

## Leviticus Chapter 23 Continued

**Leviticus 23:14 "And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings."**

That is, they were not allowed to make bread of the new corn, as Aben Ezra and Gersom explain it; for they were obliged to eat unleavened bread at this time. But it might not be made of the new corn, until the above offering was made. They were not allowed to parch any of the grains of corn, and eat them, even they might not pluck and eat the green ears, though of ever so small a quantity. The Jews say, if it was the quantity of an olive of either of these, a man was to be beaten for it.

"Until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God": Which includes all the offerings on this account. The offering of the firstfruits, the offering of the male lamb, and the meat offering and the drink offering. Until these were offered up, the new corn might not be eaten in any form.

"It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations": Until the Messiah came, who is the substance of these shadows.

"In all your dwellings": Not at Jerusalem only, but in the several parts of the land of Canaan. As Ben Gersom says, whether in the land, or without the land. And in the land of Israel, until the beginning of the night of the seventeenth of Nisan.

We talked about the importance of the first fruits offering in the previous lesson. It was very important not to eat of the harvest before this offering was made. The entire crop was blessed by the first of the foodstuff being offered to God. This firstfruits offering of the sheaf of corn and other early crops was symbolic of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus fulfilled the first fruits feast when He rose from the grave. Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. Jesus actually purified all the human race for resurrection when He rose from the grave.

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 "But now is Christ risen from the dead, [and] become the firstfruits of them that slept." "For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead." "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

Jesus' resurrection is a surety that we believers, also will rise.

Verses 15-22: The Feast of Pentecost occurred 50 days after the Feast of Firstfruits (thus Pentecost in Greek), and was regarded by later Jewish authorities as the complement or conclusion of the Passover celebrations, since it followed the latter by seven weeks. It lasted for only one day (Deut. 16:9-12), and was a joyous occasion when the entire nation gave thanks to a

gracious heavenly Father for His abundant gifts of food. This was symbolized by two loaves “baked with leaven” (verse 17), and presented to the Lord, along with sacrificial animals, cereal gifts, and drink offerings. The feast reminded the Israelites that God’s care and control reached into every area of life, making no distinctions between material and spiritual blessings. Pentecost symbolized the thankfulness of a people who were not only grateful for the firstfruits of the grain harvest but who looked forward to the culmination of the harvest season in the fall. On the Feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was first poured out on the apostles (Acts 2:1-4).

The “Feast of Weeks”, celebrating the harvest (Exodus 34:22; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-10), was one of the three great festivals the Hebrew people later celebrated in Jerusalem. Because it required “50 days” from the Passover Sabbath, it was also called “Pentecost”, meaning fiftieth. During the Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ, the church was born (Acts chapter 2).

“Fifty days”: The Feast of Weeks (May/June), dedicated the Firstfruits of the wheat harvest (compare Exodus 23:16; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12). It occurred on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the Sabbath preceding the Feast of Firstfruits. It is also known as the Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23:16), and Pentecost, Greek for 50 (Acts 2:1).

**Leviticus 23:15 "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:"**

Not the seventh day Sabbath in the Passover week, nor the whole feast of Unleavened Bread, but the first day of it, which was a holy convocation. A Sabbath in which no servile work was to be done (Lev. 23:7). And it was from the day after this, even the sixteenth of Nisan, that the following count was to be made. So the Targum of Jonathan, after the first feast day of the Passover. And Josephus is very clear in it, that Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, was the fiftieth day from the sixteenth of Nisan, when the above offerings were made.

"From the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering": Which plainly points out the express day from whence the count was to begin. Even on the day when the sheaf of the firstfruits of the barley harvest was offered.

"Seven sabbaths shall be complete": Or seven weeks, that is, forty-nine days; and hence, Jarchi says, we learn that the count began from the evening, or otherwise the weeks would not be complete. And Gersom thinks the day in which the sheaf was offered is included in the days counted. For the count began from the day after the first of the Passover, and lo, seven days are seven weeks of days, which make forty-nine days.

**Leviticus 23:16 "Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD."**

Or weeks, forty-nine days being counted, the following was the fiftieth day, or Pentecost.

"Shall ye number fifty days": From whence this feast had the name of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). All in Israel were obliged to number those days, except women and servants. The manner of doing it was this; on the night of the second (day of the Passover), after the evening prayer, they began to

number. But if anyone forgot to number at the beginning of the night, he went and numbered all the night. For the commandment is for everyone to number by himself, and he ought to number standing, and to bless first, and number the days and weeks. How? On the first day he says: This is one day, until he comes to seven days, and then he says, this is the seventh day, which is one week. And on the eighth day he says” This is the eighth day, which is one week and one day, and so till he comes to the fourteenth. Then he says: This is the fourteenth day, which make two weeks. And in this way he numbers, and goes on until the forty ninth day.

“And ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord”: That is, of new corn, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi explain it, and this was of wheat. For it was the offering for the wheat harvest, which was offered on the fiftieth day from the offering of the sheaf or omer of the barley harvest.

Fifty days later, is the feast of Pentecost mentioned above. The feast of Pentecost was fulfilled by the Spirit of God baptizing the 120 with the baptism of the Holy Ghost or fire. This is the fulfillment of Jesus telling the disciples, He would send the Comforter. This new meat offering, mentioned (in verse 16 above), is the Feast of Pentecost. Another way to say this would be the feast of fifty days. This new meat offering was fulfilled in the earnest of the Spirit at Pentecost.

Ephesians 1:13-14 "In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Fifty days after the Exodus out of Egypt, the law was given at Sinai. What the law had not been able to do, the baptism of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost here would do. This baptism would empower these to continue with the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Leviticus 23:17 "Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; [they are] the firstfruits unto the LORD."**

Out of their habitations in the land of Canaan. And not out of those without the land, as Jarchi observes. And indeed, out of no particular habitation, because it was at the public expense. But they were brought from some part of the country or another, even the quantity of two tenth parts of an ephah. Or two omers of wheat flour made into two loaves, which were to be, and were waved before the Lord, and hence so called. And are the same with the new meat offering, or rather bread offering, made of the new corn, in the preceding verse, so Jarchi.

"They shall be of fine flour": Of wheat flour, the finest of it, of which all meat or bread offerings were made. And this was particularly on account of the wheat harvest, and therefore it was proper that the finest of the wheat should be used on this occasion (see notes on Lev. 2:1). Each loaf or cake, according to Maimonides, was seven hands' breadths long, four hands' breadths broad, and four fingers high.

"They shall be baked with leaven": The common meat offering was unleavened, part of which was burnt on the altar, where no leaven might be burnt (Lev. 2:4). And from there it may be concluded that no part of these loaves was to be burnt, but the whole of them fell to the share of the priests.

"They are the firstfruits unto the Lord": Which he claimed as his, and gave unto his priests. And it was but right and just he should have them, as an acknowledgment of all coming from his hands, and as expressive of gratitude for them, and for the sanctification of the rest. Therefore, this is called the feast of the firstfruits of wheat harvest (Exodus 34:22).

At Pentecost, firstfruits were to be again offered to the Lord. The difference in this firstfruits offering here, was that it was the first of the wheat harvest. This was offered with leaven. This was also accompanied by a sin offering. Christians were not free from sin, until they were cleansed by Jesus. Jesus Christ was the firstfruits during feast of Unleavened Bread. Christians are certainly represented here, where there is an offering for sin. Jesus is called firstfruits, as we said in a previous verse. Christians are also called Firstfruits in Romans. The Firstfruits at Pentecost was the Firstfruits of the wheat. The great harvest of the wheat (Christians), is at the end of the world.

Matthew 13:30 "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:36-38 "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;" "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one];"

To get the full impact of this, read the rest of this chapter. Then Pentecost is the Firstfruits of the harvest of the wheat at the end of the world. Pentecost is the earnest of the harvest of the wheat at the end of the world.

**Leviticus 23:18 "And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be [for] a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, [even] an offering made by fire, of sweet savor unto the LORD."**

That is, with the two wave loaves, the meat or bread offering: and besides these, one young bullock, and two rams. In (Num. 28:27), it is two young bullocks, and one ram. And Aben Ezra suggests, that this was at the will and option of the priest, whether one bullock and two rams, or two bullocks and one ram. But according to Maimonides, these sacrifices were distinct from them. They are sacrifices of the day, as being a feast day, and these belonged to the loaves.

"They shall be for a burnt offering unto the Lord, with their meat offering, and their drink offering": Each of the said beasts were offered unto the Lord on the altar of burnt offering, and

burnt thereon. And to every beast they offered, there was a meat offering and a drink offering. The meat offering consisted of three tenth deals, or omers, of fine flour, to a bullock. Two to a ram, and one to a lamb. And the drink offering was half an hin of wine to a bullock, the third part of one to a ram, and a fourth part to a lamb, as Jarchi observes. Which appears from (Num. 28:12).

"Even an offering made by fire of a sweet savor unto the Lord": An acceptable burnt offering to God.

This is a list of the technical things to be done at this offering. Notice, these animals were to be sinless (without blemish), and they were to be of the first year. The 7 lambs show the complete work that Jesus did for all of us. Just as the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us glorified the Father, so these too, were a sweet smelling savor to Him.

**Leviticus 23:19 "Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings."**

Which was for the sin of the whole congregation, typical of Christ, whose soul was made an offering for sin. In virtue of which all other sacrifices become acceptable to God, and believers enjoy the fruits and blessings of divine grace.

"And two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings": Which Gersom says were the most holy things, and were only slain in the north, and only eaten by males, as the rest of the holy things. And are the only peace offerings of the congregation that were offered throughout the whole year.

**Leviticus 23:20 "And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits [for] a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest."**

The two loaves called the two wave loaves (Lev. 23:17). With which were waved the two lambs of the peace offerings; and these alive, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom intimate. The Jewish doctors dispute, whether, in waving, the lambs were put above the bread, or the bread above the lambs. Which some reconcile by observing, that the bread was put by the side of the lambs.

"For a wave offering before the Lord": Being waved this way and that way, upwards and downwards, and towards the several quarters of the world. Showing that the fruits of the earth were owing to the providential goodness of God everywhere.

"With the two lambs": Not that all the above sacrifices were waved, or any part of them, along with the lambs, but the wave loaves, and they were waved together, as one wave offering to the Lord.

"They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest": Both the loaves and the lambs, these were separated and devoted wholly to the Lord, and to be eaten by his priests. The peace offerings of a single person were light holy things, as Jarchi says. But the peace offerings of the congregation,

as these were, are the most holy things, and so to be eaten only by the priests, and by the males only, in the court of the tabernacle.

We have dealt fully with these offerings in a previous lesson. One thing we will remind ourselves of here, is that even though these offerings that were waved before God and not burned up, they were still offered as unto God. The priest and his family lived of the things of the sanctuary. Gifts that are used in the normal function of the church are still gifts to God.

**Leviticus 23:21 "And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, [that] it may be a holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work [therein: it shall be] a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations."**

This proclamation was made by the priests with the sound of a trumpet, that the people might observe that this fiftieth day. Or day of Pentecost, which was devoted to sacred service, and that they were called to holy exercises in it.

"Ye shall do no servile work therein": What was not necessary for food, as Ben Gersom observes, but what was necessary on that account, as kindling a fire, etc. might be done (see Lev. 23:7). For this was to be kept in like manner as the first and seventh days of the feast of Unleavened Bread. The general design of which was to express thankfulness for the appointed weeks of the harvest, and to honor the Lord with the firstfruits of the increase of the earth. And the Jews say, as Ben Gersom observes, that this fiftieth day, being reckoned from the sixteenth of Nisan, fell upon the sixth of Sivan, on which day, they say, the law was given. Which is another reason for the observance of it. And it is remarkable, that on this same day the Word of the Lord went out of Zion, and the law or doctrine of the Lord, even the everlasting Gospel, went out of Jerusalem. Published by the apostles of Christ to the people of all nations (Acts 2:14). When they were favored with the firstfruits of the Spirit, after our Lord's ascension to heaven, and receiving gifts for men, which he now in an extraordinary manner bestowed on his disciples (Acts 2:1). And which were the firstfruits of all others, after to be given forth in the course of time, and of the effusion of the Spirit in the latter day. And when there was a number of souls converted, as the firstfruits of after conversions among Jews and Gentiles (Acts 2:41). And particularly of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, and of the harvest of souls in the end of the world (Matt. 13:30).

"It shall be a statute for ever all your dwellings throughout your generations": So long as they dwelt in the land of Canaan, and had their harvest in it, even until the Messiah came, in whom all those types and figures had their accomplishment.

This day is to be treated as Sabbath. No work is to be done on this day at all. The Hebrews were to keep these statutes forever. The only time that would be permissible to stop sacrificing, would be when Jesus became the perfect fulfillment of all sacrifice for all time for everyone at Calvary.

**Leviticus 23:22 "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I [am] the LORD your God."**

This law is repeated from (Lev. 19:9). And as Aben Ezra observes, the Feast of Weeks being the feast of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, it is repeated. That they might not forget what God had commanded them to do at that time, namely, to leave somewhat for the poor. And the Jewish writers observe, that this law, being put among the solemn feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, and the beginning of the year, and the Day of Atonement, teaches, that he that observes it, and leaves the corner of the field and the gleanings to the poor. It is as if he built the sanctuary, and offered his sacrifices in the midst of it. But a much better reason may be given for it, which was, to teach them that when they expressed their thankfulness to God, they should exercise charity and liberality to the poor.

"Thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest" (see notes on Lev. 19:9).

"Thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God" (see notes on Lev. 19:10).

This that was left in the field was for the widow and the stranger in the land. This was a way of helping someone in need without the person who received the help feeling like a lesser human. God had made arrangements for those in need. There is a beautiful story of this very thing in the book of Ruth. Ruth was a widow and was gleaning for herself and her mother-in-law. We find that not only did God provide for the physical needs of Ruth and Naomi in this, but Ruth and Boaz married each other. You will find them in the genealogy of Jesus in the flesh. God reminded the people, when He told them to leave some for the strangers and the poor, that He was in fact the reason they had a good crop.

Verses 23-43: Three events were commemorated in Sept./Oct.

- (1) Feast of Trumpets on the 1<sup>st</sup> (verses 23-25);
- (2) Day of Atonement on the 10<sup>th</sup> (verses 26-32); and
- (3) Feast of Booths or Tabernacles on the 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> (verses 33-43).

Verses 23-25: The Feast of Trumpets was one of three festivals that occurred in the seventh month (Tishri, September/October). It was to be a Sabbath, or day of rest, when trumpets were blown to assemble the congregation (Num. 10:10). It signaled the beginning of the civil new year, Rosh Hashanah. In the postexilic period, the Torah was generally read in public in an atmosphere of rejoicing and celebration. The people were reminded of God's mercies, which would sustain them through the new year if they obeyed His covenant.

### **Leviticus 23:23 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,"**

At the same time, in a continued discourse, concerning some other days, which were to be observed in a sacred manner.

"Saying": As follows.

Verses 24-25: The “seventh month” on the Hebrew calendar is September or October on standard calendars. The Feast of Trumpets mentioned here (known in modern times as Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year), is the first of three festivals during this season (Num. 29:1-6), and signals a month-long “Sabbath” rest. The others are the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles.

**Leviticus 23:24 "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first [day] of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation."**

For all the people of Israel were concerned in the following precept, and obliged to observe it, even priests, Levites, Israelites, proselytes, and freed servants. Though other servants, and women, and children, were not obliged to hear the sound of the trumpets, and which were blown not in Jerusalem only, but in all cities and towns where the Sanhedrim was. And it was the hearing of them the people were bound unto. And not less than nine distinct soundings were they obliged to hear. To which perhaps respect is had in (Psalm 89:15).

"In the seventh month": The month Tisri, as the Targum of Jonathan. Which was the seventh from the month Nisan or Abib. Which was appointed the first month of the year, on account of the Israelites coming out of Egypt in it. Otherwise, before, this month Tisri was the first, and so it still continued. For the fixing the years, and settling the sabbatical and jubilee years, and for the planting of trees and herbs.

"In the first day of the month shall ye have a sabbath": Not entirely as the weekly Sabbath, in which no manner of work at all was to be done, but in which no servile work was to be done. And was observed in like manner as the first and seventh days of Unleavened Bread, and the day of Pentecost (Lev. 23:7).

"A memorial of blowing of trumpets": I.e., solemnized with the blowing of trumpets by the priests. Not in a common way, as they did every first day of every month (Num. 10:10). But in an extraordinary manner. Not only in Jerusalem, but in all the cities of Israel. This seems to have been instituted to solemnize the beginning of the new year, whereof as to civil matters, and particularly as to the jubilee, this was the first day. Concerning which it was fit the people should be admonished, both to excite their thankfulness for God’s blessing in the last year, and to direct them in the management of their civil affairs. And to put a special honor upon this month. For as the seventh day was the Sabbath, and the seventh year was a sabbatical year; so God would have the seventh month to be a kind of sabbatical month. For the many Sabbaths and solemn feasts which were observed in this more than in any other month. And by this sounding of the trumpets in its beginning, God would quicken and prepare them for the following Sabbaths, as well that of atonement and humiliation for their sins, as those of thanksgiving for God’s mercies.

"A holy convocation": On which the people were called together to holy exercises. And so the Jews observe it to this day. For after they return home from attendance to the blowing of the

trumpets in their synagogues, they sit down to meat, and spend the rest of the day in hearing sermons, and in other religious exercises.

This is what we call the Feast of Trumpets. This occurs at approximately October first on our calendar. Of course, since their month falls on the new moon, it would not always be on that exact date, but it will be near that date. This trumpet would be the silver trumpet which assembled the people. Silver means redemption. It is interesting to note that a trumpet will be blown to assemble the people in the heavens to meet with our Lord Jesus Christ when He calls us home.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" "Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

It is very interesting to me, that this happens on the 7th month. Seven, you remember, means spiritually complete. Many believe that the catching away of the Christians from the earth will occur on the Feast of Trumpets. This, Feast of Trumpets, certainly could symbolize the calling of the believers to assemble with their Lord. Perhaps, on some Feast of Trumpets, our Lord will blow the silver trumpet of redemption in the sky and we will gather there with Him.

### **Leviticus Chapter 23 Continued Questions**

1. What must be done, before eating bread or parched corn?
2. What blessed the entire crop?
3. What did the firstfruits offering during the period of Unleavened Bread symbolize?
4. Who is called firstfruits in 1 Corinthians 15:20?
5. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Jesus' resurrection is surety of what to the believer?
7. When is feast of Pentecost celebrated?
8. What is another thing that feast of Pentecost might be called?
9. What is the earnest of the Christian's inheritance?
10. When was the law given at Sinai?
11. What did the Holy Spirit do that the law could not?

12. What would the baptism in the Spirit equip them to do?
13. Why is the bread offered in this Pentecost offering leavened?
14. What is the difference in firstfruits at Pentecost and firstfruits at unleavened bread?
15. What book in the Bible calls the Christians firstfruits?
16. What foodstuff was offered at firstfruits at Pentecost?
17. What are the Christians called at the harvest at the end of the world?
18. How many lambs were offered in verse 18?
19. What does the number of the lambs show us about Jesus?
20. What other 2 offerings are mentioned in verse 19?
21. What does the waving of the offering show us?
22. Of what did the priest and his family live?
23. What were the special instructions given on harvesting?
24. What book of the Bible has a beautiful story about gleaning fields?
25. What month was the memorial of the blowing of trumpets held?
26. What was the trumpet made of that assembled the people?
27. What does the 4th chapter of 1 Thessalonians tell us about gathering people?
28. When do a large number of people believe the catching away of the Christians will be?