

# Leviticus 23: The Ceremonial Harvest

**Overview:** This study reveals that the ancient harvest rites/ceremonies pointed forward to the work of the gospel, including the last great harvest of our time. Our study will concentrate on three harvest feasts/ceremonies. They are called the feasts of :

1. The wave sheaves
2. The wave loaves
3. The feast of tabernacles

## Questions to be addressed:

- How do the ceremonies of the harvest point to the opening and closing events of the gospel?
- How are we to keep the feast days today?

**Prayer Thought:** AA 14

## Scripture Reading: Leviticus 23:1-4.

- God introduces the subject of the feasts by reiterating the Sabbath. Note that the Seventh day Sabbath is designated as **“the”** Sabbath, while the other rest days are designated **“a”** sabbath.

## Leviticus 23:5-8

- **Verse 5** — the first feast mentioned is the Passover. The Passover was kept on the 14th day of the first month (late March to April by the Roman calendar).
- **Verse 6** — the next feast is the ceremony of unleavened bread. This feast was kept for seven days beginning the 15th day of the first month, immediately following the Passover.

## Leviticus 23: 9-11 (The Wave Sheafs in Type):

- Each year during the Passover/feast of Unleavened bread, farmers would take to the priests a handful of grain (sheaf) to be waved for them as a thank offering.
- **Verse 10** — the sheaf was waved as a thank offering pointing forward to the ingathering of the first fruit harvest, the fruits to be harvested. They could not reap until the sheaf was offered.
- **Verse 11** — the sheaf was always waved on a Sunday — “on the morrow after the Sabbath.” The sheaf therefore was presented every year on the Sunday of the Passover/feast of Unleavened bread.

## Leviticus 23:15-17 (The Wave Loaves in Type):

- **Verse 15** — farmers were to count seven Sabbaths (49 days).
- **Verse 17** — then on the 50th day they were required to present two wave loaves.
- During the 50 days the farmers reaped, sifted, ground the grain, and then baked it into bread.
- **Verse 16** — the 50th day was a Sunday, the day after the 7th Sabbath.
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- The wave loaves being a finished product, signified fruits previously gathered. As a thank offering it pointed back to the ingathering of the crops.
- **Verse 17** — the wave loaves are a symbol of the first fruits. They were dedicated at the completion of the harvest.

### **Who are the Wave Sheaf in Antitype?**

- Christ and those who were resurrected with Him.
- Christ was resurrected on the very day the wave sheaf was offered — **DA 786**.
- Christ was crucified on the Sunday during the Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- A multitude of saints were resurrected with Christ — **Matt. 27:51-53; DA 785; EW 184**. The resurrected ones were faithful persons from Adam to Christ's time. Unlike Lazarus, these persons were never to die again.
- These saints were taken to heaven and presented before the Father as the antitypical wave sheaf — **DA 834**. It pointed forward to the ingathering of a harvest.

**Summary:** The wave sheaf was a symbol of Christ and those who resurrected and ascended with Him to heaven. They were presented before the Father as a thank offering, a token of saints to be gathered.

### **Who are the Wave Loaves in Antitype?**

- After His resurrection, Jesus remained on earth for 40 days teaching and preparing the disciples for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit — **Acts 1:2-5**. So while the farmers were harvesting, sifting, grounding, and baking their grain, Jesus was teaching, preparing His disciples.
- After Jesus' ascension, the 120 disciples tarried in the upper room until the day of Pentecost.
- On the day of Pentecost (50th day from the offering of the wave sheaf), the 120 disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit — **Acts 2:1-4**. While the farmers were bringing their wave loaves to the temple, the true wave loaves were receiving the power of the Spirit.

**Summary:** Thus the 120 disciples were the antitypical wave loaves, the gospel's first fruits. A second gathering in ancient Israel, after the harvesting of the grain, the first fruits — **Lev 23:17** — farmers would have a second period of reaping, a vintage or fruit harvest. This second gathering period ended around the fall, September to October. The same was true of the disciples. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the empowered 120 saints (the gospel's first fruits) went out and gathered another group, a great multitude of people, the second fruits — **Acts 2:40-47**.

### **The waves sheafs and waved loaves must have a double antitype.**

The wave sheaf and the wave loaves must also have applications to the last great harvest.

- The 144,000 are also called the first fruits.
- The 120 disciples are all now dead.

- There are two outpourings of the Holy Spirit.
- The judgment is in two phases, the dead and living.

### **The Wave Sheaf of the Living:**

- As those who arose with Christ ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave, they thereby became a living type of the wave sheaf of the living. They therefore, must be the only ones offered in the heavenly sanctuary; and that as ones raised from the dead, they are the first fruits of the dead, whereas as ones ever living before the Father, they are the living wave sheaf of the first fruits of the living, the 144,000. Thus, the wave sheaf also points to the ingathering of the 144,000.

### **The Waves Loaves of the Living:**

- The 144,000 are also called the *first fruits* of the living, the finished product. The wave loaves are also called the first fruits — **Lev. 23:17**. The 144,000 like the 120 disciples will receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We are therefore living in the time when Christ is preparing His disciples for the second Pentecost. This preparation has been going on since 1844, the time when Ellen White had her first vision of the 144,000 (**EW 14-15**), signaling that Jesus is about to reap another first-fruit harvest.

### **A Second Gathering [of the Living]:**

- Just as the 120 disciples brought in a great multitude after the outpouring of the Spirit in their day, so in like manner the 144,000 will receive the power of the Holy Spirit and go out to gather the Great Multitude from all nations, the second fruits of living — **Rev. 7:9; Isa. 66:15-20**.

### **Leviticus 23:33-43 The Feast of Tabernacles in Type:**

- **Verse 34** — the feast of Tabernacles was celebrated on the 15th day of the 7th month.
- **Verse 40** — the children of Israel had to dwell in booths made of tree branches.
- They could only celebrate the feast after they had brought in the fruit of the land, finished the year's harvesting.
- **Verse 43** — their dwelling in booths reminded them of their wilderness sojourn.

### **The Feast of Tabernacles in Antitype:**

- **PP 541** — The feast of Tabernacles was not only commemorative of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, but typical of the great day of final ingathering when the gospel is completed and all the righteous are gathered into the barn (kingdom) — when the "fruits" have been "gathered in."

**Summary:** This reveals that the righteous (the 144,000 and the Great Multitude) will celebrate their being delivered from sin (their wilderness wandering) and having completed the gospel work, "gathered in the fruit of the land" — **Lev. 23:39**. This celebration will be in the kingdom near the close of probation.

**Conclusion:** This study revealed that the ceremonies of the harvest point to the opening and closing events of the gospel and as it relates to Christ work in the heavenly sanctuary.

**Further Reading:** [Tract No. 3, The Judgment and the Harvest](#), pgs. 75-88

