

The Feast of First Fruits

Hello all,

After many questions, listening to the teachings of Pastors, church leaders and TBN televangelist, I decided to set the biblical record straight when it comes to teaching on the "Feast of First Fruits". First and foremost, the Feast of Firstfruits is NOT about sowing MONEY! No Feast of Yahweh is about sowing money and anyone who teaches otherwise has a very elementary understanding of the scriptures at best. The present day church in their attempt to embrace Yahweh's feast without understanding or obeying the Torah continues to destroy the pure Word through their money marketing schemes. They market the Passover feast like a Rock concert or a TBN telethon and have turned the sacred Feast of First Fruits into a fund raising campaign in order to pay off their brick and mortar cathedrals where the Spirit of Yahweh DOES NOT abide or pad the wallet of some church leader because he has somehow been led by Yahweh to not get a real job. Let me make this perfectly clear, NONE of Yahweh's feast are about sowing money into some church! Every feast is about Yahshua the Messiah!

We have already celebrated the Passover, and what a beautiful picture of what the Messiah has done for us. Then we celebrated the Feast of Unleaven Bread, focusing once again on removing the sin from our lives so we can be more like Yahshua. Now we await the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost). But before Shavuot, we have the Feast of First Fruit. Here is my question for you all. Why would the theme of the feast change all of a sudden from focusing on Yahshua to focusing on sowing Money? The truth of the matter is that every feast follow the same theme and that theme solely places its focus square on the Messiah, who also is considered the Firstfruits among the brethren. So let's start the lesson and see what we discover.

Readings: Deuteronomy 26, Leviticus 23: 15-21, Exodus 23:14-19

Introduction

The Feast of Pentecost was originally called the Feast of Harvest or the Feast of Firstfruits. This harvest feast occurs 50 days after the waving of the sheaf during the Passover week. It also coincides with the start of the wheat harvest in Israel.

Feast Seasons- Yahweh's command concerning His three feast seasons are as follows:

Exodus 23: 14-17: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. 15: Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou came out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before Yahweh."

Two Wave Loaves- Besides the sacrifice of certain animals, two loaves of leavened bread were offered to Yahweh at the Feast of Firstfruits. These represented the first fruits of the wheat harvest from the field. On a higher level, the leavened loaves of bread represent two groups of people, believers and non-believers (wheat and tare) in whom the leaven of sin both exist. They are brought before Yahweh and waved to be purified and dedicated solely for priestly use. Sacrificed animals, most should know, represent Yahshua the Messiah; but finely ground flour, fruit and incense represent the holiness and prayers of the people of the Most High.

Leviticus 23: 17-20: "Ye 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 the firstfruits unto Yahweh. And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs **without blemish** of the first year, and one young

bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto Yahweh, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto Yahweh. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before Yahweh, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to Yahweh for the priest.”

A Basket of Fruit- In addition to the young bullock, the rams, the lambs and the loaves; during the harvest season, individual Israelites were required to bring a ‘basket of fruit’ to the Most High, and they were commanded to enact the following.

Deuteronomy 26: 1-11: “And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which Yahweh giveth thee for an inheritance, and possess it, and dwell therein; That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that Yahweh give thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which Yahweh shall choose to place **His name there**. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto Yahweh, that I am come unto the country which He swore unto our fathers for to give us. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of Yahweh. And thou shalt speak and say before Yahweh, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous: And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried unto the Elohim of our fathers, He heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression: And He brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: And He hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that flow with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Yah, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before Yahweh, and worship before Him: And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which Yah hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.”

The basket of fruit was symbolic of the spiritual fruit Israel’s God would produce in the lives of His people after He had rescued them from the slavery of sin. More about this fact later. There are a few points concerning firstfruits that we should note. They are mentioned in the following commands: Exodus 22: 29: “Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.”

The Best- Numbers 18: 12: “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto Yahweh, them have I given thee.”

Blessing/Cursing- At their highest level, we are NOT meaning the symbolic level of animal sacrifices and the waving of loaves of bread. The Torah of the Most High are living, active and eternal instructions. Like the laws of thermodynamics or the law of gravity, they are in operation at this very moment and the better we understand and obey them the better it will be for us. In short, IF you do what the Almighty says, you will be blessed. But break His commands and they will break you. This fact is detailed in (Deuteronomy chapter 28). I will quote a few verses concerning the results of obedience and disobedience.

Obedience- Deuteronomy 28: 1-5: “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Yah, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that Yahweh will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of Yah. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.”

Disobedience- Deuteronomy 28: 15-18: “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of Yah, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou

be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.”

Spiritual Priorities-How important is all this to us living today? Does it really make any difference to the quality of one's spiritual life, or the welfare of this small congregation, whether we keep these Feasts of Yahweh or not? After all, most of us don't make our living in agriculture. We don't grow wheat or keep sheep. We don't keep cattle for milk: neither do many of us keep bees for honey. How does this feast of Firstfruits affect us? The answer is this; these low-level laws all have high-level spiritual meaning. We are the soil. We were made from the dust of the earth. Sacred spiritual truths (the Word of Yahweh) have been sowed in our minds. The Holy Spirit is tending each one of us, with our permission, like a gardener tends his plot or a shepherd his flock. Yahweh expects us to be producing sacred fruit in thought, word and deed. This is the purpose of our salvation.

Those ancient commands may not concern us at there low agricultural level: but most certainly they do at there high spiritual level. We are expected to **bring forth ‘ fruit of the Holy Spirit.’** Failure to do so will be catastrophic. Consider this parable:

Luke 13: 6-9: “He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why should it continue to use up the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt **cut it down.**” (It shall be cut off). The meaning of this story is obvious. It needs little or no explanation. A vital clue to the importance of offering the best to God is found in what, at first glance, appears to be a misplaced instruction.

Exodus 23: 19: “The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of Yahweh. Thou shalt not seethe (boil) a kid in his mother's milk.” What has this last sentence about cooking a kid in its mother's milk have to do with firstfruits? The answer, we suspect, is: offering the first of the firstfruits is as vital to spiritual growth as milk is to a new-born kid. Withholding the best from Yahweh is as damaging as seething (boiling) a kid in its mother's milk. In other words, consuming the very thing (the milk) which was intended to make the kid grow. Withholding the firstfruits from Yah, in other words, is fatal. It will kill you in the end just like withholding milk from a kid.

Proverbs 3: 9: “Honor Yahweh with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:”

High Level Firstfruits- As I stated before, firstfruits come at several levels: farm produce, living beings (believers) and the holy thoughts, words and actions of those believers.

Yahweh's only begotten Son is a first fruit; the fruit of His own body.

Colossians 1: 15: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”

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

The people of Yahweh are also firstfruits; the first to be saved from sin.

Jeremiah 2: 3: “Israel was holiness unto Yahweh, and the firstfruits of His increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith Yah.”

The 144000 priests or prophets of God. Not so much first in sequence; but first - (best) in quality. They are absolutely faultless.

Revelation 14: 4: ... “These are they which follow the Lamb where ever He goeth. These were redeemed from Epaenetus: among men being the firstfruits unto Yah and to the Lamb.”

Romans 16: 5: “...Salute my well beloved Epaenetus who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.”

Individual Believers:- **Romans 8: 21-23:** “Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of Yah. For we know that the whole creation groan and travail in pain together until now. And not only they, but

ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

James 1: 17-18: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

Have you noticed a pattern here? None of these scripture which paint a picture of Firstfruits are speaking about sowing MONEY!

2 Kings 4: 42: “And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.” Note that what this man gave provided food for many souls.

Yahweh is more concerned with the Spiritual condition of His people then them trying to appease Him with money. He can't be bought or paid off and remember, money does not have a spirit; it takes on the nature of the one whom possesses it, and Yahweh excepts nothing unless it it offered with clean hands and a pure heart!

Spiritual Fruit- To produce a crop one must sow seed. Pause a while and consider that basic agricultural fact. Without sowing there can be no harvest. It is exactly the same in the spiritual realm. Note that when Yahshua taught on the parable of the sower, he always explained that the seed sown was the WORD! Read **Mark 4:1-20**, in verse 14 Yahshua explains, “The sower sows the WORD! Same teaching is taught in Matthew 13:1-23, vs 19 states “When any one hear the **word** of the kingdom, and understand it not, then cometh the wicked one, and takes away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.” Yahshua always referred to the seed sown as the Word, not Money.

Sowing- Proverbs 3: 9: “Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of all thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”

Galatians 6: 7-8: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; ... ”

Sowing to the flesh is not just committing blatant sin. Sowing to the flesh means sowing in the spirit of error and self- interest. This includes: Pride, the first and most dangerous sin, greed, jealousy, envy and secret hate, misjudgment, an unforgiving heart etc. These seeds sown produce a harvest of nothing but heartache.

Sowing to the Spirit- Galatians 6: 8: ... “But he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Galatians 5: 22-26: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

I would add to this list, qualities such as: mercy, tender-heartedness, kindness, generosity, hospitality, compassion, good judgment, self-sacrifice, a sense of humor and the desire for reconciliation, etc. If you produce such fruit, the Most High will be leaning towards you with favor which brings you more than enough.

Matthew 7: 15-20 “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bring forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bring forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good

fruit. Every tree that bring not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

The Feast of Firstfruits is primarily about spiritual fruit and not MONEY!. I tell you our very lives depend upon the kind of fruit we are producing. Just as we do not expect young children to produce offspring, or young fruit trees to produce fruit; in exactly the same way Yahweh gives us time to produce spiritual fruit in our lives. Remember, we are a kind of firstfruits, all of us. Yahweh is looking for the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives. If He finds no good, spiritual fruit, it could end in being hewn down and cast into the fire! We are commanded to put Him first and to bring Him the best. We are recognized by others, believers and unbelievers, by our words and actions. We are known by our fruit.

In closing, there is a place to GIVE finances and the scriptures clearly teaches about GIVING. I always teach that you Give money, but you SOW your life. Your life is the seed, not your money. Yahweh sowed the greatest seed of all, His only begotten Son, Yahshua. We did not have enough money to buy our redemption, so we were redeemed by a ransom, but that ransom was not money, but the very Seed of Yahweh. In the light of these facts, let all of us examine ourselves and ask ourselves the question: Am I producing good fruit or evil fruit? That is the question we must address today during this season of the Feast of Firstfruits.

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