by the two festivals of Shavuot and Sukkot in Deuteronomy 16:9–15,[[18]](https://www.thetorah.com/article/deuteronomys-festival-calendar%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn18) but rather by the short calendar (vv. 16–17, see appendix) and only later, when the short calendar was supplemented, was Pesach merged into the calendar by connecting it to Matzot.[19]

When we read the Pesach laws on their own, the logic and flow are clear: On the month or New Moon of Aviv, the paschal sacrifice should be offered, but this offering must take place in the holy precinct. The artificiality of the connection between the verses that describe the offering, and those that outline the mandate to eat unleavened bread and the prohibition against eating any leavened food, is illustrated through the indenting below:

דברים טז:א שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעָשִׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאֲךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָיְלָה. טז:ב וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ צֹאן וּבָקָר בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם.

Deut 16:1 Observe the month (or: New Moon) of the Aviv, and offer a paschal sacrifice to YHWH your God, for it was in the month of the Aviv, that YHWH your God freed you from Egypt, at night, 16:2 and slaughter the paschal sacrifice for YHWH your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where YHWH will choose to establish His name.

טז:ה לֹא תוּכַל לִזְבֹּחַ אֶת־הַפָּסַח בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ. טז:ו כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם תִּזְבַּח אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בָּעָרֶב כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם. טז:ז וּבִשַּׁלְתָּ וְאָכַלְתָּ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ וּפָנִיתָ בַבֹּקֶר וְהָלַכְתָּ לְאֹהָלֶיךָ.

16:3 You shall not eat anything leavened with it, for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live. 16:4 For seven days no leaven shall be found with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh of what you slaughter on the evening of the first day shall be left until morning.

טז:ג לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חָמֵץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מַצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֹנִי כִּי בְחִפָּזוֹן יָצָאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ. טז:ד וְלֹא־יֵרָאֶה לְךָ שְׂאֹר בְּכָל־גְּבֻלְךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְלֹא־יָלִין מִן־הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן לַבֹּקֶר.[20]

16:5 You are not permitted to slaughter the paschal sacrifice in any of the settlements that YHWH your God is giving you; 16:6 but at the place where YHWH your God will choose to establish His name, there alone shall you slaughter the paschal sacrifice, in the evening, at sundown, the time of day when you departed from Egypt. 16:7 You shall cook and eat it at the place that YHWH your God will choose; and in the morning you may start back on your journey home.

טז:ח שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עֲצֶרֶת לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה.

16:8 You shall eat *matzot* six days, and on the seventh day, you shall hold a solemn gathering for YHWH your God: you shall do no work.

The addition of the seven days of the Matzot festival to this pre-existing text concerning the paschal offering is awkward. A facile connection is made by emphasizing the prohibition to eat leaven with the Paschal offering; additionally, both are described as commemorating the exodus (see below for discussion on this point), but otherwise, the two festivals seem unrelated.

But why did the redactor, who wished to add an expansion on the Matzot festival, as he did for the other two, chose to interweave his text with Pesach as opposed to simply placing it afterwards?[21] He was likely inspired by opening phrase of the Pesach offering law, stating that it should be kept, שׁ.מ.ר, during the month (or: on the New Moon) of the Aviv, exactly the time according to Exodus 23 that Matzot should be kept, שׁ.מ.ר—using the same Hebrew root—during the month (or: on the New Moon) of the Aviv:

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| דברים טז:א שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעָשִׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ | שׁמות כג:טו אֶת־חַג הַמַּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר... לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב |
| Deut 16:1 Observe the month (or: New Moon)[22] of the Aviv, and offer a paschal sacrifice to YHWH your God… | Exod 23:15 You shall observe the Feast of Matzot… at the set time of the month (or: on the New Moon) of the Aviv… |

Thus, the redactor here, for the first time, made a direct connection between Pesach and Matzot.[23] He thus ended up expanding the original calendar in vv. 16–17 not only with detailed descriptions of the original three festivals, but with the intermingling of Matzot with the Pesach offering as well.

Pesach and Firstborn: The Older Meaning

If the Pesach offering was not originally part of the festival calendar but a self-contained, independent unity, then what was it about? To answer this question, we need to look at the preceding passage in Deuteronomy, concerning the law of the firstborn.

In his *Prolegomena*, the great Bible scholar Julius Wellhausen suggested that in its older form, Pesach was about the sacrifice of the firstborn animal in spring.[[24]](https://www.thetorah.com/article/deuteronomys-festival-calendar%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn24) Thus, it has obvious relations to the previous verses in Deuteronomy which speak of the vague requirement to “consecrate” the animal firstlings and “eat” them at the Temple:

דברים טו:יט כָּל הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִוָּלֵד בִּבְקָרְךָ וּבְצֹאנְךָ הַזָּכָר תַּקְדִּישׁ לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲבֹד בִּבְכֹר שׁוֹרֶךָ וְלֹא תָגֹז בְּכוֹר צֹאנֶךָ. טו:כ לִפְנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תֹאכֲלֶנּוּ שָׁנָה בְשָׁנָה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אַתָּה וּבֵיתֶךָ...

Deut 15:19 You shall consecrate to YHWH your God all male firstlings that are born in your herd and in your flock: you must not work your firstling ox or shear your firstling sheep. 15:20 You and your household shall eat it annually before YHWH your God in the place that YHWH will choose….[25]

A later scribe added the Pesach law in Deuteronomy in order to centralize the Pesach sacrifice and to supplement the previous paragraph with a clear description of what should be done with the firstborn, which he refers to as the Pesach offering. That the Pesach was to be offered in the spring may due to this being the time when a new batch of sheep and goats would be weaned,[26] or for some other reason relating to the lifecycle of pastoralists, just as Matzot must be in spring since this is the time when grain is beginning to grow.[27]

Further Evolution of the Festival Calendars

The biblical text here and elsewhere[28] mentions a further connection between Pesach and Matzot: they are both commemorated in the spring to recall the exodus from Egypt. Nevertheless, as scholars have noted, in most of these passages, the connection to the exodus are later supplements.[29] Such is the case in Deuteronomy 16. The first clue that the exodus is secondary in this passage is found in the opening verses, which contain a resumptive repetition (*Wiederaufnahme*):

דברים טז:א שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעָשִׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאֲךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָיְלָה. טז:ב וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ צֹאן וּבָקָר...

Deut 16:1 Observe the month (or: New Moon) of the Aviv, and offer a paschal sacrifice to YHWH your God, for it was in the month of the Aviv, that YHWH your God freed you from Egypt, at night, 16:2 and slaughter the paschal sacrifice for YHWH your God, from the flock and the herd…

The interruptive message that the Pesach sacrifice should take place in the spring since this is when the exodus took place is in between the two instances of the repeated passage.[30] This kind of exodus themed glossing continues throughout the text, affecting the significance of earlier aspects of the ritual.

According to this addition, the Pesach is eaten at night, not merely so that people could return to their homes in the morning, but because it is (v. 6b) מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם “the time you departed from Egypt.”

This same glossing appears in the section on Matzot as well:

דברים טז:ג לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חָמֵץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מַצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֹנִי כִּי בְחִפָּזוֹן יָצָאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ.

Deut 16:3 You shall not eat anything leavened with it, for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live.

Here again, a ritual that may have had an independent agricultural meaning—bread of distress—is explained as due to Israel’s rush out of Egypt during the exodus.[31]

This kind of gloss––from the same or a different hand––is also evident in the other part of the supplement, dealing with Shavuot and Sukkot:

דברים טז:יב וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרָיִם וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה.

Deut 16:12 Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt, and take care to obey these laws.

Several things mark this verse as a secondary gloss. First, the connection to the Shavuot laws, which it follows, is artificial. The text doesn’t explain what slavery in Egypt has to do with the festival. Moreover, it doesn’t even specify what festival practice it is attempting to explain (as the glosses on Pesach and Matzot do), relying merely on the general “these laws.” Finally, its placement between Shavuot and Sukkot, as opposed to the end of the set, is awkward.[32]

Stages of Growth in the Festival Calendar

Both the later long version of the festival calendar in Deuteronomy 16:1–15 and the earlier short version in Deuteronomy 16:16–17 are concerned with the centralization of the cult, which is significant for Deuteronomy. But the differences between the long and the short versions of the calendar are so serious that they must be understood in terms of their history of literary growth. And in looking at this growth, we must remember that what in its final form looks like a summary, may in fact be the earliest form of the law.

Even clearer is the artificial connection between the (long) festival calendar and the Pesach offering. That law, which was once an expansion of the firstborn rite, became intertwined with the festival of Matzot and entered the festival calendar. The final step of this development is the association of each festival in this calendar with the exodus from Egypt, which gave the Israelite agricultural festivals a new religio-historical rationale.

Appendix

The Development of the Text

Here is my reconstruction of the text’s basic layers:[33]

דברים טו:יט כָּל הַבְּכוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִוָּלֵד בִּבְקָרְךָ וּבְצֹאנְךָ הַזָּכָר תַּקְדִּישׁ לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲבֹד בִּבְכֹר שׁוֹרֶךָ וְלֹא תָגֹז בְּכוֹר צֹאנֶךָ. טו:כ לִפְנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תֹאכֲלֶנּוּ שָׁנָה בְשָׁנָה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אַתָּה וּבֵיתֶךָ. טו:כא וְכִי יִהְיֶה בוֹ מוּם פִּסֵּחַ אוֹ עִוֵּר כֹּל מוּם רָע לֹא תִזְבָּחֶנּוּ לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ. טו:כב בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ תֹּאכֲלֶנּוּ הַטָּמֵא וְהַטָּהוֹר יַחְדָּו כַּצְּבִי וְכָאַיָּל. טו:כג רַק אֶת דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכֵל עַל הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ כַּמָּיִם.

טז:א שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וְעָשִׂיתָ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאֲךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָיְלָה. טז:ב וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ צֹאן וּבָקָר בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם.

טז:ג לֹא־תֹאכַל עָלָיו חָמֵץ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל־עָלָיו מַצּוֹת לֶחֶם עֹנִי כִּי בְחִפָּזוֹן יָצָאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר אֶת־יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ. טז:ד וְלֹא־יֵרָאֶה לְךָ שְׂאֹר בְּכָל־גְּבֻלְךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וְלֹא־יָלִין מִן־הַבָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר תִּזְבַּח בָּעֶרֶב *בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן* לַבֹּקֶר.

טז:ה לֹא תוּכַל לִזְבֹּחַ אֶת־הַפָּסַח בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר־יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ. טז:ו כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם תִּזְבַּח אֶת־הַפֶּסַח בָּעָרֶב כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם. טז:ז וּבִשַּׁלְתָּ וְאָכַלְתָּ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ וּפָנִיתָ בַבֹּקֶר וְהָלַכְתָּ לְאֹהָלֶיךָ.

טז:ח שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עֲצֶרֶת לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה.

טז:ט שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעֹת תִּסְפָּר־לָךְ מֵהָחֵל חֶרְמֵשׁ בַּקָּמָה תָּחֵל לִסְפֹּר שִׁבְעָה שָׁבֻעוֹת. טז:י וְעָשִׂיתָ חַג שָׁבֻעוֹת לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִסַּת נִדְבַת יָדְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן כַּאֲשֶׁר יְבָרֶכְךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ. טז:יא וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לִפְנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבֶּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם. טז:יב וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרָיִם וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה.

טז:יג חַג הַסֻּכֹּת תַּעֲשֶׂה לְךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בְּאָסְפְּךָ מִגָּרְנְךָ וּמִיִּקְבֶךָ. טז:יד וְשָׂמַחְתָּ בְּחַגֶּךָ אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתֶךָ וְהַלֵּוִי וְהַגֵּר וְהַיָּתוֹם וְהָאַלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ. טז:טו שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תָּחֹג לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה כִּי יְבָרֶכְךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל תְּבוּאָתְךָ וּבְכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ וְהָיִיתָ אַךְ שָׂמֵחַ.

טז:טז שָׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָל־זְכוּרְךָ אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחָר בְּחַג הַמַּצּוֹת וּבְחַג הַשָּׁבֻעוֹת וּבְחַג הַסֻּכּוֹת וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה אֶת־פְּנֵי יְ־הוָה רֵיקָם. טז:יז אִישׁ כְּמַתְּנַת יָדוֹ כְּבִרְכַּת יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן־לָךְ.

Deut 15:19 You shall consecrate to YHWH your God all male firstlings that are born in your herd and in your flock: you must not work your firstling ox or shear your firstling sheep. 15:20 You and your household shall eat it annually before YHWH your God in the place that YHWH will choose. 15:21 But if it has a defect, lameness or blindness, any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to YHWH your God. 15:22 Eat it in your settlements, the unclean among you no less than the clean, just like the gazelle and the deer. 15:23 Only you must not partake of its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

16:1 Observe the month (or: New Moon) of the Aviv, and offer a paschal sacrifice to YHWH your God, for it was in the month of the Aviv, that YHWH your God freed you from Egypt, at night, 16:2 and slaughter the paschal sacrifice for YHWH your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where YHWH will choose to establish His name.

16:3 You shall not eat anything leavened with it, for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live. 16:4 For seven days no leaven shall be found with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh of what you slaughter on the evening *of the first day* shall be left until morning.

16:5 You are not permitted to slaughter the paschal sacrifice in any of the settlements that YHWH your God is giving you; 16:6 but at the place where YHWH your God will choose to establish His name, there alone shall you slaughter the paschal sacrifice, in the evening, at sundown, the time of day when you departed from Egypt. 16:7 You shall cook and eat it at the place that YHWH your God will choose; and in the morning you may start back on your journey home.

16:8 You shall eat *matzot* six days, and on the seventh day, you shall hold a solemn gathering for YHWH your God: you shall do no work.

16:9 You shall count off seven weeks; When the sickle is first put to the standing grain start to count off seven weeks. 16:10 Then you shall observe the Feast of Weeks for YHWH your God, offering your freewill contribution according as YHWH your God has blessed you. 16:11 You shall rejoice before YHWH your God with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your communities, and the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your midst, at the place where YHWH your God will choose to establish His name. 16:12 Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt, and take care to obey these laws.

16:13 After the ingathering from your threshing floor and your vat, you shall hold the Feast of Booths for seven days. 16:14 You shall rejoice in your festival, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your communities. 16:15 You shall hold a festival for YHWH your God seven days, in the place that YHWH will choose; for YHWH your God will bless all your crops and all your undertakings, and you shall have nothing but joy.

16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before (or: see) the face of YHWH your God in the place that He will choose—on the Feast of Matzot, on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the face of YHWH empty-handed, 16:17 but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that YHWH your God has bestowed upon you.

[View Footnotes](https://www.thetorah.com/article/deuteronomys-festival-calendar)

1. I would like to express my deep gratitude to Shimon Gesundheit for the possibility of a long and intensive exchange about the subject of the festival calendars and to Christoph Berner, Reinhard Müller, and Peter Porzig for their critical and stimulating comments on the argument. I also would like to express my gratitude to Zev Farber and the editors of TheTorah.com for rewriting my little piece and make it suitable for the journal. A more detailed version of this contribution will appear both in English and German in 2022.
2. Here and in Deuteronomy, I am translating according to the Masoretic pointing, יֵרָאֶה, which has the verb in the *niphʿal* form. This is also the understanding of the Greek LXX, ὀφθήσεται. Nevertheless, it is likely that the original text was in the *qal* form, יִרְאֶה, meaning “he shall see,” and that later scribes wished to avoid the anthropomorphic implication of such a phrase as “he shall see the face of YHWH.” In fact, the lack of a preposition אל “before or to” in Exodus 23:15 (different to v. 17) implies that it was a *qal*, since the sentence as written is ungrammatical. The same is true of the accusative marker in Deuteronomy.
3. Deuteronomy 14:22–26 includes regulations for tithes of crops and firstborns, and Deuteronomy 15:19–23 covers the first fruits of animal origin. This latter set of laws is modeled after those in Exodus 22:28–29 and 23:19.
4. Elsewhere in Deuteronomy, the tithe is to be offered at the central sanctuary שָׁנָה שָׁנָה “yearly” (14:22) as are the firstborn animals שָׁנָה בְשָׁנָה “year after year” (15:20).
5. There is also a small difference in grammar in the phrase “to the face of”: Exodus has it as אֶל־פְּנֵי , a prepositional phrase, while Deuteronomy has it as אֶת־פְּנֵי, an accusative phrase. This difference may reflect the change in pointing noted above. The accusative makes good sense with an active verb “see” whereas the prepositional phrase makes better sense with “appear.” If so, insofar as this element is concerned, Exodus (in its current form) would be the corrected text and Deuteronomy the more original. That said, it is possible to read the form in Deuteronomy with the secondary prepositional usage of the term אֶת meaning “with,” which would work with the Masoretic pointing.
6. The form, style, and scope of verses 16–17 are also consistent with the other cultic commandments of centralization in Deuteronomy (12:13–18; 14:22–26; 15:19–23).
7. The (older) short formula for referring to the Jerusalem Temple, *bamaqom asher yivchar (YHWH)* “the place that (YHWH) will choose” (16:16) also appears in 12:14, 14:25, and 15:20. Deuteronomy 14:23 and 24 contain longer versions of the formula: בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם “in the place which He will choose, to make his name dwell there” (v. 23); and הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָשׂוּם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם “the place which YHWH your God will choose, to set his name there” (v. 24).
8. Compare the phrasing in Jeremiah’s complaint about Judah’s waywardness:

ירמיה ה:כד וְלֹא אָמְרוּ בִלְבָבָם נִירָא נָא אֶת יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַנֹּתֵן גֶּשֶׁם (וירה) [יוֹרֶה] וּמַלְקוֹשׁ בְּעִתּוֹ שְׁבֻעוֹת חֻקּוֹת קָצִיר יִשְׁמָר לָנוּ.

Jer 5:24 They have not said to themselves, “Let us revere YHWH our God, who gives the rain, the early and late rain in season, Who keeps for our benefit the weeks appointed for harvest.”

1. In Isaiah’s imagery describing Jerusalem’s place as the sole remaining stronghold in the desolation of Judah, the passage connects booths and the grape harvest:

ישעיה א:ח וְנוֹתְרָה בַת צִיּוֹן כְּסֻכָּה בְכָרֶם כִּמְלוּנָה בְמִקְשָׁה כְּעִיר נְצוּרָה.

Isaiah 1:8 Fair Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field, like a city beleaguered.

1. The formulation also repeats a phrase from the beginning of verse 16a, *yeraʾeh…et pene YHWH*, creating a frame around the list of festivals.
2. This formulation also appears in Deuteronomy 12:15 and is reminiscent of כִּי יְבָרֶכְךָ יְ־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, “when YHWH your God blesses you,” in Deuteronomy 14:24.
3. Exodus but not Deuteronomy notes that Matzot is a seven-day festival that is meant to commemorate the exodus from Egypt; this may be a gloss that was added into the Exodus text after Deuteronomy 16:16–17 had already been written. The seven-day festival concept is consistent with what will be argued below are expansions in the text of Deuteronomy itself, earlier in this same chapter. See also discussion in Zev Farber, [“How Eating Matzot Became Part of the Exodus Story,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/how-eating-matzot-became-part-of-the-exodus-story) *TheTorah* (2018).
4. That this difference is no trifle is clear from the textual history. Thus, in the Samaritan Pentateuch and in the Septuagint in v. 8, at least for the seventh day of Pesach-Matzot, the term “feast for YHWH” (חג instead of עצרת) has crept in. Cf. also Exod 34:25.
5. The differences between the two versions are explained variously in scholarship. Some see verses 16–17 as a summary of verses 1–15. Others consider the short version to be a secondary addition to chapter 16. For the first option, see Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 53–97; for the second option, see Shimon Gesundheit, *Three Times a Year: Studies on Festival Legislation in the Pentateuch*, FAT 82 (Tübingen; Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 157–162.
6. I am simplifying a longer argument, which isolates smaller sublayers in the revision of the text, but for the purposes of this article, I am sticking only to the larger editorial revisions.
7. Seven weeks *after* the harvest in the case of Shavuot, for seven days *after* ingathering in case of Sukkot. The seven weeks after harvest time concept is a clear departure from the timing suggested in Exodus, though it might reflect a change that had already occurred by the time of the rewriting in vv. 16–17, as that text offers no date but it does refer to the festival as Shavuot (Weeks).
8. Verse 12, which is a general statement about the festivals, will be discussed in the section on the final expansion.
9. See Gesundheit, *Three Times a Year*, 96–166. On this point, Gesundheit and I are in agreement, though not on the next point, since he sees vv. 16–17 as a later addition and not the earliest layer as I do.
10. Editor’s note: See also discussion, Michael Satlow, [“Passover and the Festival of Matzah: Synthesizing Two Holidays,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/passover-and-the-festival-of-matzot-synthesizing-two-holidays) *TheTorah* (2014).
11. This half verse, requiring that the Pesach be entirely consumed that night, is tricky. In theory, it reads like an integral part of the rules for the Pesach offering and should be included in the other layer. If that is the case, then it would connect conceptually to verse 7b, “and in the morning you may start back on your journey home.” While some may favor this view, seeing only the phrase “on the first day” as a later gloss, there is a problem with attributing this half verse to the original layer of the Pesach law. Unlike the short festival calendar and the Matzot redaction, the Pesach law on its own has no literary connection to the laws in the Covenant Collection. And yet, v. 4b appears to be responding to Exodus 23:18, the verse immediately following the Covenant Collection’s festival calendar:

שמות כג:יח לֹא תִזְבַּח עַל חָמֵץ דַּם זִבְחִי וְלֹא יָלִין חֵלֶב חַגִּי עַד בֹּקֶר.

Exod 23:18 You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with anything leavened; and the fat of My festal offering shall not be left lying until morning.

The text here reworks the rule about the festal offering to be about the Pesach (as is done also in Exodus 34:25). The first half of the verse is also reworked in Deuteronomy 16, 3aα, “you shall not eat anything leavened with it.” It would thus seem that the same hand is responsible for both reworkings of the Exodus verse, adding the prohibition against leaven in v. 3 and the requirement to eat the entire Pesach before dawn in v. 4. Whether these two laws were added before the Matzot festival passages (3aβ+4a) about seven days of Matzot and seven days of prohibited leaven (as Gesundheit believes) or at the same time (as seems more likely to me) is difficult to determine. According to Gesundheit, at least, the words “on the first day” in 4b would need to have been added by the later hand.

1. This was the strategy in Leviticus 23, for example, where Pesach is described as taking place on the 14th (v. 5) and Matzot on the 15th–21st (vv. 6–8).
2. The formulations לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב and שָׁמוֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב suggest the meaning of ח.ד.שׁ as “new moon” rather than “month” since “the appointed time of the *chodesh*” (not “in the chodesh” as Numbers 9:2f) and especially the wording “Observe” with accusative marker is only possible with a fixed day (see Deuteronomy 5:12) or date (“the festival of Matzot”), not a month. (This is the translation preferred in Zev Farber, [“Israelite Festivals: From Cyclical Time Celebrations to Linear Time Commemorations,”](https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/10/5/323) *Religions* 10.5 [2019], 1­–19 [p. 6]). The dating of the Pesach-Matzot festival was only later changed from “(the time of) the new moon of the Abib” (Exod 23:15; Deut 16:1a) to the 10th or 14th day “in the month of the Abib” as the “first month” (Exod 12:2–3, 6, 18). The re-dating is probably due to a cultic-historical development that has to do with the adoption of the Babylonian calendar reflected maybe in the famous “Pesach Letter” (more correctly: “Matzot Letter”) of Elephantine (TAD A4.1). (Editor’s note: See discussion in, Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, [“The Passover Papyrus Orders a Religious Furlough for Judean Soldiers,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-passover-papyrus-orders-a-religious-furlough-for-judean-soldiers) *TheTorah* [2020]. For an alternative understanding of this papyrus, see Idan Dershowitz, [“Darius II Delays the Festival of Matzot in 418 BCE,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/darius-ii-delays-the-festival-of-matzot-in-418-bce) *TheTorah* [2017].) The historically based *halakha* in Exodus 12–13 and the repercussions it had for the law in Exodus 23 and Deuteronomy 16 have been adopted in the later priestly calendars (Lev 23; Num 28–29; Ezek 45), which for their part have had an influence back upon the *halakha* in Exodus 12–13, resulting in mutual alignments that reverberate in the textual history (Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Targum).
3. To be more precise, the connection was made for the first time by the dating of the Pesach regulation with “Observe the new moon of the Aviv” in verse 1 (following Exod 23:15), but only in terms of the date. Only later, when the Matzot additions were added together with the calendar expansions in vv. 9–15, was the connection made between Pesach and Matzot.
4. Julius Wellhausen*, Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, trans. J. Sutherland Black and Allan Menzies (Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1885) 87–89; trans. from German, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*, (Berlin: Reimers, 1883 [orig. *Geschichte Israels*, 1878]). Editor’s note: For another possible independent origin for the paschal sacrifice, as a protection ritual for Israelite firstborn, see Kristine Garroway, [“The Origins of the Biblical Passover,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-origins-of-the-biblical-pesach) *TheTorah* (2015).
5. The text continues with the law of what to do if the animal is damaged and thus unworthy to be sacrificed on YHWH’s altar:

טו:כא וְכִי יִהְיֶה בוֹ מוּם פִּסֵּחַ אוֹ עִוֵּר כֹּל מוּם רָע לֹא תִזְבָּחֶנּוּ לַי־הוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ. טו:כב בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ תֹּאכֲלֶנּוּ הַטָּמֵא וְהַטָּהוֹר יַחְדָּו כַּצְּבִי וְכָאַיָּל. טו:כג רַק אֶת דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכֵל עַל הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ כַּמָּיִם.

15:21 But if it has a defect, lameness or blindness, any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to YHWH your God. 15:22 Eat it in your settlements, the unclean among you no less than the clean, just like the gazelle and the deer. 15:23 Only you must not partake of its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

1. See Oded Borowski, *Every Living Thing: Daily Use of Animals in Ancient Israel* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1998), 52.
2. Editor’s note: For a discussion of the connection between Matzot and barley/wheat, see Yael Avrahami, [“Why Do We Eat Matzah in the Spring?”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/why-do-we-eat-matzah-in-the-spring) *TheTorah* (2018).
3. The connection between Pesach and the exodus is also in view in the later priestly calendars in Leviticus 23, Numbers 28–29, and Ezekiel 45, as well as in some narrative literature texts influenced by them (Num 9; Josh 5; 2 Kgs 23; 2 Chr 30, 35; Ezra 6). Similarly, Matzot and exodus are connected in Exodus 12–13, 23:15, and 34:18.
4. Editor’s note: See, for example, David Frankel, [“Integrating the Exodus Story into the Festivals,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/integrating-the-exodus-story-into-the-festivals) *TheTorah* (2015).
5. Editor’s note: For a brief discussion of this editorial technique, see Zev Farber and Marc Brettler, [“The Resumptive Repetition (*Wiederaufnahme*),”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-resumptive-repetition-wiederaufnahme) *TheTorah* (2013).
6. Editor’s note: For more on this point, see Zev Farber, [“How Eating Matzah Became Part of the Exodus Story,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/how-eating-matzot-became-part-of-the-exodus-story) *TheTorah* (2018).
7. Is it meant to include only Shavuot or also Sukkot? Elsewhere in the Torah, in Leviticus 23:42–43, Sukkot is connected explicitly to the exodus. This too is a late text. Editor’s note: For a discussion of how this idea may have developed, see David Frankel, [“How and Why Sukkot Was Linked to the Exodus,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/how-and-why-sukkot-was-linked-to-the-exodus) *TheTorah* (2015); David Ben-Gad HaCohen, [“When and Where the Israelites Dwelt in Sukkot,”](https://www.thetorah.com/article/when-and-where-the-israelites-dwelt-in-sukkot) *TheTorah* (2016).
8. Non-indented text is the oldest layer of the law collection. One indent is the Pesach supplement to the firstborn law. Double indent is the long festival calendar. Bold is the addition of the exodus story as an explanation.