

# Wave-sheaf or Pentecost Resurrection?

Many Christians will never read this scripture: Leviticus 23:1-2, 'The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts," and verses 10-14, "Speak to the Israelites and say, 'When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you are to bring to the priest a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD **so that it may be accepted on your behalf**: the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath. On the day you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a year-old lamb without blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD, along with its grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil—an offering made by fire to the LORD, a pleasing aroma—and its drink offering of a quarter hin of wine.

You must not eat any bread or roasted or new grain until the very day you have brought this offering to your God. This is to be a permanent statute for the generations to come, wherever you live."

Many Christians do not realise that it is impossible to understand the New Testament without the Old, or the Old without the New. Only by accepting the relevance of the two to all mankind, can we come to understand God's Plan for the whole of mankind, because the God, whose voice so scared the Israelites at Mount Sinai as He gave them the Ten Commandments, was Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:4, 'and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, **and the Rock was Christ.**' He went on to further define His Laws to Moses, as in that key chapter, Leviticus 23.

We should also note that these Holy Days of God cannot be predicted years in advance, as in the Jewish Rabbinic Calendar, but can only be proclaimed "in their seasons", verse 4, "These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them," or, as the King James has it, "in their seasons".

The reason for that is that their timing is to be based upon natural events which occur in the land of Israel, which God alone determines by His control

of the climate. (Yes, God is in control of the climate, and we get the climate we deserve, according to our sins!)

Thus, God reveals the start of the first month of the year by the evidence of the ripening barley crop in Israel, the first sheaf of which is needed for the Wave-Sheaf Offering during The Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is the bedrock of God's calendar, together with the visual evidence of the New Moons, while we have access to the land of Israel.

Those who say there is no calendar in the Bible are therefore wrong, but they are blind to what we have read so far, for they prefer to follow the traditions of the Jews with their Rabbinic calendar, introduced when they were driven out of Israel by the Romans in AD 70, and no longer had access to examine the growing barley, which calendar they continued to change for the next 900 years, so that it could *not* be the one used at the time of Christ. Nowadays we can monitor the barley in Israel as it grows, and each year can easily determine the start of the biblical New Year, exactly as the priests did at the time of Christ.

Each one of the special High Sabbaths or Holy Days listed in that important chapter, Leviticus 23, depicts a stage in the Plan of God, and today we will zero in on Wave-Sheaf Day, which, like Passover, is not a High Sabbath upon which we must not work, but still plays a vital role in the developing Plan, as we will see.

All of us are at different stages of comprehension of that Plan, and God requires our diligent study and obedience before he gives us more understanding. That has never been more important! Daniel 12:8-9, "I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these things?"

"Go on your way, Daniel," he replied, "for the words are closed up and sealed **until the time of the end.**" Now, when we need it, to prepare for the challenging times ahead, God is revealing further information!

All of us are still learning, so it is hardly surprising that none of us can afford to be dogmatic about the prophetic symbolism details of the Leviticus 23 Wave-Sheaf *or* the Pentecost Offering. We *do* know that the Firstfruit barley harvest in Israel pictures the *spiritual* harvest of Christ's Firstfruit Bride, but when will that resurrection take place? There are two Firstfruit Offerings in

that chapter – the Wave-Sheaf itself and *its* attendant parts, at the start of the barley harvest and the two Wave loaves with *their* attendant parts at the end of the 7 week harvest.

Of course we do not know *when* the Resurrection takes place, as God says, but just as we know that Christ will return from Heaven *with* His Bride at the war Feast of Trumpets, though we do not know the year, we can understand the symbolism of the barley harvest shows that *it* will take place at the time of that Firstfruit harvest in Israel.

Pentecost has been suggested as the time of that resurrection, but the scriptures provide an alternative at Wave-Sheaf Day. We should totally reject the most common belief among the churches of God, which is for a Feast of Trumpets resurrection, simply because that is scripturally a *no-go* option, it just does not work, when all the scriptures are put together: it is simply church tradition!

So, let us see that the Israelites were told to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of their barley harvest for the High Priest to wave before the Lord, on the day after the Sabbath which occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Leviticus 23:6, 10-11. *'And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.'* v 10-11, *' "Speak to the Israelites and say, 'When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you are to bring to the priest a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD so that it may be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.'*

We should notice that a reading of the New Testament reveals that Christ and the Apostles *and the NT Gentile Church* diligently observed all of the Lev. 23 Holy days, and they continue to be observed by the True Church to this day. Not only that, but they will be observed in God's Kingdom, Isaiah 66:23, *'From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,'* says the LORD. NIV. Zechariah 14:16, *'Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.'* So important does Christ consider them, that refusal to attend will result in no rain-fall upon that nation! (Zechariah 14:17)

Among those days to be observed then, will be Wave-Sheaf Day, the waving of which sheaf pictures the resurrected Christ as He ascended to His Father in Heaven and, as we will see, also those who are to be His Bride after *their* resurrection at His coming. 2 Corinthians 4:14, 'Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by [through] Jesus, and shall present us with you.'

It is important to realise that God's Church has almost totally neglected this event, failing to recognise the true significance of the Wave-sheaf.

As we examine this important ceremony, first note that it is entirely dependent upon a sheaf of barley (the first of the Firstfruits) being ripe and ready to be waved when the Feast of Unleavened Bread arrives, in the month *of the Aviv*, Abib, the first month. It must be waved on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath, a Sunday, which occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as we read earlier in the first paragraph.

The Sheaf is waved before the Lord, verse 11, "to be accepted for you" (King James) by our Father. Actually, Christ, as "First of the Firstfruits" is typified by this sheaf, but it is made up of very many stalks, which, when beaten provide hundreds of grains of barley, and so we need to examine this verse more closely in the Hebrew to gain an understanding of its full meaning.

The Hebrew is more correctly translated, "for you to be accepted", or, "for the acceptance of you". It pictures the acceptance by our Father of Christ, the First of the Firstfruits" and, *the words indicate*, the balance of the Spiritual firstfruit barley harvest also. In other words, those key words "for you to be accepted" picture *our* resurrection and acceptance by our Father, as the Bride of Christ!

The waving is followed by a burnt offering of a lamb without blemish, of the first year, and then follows the offering of '2 tenth deals' of barley flour mingled with olive oil and frankincense, part of which is also burned as an offering, and the rest given to Aaron and his sons. Leviticus 23:10-14, (see para. one) also Leviticus 2:14-16, "If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the Lord, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads of grain (barley) roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads. And you shall put oil on it, and lay frankincense on it. It is a grain offering. Then the

priest shall burn the memorial portion: part of its beaten grain and part of its oil, with all the frankincense, as an offering made by fire to the Lord."

The male lamb without blemish pictures Christ's freedom from sin as our sacrifice, John 1:29, 'The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!' John 12:23-24, 'And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, **it bears much fruit.**'

As a sheaf comprehends many stalks and grains, so Christ has all His Firstfruit people representatively in Him.

This offering of barley flour was *unusual*. Benson's Commentary mentions this:

"Two tenth deals of an ephah; that is two omers; whereas in other sacrifices of lambs there was but one tenth deal prescribed. The reason of which disproportion may be this; that one of the tenth deals was a necessary attendant upon the lamb, and the other was peculiar to this feast, and was attendant upon **the oblation of the corn**, [barley] and was offered with it in a thanksgiving to God for the [first] fruits of the earth." (My stress)

When the individual grains of barley from the sheaf were beaten from the stalks and ground into fine flour and anointed with olive oil, are they not typical of Christians who have been begotten by God's Holy Spirit, had to endure the grinding influence of a politically correct society under Satan's guidance, who have had to resist, repent, and overcome its pulls, to follow in the footsteps of Christ? 1 Peter 2:21, 'For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, **so that you might follow in his steps.**'

And Colossians 3:1-5, 'Therefore, since you have been **raised with Christ**, strive for the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **When Christ**, who is your life, **appears**, then **you also will appear with Him in glory.** Put to death, therefore, the components of your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

We see that we are included in the symbolism of being raised from the dead, and so are accepted by God *along with* Jesus Christ. The King James version has it, 'And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.'

The final part of the Wave- sheaf offering is the drink offering of wine, verse 13, '...and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, a fourth of a hin,' which pictures Christ's blood, poured out in payment for our sins, and maybe even the blood of the martyred saints.

**It seems** that extra unusual 2<sup>nd</sup> omer of ground barley, anointed with olive oil and frankincense, further indicates the acceptance by our Father in Heaven of the spiritual First Fruit harvest of faithful Christians!

Significantly, there is no leaven in this Offering, Leviticus 2:11, "No grain offering which you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering to the LORD made by fire." Leaven, during this week, the Feast of unleavened Bread, depicts sin, so this offering stresses the dedicated holy living of these 'Saints', which lies in Christ's redemption of all their sins.

Christ's life now enables these Firstfruits to join Him, in the coming 1<sup>st</sup> Resurrection, for as our now High Priest, He enables our continued reconciliation by covering all our sins, Hebrews 4:4, 'Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.' NIV.

So, when Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up **on the last day**," was He referring to Pentecost, the last day in a count to 50, the Last Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles which pictures the *Second* Resurrection, or was He referring to the last day in His hard gained success in actually bringing the Firstfruits to join Him in eternal life, as the Father accepts both Himself and His Bride to be, on Wave-Sheaf Day?

So, with two Firstfruit offerings, the barley harvest firstfruits and the wheat harvest firstfruits, if the barley firstfruits depict Christ's bride, what about the wheat firstfruits? Exodus 34:22, 'You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of **wheat harvest**, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.'

This occurs 50 days later than the Wave-Sheaf Day, at Pentecost. Leviticus 23:15-17, 'From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, you are to count seven full weeks. You shall count fifty days until the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.

Bring **two loaves** of bread from your dwellings as a wave offering, each made from two-tenths of an ephah **of fine flour, baked with leaven**, as the firstfruits to the LORD.' This is a much larger harvest of those Christians who keep God's Commandments but were not fully prepared or repentant at Christ's return (Matthew 25:1-10).

'Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus', Revelation 12:17.

This time the offering contains leaven in the loaves, also a sin offering, and a larger burnt offering of two lambs which were waved over the two loaves as a peace offering between God and the Laodiceans described in Revelation 7, who miss out in the resurrection because of their late repentance.

Although Christ used leaven to also illustrate the pervasive growth of the Kingdom of God within bread made with leaven (Matt. 13:33) this is actually a process of fermentation, and thus a source of corruption, so leaven was never to be used in a burnt offering, as we see in Leviticus 2:11, exactly the opposite of the olive oil and frankincense in the ground barley offering, because *they* were symbols of the Holy Spirit, and Deity (Malachi 1:11--[frank]incense).

The month of THE aviv, for the word is always preceded by the definite article 'the', meaning 'the ripe barley', is so important that it became the name of the first month of God's calendar, Aviv or 'Abib', for by the sighting of ripe barley the first month of the year was determined, during which most of the barley in Christ's day was harvested. In those days there was only *two* row barley, referring to the seed head, which now grows wild, as a weed all over Israel, even in the cities.

If the Wave-Sheaf and its attendant beaten barley flour offering *do* represent the ascension, resurrection and acceptance of Christ and His Bride by their Heavenly father, as the scriptures we have studied suggest, then maybe we

should expect the Firstfruits resurrection at Wave-Sheaf Day, rather than Pentecost.

Apart from what we have seen, there are real problems with a Pentecost resurrection. The main problem is mathematical. There is not half a year between Pentecost and Trumpets, as there needs to be for 3½ years between the resurrection of the Firstfruits and their return with Jesus Christ at Trumpets. Zechariah 14:5, Daniel 9:27, Revelation 12:14, 13:5, 11:2 etc.

Also, Pentecost has its own rich symbolism, commemorating the ancient marriage of Christ to Israel at Sinai, which failed, and ended with Christ's death; his future marriage to spiritual Israel on the same day, on the Sea of Glass before our Father's Throne in Heaven, and the foundation of the new Testament Church with the giving of the Holy Spirit.

It should also not be hard seeing the total impracticality of the Firstfruit Resurrection taking place on exactly the same day as so many other important events:

- \* The arrival of Christ in the clouds, angels gathering His elect from the 4 corners of the earth. Matthew 24:31.
- \* The Resurrection. Revelation 14:15.
- \* The marriage in Heaven. Revelation 19:7.
- \* Our education in Heaven in preparation for reigning with Christ on Earth. Revelation 20:4.
- \* Learning how to ride a white War Horse! Revelation 19:14.
- \* Returning with Christ to the Mount of Olives. Joining the battle of Armageddon. Revelation 19:19.

Despite the fact that the Feast of Trumpets is also the wrong day symbolically, well over 90% of the churches of God cling on to this false tradition, apparently ignoring the scriptures we have examined today. By what percentage of God's word *should* we live? Matthew 4:4, 'But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"'

Do not rely on *any* man to tell you what to believe: come to your own conclusion, directly from God's word. It is our *hearts* that Jesus Christ will examine, to see if we have been faithful to what we have prayerfully



concluded from His word. If we have simply followed a man or our church's tradition, we will not be gathered by those angels. We will not marry Jesus Christ, for we would have denied His words by allowing others to tell us what we must believe. (Matthew 20:25-26, and Mark 7:7) We would be among those mentioned in Revelation 7:14 rather than those in Revelation 14:1-4.

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