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The Feast of Weeks

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
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or Roget's Thesaurus - **February 14, 2016**

Leviticus 23:15-22

Introduction: Here begins the fourth major division of Leviticus dealing principally with the various holy days and festivals observed by the children of Israel.

...Significantly, these **great festivals** outlined here are still observed by the Jews all over the world, although with changes that have inevitably occurred. There was only ONE fast day, the **Day of Atonement**. In post-exilic times, the Jews imposed many fasts upon their people, but without God's command or sanction. It was a boast of the Pharisee (Luke 18) that he "fasted twice in the week"!

This part of Leviticus is distinguished by the continued use of "I am the Lord your God," frequently used to terminate paragraphs. Here it divides this chapter into two parts detailing the **spring festivals** (Leviticus 23:22), and the **autumn festivals** (Leviticus 23:43). The major divisions of the chapter ending in those verses are further subdivided by the clause, "this is a permanent rule for your descendants wherever you dwell" (Leviticus 23:14, 21, 31, 41).

The principal thrust of the chapter regards the people's observance of these **festivals**. The detailed types of sacrifices required, which concerned chiefly the priests, are presented later in Numbers (Numbers 28-29).

Some of these **festivals** occurred at times of the year when **many festivals** in the **pagan world** had been observed continually for ages, and, as we should have expected, critical **enemies** of the Bible **try to find** the **origin** of these **O.T. festivals** in the **older pagan ceremonies** occurring about the same time, but all such attempts have failed. "The original ground of these festivals was **not** the **natural celebrations** of **pagans**, but historical. All of these observances derived from circumstances attending the BIRTH of the nation of Israel and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage."

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Leviticus 23:15, *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:*

NOTE: NOT the **seventh day sabbath** in the passover week, nor the whole feast of unleavened bread, but the first day of it, which was an holy convocation, a sabbath in which no servile (service or slave) work was to be done, Lev. 23:7; and it was from the day after this, even the sixteenth of Nisan, that the following count was to be made; so the Targum of Jonathan, after the first feast day of the passover: and Josephus Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 10. sect. 6. is very clear in it, that **Pentecost**, or the **feast of weeks**, was the **fiftieth day** from the sixteenth of Nisan, when the above offerings were made:

from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; which plainly points out the express day from whence the count was to begin, even on the day when the **sheaf** of the **firstfruits** of the barley harvest was offered:

seven sabbaths shall be complete; or seven weeks, that is, forty nine days; and hence,

Jarchi says, we learn that the count began from **the evening**, or otherwise the weeks would not be complete; and Gersom thinks the day in which the sheaf was offered is included in the days counted; for the count began from the day AFTER the first of the **passover**, and lo, seven days are **seven weeks of days**, which make **forty nine days**.
(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Leviticus 23:16, *Even unto the morrow after the **seventh sabbath** shall ye number **fifty days**; and ye shall OFFER a **new meat offering** unto the LORD.*

NOTE: ...**the morrow after the seventh sabbath**,.... Or weeks, forty nine days being counted, the following was the fiftieth day, or Pentecost:
shall ye number fifty days; from whence this **feast** had the name of **Pentecost**, Acts 2:1; all in Israel were obliged to number those days, EXCEPT women and servants Maimon. Hilchot Tamidin Umusaphim, c. 7. sect. 24. : the manner of doing it was this^{F21}Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 489. sect. 1. & Lebush, ut supra, (c. 489.) sect. 1. ; on the night of the second (day of the passover), **after the evening prayer**, they began to number; but if anyone forgot to number at the beginning of the night, he went and numbered all the night; for the commandment is for everyone to number by himself, and he ought to number standing, and to bless first, and number the days and weeks: How? on the first day he says, This is one day, until he comes to seven days, and then he says, This is the seventh day, which is one week; and on the eighth day he says, This is the eighth day, which is one week and one day, and so till he comes to the fourteenth; then he says, This is the fourteenth day, which make two weeks; and in this way he numbers, and goes on until the **forty ninth day**: and ye shall **offer a new meat offering** unto the Lord; that is, of new corn, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi explain it, and this was of wheat; for it was the offering for the **wheat harvest**, which was **offered** on the **fiftieth day** from the offering of the **sheaf** or omer of the barley harvest.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Acts 2:1, And when the **day of Pentecost (fiftieth from Passover)** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

NOTE: The word "**Pentecost**" is a Greek word signifying the **50th** part of a thing, or the **50th** in order. Among the Jews it was applied to one of their **three great feasts** which began on the **50th day** after the Passover. This feast was reckoned from the 16th day of the month Abib, or **April**, or the second day of the Passover.It was also a harvest festival, and was accordingly called the **Feast of Harvest**; And it was for this reason that **two loaves** made of **new meal** were offered on this occasion as **first-fruits**, Leviticus 23:17, Leviticus 23:20; Numbers 28:27-31.
(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=2#1>)

NOTE: ...**Pentecost was fully come**,.... Or "was come", was begun and entered upon; for it was not over, or ended, it being but the **third hour** of the day, or **nine** of the clock in the **morning**, when Peter began his sermon; see Acts 2:15. The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "when the days of Pentecost were fulfilled"; not that there were more days than one, kept at this festival; for though the feasts of passover and tabernacles were observed each of them seven days, according to the law, and eight days according to the Scribes, yet the **feast of Pentecost** was kept but **one day**...

...Josephus calls^{F14}Antiqu. 1. 3. c. 10. sect. 6. this feast by the same name that Luke here does; and says^{F15}De Bello Jud. 1. 2. c. 3. sect. 1. , the Jews so call it, from the number of the days, that is fifty; and so R. Sol Jarchi^{F16}In Lev. xxiii. 15. calls this day, חמישים יום, "the fiftieth day": on this day, the Jews say^{F17}T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 68. 2. , **the law was given**; and observe^{F18}Zohar in Exod. fol. 34. 4. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 4. , that "from the day that Israel **went out of Egypt**,

unto the day that the law was given, were **fifty days**.

And on this day, and which was the **FIRST day** of the **week** (*Sunday*), the **Spirit** was **poured** forth **UPON** the disciples; the Gospel began to be preached to all nations, and a **harvest of souls** was **gathered in...**

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=43&ch=2>)

Leviticus 23:17, *Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be **baken with leaven**; they are the **firstfruits** unto the LORD.*

NOTE: "Two wave-loaves ... baken **with leaven** ..." (Leviticus 23:17). **Why two loaves?**

Unger was of the opinion that, "This anticipated the N.T. Pentecost when, under the administration of the Holy Spirit, **BOTH Jews** and **Gentiles** were baptized into union with the glorified Christ."

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

NOTE: ...bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals,.... Out of their habitations in the land of Canaan; and not out of those without the land, as Jarchi observes; and not out of all of them, as Ben Gersom remarks; though the Vulgate Latin version has it, out of "all" of our habitations, but wrongly; and indeed out of no one particular habitation, because it was at the **public expense**; but they were brought from some part of the country or another, even the quantity of two tenth parts of an ephah, or two omers of wheat flour made into **two loaves**, which were to be, and were waved before the Lord, and hence so called; and are the same with the new meat offering, or rather **bread offering**, made of the new corn, in the preceding verse, so Jarchi:

they shall be of fine flour; of **wheat flour**, the **finest** of it, of which all meat or bread offerings were made; and this was particularly on account of the wheat harvest, and therefore it was proper that the finest of the wheat should be used on this occasion; See Gill on Leviticus 2:1; **each loaf** or **cake**, according to Maimonides^{F23}Hilchot Tamidin, &c. c. 8. sect. 10. , was seven hands' breadths LONG, four hands' breadths BROAD, and four fingers HIGH:

they shall be baked with leaven; the common meat offering was **unleavened**, part of which was burnt on the altar, where no leaven might be burnt, Leviticus 2:4; and from hence it may be concluded that no part of these loaves was to be burnt, but the **whole** of them fell to the share of the priests:

...the firstfruits unto the Lord; which he claimed as his, and gave unto his priests; and it was but right and just he should have them, as an acknowledgment of all coming from his hands, and as expressive of gratitude for them, and for the sanctification of the rest; hence this is called the **feast of the firstfruits** of **wheat harvest**, Exodus 34:22.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=2&ch=23>)

Leviticus 23:18-19, *And ye shall offer with the bread SEVEN lambs without blemish of the first year, and ONE young bullock (young bull), and TWO rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid (he-goat) of the goats for a SIN offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.*

NOTE: ...burnt offering unto the Lord, with their meat offering, and their drink offering; each of the said beasts were offered, unto the Lord on the ALTAR of burnt offering, and burnt thereon; and to every beast they offered, there was a **meat offering** and a **drink offering**: the meat offering consisted of three tenth deals, or omers, of fine flour, to a bullock (*young bull*), two to a ram, and one to a lamb; and the drink offering was half an hin of **wine** to a bullock, the third part of one to a ram, and a fourth part to a lamb, as Jarchi observes, which appears from Numbers 28:12,

...by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord; an acceptable burnt offering to God.

Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering,.... Which was for

the sin of the whole congregation, typical of Christ, whose soul was made an offering for sin; in virtue of which all other sacrifices become acceptable to God, and **believers** enjoy the fruits and blessings of divine grace:

and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings; which Gersom says were the most holy things, and were only slain in the north, and only eaten by males, as the rest of the holy things, and are the only peace offerings of the congregation that were offered throughout the whole year.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Hebrews 10:1-9, For the **LAW** having a **shadow of good things to come**, and not the VERY IMAGE of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the **blood of bulls** and of **goats** should **take away sins**. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In **burnt offerings** and **sacrifices for sin** thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to DO thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. **He taketh away the FIRST**, that he may **establish the SECOND**.

NOTE: In this verse it is plain why the parenthesis was introduced in the verse above; it was to show that "**the first**" does not apply to sacrifices, offerings, or the ceremonial part of the Jewish institution, nor to the law concerning priests, but to the **first "law,"** that **entire covenant** with its **ten commandments** and everything else that pertained to it. (Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=heb&ch=10#1>)

Thought 1. What **SACRIFICES** do believers offer who living under the "New Covenant"?

Romans 12:1, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your **bodies** a **living SACRIFICE**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Hebrews 13:15-16, By him (*Jesus*) therefore let us **offer** the **SACRIFICE** of **PRAISE** to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to **DO good** and to **communicate** (give alms) forget not: for with such **SACRIFICES** God is well pleased.

1 Peter 2:4-5, To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an **holy priesthood**, to **offer up** **SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES**, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Leviticus 23:20, And the priest shall WAVE them with the **bread** of the **firstfruits** for a wave offering before the LORD, with the **two lambs**: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

NOTE: ...shall **WAVE them with the bread of the firstfruits**,... The **two loaves** called the two wave loaves, Leviticus 23:17; with which were waved the **two lambs** of the peace offerings; and these alive, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom intimate. The Jewish doctors^{F26}In Torat Cohenim, apud Yalkut in loc. dispute, whether, in waving, the lambs were put above the bread, or the bread above the lambs; which some reconcile by observing, that the bread was put by the side of the lambs:

for a wave offering before the Lord; being **WAVED** this way and that way, **upwards** and **downwards**, and towards the several quarters of the world, showing that the fruits of the earth were owing to the providential goodness of God EVERYWHERE:

with the two lambs; not that all the above sacrifices were waved, or any part of them, along with the lambs, but the wave loaves, and they were waved together, as one wave offering to the Lord:

they shall be holy to the Lord for the priests; both the loaves and the lambs, these were separated and devoted wholly to the Lord, and to be **eaten by his priests**; the peace offerings of a single person were light holy things, as Jarchi says; but the peace offerings of the congregation, as these were, are the most holy things, and so to be eaten only by the priests, and by the males only, in the court of the tabernacle.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Leviticus 23:21, And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no **SERVILE (bondservant, service) work** [therein: it shall be] a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

NOTE: ...an holy convocation unto you... This proclamation was made by the priests with the sound of a trumpet, that the people might observe that this **fiftieth day**, or **day of Pentecost**, was devoted to **sacred service**, and that they were called to holy exercises in it: **ye shall do no servile work therein**; what was not necessary for food, as Ben Gersom observes, but what was necessary on that account, as kindling a fire, &c. might be done, see Leviticus 23:7; for this was to be kept in like manner as the first and seventh days of the feast of unleavened bread; the general design of which was to express thankfulness for the appointed weeks of the harvest, and to honour the Lord with the **firstfruits** of the **increase of the earth**:

...when there was a number of souls **converted**, as the **firstfruits** of after conversions among Jews and Gentiles, Acts 2:41; and particularly of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, and of the harvest of souls in the end of the world, Matthew 13:30,

...be a statute for ever all your dwellings throughout your generations; so long as they dwelt in the land of Canaan, and had their harvest in it, even until the **Messiah came**, in whom all those **types** and **figures** had their **accomplishment**.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=le&ch=23#1>)

Matthew 13:30, Let both grow together until the **harvest**: and in the **time of harvest** I will say to the **reapers**, Gather ye together first the TARES, and bind them in bundles to **burn them**: but gather the **WHEAT** into my **barn**.

Leviticus 23:22, And when ye **reap** the **harvest** of your land, thou **shalt NOT** make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any **gleaning** of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the **POOR**, and to the **stranger**: I am the LORD your God.

NOTE: Same as **Leviticus 19:9** ... When ye reap the harvest of your land. The **RIGHT** of the poor in Israel to GLEAN (gather stalks or ears left by the reapers) after reapers, as well as to the **unreaped corners** of the **field**, was secured by a positive statute; and this, in addition to other enactments connected with the ceremonial law, formed a **beneficial provision** for their **support** (cf. Deuteronomy 24:19-22). At the same time, proprietors were not obliged to admit them into the field until the grain had been carried off the field; and they seem also to have been left at liberty to choose the poor whom they deemed the most deserving or needful (Ruth 2:2; Ruth 2:8). The same regulation applied to the clusters remaining on the vines after the first gathering. This was the earliest **poor-law** that we read of in the code of any people; and it combined in admirable union the obligation of a **public duty** with the **exercise** of **private** and **voluntary benevolence** at a time when the hearts (MIND) of the rich would be strongly inclined to liberality.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/view.cgi?bk=2&ch=19>)

Thought 1. Notice the poor were allowed to work and had a DUTY to WORK in the fields. The owners of the fields weren't commanded to GIVE them grain just because they were POOR, and allow them to be LAZY. No, every able body had a duty to work, or not eat.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, Now we command you, brethren, in the **name (authority)** of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **withdraw** yourselves from every **brother** that walketh **disorderly**, (in a manner violating law and good order) and NOT after the **tradition** which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to **follow us**: for we behaved not ourselves **disorderly** among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with LABOR and travail **night and day**, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not **power (authority, right)**, but to make ourselves **an ensample** unto you to **follow** us. For even when we were with you, this we **commanded** you, that if any would not work, **neither** should **HE EAT**.

Thought 2. To the un-renewed mind, this seems harsh! But, it's loving like God says love.

Ruth 2:1-3, And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a **mighty man of wealth**, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was **Boaz**. And **Ruth** the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and **glean** ears of **corn** after him in whose sight I shall find **grace**. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. And she went ...came, and **gleaned** in the field after the reapers: and her **hap (fortune [good])** was to light on a part of the **field** belonging unto **Boaz**, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

Thought 3. As we know, this good, which un-expectantly came to her, was God blessing her because she had entered into covenant with him and Israel and was obeying him. And as the owners of the fields obeyed God's command to help the poor, they too would also be blessed, rewarding their obedience. The same is also true under our New Covenant. So, regardless of the Covenant God has made, he always keeps and honors it. And we should know, he's not unrighteous to FORGET our labor of LOVE to the saints and others.

Psalm 89:34, My **covenant (compact [agreement between parties; contract])** will I NOT break, **nor alter (CHANGE)** the thing that is gone out of my **lips**.

Psalm 111:5, He hath given **meat** unto them that **FEAR** him: he will ever be **mindful** of HIS covenant.

Deuteronomy 28:2, And ALL these **blessings** shall come on thee, and **OVERTAKE** thee, IF thou shalt **hearken (be obedient)** unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

Proverbs 19:17, He that hath **pity** upon the **POOR** **lendeth** unto the **Lord**; And that which he hath given will **HE** **PAY him** again.

Psalm 18:20-21, The Lord **rewarded** me **according** to my **righteousness**; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have **kept** the ways of the Lord, and have **not** wickedly departed from my God.

Galatians 6:7, 9-10, Be not deceived; God is not **mocked (ridicule)**: for whatsoever a man SOWETH, that shall he also REAP.

...And let us not be **weary (faint [exhausted])** in **well doing**: for in **due season** we shall reap, if we **faint (relax [give up or decrease labor])** NOT. As we have therefore **opportunity**, let us DO GOOD unto ALL men, especially unto them who are of the **household of faith**.

Hebrews 6:10 ...God is not **unrighteous to forget** your **work** and **labour** of LOVE, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have **ministered to the saints** and DO minister.