

The Sheaf of the Firstfruits

(Leviticus 23:10-11)

- A. Remember that the O.T. tabernacle service and the Levitical priests' work served "...unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (**HEB 8:1-5**).
1. The Levitical service was under the bondage of corruption: sinful men making offerings of sin-burdened creatures for sinful men and for the very place of sacrifice.
EXO 29:36-37; LEV 16:16.
 2. The heavenly things themselves required the superior sacrifice of Christ. **HEB 9:23-24.**
 3. Some of the types and shadows of Christ in the Levitical system are relatively easy to discern with the light of the N.T., such as:
 - a. Christ fulfills the passover lamb. **EXO 12:1-13 c/w 1CO 5:7.**
 - b. Christ is both the sacrificed goat and the scapegoat of the Day of Atonement.
LEV 16:15, 22 c/w JOH 1:29; 1PE 2:24.
 4. Other types/shadows/patterns of Christ are not as easily discerned but are there.
- B. During the feast of harvest (**EXO 23:16**), the firstfruit wave sheaf offering was to be observed. **LEV 23:10-11.**
1. This observance was only to be kept, "...When ye be come into the land..." (**LEV 23:10**), i.e., into the *promised land*.
 2. This ceremony was not meant for the time of their wilderness wanderings: it was only for the season in which they entered the promised land.
 3. Upon entering Canaan, Israel was not to partake of the firstfruits of their harvest *until the priest had waved a sheaf of it before the LORD*. c/w **LEV 23:14.**
 4. This order is consistent with the general principle that the "first" belongs to God.
 - a. Abel by faith offered the firstling of his flock. **GEN 4:4 c/w HEB 11:4.**
 - b. The firstborn of man and beast was God's. **EXO 13:2.**
 - c. No prizes were to be taken of Jericho, the first city conquered in Canaan.
JOS 6:17-19.
 - d. God is honored with firstfruits. **PRO 3:9-10.**
- C. God's children are deemed His firstfruits, redeemed unto Himself. **JAM 1:18; REV 14:4.**
1. The redeemed crowd are also called "...the children of the resurrection" (**LUK 20:36**) since Christ not only redeems them by His blood but guarantees to raise them to glory at the last day. **JOH 6:37-39.**
 2. Jesus Christ is the firstfruits of that harvest of the present world. **1CO 15:20-23.**
 3. As the sheaf of the wave offering was the first to be harvested and accepted by God *for Israel* (**LEV 23:10-11**), Jesus Christ was accepted by God as the firstfruits of the divine harvest of the earth *for us*.
- D. The Levitical priest was to wave the sheaf before the LORD "...on the morrow after the sabbath..." (**LEV 23:11**).
1. This presentation could only occur after the accomplished rest, even as Christ arose and presented Himself to God after He had completed the work of redemption. **HEB 10:12.**
 - a. wave: *trans.* In the Levitical law: To elevate and move from side to side (an oblation or wave-offering) before the altar. *Obs.*
 - b. The O.T. priest basically made by motions a cross.
 2. Also, Christ had arisen bodily from His tomb before the women arrived there in the dark early morning following the weekly sabbath. **MAR 16:1-3 c/w JOH 20:1.**
 - a. At first contact with Mary Magdalene, Christ would not let her touch Him since He had not yet ascended to the Father. **JOH 20:17.**
 - b. Our High Priest had evidently not yet bodily ascended to the Father to be *accepted*

- for you (LEV 23:11)* in satisfaction of this Old Testament wave offering.
- c. Later that day He appeared to His disciples and allowed contact. **MAT 28:9.**
 - d. Christ must have ascended and presented Himself as the firstfruits of the resurrection for us and God "...made us **accepted** in the beloved" (**EPH 1:6**).
 - e. The Father accepted Jesus as our personal Savior!
 - f. Christ is the *firstfruits of them that slept* Who presented Himself to the Father in heaven FOR US, "...a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (**JAM 1:18**).
 - g. In reserving contact with Himself until after He presented Himself to God as the firstfruits of earth, Jesus basically honored **PRO 3:9**.
- E. Christ was a "...man of sorrows..." (**ISA 53:3**) Who wept about and for sinners (**LUK 19:41; JOH 11:35**) and shed tears over what He knew He must endure. **HEB 5:7.**
1. But He also knew there was a joy set before Him which He now lives. **HEB 12:2.**
 2. His was temporary **weeping** in anticipation of joy. c/w **PSA 30:5.**
 3. This was for His elect, the **precious seed** who are the heirs of promise. **GAL 3:28-29.**
 4. He victoriously presented His sheaf to God as the firstfruits of earth's harvest at Resurrection Day (**MAT 13:39**) when He brings the already harvested to unite with the to-be-harvested. **1TH 4:14-17.**
 5. (**Psalms 126:6**) He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.