

MESSIAH IN THE FEAST OF THE FIRSTFRUITS - Lev 23:9-14 OUTLINE

I. Under The Law

A. The Texts: Lev 23:9-14; Exo 23:19a, Exo 34:26a; Num 18:12-13; Deu 18:1-5

B. The Ordinance Requirements:

1. For the People

- a. With every harvest they were to bring **the best of the firstfruits of the land into the House of the Lord** (Exo 23:19a & Exo 34:26, Num 18:12a)
- b. **Of the grain** harvested (Deu 18:4) **they must bring a sheaf unto the priest** (Lev 23:10)
- c. Along with the sheaf they were to bring prescribed burnt, meal and drink offerings (Lev 23:12-13)
- d. Neither bread, parched grain or green ears was permitted to be eaten until the firstfruits of the harvest was brought (Lev 23:14)

2. For the Priest:

- a. **He waved the sheaf** before the Lord to be accepted for the people (Lev 23:11a)
- b. He waved the sheaf **on the day after the Sabbath** (Lev 23:11b)
- c. **All that was first ripe in the land** which the people bring unto the Lord, **became the priests** (Num 18:13): He was given **the best** of the oil, **the best** of the wine and of **the firstfruits** of the wheat (Num 18:12) and **the first** of the fleece of their sheep (Deu 18:4).

C. The Ceremony:

- According to Josephus in *The Antiquities of the Jews* from Book III, Chap 10, Sec. 5:

“They take a handful of the ears (of barley), and dry them, then beat them small, and purge the barley from the bran; they then bring 1\10 deal to the altar of God; and casting one handful of it upon the fire, **they leave the rest for the use of the priest**; and after this it is that they may publicly or privately reap their harvest. They also **at this participation of the first-fruits of the earth**, sacrifice a lamb as a burnt offering to God.”

D. The Purpose:

- a. God gave the firstfruits as **the priest's due** (Deu 18:3) from the people, **because they & their sons were to minister in the name of the Lord** (Deu 18:5).
- b. Since they had no inheritance, they were to eat the offerings of the Lord (Deu 18:1).

II. Modern Day Jewish Observance:

This festival is not kept today
[Not since the Temple's destruction in 70 A.D.]

III. The Feast of First Fruits in the New Testament

A. The Texts: 1Cor 15:20-49

B. The Illustration to Christ's Ministry: The Firstfruits in the Resurrection from the dead

1. Christ the "First-fruits" from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits:

- In the year in which Christ died, the feast of firstfruits should have been celebrated on the morrow after the Sabbath (Lev 23:11) following Passover (Lev 23:4). On the day after the Sabbath (lit. "Sabbaths" in Mt 28:1) that year, when the priest would be thanking God for the new grain offering of the harvest that just came out of the ground; Christ rose from the dead and has
". . . become the **FIRSTFRUITS** of them that slept." (1Cor 15:20b)

2. "Afterward-Fruits" at His Coming:

- "First-fruits" are a Guarantee of More-Fruits to Follow. As joint-heirs with Christ, (Rom 8:17); we also will be raised by the same spirit that raised Christ (Rom 8:11) so that Christ is the Firstborn among many brethren (Rom 8:29).

1Cor 15:23 But every man in his own order: **Christ THE FIRSTFRUITS**; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

- Our body will be raised like a New Grain Offering: 1Cor 15:37-38; 1Cor 15:42-49 explaining the parable in

John 12:24-26 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

1Cor 15:37 **And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:**

1Cor 15:38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, **and to every seed his own body.**

1Cor 15:42-44a **So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It's sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.**