

When Was the First-Fruit Barley Sheaf Cut?

by
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The day of the week when the First-Fruit barley sheaf was cut, when the Wave Offering was made at the Temple, and when the count to the Feast of Weeks began, is *not* specified in the scriptures.

In fact, the events occurred at different times on the *same* day. Which day is relatively unknown by Sunday-keeping denominations because very few observe the Holy Convocations in Leviticus 23. Very few of the religious leaders teach they must be observed. This, even though the weekly Sabbath is the first of those holy convocations, and is the Fourth Commandment. Neither do they know, or teach, how to correctly determine the Scriptural Calendar.

Knowing about the Holy Convocations in the Old Testament is important because they teach the day when: Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread occurred, the Exodus began, the Red Sea was crossed, the Quail and Manna were provided in the wilderness, and when the Ten Commandments were given to Moshe.

In the New Testament it was a holy convocation when Yeshua the Anointed went in the synagogue in Natzerth and stood up to read on 'day of Sabbaths' (Feast of Weeks, Pentecost). He died on Passover and by his own prophecy was in: 'heart of the earth' three days and three nights, was resurrected and ascended on the first day of the week.

Scriptures clearly record Yeshua observed his Father Yahweh's holy convocations. So did the Disciples, Paul, the Jewish and Gentile converts, and the Apostolic Fathers.

For converts, the observance of the holy convocations in Leviticus 23 essentially began to end when the second Temple was destroyed in CE 70.

Keeping the weekly Sabbath by believers officially ended by an edict of the Roman Emperor Constantine in CE 325. The edict, made at the behest of the then Roman Catholic Church, changed the day of worship *from* the commanded seventh day Sabbath, *to* the first day of the week, a regular work day. Observing all holy convocations greatly diminished thereafter.

Religious leaders *must* know and teach how to determine the scriptural calendar in ancient times, especially the year CE 31 when Yeshua the Anointed died.

Most religious leaders don't know about: the interrelationship of the events mentioned above, the fact that there is a scriptural calendar, nor the importance of observing the *weekly* and *annual* holy convocations on the correct day. This was very important to the High Priest because only he could enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple on the Day of Atonement and he had to know the day was correct.

Neither do religious leaders acknowledge the sacred name of the Father and the Son. Accordingly, the deeper things in scripture are not taught to their members.

Yet the day when these events occurred can be known by studying Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16:9.

These same leaders, and many of their members, want to choose which scriptures are applicable to them. They forget they are but insignificant ‘clay’ and the ‘potter’ is the Almighty Yahweh who created the universe first, and them last.

They don’t want to admit it but the Ten commandments have *never* been *amended* or *rescinded* and are still in force as when Moshe received them, and are applicable to all.

One hears Sunday-keepers glibly state the commandments, statutes, ordinances given by the Almighty Yahweh through his son Yeshua the Anointed, are ‘legalisms.’ This is a term which they readily parrot, but when pressed to define the term they get evasive and uncomfortable.

Sunday-keeping religious leaders should know *why* and *how* the High Priest at the Temple determined the Scriptural Calendar. The *why*, because it is a prerequisite to keep the *weekly* and *annual* Holy Convocations obediently, and the *how* is to know when they occur.

The three events mentioned relate to the holy convocation called Feast of Weeks, in the Old Testament. In the New Testament it is called the Day of Sabbaths and Pentecost.

During the temple eras the Scriptural Calendar was determined by the new-moon crescent. This included the time of Yeshua’s ministry. After the destruction of the Temple the *calculated Jewish Calendar* came into use. That calendar includes Rabbinic traditions unrelated to scripture.

The Weekly Holy Convocation

The *first* holy convocation in Leviticus 23 is the *weekly* Sabbath which occurs every seventh day. The seven day week mentioned in Genesis was reckoned from sunset-to-sunset, as are calendars used by Sabbath keepers today.

The description of the Sabbath in Leviticus 23 is essentially a reiteration of the Fourth Commandment given in Exodus 20:8-11. The Sabbath can be traced continuously back to the time of Moshe when he designated Aaron High Priest, and his sons as priests.

The High Priest in the temple eras were responsible for many things, not the least of which was determining the scriptural calendar, maintaining the sequence of the seven day Sabbath week, setting the correct time to observe the annual holy convocations, etc.

The Annual Holy Convocations

The remaining holy convocations in Leviticus 23 are *annual* Sabbaths. They begin in Leviticus 23:4, and include: Passover, The Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, the Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and Last Great Day.

Reading Leviticus 23:4 carefully will reveal that a *date* is given for all remaining annual holy convocations, *except* for the Feast of Weeks (also known as the Day of Sabbaths, and Pentecost). The scriptures *require* the day of Feast of Weeks be determined by *counting*.

It will be shown the *count* to the Feast of Weeks begins *on* the first day of the week *after* the Sabbath which falls within the Days of Unleavened bread. On that day the first-fruit barley sheaf was *cut* and *brought* to the priests to be prepared for the Wave Sheaf Offering in the morning, and was when the count to the Feast of Weeks began.

In the foregoing, words enclosed in brackets have been inserted by the author to aid understanding.

In Leviticus 23:5 the date of Yahweh's Passover is: "in the *first month* [of Abib], on the *fourteenth* day, at evening..."

Leviticus 23:6 follows with the start date of the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread: "on the *fifteenth* day of the *same month* [Abib]."

Leviticus 23:9 mentions the Wave Offering, but the *date* on which it occurs is *not* given.

One knows that the day falls within the Feast of Unleavened Bread because: (a) verses about that day continue directly from those about the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread, (b) because that day is *not* described as being a holy convocation, and (c) and because the cutting of the first-fruit wave sheaf coincides with the barley crop maturing about that time of the year.

The requirements for *counting* to the Feast of Weeks are in:

Leviticus 23:15 "And you shall count *from* the day *after* the [weekly] *Sabbath*, *from* the *day* that you brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: 16 even to the day *after* the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days ..."

These requirements are reiterated in another book of scripture with words that link the day the wave sheaf is cut, to the day the count begins:

Deuteronomy 16:9: "Seven weeks shall you number to yourself from the time you begin to *put the sickle* to the standing grain."

The day of *cutting* of the first-fruit sheaf of barley, and the day to start *counting* to the Feast of Weeks, is shown to be the same.

But the *day* when these events occur is still not identified.

The Effect of the Calendar Used

People who keep the Sabbath and use the calculated Jewish Calendar are comfortable with Passover being referred to as the 'Preparation' day. It was the day in the temple era when preparations were made for the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This includes slaughtering a lamb on the afternoon of Passover, instead at the its beginning. The word 'Preparation' is seen in the New Testament Gospels.

Generally, Yahwists determine their Scriptural Calendar based upon the first new-moon crescent, seen in Jerusalem, *after* the Day of the Spring Equinox. The same was done by the High Priests prior to 69-70 CE until the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans.

Is a Weekly or Annual Sabbath Being Referred to in Leviticus 23:15?

Whether a weekly or annual Sabbath is being referred to in Leviticus 23:15, and, which day of the week the count began, is revealed by examining the two calendars used by *Sabbath* keepers today.

The first is the calculated Jewish Calendar, and the second is the Scriptural Calendar determined by the first *new-moon crescent* seen in Jerusalem *after* the sunset of the Spring Equinox.

(a) The calculated Jewish Calendar is based upon man's tradition.

Recall John19:31 says: "...that sabbath was a *high day*...". This statement identifies the annual sabbath, which in CE 31, was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That day *seldom* falls on the seventh day within the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Recall, the count to the Feast of Weeks in Deuteronomy 16:9 begins *on* the day the 'sickle is put to the standing grain...'. The calculated Jewish Calendar shows the 'sabbath' day in Leviticus 23:15 as the *annual* Sabbath, the holy convocation which is on 15 Nisan.

The following day is 16 Nisan which the calculated Jewish calendar fixes as the date of the Wave Offering. The assumption is that the Sabbath being referred to is the High Sabbath and also the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Accordingly the 'count' of days to the Feast of Weeks, if it were actually made, would begin on the day after which is 16 Nisan regardless which *day* of the week it fell upon.

Fifty days later is *always* 6 Sivan, which can fall on *any* day of the week. Fixing the date at 16 Nisan negates counting because the end date is always the same. This *violates* the scriptural requirement to count.

Most of the time in the Jewish calendar the intervening weeks to the Feast of Weeks are not 'whole,' weeks, which is also a scriptural requirement. Clearly, several scriptural requirements are *not* met using the Jewish Calendar.

Those who use the calculated Jewish Calendar for determining the date of the Feast of Weeks are not being obedient to Almighty Yahweh's word. The WCG used the Jewish Calendar for many years.

(b) The Scriptural Calendar is determined by the first new-moon crescent seen in Jerusalem *after* the sunset of the Day of the Spring Equinox. The High Priests did the same.

If Leviticus 23:15 refers to the *weekly* Sabbath, it could fall on any *date* within the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is because the scriptural calendar is based upon the lunar year. Since the lunar year is 10.87 days shorter than the solar year, the *day* when events occur are variables. It is why there *must* be a count to the Feast of Weeks in obedience with the Almighty Yahweh's requirements, and why an intercalary month is used about every three years.

The day after the *weekly* Sabbath is *always* the first day of the week (Sunday) which begins *after* the sunset of that Sabbath. The first day of the week within the seven days of Unleavened Bread is when the wave sheaf is cut, is when the count to the Feast of Weeks begins, and is when the Wave Offering is later made the morning of that same day.

Starting the count on that first day of the week: (a) ensures all the scriptural requirements in Leviticus 23:15 to determine the day of the Feast of Weeks are met, (b) the count will always contain seven *whole* Sabbath weeks and with the morrow, total fifty days, and (c) will *always* begin and end on *first* day of the week.

Since all requirements are met using the Scriptural Calendar, it proves the day after the *weekly* Sabbath within the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread, *is* the correct day when the first-fruit wave sheaf was cut and brought to the priests, and was when the Wave Offering was made, and when the count to the Feast of Weeks began.

Verses Which Confirm the First Day of the Week

The following verses relate to a day within the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The day after the weekly Sabbath is referred to as the 'first,' or the 'first day of the week.'
{From the Sacred Scriptures, Bethel Edition, bible}:

Matthew 28:1 "... Now *late* on the sabbath day, as it began to *dawn* (draw) toward the first of the week ..."

The verse refers to the forthcoming first day after the weekly Sabbath.

Luke 16:2 "... And very early on the first of the week, they came to the tomb near sunrising..."

Luke 23:54 "And it was the day of the Preparation, and the [annual] sabbath drew on."

This would be the *annual Sabbath*, first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Luke 23:56 “And on the sabbath day they rested according to the commandment.”

They rested on the weekly Sabbath which followed a work day after the annual Sabbath.

Luke 24:1 “But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb ...”.

This would have been the morning of the first day of the week (now called Sunday).

John 19:31 “The Jews therefore, because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the torture stake upon the *sabbath* (for the day of that sabbath was a *high* day).”

Our Savior died on Wednesday, 14 Nisan CE 31 about noon on Passover. The body was taken down, prepared, and entombed shortly *before* the sunset of that day. The ‘high’ day on Thursday was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

John 19:42 “There then because of the Jews Preparation they laid...”

The ‘Preparation’ is what the Jews then called Passover. It was considered a preparation day for the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

John 20:1 “Now on the first of the week comes Miriam of Magdala early, while it was yet dark, to the tomb and sees the stone taken away from the tomb.”

This shows she (a) came after the ‘high’ day on Thursday (15 Nisan), after Friday (16 Nisan) which was a work day when spices were purchased and prepared, and (c) after the *weekly* Sabbath (17 Nisan) when they rested according to the commandment.

John 20:17 “Touch me not; for I have not ascended to the Father...”

This first-person statement by Yeshua the Anointed was made early in the morning of the first day of the week (18 Nisan) which occurred within the seven days of the feast of Unleavened Bread.

John 20:19 “When therefore it was evening, on that day, the *first* of the week, and the doors...”

This event occurred on the same first day of the week as in John 20:17.

The Sequence of Events When the First-Fruit Barley Was Cut

This is the sequence of events related to the cutting of the first-fruit barley sheaf: Shortly *after* the sunset of the *weekly Sabbath* within the Days of Unleavened Bread, the *first day of the week* began. The first-fruit sheaf of barley was *cut and brought* to the priests immediately, even if dark. The cutting would likely have been performed by a delegation from the Temple.

During the night the priests prepared the barley (flailing, parching, grinding, sifting, etc.) for the Wave Offering in the *morning*, on that *same* first day of the week. The cutting, bringing, processing, and waving of the barley sheaf, and, the start of counting to the Feast of Weeks, all occurred on the *same* day.

All requirements of Leviticus 23:15 and Deuteronomy 16:9 were met using the Scriptural Calendar based upon the new-moon crescent first after the spring equinox.

The First of the First-Fruits Was Cut Off on Wednesday, 14 Nisan, CE 31

As can be determined from Daniel 9, Yeshua the Anointed's ministry ended about three and one half years in the midst of a Sabbatical week of seven years. It ended about noon on Wednesday in the midst of the literal seven day week. Yeshua's death occurred on Passover, 14 Nisan which corresponds to April 25, CE 31, Julian.

According to scripture, Yeshua the Anointed was entombed late on Passover afternoon just before the sunset according to Luke 23:54 "...as the Sabbath drew on..."

Yeshua's own prophecy about himself was that he would be in the "heart of the earth three days *and* three nights" (seventy-two hours). He was in the tomb Thursday, 15 Nisan, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; Friday, 16 Nisan a work day; and the weekly Sabbath 17 Nisan, arising just before the sunset that day. Yeshua the Anointed was *already* risen by Sunday, 18 Nisan, the first day of the week.

After Yeshua's resurrection, and his meeting Miriam of Magdala, he was elevated to heaven during the morning of that first day of the week. Yeshua presented himself to his Father Yahweh as *the first of the first-fruits* of the obedient ones.

About that same time it is likely the First-Fruit barley sheaf was elevated by the High Priest in an offering to the Almighty Yahweh for the people of Israel.

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