

The Wave Sheaf and the Two Wave Loaves: What Do They Represent?

The wave sheaf was offered on the day after Passover, and the two wave loaves were offered on the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost. The wave sheaf was from the firstfruits of the barley harvest that took place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The two wave loaves were from the firstfruits of the wheat harvest in late spring, and the two loaves were to “...be baked with leaven...” (Leviticus 23:17).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a sanctification festival that pictures the complete removal of sin, as leaven is a type of sin. The two wave loaves were to be baked with leaven. Do the two loaves picture sin? What do these seemingly disparate offerings picture?

According to some people, the wave sheaf “...pictures the *resurrected* Christ ascending to heaven to be accepted by His Father as the very first human to be actually born of God—the firstfruit of the first harvest of souls!...This fulfillment of the wave-sheaf offering actually occurred on Sunday, the morrow after the Sabbath during the days of unleavened bread.”¹

Is it true that the wave sheaf was actually offered on the pagan day of the sun? We need to determine the day that the wave sheaf was presented. Once we discover that, then we can determine what it, and the two wave loaves, actually represent.

Passover and the Wave Sheaf

The children of Israel were instructed that when they entered the Promised Land and reaped its harvest, “...then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest: 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....And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that you have brought an offering to your God...” (Leviticus 23:10-12, 14).

These are the instructions that were given for when they would enter the Promised Land. The wave sheaf was to be from the firstfruits of their **harvest**, and it had to be offered on the day after the Sabbath. Harvesting is very labor-intensive work, which is forbidden on a Sabbath. The people were forbidden to eat any of their harvested produce until they had presented their firstfruits offering to the priest.

The children of Israel entered the Promised Land on the tenth day of the first month (Joshua 4:19). “And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept [6213, *to make, to prepare*] **the Passover** on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And **they did eat of**

¹ Herbert W. Armstrong, *Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?*, Ambassador College Press © 1974, p. 29.

the produce of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched grain in the selfsame day” (Joshua 5:10, 11). Now we are going to establish the day on which the wave sheaf was presented.

The people were eating the produce that they had harvested **on the day after the Passover**. Therefore **the Passover had to be a Sabbath day**. The fourteenth is not an annual Sabbath (a holy day). If the fourteenth was on the weekly Sabbath, then the day after the weekly Sabbath would be on the annual Sabbath, that is on the fifteenth. “And on the fifteenth day of the [*first*] month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread...In the first day you shall have a **holy convocation: you shall do no servile** [5656, *to labor, to work*] **work therein**” (Leviticus 23:6, 7).

The people were forbidden to do any harvesting, which is labor-intensive, on that annual Sabbath day! The fourteenth is therefore eliminated as being the day of the Passover ceremony. What was to take place on the fourteenth? “Christ our Passover” died at the ninth hour, the exact midpoint between noon and sunset, on the fourteenth day. This is the exact time of day that the Passover sacrifices were killed “between the evenings” under the Old Covenant.

The preparation is not the Passover ceremony. The Passover sacrifices had to be killed, bled out, skinned, cleaned, and roasted whole, “...his head with his legs, and with the entrails thereof” (Exodus 12:9). The preparations would have taken four to five hours. “And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and **unleavened bread**; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it” (v. 8). The fourteenth is “...the preparation [3904, *a making ready*] of the Passover...” (John 19:14).

Unleavened bread is commanded to be eaten with the Passover meal, and the fifteenth is the first day of unleavened bread. The fourteenth is not a day for which there is any commandment to eat unleavened bread. The Passover ceremony is an assembly that is commanded by God, i.e. it is a holy convocation. There is no holy convocation on the fourteenth. The fourteenth is disqualified as being the day of the Passover ceremony.

The fifteenth is a Sabbath, and the day after the Sabbath is the sixteenth. The sixteenth is the day when the wave sheaf was offered, on the day after the annual Sabbath of Passover. We have now determined the day on which the wave sheaf was offered.

Christ is Not the Wave Sheaf

Jesus died at the ninth hour (about 3:00 P.M.) on Wednesday the fourteenth. “The Jews therefore, because it was the **preparation**, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away” (John 19:31).

Jesus’ body was “...laid in a sepulcher...And that day was the **preparation**, and the Sabbath drew on” (Luke 23:53, 54). The Sabbath that was drawing near was not the weekly Sabbath, but

the annual Sabbath of the fifteenth. Jesus had said that He would be "...three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40). Three full days from late Wednesday afternoon would conclude late Sabbath afternoon.

God had ordained that the wave sheaf was to be offered on the day after Passover, i.e. the sixteenth. Jesus was in the tomb on the day after Passover, which means that He could not have fulfilled the wave offering. When did Jesus ascend into heaven?

Jesus was "...seen of them forty days [*and*]...while they beheld, He was taken up: and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (Acts 1:3, 9). Jesus ascended into heaven forty days after His resurrection. On that day, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in **once** [2178, *upon one occasion only, once for all*] into the Most Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12).

The scripture specifically states that Jesus entered "**once into the Most Holy Place,**" and that one time was forty days after His resurrection. No, the wave sheaf does not picture the resurrected Christ ascending to heaven on Easter Sunday morning.

Who Does the Wave Offering Represent?

The wave offerings were performed by the priest, by lifting the offering upward toward heaven, as if presenting a gift to God. "...[Y]ou shall bring an omer of the **firstfruits** of your harvest to the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted [7522, *delight in, be pleased with*] **for you**: on the morrow after the Sabbath ..." (Leviticus 23:11). Who was the Eternal delighted with?

It was the people who had been made acceptable to God by the blood of the Passover sacrifice on the night of Passover. The Eternal had said, "For **all the firstborn** of the children of Israel are Mine...on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt **I sanctified them for Myself**" (Numbers 8:17).

That is why the wave sheaf was offered on the **day after Passover**. The wave sheaf offering of the firstfruits are the people who have been sanctified by the blood of the Passover sacrifice on Passover. On the day after Passover, on the sixteenth, they are presented to God as a firstfruits offering.

The Two Wave Loaves

"Seven weeks shall you number to you: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as you begin to put the sickle to the grain. And you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God..." (Deuteronomy 16:9, 10). On the fiftieth day "You 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 firstfruits to the LORD**" (Leviticus 23:17).

Pentecost is connected directly to Passover by the seven weeks. The firstfruits that were offered on the day after Passover are the same firstfruits that were offered on the Day of Pentecost. They are the people, who have been made acceptable to God by the blood of the Passover sacrifice.

Leaven represents sin during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. “Know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:6-8).

However, leaven does not always represent sin. We have to see the context in which it is used. “Another parable spoke He to them; **The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven**, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, **till the whole was leavened**” (Matthew 13:33). Is the Kingdom of God going to be filled with sin? No, the leaven as used in the parable represents the Holy Spirit, which shall fill all the earth. The three measures of meal represent the three periods of salvation.

On the Day of Pentecost, Jesus’ disciples “...were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them cloven tongues like as fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...” (Acts 2:1-4). On the Day of Pentecost they were filled with “...the firstfruits of the Spirit...” (Romans 8:23).

The Holy Spirit Adds a New Dimension to the Firstfruits

“For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for Myself” (Numbers 8:17). These are represented by the wave Sheaf that was offered on the day after Passover, but they are incomplete. They are not ready to do the work of God. God then made an exchange. “And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel” (v. 18).

“And you shall set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and **offer** [5130, *wave*] them for an **offering** [8573, *wave offering*] to the LORD. Thus shall you separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be Mine. **And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:** and you shall cleanse them, and **offer** [5130, *wave*] them for an **offering** [8573, *wave offering*]. For they are wholly given to Me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of **the firstborn...**” (Numbers 8:13-16).

The Levites are symbolized by the two wave loaves. The number two, as the smallest whole number of division, represents division, or separation. They have been separated out to do God’s work. Being sanctified does not empower you to do the work of God. You must have “...the firstfruits of the Spirit...” (Romans 8:23).

The wave sheaf represents those who have been sanctified by the blood of the Passover sacrifice. The wave loaves represent the same people who have now received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The entire process is summed up by Acts 2:38. “Then Peter said to them, **Repent** [*Passover*], and **be baptized** [*7th day of Feast of Unleavened Bread*]...in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**, and you shall receive the gift of the **Holy Spirit** [*Pentecost*].”

Acts 2:38 is a summation of the first three of God’s seven annual holy days. It is all made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the fourteenth day of the month. That is the foundation upon which we are to build. “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Many people try to build on a foundation laid by men, by observing Passover almost twenty-four hours before Jesus was laid in the stone sepulcher as the foundation upon which we are to build. By doing so there is no connection between Passover and Pentecost, but there is a connection between Easter and Pentecost (Catholic Whitsunday).

Conclusion: The wave sheaf does not represent Jesus rising to His Father on Easter Sunday morning, but it does represent those who have been sanctified and made acceptable to God by Jesus’ blood. The two wave loaves represent those who are sanctified, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The wave sheaf and the wave loaves represent the same firstfruits who are at different stages of the process.