

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Wave Sheaf Offering

Song of Praise
Opening Prayer

The day after the weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called the First-fruit or Wave Sheaf Offering. On this day a sheaf of barley, marking the beginning of the harvest for the year, is brought before the congregation and held up to God as an offering. (Leviticus 23:9-16)

And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath¹ the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to Jehovah. Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to Jehovah, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin.

¹ This refers to first day after the weekly seventh-day Sabbath. Jehovah has deliberately avoided calling the First (and Last) Day of Unleavened Bread a Sabbath in this chapter to prevent confusion. It is not until John 19:14 and 31 that Jehovah specifies that the first day of Unleavened Bread is a Great Sabbath. So the Wave Sheaf Offering always falls on the first day of the week during the seven days of Unleavened Bread. The counting of the seven Sabbaths in verse 15 further confirms that the weekly Sabbath is meant.

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‘You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

‘And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to Jehovah.

Work is permitted on the remainder of the day unless it coincides with the first or last day of Unleavened Bread, which are Annual Sabbaths. In Israel, Jehovah God’s people could then begin their new season’s barley harvest and eat from the new grain later that day.

The availability of ripening barley at the previous New Moon, which would be required for the Wave Offering, was the main factor deciding which New Moon marked the beginning of the New Year. The Wave Offering was unique in the Abib Holy Days in that it did not have a direct fulfilment during the Feast of Unleavened Bread while the Exodus was happening. Instead, it’s usefulness was linked to their future spring harvests in Israel and ultimately to the Resurrection of Jeshua. The Wave Offering also determined when the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost would occur.

This first-fruit sheaf represents Jeshua, our Passover, who was raised from the dead and then ascended to His Father on this same day.

Paul reminds us of this, and of our need to be holy in 1 Corinthians 5:6 to 8:

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge the old leaven out of you, that you may be a new lump, since you

are unleavened. For our Passover is the Messiah, who was sacrificed for our sake. Therefore let us keep the feast not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of bitterness or wickedness, but with the leaven of purity and holiness.

The Good News of John tells us of the great Miracle which occurred on this day, which is also called the First Day of the Weeks: (John 19:40 to 20:18)

Then they took Jeshua's body and bound it in linen with the spices, as is the custom of the Judeans when they bury. Now there was a garden in the place where Jeshua was impaled, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So they laid Jeshua there, because the Sabbath was approaching and because the tomb was nearby.

Now on the first day of the week,² Mary Magdalene came to the tomb in the early morning while it was dark, and she saw the stone removed from the grave. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jeshua loved, and she told them, "They have taken our Lord from that tomb, and I do not know where they put Him."

Therefore, Simon and the other disciple went out, and came to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple ran in front of Simon and arrived at the tomb first. And he looked in and saw the linen lying there; but he did not enter. Simon came after him, and entered into the tomb; and he saw the linen lying there, and the burial cloth that had been wrapped around His

² This first day of the week during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the Wave Sheaf Offering day, which celebrates Jeshua's resurrection and ascent to Heaven and also begins the seven weeks and a day count to the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) See Lev 23:4-16, also Mat 28:1, Mar 16:9 & Luk 24:1.

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head, not with the linen, but folded and put aside, in a certain place. Then the other disciple who arrived at the tomb first also went in and saw and believed. But they did not yet understand from the Scriptures that He would rise from the dead. Then the disciples went away to their places again.

But Mary stood at the tomb weeping, and while she wept she looked into the grave. And she saw two representatives in white, one who was sitting at His pillow and the other where the feet of Jeshua's body had lain.

And they said to her, "Woman, why do you weep?" She said to them, "Because they have taken my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." She said this and she turned around and saw Jeshua standing there, but did not know it was Jeshua.

Jeshua said to her, "Woman, why do you weep, and whom do you seek?"

But she thought He was the gardener and she said to Him, "My lord, if You have taken Him, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will go and take Him."

Jeshua said to her, "Mary!"

She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabbuli!", which means Teacher.

Jeshua said to her, "Do not touch Me yet, for I have to ascend to My Father; but go to My brethren and tell them I am ascending to My Father and your Father and My God and your God."

Mary Magdalene came and declared to the disciples "I have seen our Lord!", and that He had said these things to her.

So we see that Mary was not allowed to touch Jeshua then because He had not yet ascended to His Father. But in Matthew 28:9, they are now allowed to embrace Him: (Matthew 28:8-10)

So they departed quickly from the grave with fear and great joy, and ran so they could tell His disciples.

And behold, Jeshua met up with them and said to them, "Peace to you!" And they drew near and embraced His feet and worshipped Him. Then Jeshua said to them, "Do not be afraid. Now go, tell My brothers to go to Galilee, and they will see Me there."

Clearly, there is a gap between Mat 28:8 and 9. Between these verses, the women run from the tomb to where the brethren were staying and give them the representative's message. They then leave and Mary Magdalene returns to the tomb and talks with Jeshua while the two brethren from Emmaus leave for home. Jeshua goes to heaven and presents His blood to His Father: (Hebrews 9:11-16)

But the Messiah who came has become the High Priest of the good things that He does, and He entered the great and perfect Booth that was not made with hands, which is not of this creation. He did not enter with the blood of yearling goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Holy Place that one time, and He achieved eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and calves and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkled on the defiled, sanctifies them for the purifying of the flesh, therefore, how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works, that we may serve the Living God?

Because of this, He is the Mediator of the new covenant, for by His death, He became salvation for those who transgressed against the first covenant, that we who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a covenant, the death of him who made it must be shown.

Then Jeshua returns and meets up with the women who can now embrace Him. They then take His new message to the Apostles. Later that day Jeshua meets the two brethren returning to their home: (Luke 24:13-32)

Now behold, two of them were travelling on that day to a village named Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs³ from Jerusalem. And they talked with each other about all these things which had happened. And while they talked and speculated with each other, Jeshua Himself came and He met up and walked with them. But their eyes were closed, so they could not recognize Him.

And He said to them, “What are these matters of which you are speaking that are making you sad as you walk?”

Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas answered and he said to Him, “Are You indeed a stranger in Jerusalem, that You do not know the things which happened there in these days?”

He said to them, “What things?”

And they said to Him, “Things concerning the man Jeshua from Nazareth, who was the Prophet and He was mighty in word and in deed before God and before all of the people, and the chief priests and the elders delivered Him to be condemned to death, and they impaled Him. But we were hoping that He was going to redeem Israel. And behold, three days have passed since all these things happened.⁴ Yes, and some of our women astonished us when they went to the tomb early, and when they did not find His body, they came to us saying that “We saw

³ About 10.5 kilometers.

⁴ As translated from the Aramaic by Paul Younon. The Greek translations make it appear that this **is** the third day, while the Peshitta shows that this conversation is **after** the third day.

representatives there and they said about Him, “He is alive!” And some men also went from us to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Him.”

Then Jeshua said to them, “Oh, weak minds and dull hearts; so slow to believe in all those things that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to endure these things and to enter into His glory?” And He began from Moses⁵ and from all the Prophets to expound to them about Himself from all the Scriptures.⁶ Then they drew near to the village to which they were going, and He indicated to them that He was going to a distant place.

But they urged Him, saying to Him, “Remain with us, for now the day is ending and it is becoming dark.” And He went in to stay with them. Now it happened, as He reclined with them, that He took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. And immediately their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He was taken from them. And they said to one another, “Our hearts were not dull within us while He talked with us on the road, and expounded the Scriptures to us!”

And now that they are truly awake, what do they do next? (Luke 24:33-49)

So they arose in that hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were gathered together with them, saying, “Truly, our Lord is risen, and has appeared to Simon!” And they also related the things

⁵ Gen 1:26, 3:14-15, 12:3 & 22:18, Num 21:6-9 & 24:17, Deu 18:15-19, etc.

⁶ 2Sa 7:12-16, Isa 7:14, 9:6-7, 11:1-10, 42:1-4, 50:4-7, 52:13-53:12 & 61:1, Jer 23:5-6, Dan 7:13-14 & 9:24-27, Mic 5:2, Zec 6:12-13, 9:9, 12:10-13:2 & 13:7-9, Psa 2:1-12, 16:8-11, 22:1-31 & 72:1-19, Pro 8:4-36, Dan 7:13-14 & 9:24-27, etc.

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that had happened on the road, and how He was made known to them while breaking bread.

Now while they were speaking these things, Jeshua stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you. I AM! I AM! Do not be afraid." But they were confused and were frightened, for they thought they were seeing a spirit. And Jeshua said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do these thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, for I AM! I AM! Touch Me and understand, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." And as He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But even then they did not believe because of their joy, and they were astonished. He said to them, "Have you anything to eat here?"

So they gave a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb to Him. And He took it and ate it before their eyes. Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was with you, that it was necessary to fulfil all things written in the Instructions of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was right that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that He preaches repentance for the remission of sins in His Name in all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high."

And so we see that they are commanded to stay there. It cannot be doubted that they continued to grow in truth and faith as they awaited their clothing with Power.

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Our hope of resurrection is firmly linked to Jeshua's resurrection:
(Romans 6:5-9)

For if we have been planted with Him in the likeness of His death, in this way we shall also be in His resurrection, for we know that our old person was impaled with Him, that the body of sin will be destroyed, so we shall not serve sin again. For the one who has died has been freed from sin. But if we died with the Anointed, we believe that we shall also live with the Anointed, knowing that the Anointed, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death has no further dominion over Him.

We are called to rejoice for eternity!! (1 Peter 1:3-7)

Blessed be God. He is our Anointed Lord Jeshua's Father, He who in His great mercy has begotten us anew by the resurrection of Jeshua Messiah to the hope of life, and to an incorruptible inheritance which is neither defiled nor withers, which is prepared in heaven for you, while you are kept by the power and in the faith of God, for the lives which are ready to be revealed in the last time. Lives in which you shall rejoice for eternity, though in this time you will be wearied a little with various temptations which come upon you suddenly, that the genuineness of your faith may appear, which is worth more than refined gold. It is tested by fire for glory, honour, and praise at the revelation of Jeshua the Anointed.

On this morning of the Wave Sheaf Offering, we offer praise to God and wave (lift up) a sheaf of barley to commemorate how Jeshua was resurrected and lifted up to Heaven on that day, becoming the First-fruit of the First-fruits of Jehovah's harvest from the earth.

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[Lift up a sheaf of barley, and praise our Father Jehovah for His Son Jeshua, and praise Jeshua for taking our sins, who the sheaf represents.]

Now we can begin our fifty day count, for after seven Sabbaths and a day, the time for the Feast of the First-fruits, also called the Feast of Weeks and Pentecost, will arrive. We will see that the time for the disciples to receive Power from God arrives with it.

Until then, we must continue to remove our sins and grow in faith, truth, purity and love, as symbolised by this Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Closing Prayer

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Scripture quotes are from the CHCoG translation, based on the Aramaic Peshitta New Covenant.