

What is the Importance of the wave sheaf offering?

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By Joseph F. Dumond

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News Letter 5848-054

19th day of the 12th month?5848 years after the creation of Adam

The 12th Month in the Third year of the third Sabbatical Cycle

The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle

The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

This is also the end of the Forty Ninth week of this the Third Tithe Year for the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow Deuteronomy 26:12

March 2, 2013

Shabbat Shalom to the Royal Family of Israel,

I am pleased to note that we had some of you going last week with the death of the crows.

Nice one Joe – “Caw” I was in hook line and sinker waiting for this huge scientific outbreak about the crows dying, or a new epidemic in the offing. Thanks my partner and I (at work of course) had a good laugh. Blessings, Esther

Before we begin, I am in need of someone who can video tape themselves translating the DVD of the Sabbatical years into sign language, so a deaf brother can understand it. They have The Prophecies of Abraham and want to understand the DVD. If you can help would you contact me. If you live in Texas that would be even better. Thank you.

For years I have been warning you of the coming famine. Some may think I am full of it. But this week I received a letter from someone who is an earth Scientist and who has read The Prophecies of Abraham and understands the curses of Lev 26. If my memory serves me correctly he also kept the Sabbatical year with us in 2009. I would like you all to read what he has said about the conditions of the USA right now. As you read this keep in mind that Australia is also being flooded and at the same time having severe to extreme heat conditions and are hurting as well.

Grandpa Joseph, Shalom Brother;

Just reading up on the state of our rebellion and read where the beef supply has taken a nose dive over the last 4 years. Feeding facilities are shutting down left and right, cattle herds are selling their breeding stock and slaughter houses are shutting down and laying off thousands of workers. The “big mac” may one day (soon) disappear or be so expensive as to have the same affect. Most of the “bread basket” of the world is still in severe drought and many areas are reporting there may not be enough soil moisture to germinate seeds, much less grow a crop. As a Soil Scientist/glorified ditch digger, I see this as more than just a potential disaster, this is surely judgement on a rebellious nation/world. Between low soil moisture and the

demand for this ridiculous “green” fuel, coupled with greater demand for food commodities, this would appear to be potentially one of the largest disasters to affect this globe that has ever been seen. especially with world population higher than ever before. Last fall I attended a Sukkot celebration in the Midwest, specifically to worship with brothers and sisters, but also to drive through primary agricultural areas to observe crop harvests and see for myself the condition of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. I was shocked. I spoke to farmers who had much lower production levels than the USDA was reporting. This was in Indiana and Illinois. One farmer said he was getting soybean harvests of only 20 to 30% of normal and that his better ground (which was higher in elevation, was yielding only 5 bushels per acre where if normally yielded 60 to 70 bushels.

I saw the Mississippi where in some places sandbars were visible while other areas were still navigable, primarily because the lock and dam system can be regulated to allow for barge traffic. Still barge traffic was being stopped every few days by barges running aground. The Missouri river, where I crossed, was not navigable. Wing dams were fully exposed, and sandbars were nearly meeting in the channel. Very little precipitation has fallen this winter, so I doubt anything has improved.

From a soil perspective, this stage has been set for many years. Soil nutrition has been neglected, much as a result of USDA policies that encourage minimum/no tillage and banding of fertilizer. This has caused a stratification of soil nutrients to the point of making these nutrients unavailable in low moisture/drought conditions, since these nutrients are generally positioned in the upper 4 inches of the soil, which is the driest under any moisture condition. The entire soil volume needs to be addressed for plants to have access to the nutrient they need in order to produce seed. Unhealthy plants produce unhealthy seeds, just like the uninformed cannot produce fruit and thus seed that is worthy of salvation, much less earning an elevated place in Yah’s Kingdom. I would echo you Joe, enough of all this back biting and fellowship ending disagreement. We must all nourish each other that we be edified as YHWH’s body/bride.

Joe, commodity prices have got to go out of sight. Our far-sighted USDA has again set a target of more than 1 billion gallons of “green” fuel production, when last year’s production fell far short of the “required” production. If an attempt to produce this fuel is pursued, It will just pull that much more out of the mouths of the world’s hungry, and mostly rebellious people. We have made such an effort to regulate our burning our children to Molech (read about the next generation before they draw their first breath), and to worship the Baals of our hearts, that I don’t see there is any hope for our Creator relenting on the famine and pestilence that Leviticus 26 calls for in this third cycle of this last Jubilee. I only see the potential for individual repentance/teshuvah that the believers themselves might be protected and provided for to whatever extent our Father is able to bless them. Read Eze 14:14- 20 about Noah, Daniel and Job being able to save only themselves by their “straightness” and adherence to Yah’s commands.

I commented last communication, that the “Prophecies of Abraham” are the best effort to date that enumerate the coming consequences of our rebellion, I reiterate that expression.

To me, some degree of famine is a sure thing and with the conditions that are currently in place, I don’t see how it can be limited. A time of testing and proving that we can be trusted to keep the Commands of our Elohim are nearly upon us brother and I pray your readers will fully comprehend and do whatever Teshuva their condition requires. I pray for all the Children of Elohim that they will have the strength and courage required to accomplish their individual purposes in the place they have been led to. We most likely don’t understand the extent of our calling that will materialize when things get really HARD. Please understand that none of us can accomplish YHWH’s will of our own volition. This is YHWH’s great work and He will provide for and use, those who prove themselves to be His.

Shalom Shalom

Opa Jim

You are now just one and a half weeks away from the New Year of 5849 after the Creation of Adam. Well maybe we are.

Read the report from Nehemiah about the coming barley search.

Aviv Search in Kassam Alley

by Nehemia Gordon

After a month in China, I continue to put my Sabbatical on hold to fly over to Israel and carry out the Aviv Search. The search will take place at the end of the 12th Hebrew month, on March 11-12, 2013. The Aviv Team will be examining barley all over the Land of Israel to determine whether it has reached the stage in its ripening known in Scripture as Aviv. This is in accordance with the commandment in Scripture: “Observe the Month of the Aviv” (Dt 16:1).

If the barley is Aviv by March 12, this will put the Feast of Unleavened Bread?(Passover) in late March and early April. If the barley is not Aviv by March 12,?the Feast of Unleavened Bread will fall out at the end of April and the beginning of May.

A slight complication this year is the timing of the new moon at the end of the?12th Hebrew month. This is one of those “borderline” sightings that cannot be predicted with any reliability. Specifically, the moon on March 12, 2013 will have 0.90% illumination and 47 minutes lag time. Visibility might be possible although in my experience unlikely. This means there are three possible sets of dates for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover):

If the barley is Aviv by March 12 and the new moon is sighted on March 12, then ?the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) will be from sunset March 26 through sunset April 2.

If the barley is Aviv by March 12 and the new moon is NOT sighted on March 12,?then the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) will be from sunset March 27 ?through sunset April 3.

If the barley is NOT Aviv by March 12, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread?(Passover) will be from sunset April 25 through sunset May 2.

Carrying out the Aviv Search and sighting the New Moon is vital for determining the true timing of the Biblical Festivals. To learn more about Aviv, please visit:

<http://www.karaite-korner.org/abib.shtml>

Please join us in this vital endeavor if you can by contributing to the effort. Each year we have seen costs rise especially in the area of flights, car rental, and fuel; fuel specifically, which is now about \$9.39 a gallon in Israel. Yisra'el has the 6th highest gasoline prices in the world.

Please make a tax-deductible donation using the button on the side of this page. You can also send a check or money order to: Makor Hebrew Foundation, POB#535579, Grand Prairie, TX 75053 or call Dev at 682-422-6007.

One of the key areas of the Aviv Search is the infamous "Kassam Alley" on the border of Gaza. The area is considered so dangerous, that the Israeli army recently started a program to plant trees along the side of the road to hide Israeli cars from being targeted by Arab rocket fire. This is an active war zone, so please pray for our safety. Nehemia Gordon

The Wandering Jew in Texas

I had another friend post this on our Face Book page.

14 days before Passover

Ex.12:2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Virtually ignored this the (New Moon) 14 days before Passover it is the first day of the first month – 'beginning' is the Hebrew ; 'year' is the Hebrew – This is the true and only 'Rosh ha Shaunah' in Torah – Yet it is ignored.

The false Rabbinic/Judaic 'Rosh ha Shaunah' is purportedly from Lev.23:24

Lev. 23:24 Speak unto the children of Israel <Yisra'el>, saying <'amar>, In the seventh <sh@biy`iy> month , in the first <'echad> day of the month , shall ye have a sabbath , a memorial of blowing <t@ruw`ah> of trumpets, an holy convocation <miqra'>.

As you can see with the Hebrew inserted the 'Rosh ha Shaunah' verbiage is not there. Yet most of the 4,560,000 results (that's 4.56 million) of a Google search attests to swearing how biblical it is sighting Lev. 23:24 of which no 'Rosh ha Shaunah' verbiage can be found!!???

Yet the world has been taught this whoee for centuries via the Jewish Rabbis and Religious Judaism in general inclusive but not limited to Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, etc. – Which most Messianic, Hebrew Roots, Messianic Israel, Torah Observant (wink wink) etc. buy into including the Christian Church.

Actually the false 'Rosh ha Shaunah' of Lev. 23:24 is a cover-up of another important day; Yom Teruah or the Feast of Trumpets. Yom Teruah is the 1st day of the 7th month. What is so very significant of this (New Moon) is that Yahshua did say;

Mt 24:36 “But of that day and hour no one knows...” (Mk.13:32)

Each of the 12 New Moons has to be sighted no one knows for sure until they are sighted. The 1st day of the 7th month Yom Teruah or the Feast of Trumpets is Highly Significant for it is the only mow`ed (feast) that has to fall on this sighted moon of which – no man knows the day or the hour. But it is hidden by the assertion of the false ‘Rosh ha Shaunah’

So instead of throwing up our hands and thinking no one can know – Yahshua was likely identifying the very time that we wait for – Yom Teruah but its importance is being hidden – as in the scrolls, bowls, vials and trumps of Revelation. Hidden by the usurping masquerade of the false ‘Rosh ha Shaunah’ imagination.

There are supposedly four Jewish new years specified in Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:1 (not Bible/not Torah) they are 1 Tishri, 15 Shevat, 1 Nisan, and 1 Elul. All of which carry the pagan month names from Jewish Babylonian captivity not found in Torah. Nisan was in the pantheon of pagan gods and fertility goddesses, which hides the only name given in Torah for any month – Abib (or Aviv – Ex.13:4; Dt.16:1).

These other new years are supposedly supported by non-Torah and in some cases extra Beyond Scripture (not Bible) literature. The point is; you cannot use anything non-Torah to redefine Torah to another conclusion!!!

Dt.4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you.

So when the evening of 3-11-2013 (or Abib 1) comes (give or take) Happy Biblical Rosh ha Shauna. Then on Abib 14 – Happy and Blessed Passover.

Yah’s Esteem

The 24th and 25th of February was Purim this year of 2013. It is one of the key dates in the Daniel timeline. Then they have 30 days until Passover and Unleavened Bread for things to happen. Purim is not found in Lev 23 and we should not keep it nor use it for understanding prophecy.

Well this past week I was sent this message below. Read it and look at the buzz words used by the Israeli government. Are they playing on the Daniel timeline hype as well?

Obama will be the first sitting American president to be awarded Israel’s Presidential Medal of Distinction.

Netanyahu, designated the visit “Operation Unbreakable Alliance” (or, in slightly less breathy Hebrew, Covenant of Peoples)

(A Covenant being made here)

The fraught Netanyahu-Obama relationship has been described as joyful as a “loveless marriage,” and Israeli officials are working overtime to make sure this is a successful visit.

(Like a wife who is getting things ready for her husband's return home, hoping to please him, and get forgiveness)

And no state visit in memory, including that of other American presidents, has been branded with a logo.

(Wow, just look at the language being used, branded with a trademark, a corporate signature)

An official from the prime minister's office said the efforts are a way to harness the "energy" the visit has generated in Israel.

(A harness, leather straps with metal pieces, used to subdue/control/direct)

An official itinerary has yet to be released, but various leaked drafts reveal a schedule full of symbolic visits.

It appears that the White House is angling for more serious policy coordination with Netanyahu on subjects as thorny as Iran's nuclear program and the moribund Israel-Palestine peace negotiations.

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/israel-andpalestine/130219/israel-netanyahu-nervous-obama-visit-logo-unbeakable-alliance>

This article was in every way carefully crafted, as the language used seems to be right out of the New Testament.

It will be quite interesting to follow the president's trip to Israel, especially concerning where he will be on what dates, and what speech and or speeches he gives, the topic.

And when arriving, as will he arrive on the Spring Equinox?

There is a drive taking place for the president to give a speech on Peace, you know, like maybe a Sermon on the Mount type speech.

Could this be the final usage of the term, Peace and Safety?

The Passover, and the Spring Feast will be starting during this time-frame, which is one of the earliest times for it to do so.

Very symbolic things taking place next month.

New pope to be announced in March as well, and the kings of the world will more than likely be heading to Rome.

When reading thru the story above, be sure and check out the other links offered up throughout the story.

I had someone respond to this email above which I had received, and their comments are below. The reason I am sharing these with you is because some might try and make this line up with the Daniel timeline. Force fit the whole mess.

Shalom Joseph!

As you know, President Obama is to visit Israel sometime this spring and according to Ynet News, he is scheduled to arrive in Israel at noon on Mar. 20th. The visit has been given an official name which in English is "Operation Unbreakable Alliance" but in Hebrew the name is "Brit Amim" meaning "Covenant of Peoples".

This name is driving speculation as to whether the covenant spoken of in Dan 9:27 is about to occur. Adding even more fuel to this fire is the fact that the spring equinox is to occur at 1:02pm on the day of his arrival. Also, as the March arrival date is just days prior to the Passover, many are also thinking that Obama's arrival is the antithesis of Yahshua's Triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

During this visit President Obama is also scheduled to meet with Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and to travel to Jordan so it is believed that the purpose of this trip is to make a push towards Middle East peace. Since election restraints have been removed, it is also believed that Obama will take a "tougher tack" with Netanyahu in spite of possibly taking heat from Republicans. This is of course also adding to the expectation that the "covenant with many" of Dan 9:27 could possibly take place during this visit.

However, since Secretary of State John Kerry won't be visiting Israel prior to President Obama's visit, there will be no serious negotiation points formulated by foreign service specialists for this trip. That means that the chances of a real Middle East peace agreement coming out of this are nonexistent.

Another thing about all of this that needs to be taken into consideration is Israeli politics. At the moment, recently elected Netanyahu is trying to form his coalition government and it is speculated that he'll be unable to do so and that re-elections will be called for. He has only six weeks to do this and can only request a two-week extension.

So, here's my take on all of this – for what it's worth;

The Israeli's chose "Brit Amim" on purpose as it sounds good to the Israeli people as to them it will appear that Netanyahu is going to try and make amends for his support of Romney in our elections and that he'll work to ensure US help in maintaining their national security. But, I also believe that this name was carefully chosen to be a slap in the face to sensitive Obama since all parties are well aware that many Christians believe Obama to be the anti-Christ and are looking for him to make the "covenant with many". So, it's a good "political pun" so to speak; it'll help rally support for Netanyahu as he tries to make his coalition government while at the same time challenging

Obama to prove that he's not the anti-messiah. IMO, it's a brilliantly crafted political ploy – and that is all it is. <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4343916,00.html>
http://www.nbcnews.com/id/50708906/ns/business-stocks_and_economy/

Obama and Israel: Community-organizing the planet?

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/israel-andpalestine/130219/israel-netanyahu-nervous-obama-visit-logo-unbeakable-alliance>

Brethren I have already read on some site where those who are putting forward the Daniel Timeline are looking at this as a full filament of these prophecies. They continue to ignore the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles and how they show the Daniel timeline false.

Almost all of the current understanding of Daniels 70 weeks is wrong. It is based on a wrong understanding and there for the conclusions are wrong. We are working feverishly on my third book Daniel's 70 Shabua which explains this prophecy word by word and shows you exactly what it does mean. It is actually the scariest 4 verses in the bible and it proves everything I have said in the Sabbatical cycles about the coming war. Please do not get swept up in the hype that Obama is the anti-christ. He is not. It is an evil lie that some are having you fall for.

Keep in mind that Satan who has deceived the whole world will if possible deceive even the elect. ASK yourself how? By making it look like the misunderstanding that is currently out there.

Here is an article by those who also believe in the Daniel prophecy. Although they too have it not according to the scriptures they also can see that certain other things must happen which have not happened. So give it a read and think. <http://www.cogwriter.com/when-will-the-great-tribulation-begin.htm>

I have one question for you. Many think 322 is the key date. That is March 22, 2013 for this whole Daniel false teaching. They believe the 3 1/2 years tribulation begins at this time. Some are preparing to flee which was the thing that angered me last week. You should know that the tribulation begins after the two witnesses have been killed. And they will have done a work for 3 1/2 years before that.

So where are the two witnesses and where is the proof that the rain never fell for 3 years as they would have caused? Again two large holes in this false teaching that many are blindly following. You do not have to be one of them.

I also received this in the mail this week.

Hi Joseph

You made a good explanation of the case for barley over equinox. I am of the view that this issue is a test – will we return to the agricultural markers which characterize Torah festivals or revert to Nimrod's celestial imposters? Today in the west we have lost touch with our agrarian roots, though our ancestors not too long ago knew and lived by them.

When this equinox issue arose fairly recently I noticed that along with our requirement to bring offerings of fruit and grain at moedim there are numerous scriptures which identify us as the fruit and grain itself – that is YHVH says we are the barley, wheat, olive, vine etc. Also those who go by the equinox method can only rarely obtain barley at the correct stage of ripening for the offering – if we bring the wrong gift we are in error.

Don't be discouraged by disrespectful critics – by their manner they reveal thier nature.

Blessings – T

I was listening to this blog talk radio show this week and I have written them to see if they want to talk about the Prophecies of Abraham in relation to the extreme weather we are having.

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/sottnet/2013/02/24/climate-change-food-shortages-and-thefuture>

It is a secular show and it could be a good way to reach a new crowd of people. Please pray about this.

The Wave Offering

There was a ritual connected with the feast of weeks or Pentecost season as some call it today, that the priests of Israel were to perform in the Temple or Tabernacle of the Lord. It is recorded for us in Lev.23:9-14.

“Say to the people of Israel, when you come into the land which I give you and REAP its harvest, you shall bring the SHEAF OF THE FIRST FRUITS OF YOUR HARVEST to the priest; and he shall WAVE the sheaf BEFORE the Lord, that you may find acceptance; ON THE MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH the priest shall wave it.....And you shall eat neither bread nor grain parched or fresh until this same day.....”

This ceremony was to do with the FIRSTFRUITS. It was a WAVING of the FIRST OF the firstfruits by the priest before the Lord. It was to be fulfilled before any of the NEW harvest could be gathered in, or used for bread, or eaten in any way.

Samuele Bacchiocchi has correctly observed that: “The countdown to Pentecost began with the offering of the first barley sheaf (known as the omer).....The purpose of the wave-sheaf was offering was to consecrate and inaugurate the Spring grain harvest which lasted about seven weeks until Pentecost.....The cutting of the first barley sheaf entailed a lively ceremony. The sheaf was cut in the evening, put into baskets, and held until the next day, when it was brought to the temple....to be ceremonially waved by the priest. The Talmud states that a priest would meet a group of pilgrims on the edge of the city and from there lead them to the Temple mount singing and praising God. Together with a priest they proclaimed: ‘A wandering Aramean was my father; and he went down into Egypt.....and the Lord brought us out of Egypt.....into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O Lord, have given me’ (Deut.26:5, 8, 9, 10).

When they arrived at the Temple, the priest would take the sheaves, lift some in the air and wave them in every direction to acknowledge God's sovereignty over the whole earth. Before the offering of the sheaves, no reaping of the harvest for personal use could be done (Lev.23:14). A portion of the wave-sheaf was placed on the altar and the rest was eaten by the priest. A male lamb was sacrificed as a burnt offering (Lev.23:12)" (God's Festivals, pages 170,171).

Let us back up a little to the time when these first sheaves were to be cut. This particular happening is interesting in its ceremony and also shows the time as to when it was done by the teaching of the Pharisees. The Sadducees disagreed with the Pharisees as to the DAY this cutting and waving of the sheaf was to be performed. The Pharisees taught the sheaf was cut the evening of the 15th of the first month, at the very beginning of the first Sabbath of the feast of Unleavened Bread. The Sadducees taught it was to be cut and presented to the Lord on the first day of the week DURING the feast of Unleavened Bread, a Sunday wave sheaf day.

Because among the religious sects of Judah the common people were in the main, followers of the Pharisees, it was their teaching of the cutting and waving of the sheaf that got center stage and the largest spot light.

Actually and technically, it was the Sadducees that held the correct understanding as to WHAT DAY the first sheaf of the spring harvest was to be waved before the Lord. It is not the purpose of this study to answer that question. I have done this in another in- depth, technical study paper that the reader can request from me.

In this typology study I want to focus on the RITES of the cutting for a moment, and not so much on the calendar day it was performed on.

This "reaping" of the Omer Barley offering was a special ceremony performed BY a select group of individuals, who performed the "cutting" and "bringing" of the Omer "on behalf of" all the people of God. This SPECIAL offering was NOT brought by each and every man in Israel.

Reading from THE TEMPLE AND ITS MINISTRY AND SERVICES, by Dr. Alfred Edersheim, page 258, we find exactly how this Barley Omer Offering was first "cut- reaped" and how it was then "brought" to the priest in the Temple.

Quote: " Already, on the 14th of Nisan, the spot where the FIRST SHEAF was to be REAPED had been MARKED OUT by delegates from THE SANHEDRIN, by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the BARLEY THAT WAS TO BE CUT DOWN. Though, for obvious reasons, it was customary to choose for this purpose the sheltered Ashes-valley across Kidron, there was no restriction on that point, provided the barley had grown in an ordinary field – of course in Palestine itself – and not in garden or orchard land, and that the soil had not been manured nor yet artificially watered. When the time for CUTTING THE SHEAF (Omer) had arrived, that is on the evening of the 15th of Nisan (even though it were a Sabbath), just as the SUN WENT DOWN, THREE MEN, each with a SICKLE AND BASKET, formally set to work.

But in order clearly to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked of the bystanders THREE times each of these questions: ‘ Has the sun gone down?’ ‘With this sickle?’ ‘ Into this basket?’ ‘ On this Sabbath (or first Passover day)?’ and lastly, ‘ Shall I reap?’

Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they CUT DOWN THE BARLEY to the amount of ONE EPHAH, or TEN OMERS, or THREE SEAHs, which is equal to about THREE PECKS AND THREE PINTS of our English measure.

The ears were BROUGHT INTO THE COURT OF THE TEMPLE, and thrashed out with canes or stalks, so as not to injure the corn (barley grain); then ‘parched’ on a pan perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched with by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. The corn (barley grain) thus prepared was ground in a barely-mill, which left the hulls whole.

According to some, the flour was always successively passed through thirteen sieves, each closer than the other. The statement of a rival authority, however, seems more rational – that it was only done till the flour was sufficiently fine, which was ascertained by one of the ‘Gizbarim’ (treasurers) plunging his hands into it, the sifting process being continued as long as any of the flour adhered to the hands.

Though ONE EPHAH, or TEN OMERS, of BARLEY was CUT DOWN, only ONE omer of flour, or about 5.1 pints of our measure, was OFFERED in the Temple.....”

In corroboration of these facts, the SONCINO TALMUD, a special limited anniversary edition of the Babylonian Talmud in English, published by The Soncino Press, tells about these procedures followed by these three men from the Beth Din (House of Judgment-Sanhedrin), to REAP this same Omer Barley Offering, which say:

“MISHNAH. What was the procedure? The messengers of the Beth Din used to go out on the day before the Festival and tie the unreaped corn in bunches to make it easier to reap. All the inhabitants of the towns near by assembled there. AS SOON AS IT BECAME DARK he called out ‘ Has the sun set?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ Has the sun set?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘With this sickle?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ With this sickle?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ Into this basket?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ Into this basket?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ On the Sabbath he called out further, ‘On this Sabbath?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ On this Sabbath?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ Shall I reap?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ ‘ Shall I reap?’ And they answered ‘Yes.’ He repeated every matter three times, and they answered, ‘Yes’ – ‘Yes’ – ‘Yes.’ ”

Again, let me remind you that what you have read above was the PHARISEE teaching and practice of the CUTTING and PREPARING the FIRST SHEAF for offering in the Temple by the priest.

They did it after the sun set on the beginning of the 15th of the first month, the annual Sabbath of the beginning of the feast of Unleavened Bread, and it was waved by the priest in the Temple on the day after this annual Sabbath, or the 16th of the first month.

This was the common practice of the Pharisees, and as the largest segment of the “religious” population belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, this practice was carried out and performed by the Temple administration, who in the main were Sadducees. Yet the Sadducees themselves in “theology” teaching DID NOT AGREE with this interpretation of WHEN this first barley sheaf should be cut and waved before the Lord in the Temple.

They said the waving of the FIRST SHEAF of the FIRST HARVEST, before the Lord in the Temple should be on the MORROW after the weekly Sabbath, which came during the feast of Unleavened Bread.

We have seen in past studies on the typology of this Pentecost feast, and especially concerning the typology of the WAVE SHEAF, or FIRST FRUIT cutting of the barley grain, that this FIRST SHEAF of grain REPRESENTED the FIRST of the FIRST- FRUITS of the SPIRITUAL HARVEST RESURRECTION to the heavenly Father, which was typical and was fulfilled by CHRIST JESUS, as the first of the firstfruits – see again 1 Cor.15:20-23; James 1:18.

The FIRST SHEAF of the FIRST harvest to the Lord, was offered or WAVED BEFORE THE LORD, on a certain morning of a certain day, which was also connected to the feast of Unleavened Bread. As this sheaf REPRESENTED the Messiah Christ, being waved or accepted by the Father in heaven, as the FIRST of the FIRST harvest of souls for His family, can we find anywhere in the Gospels where this typology was fulfilled by Jesus and heaven?

YES INDEED WE CAN!!

In John chapter twenty and verse 17, we read that on the day that Jesus appeared to Mary (verses 11-16) and was about to touch Him, He told NOT TO DO SO, for He was not yet ASCENDED UNTO THE FATHER!

Jesus was not talking about His permanent ascension to the Father for two thousand years or so, until His return to earth, BECAUSE later that SAME DAY, He appeared to his disciples and they DID touch Him – see Matthew 28:8-10.

These two accounts in the Gospels make it very clear that Jesus DID for a short while, ascend to the Father in heaven and return. He allowed no one to touch Him until He had presented Himself to the Father, and then after that on His return to earth that SAME DAY, He allowed Himself to be touched.

WHAT DAY did all this take place? A reading of the last chapters of the Gospels show quite plainly and without contradiction, that this ascending of Jesus to present Himself as the FIRST OF THE FIRSTFRUIT HARVEST, THE WAVE SHEAF OF THE FIRST HARVEST TO THE HEAVENLY FATHER, WAS ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK FOLLOWING THE WEEKLY SABBATH, DURING THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD!

The WAVE SHEAF DID NOT REPRESENT THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!

IT REPRESENTED THE CHRIST ALREADY RISEN, BEING WAVED OR ACCEPTED BY THE FATHER IN THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, AS THE FIRST OF THE FIRSTFRUITS, THE FIRST OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST TO BE MADE IMMORTAL FROM FLESH AND BLOOD. THE REST OF THIS HARVEST OF SOULS TO BE ALSO SO MADE IMMORTAL WHEN JESUS COMES AGAIN (1 Cor.15:23; 1 Thes.4:13-18).

THIS TOOK PLACE ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, AFTER THE WEEKLY SABBATH, DURING THE UNLEAVENED BREAD FEAST.

IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE THE SADDUCEES HAD THE CORRECT DAY AS TO WHEN THE WAVE SHEAF WAS TO BE OFFERED TO GOD IN THE TEMPLE! TYPOLOGY AND PROPHECY WAS FULFILLED. THAT WHICH HAD BEEN FORETOLD IN SYMBOLISM AND TYPE HAD COME TO PASS EXACTLY AS THE TYPOLOGY HAD PICTURED, ON THE EXACT DAY IT HAD BEEN PRACTICED AND PERFORMED FROM THE BEGINNING UNDER MOSES AND IN THE WILDERNESS TABERNACLE.

THIS SHOULD STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH BRETHERN. ALL THAT GOD HAS PROMISED AND FORETOLD IN PROPHECY AND TYPOLOGY, EITHER HAS ALREADY COME TO PASS, OR YET WILL COME TO PASS. WE CAN COUNT ON IT, WE CAN LOOK TO IT AS UNTO A LIGHT THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE, UNTIL THE DAY DAWN, AND THE DAY STAR ARISE IN YOUR HEARTS (2 Pet.1:19).

SO IT IS WRITTEN, SO IT WILL COME TO PASS!

That was written by Samuele Bacchiocchi.

I hope you too can see the awesome picture this day now gives us.

It is on the wave Sheaf day that Yehshua went to Heaven at 9 AM the time of the morning sacrifices. Sunday morning.

Do you grasp the importance of this event?

New International Version (©1984)

This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

New Living Translation (©2007)?That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people."

English Standard Version (©2001)?Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

New American Standard Bible (©1995)?Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

Holman Christian Standard Bible (©2009)? For it says: When He ascended on high, He took prisoners into captivity; He gave gifts to people.

International Standard Version (©2012)? That is why God says, “When he went up to the highest place, he led captives into captivity and gave gifts to people.”

David wrote about this event back in Psalms;

Psalms 68:18 When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts from men, even from the rebellious—that you, O LORD God, might dwell there.

Proverbs 30:4 Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!

Yeshua led a host of captives from the grave when He went to Heaven that day. That Sunday morning at 9 AM the time of the morning offerings. Never before had any man gone to heaven until this time. This is such a huge event I am beside myself why others do not or cannot see just how big a deal this was.

Now in all of this there is something to keep in mind. Before Yeshua went up to Heaven on this wave Sheaf Day, NO ONE, NOT ONE PERSON HAD EVER GONE TO HEAVEN.

Joh 3:13 And no one has ascended up to Heaven except He who came down from Heaven, the Son of Man who is in Heaven.

But what about Elijah the prophet. The Bible states that “Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven” (2 Kings 2:11)

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

“Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven” (verse 11). Elijah was now gone. The former followers and students of Elijah were now to look to Elisha as their new leader. “Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, ‘The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha’” (2 Kings 2:15).

Many readers assume that Elijah at that point was made immortal and taken to the heaven where God resides. This was not the case. The sons of the prophets knew otherwise. They knew the whirlwind had simply removed Elijah to another location on earth. They exclaimed to Elisha: “Look now, there are fifty strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master, lest perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley” (2 Kings 2:16).

The disciples were concerned for Elijah’s safety, so they sent out a party of 50 men to search for him. The 50 searched for three days but did not find him (2 Kings 2:17)

Another passage proves conclusively that Elijah was not taken up to live in heaven. The Bible records that Elijah wrote a letter to Jehoram, the king of Judah, several years after he was removed in the whirlwind.

Notice the sequence of events recorded for us in the Bible. Elijah's last recorded and dated act occurred during the reign of the Israelite king Ahaziah when Elijah told the king he would die for his sins (2 Kings 1:3, 17). Ahaziah's reign lasted only about a year, ca. 850 B.C.

Elijah's removal and replacement by Elisha is then recorded in the next chapter, 2 Kings 2. The story continues with incidents from Elisha's life, including an encounter with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (2 Kings 3:11-14). Several years later Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, succeeded his father as king of Judah, ca. 845 B.C. (2 Kings 8:16).

Jehoram proved to be a wicked king, leading the nation of Judah in rebellion against God's commandments. A few years into Jehoram's reign, and several years after Elijah's removal, Jehoram received a letter from Elijah warning the king of dire consequences because of his sins. This letter is recorded in 2 Chronicles 21:12-15

[12] And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD Elohim of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

[13] But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself:

[14] Behold, with a great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:

[15] And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

This letter proves that the prophet was still alive and on earth some years after he was removed by the whirlwind and replaced by Elisha. God had chosen Elisha to succeed Elijah as His prophet, so He bodily removed Elijah to another place, where he continued to live for at least several more years—as his letter to Jehoram demonstrates.

Another scripture people use to teach that we go to heaven is about Enoch. Let's look at this. Genesis 5:24 tells us that "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

Hebrews 11:5 adds: "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, 'and was not found, because God had taken him'; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

Some erroneously jump to the conclusion that Enoch was taken up into heaven, but notice the Bible nowhere says this. It simply says that God "took him." It does not specify where he was taken.

Yeshua later states in the Gospel of John that “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). One of the points He makes is that one passage of the Bible cannot contradict another passage.

This same Gospel of John reveals a startling fact very pertinent to this matter: “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven” (John 3:13).

Clearly, Yeshua was the only human being who had ascended into heaven. The phrase “who is in heaven” lets us know that this was written by the apostle John after Christ’s return to heaven. So even as late as this statement, no human being—and that includes Enoch—had ascended into heaven.

We later read about Enoch’s fate in Hebrews 11:5: “By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, ‘and was not found, because God had taken him’; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” The word rendered “taken” can also mean “transferred elsewhere.” And the New American Standard Bible says this was done “so that he would not see death”—a better translation than “did not,” as we know from the same chapter of Hebrews that he died.

Notice in verse 13 the summary given of all of the men and women of faith listed here, including Enoch: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13). So Enoch definitely died as well as all the rest.

I was not going to do this, but I may as well as some of you will no doubt bring up this point next. What about Lazarus and the Rich Man???

<http://www.askelm.com/doctrine/d030602.htm>

This section of Scripture has been more misunderstood by students of the Bible than many other parts of the divine revelation. There is a definite reason for it! It is the assumption that Christ is relating a story of literal occurrences, rather than an account rehearsed in parable form. The truth is; however, the narrative is a parable from beginning to end. Once this important point is understood, the meaning becomes clear and significant.

A sure and quick way to inflame the wrath of some preachers and Christian laity is to say the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man is a parable. They will not have it! The mere suggestion that the account is symbolic is enough to bring on the charge of “theological liberalism.” To many people today the normal bedrock of teaching concerning Christ’s judgment upon sinners, rests with the literality of this story. And one must admit, it shows a judgment of severest consequences! It seems to state, in vivid and graphic detail, the condition of wicked sinners after death. They appear to be conscious, in extreme torment, engulfed in flames that will never be extinguished and that they will remain in such excruciating pain for all eternity. And true enough, if the account of Lazarus and the Rich Man is not a parable of thoroughly symbolic meaning, this would be their fate!

Such a scene is so horrendous to imagine that it is no wonder vast numbers of fearful people walk down the aisle to accept Christ after hearing a sermon on the literality of the story. It never seems to occur to such preachers that this consignment by Christ to a never-ending judgment for sins committed in this short life, makes Him to be the most unjust and unreasonable person in the universe. Simply because someone in China or the Soviet Union (to pick two atheistic countries) never had a chance to hear of Jesus Christ and His redemptive message, and confine him to a never-ending HELL is beyond belief for a merciful and loving God who sent His only begotten son to save and redeem this world (John 3:16). However, this interpretation is part of the exact scenario being preached in many churches and revivals today. And let's face it, that is precisely what ought to be taught if Lazarus and the rich man is a literal narrative.

Thankfully, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the whole account is a parable from start to finish. What many people conveniently fail to realize is the proclivity of teachers, speaking in early Semitic languages like Hebrew (or even in Greek when speaking in a Semitic environment), to constantly use the symbolic or parable form of teaching to the people they taught. Christ was no exception!

“All these things spoke Jesus unto the multitudes IN PARABLES and without a parable spoke he not unto them. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.’”

- Matthew 13:34–35

Parables are a form of storytelling in which the physical features of some well-known subjects are exemplified to relate an essential spiritual teaching. On many occasions the incidents are greatly exaggerated to heighten the teaching. One famous example is that of Christ when he said the mustard seed was the smallest of seeds (when everyone knew it was not) and it becomes the greatest of trees (which again was not literally true). See Matthew 13:32. No one in the first century would have thought that Christ was stretching the facts. Of course he was! But it was a simple form of teaching that all people were using in that time.

Since we are told dogmatically that Christ was always in the habit of speaking to the people in parables (as a common mode of instruction in the Semitic world of the first century), why do people today insist on the literality of symbolic language, while people in Christ's day normally did not? Note one thing that the apostle Paul said which has to do with the fire of judgment, yet no one in ancient times (or even today) takes literally. Paul said: “If your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing you shall heap COALS OF FIRE on his head” (Rom.12:20, from Proverbs 25:22). This mention of the fires of judgment on a person was only intended in a figurative sense. It shows that a person's conscience would be “singed.” No literal fire was meant!

And so it is with the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man! No one with common sense could possibly believe that Christ was giving literal teaching. The whole thing is figurative from start to finish, and anyone who says differently should examine the matter closer.

Let us now look at the subject carefully. In no way should a person believe that literal acts were being discussed by Christ. Practically every detail of the story has a symbolic meaning to it, and this can be shown so clearly. When a person adopts an erroneous literality to the account, the message that Christ was trying to convey is destroyed and its true symbolic meaning is tarnished!

A Parable Throughout

The first thing to notice is the fact that Lazarus ate of the crumbs that fell from the Rich Man's table. Now, are the crumbs literal or symbolic? If literal, then tell me how Lazarus would have had enough to eat? A few measly crumbs could hardly feed any grown man. Obviously, Christ meant that the man ate the scraps (intended for dogs or other animals). However, the literalists would demand real crumbs, so they can get the Rich Man into a real burning hell!

Then it says that Lazarus died and was carried by the angels into the bosom of Abraham. Where was Abraham's bosom? Some people say it signifies the heavenly abode, heaven. In fact, the bosom of Abraham actually means the breast part of his body. Can they get Lazarus and ten million other redeemed Christians in that one bosom of Abraham? There would not be any room to breathe, let alone stretch one's arms. All people, however, rightly recognize that Christ is here giving a symbol. True! That is just the point that we wish to make! If one part is figurative, all can be!

We then find that Abraham is able to carry on a conversation with the Rich Man and that Lazarus could be seen with Abraham, though the text says that Abraham was "afar off." How were they able to talk with one another? If Abraham and Lazarus were in heaven (as many preachers claim today), it shows that the redeemed would still be in constant contact with the rebellious sinners in hell and that the redeemed would be seeing their tortured and agonized faces as they writhed in unrelenting pain. Indeed, they are close enough to be in conversation with them! Can you imagine the joy and happiness the saints would have while viewing the agony of all the wicked in hell for all eternity? But if this story of Christ were to be taken literally, that would be the outcome. What glory would it be to see your unredeemed father, your unconverted mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, wife or husband having to experience the rigors of an eternally burning hell without any relief ever in sight, while you bask in the sunshine and happiness of Abraham's bosom? And remember Abraham was close enough to carry on a conversation with the Rich Man. And the Rich Man was close enough to Lazarus to recognize him.

Another thing that is highly irregular of our experience is the fact that the Rich Man was able to speak at all. Would he not more likely be screaming his head off at the terrible excruciating

pain that he was being subjected to? Again, if the account is literal, we find a most impossible situation in the story. Even more than that, what does the Rich Man seek from Lazarus? It is not to drag him out of the fire, but simply to take a drop of cold water and put on his tongue. Why, the Rich Man ought to know that such a thing would not relieve his pain in the slightest! How can a drop of physical water give benefit to a spirit being (as the Rich Man would be)? The water, if literal, would turn into steam before it could do any good. And why did not the man ask Abraham to bring the drop of water to his tongue to cool it? Abraham was far closer to the Rich Man, or at least it looks this way because there was no conversation with Lazarus. What was so special about Lazarus that his drop of water would cool his tongue, but Abraham was not asked for any help?

The point is, the whole scene (though instructive and significant in what our Lord was trying to teach) is impossible to explain sensibly if Christ was teaching fact. However, make it a parable (as it truly is, remembering that Christ would not teach without a parable), then the message becomes beautiful and understandable. Again, everyone knows Paul did not mean literal “coals of fire on one’s head” in Romans 12:20.

The True Story in Detail

The story of Lazarus and the Rich Man is a parable (Matthew 13:34). Once this is recognized the interpretation behind the narrative can become quite meaningful. It is also very important to note the context in which the parable is found. There was a reason why Christ spoke this parable at that time. Christ had just given His teaching about the unjust steward who had mishandled his master’s money (Luke 16:1–13). This parable was told to further illustrate what proper stewardship is.

Let us first consider the identification of Lazarus. This is the only time in Christ’s parables that a person’s name is used. Some have imagined that this use of a personal name precludes the story being a parable. But this is hardly true. The name “Lazarus” is a transliteration of the Hebrew “Eleazar” (which means “God has helped”). The name was a common Hebrew word used for eleven different persons in the Old Testament.

When one analyzes the parable, this Eleazar can be identified. He was one who must have had some kind of affinity with Abraham (or the Abrahamic covenant), for the parable places him in Abraham’s bosom after death. But he was probably a Gentile. The phrase “desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table” was typical of Gentile identification (see Matthew 15:22–28). Even the phrase “laid at his gate” is reminiscent of the normal one used by Jews to denote the Gentile proselyte “Proselyte of the Gate.” This Eleazar must also have been associated with stewardship because Christ gave the parable precisely for the reason of explaining what represents the true steward.

There was only one Eleazar in the historical part of the Bible that fits the description. He was a person associated with Abraham, he was a Gentile (not an ethnic part of the Abrahamic

family), and a steward. He was Eleazar of Damascus, the chief steward of Abraham. “And Abram said, ‘Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eleazar [Lazarus] of Damascus and lo, one born in my house is mine heir.’” • Genesis 15:2–3

Long ago it was suggested that the Lazarus of the parable represented the Eleazar associated with Abraham (Geiger, *JuJ Zeitschr.*, 1868, p. 196 sq.), but for some reason very few modern commentators have taken up the identification. But once this simple connection is made, a flood of light emerges on the scene which can interpret the parable with real meaning. The Lazarus of the parable represented Abraham’s faithful steward Eleazar. And faithful he was! Though he had been the legal heir to receive all of Abraham’s possessions (Genesis 15:3), Abraham gave him an assignment which was to result in his own disinheritance. But the Bible shows he carried out the orders of Abraham in a precise (and faithful) way.

“And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house [Eleazar], that ruled over all that he had, ‘Put, I pray thee, your hand under my thigh: and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that you shall not take a wife unto my son [Isaac] of the daughters of the Canaanites.’”

• Genesis 24:2–3

Eleazar agreed to do what Abraham desired, although the fulfillment of his task meant the complete abandonment of Eleazar’s claim to any of Abraham’s inheritance—both present and future! Each step that Eleazar took northward to procure a wife for Isaac was a step towards his own disqualification. Eleazar recognized this, for he admitted to Laban, Rebecca’s brother, that “unto him [Isaac] hath he [Abraham] given all that he hath” (Genesis 24:36). There was nothing left for him! Thus, Eleazar’s faithfulness to Abraham resulted in his own disinheritance from all the promises of blessing which God had given to Abraham. They were now given to Isaac and his future family. That inheritance included wealth, prestige, power, kingship, priesthood, and the land of Canaan as an “everlasting” possession. But now Eleazar was “cast out.” He and his seed would inherit nothing. Thus, the parable calls Lazarus a “beggar” who possessed nothing of earthly worth.

Who Was the Rich Man?

The Rich Man was an actual son of Abraham. Christ had him calling Abraham his “father” (Luke 16:24) and Abraham acknowledged him as “son” (verse 25). Such sonship made the Rich Man a legal possessor of Abraham’s inheritance. Indeed, the Rich Man had all the physical blessings promised to Abraham’s seed. He wore purple, the symbol of kingship, a sign that the Davidic or Messianic Kingdom was his. He wore linen, the symbol of priesthood, showing that God’s ordained priests and the Temple were his. Who was this Rich Man who possessed these blessings while living on the earth?

The Israelite tribe that finally assumed possession of both the kingdom and priesthood, and the tribe which became the representative one of all the promises given to Abraham, was Judah. There cannot be the slightest doubt of this when the whole parable is analyzed. Remember that Judah had “five brothers.” The Rich Man also had the same (verse 28). “The sons of Leah; [1] Reuben; Jacob’s firstborn, and [2] Simeon, and [3] Levi, and Judah, and [4] Issachar, and [5] Zebulun.”

- Genesis 35:23

“And Leah said ... ‘now will my husband be pleased to dwell with me; for I have born him six sons.’” • Genesis 30:20

Judah and the Rich Man each had “five brethren.” Not only that, the five brothers of the parable had in their midst “Moses and the prophets” (verse 29). The people of Judah possessed the “oracles of God” (Romans 3:1–2). Though the Rich Man (Judah) had been given the actual inheritance of Abraham’s blessings (both spiritual and physical), Christ was showing that he had been unfaithful with his responsibilities. When the true inheritance was to be given, Judah was in “hades” and “in torment” while Lazarus (Eleazar, the faithful steward) was now in Abraham’s bosom. He was finally received into the “everlasting habitations” (verse 9).

“A Great Gulf Fixed”

The parable says that a “great gulf” [Greek: chasm] was fixed between the position of Abraham and Eleazar and that of the Rich Man [Judah]. What was this chasm? The Greek word means a deep ravine or valley — a great canyon with cliffs on each side. Its two sides were also “afar off” from each other (verse 23). It was “a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence” (verse 26). Note the italicized word “pass.” In all other occasions of its grammatical use in the New Testament, the word was used to denote a passage over water. And in Greek imagery of the abodes of the dead, there was usually some kind of water barrier between the righteous dead and the wicked — either a river or ocean. This is also represented in Jewish conceptions of the compartments for the dead — “by a chasm, by water, and by light above it” (Enoch, ch. 22). It was also common for many chasms (those described in Greek literature) to have water in their regions of deepest declivity. Let us now look at such a chasm from a Palestinian point of view. In that environment there is only one possible identification for the “great gulf” of the parable if it is to fit the meaning of the Greek chasm precisely. This would be the great rift valley between the highlands of Trans-Jordan and the hill country of Ephraim in which the River Jordan flows. This fault line is the greatest and longest visible chasm on earth. And what a spectacular sight it is! As one looks over the chasm he sees impressive cliffs on each side, a desert in its wastelands, and the River Jordan meandering in the center. Identifying the chasm of the parable with the Jordan rift unfolds a beautiful symbolic story well recognized in contemporary Jewish allegorical narratives of the time. In the center of this “gulf” was the River Jordan. It divided the original land of promise given to Abraham from ordinary

Gentile lands. The west side of Jordan represented the area that the Bible considered the original Holy Land. As the angel said to Joshua: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon stand is holy. And Joshua did so" (Joshua 5:15). When the Israelites finally entered the chasm of the Jordan and crossed the river, they then considered themselves in the Holy Land the land promised to Abraham and his seed!

Entering the land of Canaan (west of Jordan) was also a symbol of final spiritual salvation. The author of Hebrews recognized that Israel's crossing of the River Jordan under Joshua (and the taking of the land of Canaan) was typical of Christians obtaining their true "rest" in the future Kingdom of God (Hebrews 3:1–4:11). Even American Negro spirituals with which so many of us are familiar ("crossing into Canaan's land") are reflective of this early symbolic theme. Recall also that the Rich Man was depicted as being in flames of judgment (verse 24). In this same rift valley were formerly located the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which were "set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

"Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those who should after live ungodly."

- 2 Peter 2:6

When the allegorical applications are understood, the teaching of the parable becomes simple and instructive. The theme of Christ's narrative was true stewardship. Though Eleazar [Lazarus], Abraham's trusted steward, had disinherited himself from earthly rewards by his faithful obedience to Abraham's wishes, he was later to find himself (after death, when true inheritance comes) in Abraham's bosom. But the chief representative of Abraham's actual sons (Judah, the spiritual leader of all the Israelite tribes) remained East of Canaan as far as true inheritance was concerned. He had inherited all the physical blessings while in the flesh, but at death he was not allowed to pass the spiritual Jordan into the final Abrahamic inheritance.

Like Moses, because of rebellion, he was not allowed to pass the "great gulf" to enjoy the land of milk and honey. True enough, Judah had been blessed with the kingship, priesthood, the divine scriptures, the prophets, and other untold blessings, but he was not allowed to enjoy the true spiritual blessings of the future because he was unfaithful with his sonship and was refusing the true message of salvation offered by God's own Son. Christ said: "Neither will they he persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

The Final Appraisal

The only Gospel to carry the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man was Luke who was the companion of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. It showed a specific message that Gentiles could now inherit the promises to Abraham provided they were faithful as Eleazar had been. Yet Paul did not want the Gentiles to be conceited in their new relationship with God.

"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeks for ... God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear; unto this day."

• Romans 11:8

But “Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid” (verse 11). “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles [like Lazarus Eleazar]; how much more their fullness” (verse 12). One of these days, according to Paul, “all Israel shall be saved” (verse 26). God will show mercy on the natural sons of Abraham as He has on faithful Gentile stewards. This shows that the hades, the purple, the linen, the torment, Abraham’s bosom, the great gulf, and even the persons of Lazarus and the Rich Man were all symbolic and not literal. After all, the narrative was a parable.

Summary of the Symbols

1. The Lazarus of the parable was Eleazar, Abraham’s steward (Genesis 15:2).?
2. He was a Gentile “of Damascus” (“a proselyte of the gate”) who “ate the crumbs.” ?
3. He was disinherited (to become a beggar) but he remained faithful to Abraham and God. ?
4. When this earthly life was over, he received Abraham’s inheritance after all (he was in Abraham’s bosom) — in “everlasting habitations.”?
5. The Rich Man of the Parable was Judah. This son of Jacob had five literal brothers as did the Rich Man. ?
6. He was also a literal son of Abraham, while Eleazar (Lazarus) was not! ?
7. The Rich Man (Judah) also had the kingship (purple) and the priesthood (linen). ?
8. Yet Judah (representing God on this earth) was not the true steward of the Abrahamic blessings.?
9. Though he and his literal brothers had been graced with the “oracles of God” (the Old Testament) they would not respond to the One resurrected from the dead (Christ). ?
10. The “great gulf” was the Jordan rift valley the dividing line between Gentile lands and the Holy Land of promise (Abraham’s inheritance). Crossing the Jordan was a typical figure recognized by the Jews as a symbol of salvation.

Once these factors are recognized, all the points in the parable (with its context) fit perfectly to give us some simple but profound teachings of Christ. It shows that the physical promises of God (though excellent) are very inferior to the spiritual redemption that anyone (Jew or Gentile) can have in Christ.

Concluding Remarks about Hell

What are the consequences of sin? We are told by many people who view the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man literally, plus some scriptures in the book of Revelation, that it means to be in hell fire for all eternity. Let us also understand the book of Revelation is very symbolic! Though it speaks of the rebellious being tormented with fire and brimstone for ever and ever (for the ages of the ages), it is also the same book that speaks of Jesus Christ, equally in symbolic form, of looking like a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes in his face (Revelation 6:6 with 14:10–11). This section is, of course, symbolic as anyone can see. This does not mean that figurative teaching has an unpractical meaning. Far from it! What must be

discovered is the real teaching. Take, for example, the punishments God gives for sins. There are hundreds of scriptures that show God's retribution upon individuals and the world for their rebellion to Him and their harm to mankind. But the punishments of judgment are not to burn literally in a hell fire forever! Indeed, judgment is now on the house of God. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

• 1 Peter 4:17

No sinning saint is now in the fires of judgment. All people sin — alas, even Christians from time to time (1 John 1:8), but all are promised eternal life — yet they suffer the loss of certain wonderful rewards for the millennial period if they persist in sin,

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ... Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

• 1 Corinthians 3:11–15

The Bible says it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God when people rebel against Him (Hebrews 10:31), even though Christian people are sanctified, and their salvation is secure in Christ (Hebrews 10:14).

When the whole of the Bible is studied on the matter, it is seen that the judgment of hell after death is symbolic. People who have had some "near death" experiences and thought they were going to a burning hell, were having hallucinations inspired by their imaginations. 2 After all, people who have been taught all their lives about a literal hell fire to be experienced for all eternity, have difficulty in eradicating such things from their minds at the point of death — and this is more so if they think they are dying as sinners. However, Christ came to save the world, and He will do it!

The geographical area that was a symbol of fiery judgment was the Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) at the southeast corner of Jerusalem. It was the city dump. Normally, fires were set in the region to burn up the refuse. If dead bodies were placed there in time of war (or sometimes in pagan rituals), worms would emerge to destroy the carcasses. This is what Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:44–48 are talking about. Of course, the fires were in a separate area from the worms because worms cannot live in flames.

The whole thing was intended to be figurative in the first place. Gehenna (hell) was known as Tophet (Isaiah 30:33 with Jeremiah 7:31) and remarkably the entire area will one day become holy to the Lord (Jeremiah 31:38–40). There will certainly not be any eternal fires in Gehenna. (The "unquenchable fires" of Matthew 3:12 are fires that cannot be put out with water or soil until they have consumed all the combustible material.)

The truth is, it can be shown conclusively that the consequences of doing sin are NOT to be placed in a hell fire forever and ever. The Bible makes the issue plain for all to see if only people will believe its simple teaching. Many do not want to do this, and they insist on making literal what the Scripture allows only to be symbolic.

Look at this closely. It is simple and plain. All Christians know that the Bible emphatically states that Jesus paid for all our sins (even the sins of the world) when He died on the cross. If anyone disputes this fact, then the very essence of the theological teaching of the New Testament is thwarted.

“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” • 1 John 2:2

This is abundantly true! But now note this! If the consequences of sin were to be placed in a hell fire to be burned forever, then for Christ to have paid the penalty of our sins (so we do not have to suffer it), then Christ would have to be in that hell fire forever — always suffering the consequences of our sins. After all, the Bible says that Christ took our punishment. But Christ was alive from the dead some three days later, and is presently in heaven with the Father. He is not in an eternal hell fire undergoing the consequences of our sins! All of the scriptures speaking about the punishment of fire are symbolic. If they are not, then they would violate this fundamental theological fact of the New Testament that Christ paid the punishment for our sins without being burnt in any flames.

Indeed, what did Christ do for us? The Bible says, “He died” (Romans 3:34). And what are the wages of sin? — the consequences of sin?

“For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
• Romans 6:23

The result of sin is death — not life in hell fire or anywhere else! What Jesus did was to be crucified for us on the cross. He did not go into hell fire to burn forever — or else He would still be there!

One other point needs to be made. Some denominations say that the wages of sin are eternal death (nonexistence). But this cannot be true. If it were, then Christ (in order to pay the penalty for our sins) would have had to remain dead for all eternity! Yet He was dead for only three days! He is now with the Father in heaven and getting ready to return to this earth to redeem His saints at the resurrection of the just. Others have said that since all humans have to die the first (physical) death (Hebrews 9:27), it is the second death that Christ died for us. But how can that be? The second death is the Lake of Fire in the Book of Revelation (Revelation 20:14), and it is obvious that Christ did not go into any literal Lake of Fire while He died on the cross. His death was for us!

What Christ did do for you, me and all mankind was to make it possible for all death to be abolished (1 Corinthians 15:26) which He will accomplish in His own good time. Only "life" will then exist!

The fact is, the Bible makes perfectly good sense on the matter of the punishments for sin. It is when well-intentioned, but erroneous, interpreters begin to make symbolic scriptures to be literal, that all of the problems emerge. All becomes confusing and contradictory when this type of procedure is used. The story of Lazarus and the Rich Man is a pure parable from beginning to end. It makes perfectly good sense and tells a wonderful and significant story that any student of the Bible can relate to. Let us learn to leave the parables as parables! The Bible will become plain if we do.

"All these things spoke Jesus unto the multitudes in parables; and without a parable spoke he not unto them." • Matthew 13:34

Ernest L. Martin, 1984

Edited by David Sielaff, June 2003

1 In case someone wants to be silly enough to dispute the accuracy of Christ's symbolic language, would people today correct you if you said: "I am so hungry I could eat a horse"? Anyone with sense knows it is not literally possible for one to consume a horse in one meal! Everyone would know you were using figurative language and accept it.

2 It is also heightened by their bodily stress and oxygen to the brain. Usually, near death experiences reflect the beliefs, wishes and life experience of those experiencing the trauma. The apostle Paul died three times and did not indicate that any of the revelations from God occurred during those incidents. DWS

I have included these three proofs to show you that no one has gone to heaven. And that on the wave Sheaf day Yehshua came out of the grave and as Paul said He led a host of captives with him.

Look at what Mathew records about the death of Yehshua.

Mat 27:50 And crying again with a loud voice, Jesus released His spirit.

Mat 27:51 And, behold! The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And the earth quaked, and the rocks were sheared,

Mat 27:52 and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep arose,

Mat 27:53 and coming out of the tomb after His resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

When Yehshua died the grave were marked. They were raised just like the Barley being marked out before it was cut.

Then after the Resurrection of Yehshua, then these saints came back to life and went into the City of Jerusalem. This is at the exact same time when the Barley is prepared in Jerusalem at the Temple.

And the next morning when Yehsua ascended to Heaven these saints also went with him as the first fruits. They were part of the wave offering.

Now some of you will say what about the thief on the tree.

Luke 23:42 And he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

You can move the comma as some say so that it says I say to you today,

Or you can understand that the millennial day did not end until the year 85 CE. So the thief did go up with those first fruits on that millennial day. In fact I would say the thief ascended with the rest of the wave offering, that is all of those Saints who were resurrected when Yehsua came back to life.

SO this is the meaning of the wave sheaf and why it was so awesome; Because until that moment no one had gone to heaven.

And now you should be able to understand the meaning behind the second wave offering at Pentecost. It is then that all of those in the faith since this first wave offering will be able to rise up and meet him in the air and as Paul says. In a twinkling of an eye.

1Th 4:15 For we say this to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall not go before those who are asleep.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first.

1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall ever be with the Lord.

This is the next wave offering of Pentecost and this is the one that all the apostles and all the saints that lived and died since this wave offering in 31 CE, now wait for. That is right since this time in 31 C.E. no one else has ascended to Heaven. They all sleep and wait until the next wave offering takes place at Pentecost in one of the years during the Tribulation. I strongly suspect in 2033 C.E.

This is the importance of the wave offering and this why we need to have barley to begin the year. Now you can look forward to Pentecost with even more joy, because then will want to be apart of this second wave offering when all of those who died in the faith and those of us alive