



Lesson 15 – The Offering of the First-Fruits

When the waving fields of golden grain proclaimed that the time of harvest had come, the service of offering the first-fruits before the Lord was performed in the temple. As the children of Israel journeyed toward Jerusalem to attend the Passover, on every side could be seen fields of yellow barley, the heads heavy with ripened grain bending in the breeze. But not a sickle could be put into the grain, or even kernels gathered to be eaten until the first-fruits had been presented before the Lord.

1) When was the First-fruit offering waved before the Lord?

Leviticus 23:5 In the _____ day of the first month at even is the LORD'S Passover.

Leviticus 23:6 And on the _____ day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

Leviticus 23:10-11 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the _____ of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the _____ the priest shall wave it.

That sounds a little confusing, so let us break it down. On the 14th day, the Passover happens, On the next day (Sabbath), the 15th, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins. On the 16th, the day after the Sabbath, the Wave Sheaf is waved before the Lord so that the harvest could begin.

It was a beautiful service. The priest clad in his sacred robes, with a handful of yellow heads of ripened grain, entered the temple. The glow of burnished gold from walls and furniture blended with the tints of the golden heads of grain. The priest paused in front of the golden altar and waved the grain before the Lord. Those first heads were a pledge of the bountiful harvest to be gathered, and the waving indicated thanksgiving and praise to the Lord of the harvest.

2) What else was laid out as an offering that day?

Leviticus 23:12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he _____ without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD.

Leviticus 23:13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an _____ made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

Note: in the "meat" offering, this was a reference to food in general, not necessarily flesh. Also note here that the offering included what appears to be something like a communion serving, wine, and flour mingled with oil. The wine symbolized Jesus' blood, the oil, the Holy Spirit.

The waving of the first-fruits was the principal service of the day, but a lamb was also offered as a burnt-offering. No portion of the first-fruits were ever burned in the fire, for they were a type of resurrected beings clad in immortality, never more subject to death or decay.



3) What happened when Jesus died on the cross?

Matthew 27:50-51 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the _____ of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

When Christ died on Calvary and the veil of the temple was rent asunder, the virtue of the temple service came to an end. The Jews slew their paschal lambs as formerly, but the service was only a mockery; for that year, upon the fourteenth day of the month Abib, **“Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.”** The Jews kept the empty form of the Sabbath on the day following the Passover, but it was the rest experienced by Jesus and His followers that was accepted by God.

4) What did Paul call Jesus?

1 Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the _____ of them that slept.

On the sixteenth day of the month, in the year the Saviour died, the Jews, in the temple God had forsaken, went through the empty form of offering the heads of grain, while Christ, the antitype, arose from the dead, and became “the first-fruits of them that slept. The type had met antitype.

5) What promise is given to us?

1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God _____ with him.

Every field of ripened grain gathered into the garner is but a reminder of the great final harvest, when the Lord of the harvest, with His band of angel reapers, will come to gather the spiritual harvest of the world. Just as the first handful of grain was a pledge of the coming harvest, so the resurrection of Christ was a pledge of the resurrection of the righteous;

6) What happened when Jesus rose from the grave?

Matthew 27:52-53 And the _____ were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and _____ unto many.

The priest did not enter the temple with only one head of grain, he waved a handful before the Lord; neither did Jesus come forth from the grave alone, for **“many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection.”** While the Jews were preparing to perform the empty service of the offering of first-fruits in the temple, and the Roman soldiers were telling the people that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus, these



resurrected saints went through the streets of the city, proclaiming that Christ had indeed risen.

7) What were the disciples doing while all this was going on?

Luke 24:9-11 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the _____, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle _____, and they believed them not.

It is a sad fact that even the disciples who loved their Lord were so blinded that they could not recognize the fact that the time had come for the appearance of the great Antitype of the service they had yearly celebrated all their lives; and even when they listened to the announcement of His resurrection, it seemed to them as an idle tale, and they believed it not. But God never lacks for agents. When living human beings are dumb, He awakens sleeping saints to perform His appointed work. In the type, the grain was waved in the temple, and to fulfil the antitype Christ must present Himself and the company who had risen with Him before God in the first apartment of the heavenly temple.

8) What did Jesus tell Mary near the tomb when she realized that she was talking with her Savior?

John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet _____ to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I _____ unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

In the early morning of the resurrection day, when Jesus appeared to Mary, she fell at His feet to worship Him, but Jesus said to her, "**Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.**" In these words Jesus notified His followers of the great event to take place in heaven, hoping that on earth there might be an answering chord to the wonderful rejoicing in heaven; but just as they had slept in the garden on the night of Christ's agony, and failed to give Him their sympathy, a so now, blinded by unbelief, they failed to share the joy of the Saviour's great triumph.

9) What did Jesus do later that day?

John 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the _____, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

Jesus appeared to His disciples in the evening, but He had something wonderful to do first before He could return to them.



10) What did Paul tell us in Ephesians 4:8?

Wherefore he saith, When he _____ up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Between the time Jesus appeared to Mary and then later to His disciples, He took the people that rose when He died up to heaven, with Him, to present Himself, and them, as the Wave Sheaf Offering. This was done that **“He might be the first-born among many brethren.”** This company was composed of individuals chosen from every age, from that of Adam down to the time of Christ. They were no longer subject to death but ascended with Christ as trophies of His power to awaken all that sleep in their graves. As the handful of grain in the typical service was a pledge of the coming harvest, so these saints were a pledge of the innumerable company that Christ will awaken from the dust of the earth when He comes the second time as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Little did the inhabitants of earth dream of the wonderful antitypical offering of first-fruits that was being celebrated in the heavenly temple at the time the Jews were carrying out the empty forms in the temple on earth.

Words fail to describe the scene as the heavenly host with one accord fall prostrate at His feet in adoration, but He waves them back, He bids them wait. Jesus has entered heaven as **“the first-born among many brethren,”** and He will not receive the worship of the angels until the Father has accepted the first-fruits of the harvest to be gathered from the world He has died to redeem.

11) What was Jesus' prayer you?

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be _____ me where I am...

He does not plead in vain. The great antitype of the service celebrated for centuries is fully met. The Father accepts the first-fruits as a pledge that all the redeemed host will be received by Him. Then the decree goes forth, **“Let all the angels of God worship Him.”**

The first 3 days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread reveal to us Jesus' wonderful work. On the Passover, Jesus sets us free. Jesus died at the same time the Passover Lamb was sacrificed. He rested on the Sabbath and at the very time on the 3rd day that the priest was waving heads of grain before the Lord, Jesus was presenting Himself and those resurrected with Him as the First Fruit offering, the Wave Sheaf offering which allowed the harvest to begin. This will all be fulfilled when the angels collect us up on the final day.

Can you see how Jesus fulfilled perfectly what the Bible called for? _____

Are you interested in being part of the resurrection at the end of time? _____

Will you now ask Him now to help you get ready? _____