

Shadows of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #36

Significance of the Barley Harvest

October 22, 2025

Feasts Are God's Appointed Times

Col. 2:17 They are a mere shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

In Leviticus 23, God revealed His plan for His seven feasts or appointed times.

God carefully planned and orchestrated the timing and sequence of each of these Seven Feasts.

Spring: Passover Unleavened Bread First Fruits Shavuot; Pentecost

Note: These 4 feasts have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

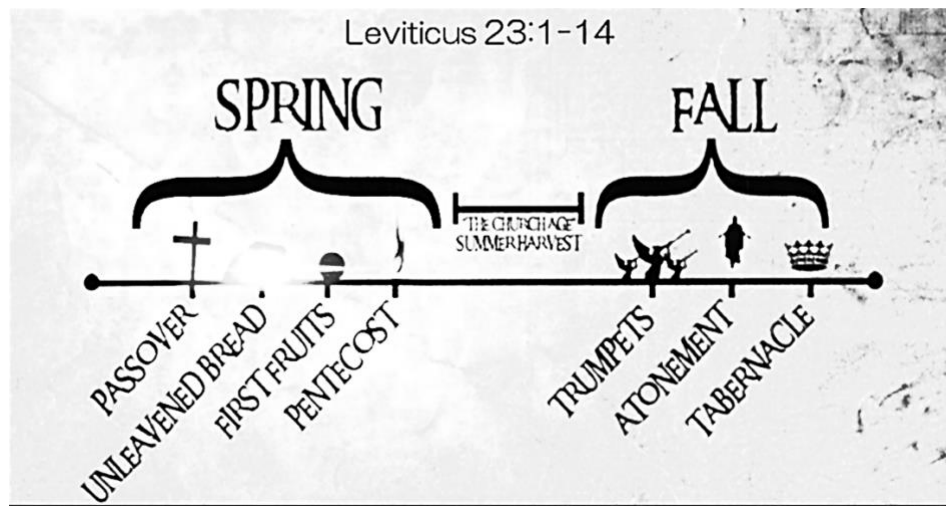
➤ Summer Church Harvest

Fall: Trumpets Atonement Tabernacles

These 7 special feasts demonstrate the Work of Redemption through God's Son.

These seven feasts were spread over seven months of the Jewish religious calendar.

- Nissan, the first month, was the beginning of the harvest cycle.
- Barley is the first grain to ripen and is associated with first fruits.
- Ruth & Naomi arrive at the beginning of barley harvest in the spring.



The Cycle Of Seasons & Redemption: The Barley Harvest occurs in the spring, a time of New Beginnings. It marks the beginning of the annual cycle of harvesting that culminates with the wheat harvest 50 days later at Shavuot or Pentecost.

- Between the 2 harvests, you are to count the omer. [important in Ruth 2]
- This timing is deeply symbolic of redemption and the ongoing work of God.

Ruth 2:3 Ruth begins to glean in the field of Boaz after the reapers. [barley harvest]

Ruth 2:23 Ruth stayed close by the young women of Boaz,

to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; [about 50 days]

Inclusion of the marginalized: The story of Ruth takes place during the barley harvest, showcasing how a Gentile widow was welcomed into the community through her labor and loyalty. This demonstrates how God includes the poor and the marginalized in His plan, offering them spiritual and physical nourishment and protection.

All About Barley in God's Word

Look for: God's Provision, Humility, God's Grace, Uses Humble & Unlikely, God's Multiplication

A. Barley is listed among the "seven species" of produce that symbolize the

➤ Blessings of The Promised Land.

The Israelites began to settle in the Promised Land at the time of the Barley Harvest. God was delighted to tell the Israelites what was waiting for them in the Promised Land: Water, natural resources, and seven species of plants that produce delicious food:

Deut. 8:7-10 For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. And you shall eat and be full, and

you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land He has given you.

Pomegranates: Israel harvests ~60,000 tons of pomegranates each year, about $\frac{1}{2}$ is exported throughout the world. They are loaded with antioxidants that boost our immune system, support our brain and heart.

Fruitfulness and abundance:

Pomegranates were one of the fruits the spies brought back from the Promised Land.

Pomegranates, associated with royalty, adorned the pillars of King Solomon's Temple.

They were a decorative symbol on the robes of the High Priests, adding a sense of majesty.

Exodus 28:33 *Make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn around the hem of the robe, with gold bells between them."*

The Promised Land is a picture of the abundant life Jesus came to give us.

B. Barley symbolizes God's provision, humility, and the sufficiency of God's grace, especially from humble or unlikely sources.

With a barley loaf, God can perform miracles, demonstrate His power to use the humble and ordinary to achieve extraordinary results.

Gideon and the Barley Loaf: Judges 7:13-15

When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade. And he said,

"Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat."

And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp."

The tent: Represents the Midianite camp, which was large and powerful.

- The interpretation: The dream is a divine message that God would give the victory to Gideon, not through human strength, but through His power.

¹⁵As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped.

And he returned to the camp of Israel and said,

"Arise, for the LORD has given the host of Midian into your hand."

The Barley Loaf: Symbolizes Gideon and his army, which was made up of seemingly weak and insignificant people, just as barley bread was the poor man's food.

Benson: Barley bread is a weak and contemptible thing, and in itself as unable to overthrow a tent as to remove a mountain; but, being thrown by a divine hand, it bore down all before it. That barley bread, the bread of the poor, the least of all breads, was Gideon.

Judges 6:15 My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

Gideon was an unassuming, humble and unpretentious man. Exactly the kind of individual our Father looks for, through whom He can perform great exploits.

This is very encouraging to all of us, that our Heavenly Father would choose to use someone of such low standing. Attention all weaklings! God may want to use you.

- C. Barley was the food of the poor and the food for animals, yet its harvest was a sign of God's provision, ensuring survival and sustenance.

What can God do when people give of the first fruits of their barley?

II Kings 4:42-44 One day a man from Baal-shalishah brought the man of God [Elisha] a sack of fresh grain and twenty loaves of barley bread made from the first grain of his harvest.

Elisha said, "Give it to the people so they can eat."

⁴³ "What?" his servant exclaimed. "Feed a hundred people with only this?"

But Elisha repeated, "Give it to the people so they can eat, for this is what the Lord says:

Everyone will eat, and there will even be some left over!" ⁴⁴ And when they gave it to the people, there was plenty for all and some left over, just as the Lord had promised.

The first fruits or the first portion of the crop was to be given to the Lord in obedience and as a sign of faith that Yahweh, the God of Israel, the covenant-keeping God, would give the rest of the crops. It was an act of faith that demonstrated the person believed God's covenant and that more would follow because Yahweh was faithful to His promises.

Elisha's response to the small offering exemplifies trust in God's ability to provide, even when the circumstances seem dire. The multiplication of the food serves as a reminder that God is the ultimate provider and sustainer, and His abundance is not bound by human limitations.

Jesus feeding the 5000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels—
other than the resurrection. Why so significant?

John 6:9 There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish,
but what are they among so many?"

Jesus took the boy's lunch, blessed it, and divided it sufficiently among the crowds.
He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is
lost." ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the
five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

Thought: Barley represents the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ who was broken for us.

12 baskets: 1 for each of the 12 disciples who were to spread the news about the Bread of Life.

This miracle with 5 barley loaves and 2 fish demonstrates God's miraculous multiplication.
It demonstrated Jesus' divine power, His compassion, and ability to provide abundantly.
Eph. 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that
we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

In all these Biblical accounts, the individuals were eaters of barley bread for one reason or
another. They all had needs that only our Heavenly Father's intervention could supply.
When they yielded in humble obedience to Jehovah Jireh, they ALL received miracles.

- Provision in abundance yet with no waste!

Barley, being the first grain to ripen, represents the first fruits of the harvest and is a symbol
of new beginnings and God's faithfulness.

It is the start of a new season of provision, redemption, and even the resurrection of Christ.

- To come at the beginning of the barley harvest, you were just in time to partake of the
joy and blessings of the entire harvest.
- Time when they expressed joy and praise to God. It was spring, a time of new life.
Hope Is Rising! It is the Beginning of Barley Harvest!
- Boaz, type of Jesus our Kinsman Redeemer, is coming.

Remember: When life is bitter, cast Jesus into your bitter waters.

Remember: We are studying men who are types of Jesus Christ.

We are focusing on the one who is to be his bride.

Question: Why did the Bible think it important to state that Ruth and Naomi
returned home during barley harvest?

Barley Harvest is the key that unlocks profound connections to Passover, Feast of Unleavened
Bread, Feast of First Fruits, Counting the Omer, Shavuot, and the NT celebration of Pentecost.
While the Passover itself is not directly described, the Book of Ruth is associated with
Passover because it begins during the barley harvest, which starts shortly after Passover.

The story takes place in the weeks between Passover and Shavuot, also known as the Feast of Weeks. The Feast of Weeks was in celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest,

Passover > Feast of Unleavened Bread> Feast of First Fruits> Count 50 days> Shavuot

The barley harvest is the first of Israel's two major grain harvests,
occurring in early spring during the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

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|-------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ➤ Nissan 14 | Passover | March/April |
| ➤ Nissan 15 | Feast of Unleavened Bread | From Nissan 15-21 |
| ➤ Nissan 17 | Feast of First Fruits | Offer first sheaf of barley crop |

1. The beginning of the Barley Harvest is during the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Feast of Unleavened Bread: Nissan 15-21

- Spans the seven days immediately following Passover.
- Commemorates the swift departure of the Israelites from Egypt
- The absence of yeast is symbolic of spiritual purity.
- It represents the removal of sin and impurity from one's life.
- Reminder of the humility and dependence that God desires
- People were prompted toward introspection, repentance, and a renewed commitment to live free from the contamination of sin.

Feast Of Unleavened Bread In The Promised Land

- Joshua & the 2nd generation of Israelites.

The Israelites crossed the Jordan River on Nisan 10:

- This is the same day Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on the donkey.

Joshua 5:2 At that time the Lord told Joshua,

"Make flint knives and circumcise this second generation of Israelites.

- This happened on Nisan 11 which would allow the men to heal for 3 days before Passover would be celebrated on Nisan 14.
- Uncircumcised males were not permitted to observe the Passover.

Joshua 5:11-12 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover, Nisan 15, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day.

¹² And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna anymore; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. [Nisan 16]

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| • 14 th Day | They kept the Passover: remember redemption from Egypt |
| • 15 th Day | Ate old corn of the land, unleavened bread, parched corn |
| • 16 th Day | The manna <u>ceased</u> - after 40 yrs. of God's feeding
Ate the fruit of the Land |

The supply of corn upon Israel's first entrance into Canaan was an earnest of the promise which God had made through Moses in:

Deut. 6:10-11: So it shall be, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, ¹¹ houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant...

Joshua 23:14 And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that

not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed.

The complete fulfillment is recorded in Joshua 24:13 I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant. ¹⁵ choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

2. The Barley Harvest is closely tied to the Feast of First Fruits [Nisan 17]

Feast of Firstfruits = 3rd Feast = #3 is associated with New Life, Resurrection & Creation

Day 3: God brought forth life from the earth; earth yielded grass, herbs & trees

- Jonah was 3 days/nights in belly of large fish. He came out to walk the earth again.
- Jesus was 3 days/nights in the heart of the earth. He was resurrected to Life.
- Jesus raised 3 people from the dead during His ministry.
- God's 2 witnesses will rise from the dead after 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ days of lying in the streets of Jerusalem. [Rev. 11:11 And after 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ days the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.]

Feast of First Fruits

The Feast of First Fruits is a single-day celebration that occurs on the first Sunday after the Sabbath following Passover [Nisan 14] and the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is a high, holy day. [Nisan 15]

Feast of First Fruits always comes before Unleavened Bread ends. [Nisan 15-21]

It is observed on Nisan 17. This one-day feast marks the beginning of counting the seven weeks that lead to the Feast of Weeks [Shavuot].

Since Shavuot takes place exactly 50 days after the previous feast,

this feast is also known as "Pentecost" [Acts 2:1], which means "fifty."

The Wave Sheaf offering is Part of the Feast of First Fruits.

The Wave Sheaf offering is the specific ritual that inaugurates the Feast of First Fruits, which takes place on the day after the Sabbath of Passover week. [17]

The offering of the first sheaf is an act of gratitude and acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over the land and its produce.

For every harvest in Israel there are 3 phases: First Fruits, General Harvest & Gleanings.

First Fruits 3 phases of activity: Marking Gathering Presenting

Marking & Gathering = Identify the first barley to mature and bind it in a sheaf - usually with a red cord to make it easier to spot.

Sheaf = omer - an amount of grain large enough to require bundling;

the traditional offering of an omer of barley on the day after the Sabbath

Presenting: This chosen barley was brought to the priest to be presented by waving it before the LORD at the altar.

Lev. 23:10-11: Speak to the Israelites and say, 'When you enter the land I am giving you and reap its harvest, you are to bring to the priest a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD so that it may be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.'" [Nisan 17]

Lev. 23:14 The Israelites were not allowed to eat any of the crop until the day the first portion was brought before the priest. The first fruits belonged to God, and the people of Israel acknowledged God as the source of their crops and their provision overall.

Israelites were to present the first fruits of the barley harvest to the priest as a wave offering on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. [Nisan 17]

- The Feast of First Fruits celebrated at the time of the Passover included the first fruits of the barley harvest.
- The Feast of Weeks, Shavuot, celebrated the first fruits of the wheat harvest,

First Fruits Is Prophetic Of The Resurrection Of Christ

I Cor 15:3-4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that He Rose Again The Third Day According To The Scriptures:

This was foreshadowed in the Old Testament by type and shadow.

Genesis 22:2-6 And God said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off.

⁵ And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the donkey; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

Consider: How long was Isaac "dead" to Abraham? 3 days
When did he get him back "as from the dead"? 3rd Day!

In Matt. 12:24, The religious officials accused Him of using the power of Satan
to perform His miracles.

Jesus prophesied that He would rise 3 days and 3 nights after His crucifixion and burial.

Matt. 12:38-40 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a Sign from thee. ³⁹ But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a Sign; and there Shall No Sign Be Given to it, but the Sign Of The Prophet Jonas: ⁴⁰ For As Jonah Was Three Days And Three Nights In The Whale's Belly; So Shall The Son Of Man Be Three Days And Three Nights In The Heart Of The Earth.

Luke 24:1-3 We know that Jesus rose from the dead on the day of the Feast of Firstfruits. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

²And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

³And they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

Early Sunday morning when the priests in the Temple were offering up the *First fruits* of the barley harvest [Nisan 17], Jesus, our High Priest was raised from the dead, offering up Himself as our atonement. He became the *First fruits* of the rest of the harvest of believers in Him.

Rom. 11:16 For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy:
and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

- The offering of the wave-sheaf sanctified the whole harvest.

Barley is associated with the Feast of First Fruits. Jesus is considered the first fruits of the barley harvest because He was the first to be resurrected with a new, glorified body.

His resurrection on the day of First Fruits fulfilled the Biblical festival, which involved the waving of a sheaf of the first barley. It was the promise of a future spiritual harvest.

Jesus's resurrection on that specific day fulfilled the symbolism of the wave sheaf. He became the "first fruits" of those who would be raised from the dead.

The waving of the barley sheaf was a pledge that the rest of the spiritual harvest (believers) would also be gathered and resurrected in the future, similar to how the offering guaranteed the rest of the physical harvest.

Jesus' resurrection from death is seen as the first of its kind, a promise that all who believe in Him will also be made alive. His resurrection is the "first of the crop" of the dead, signifying that a much larger harvest of believers is to come.

Ruth 1:22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the Beginning Of Barley Harvest.

Question: Why did the Bible think it important to state that Ruth and Naomi returned home at the Beginning Of The Barley Harvest?

Barley Harvest serves as a literal backdrop for the arrival of Naomi and Ruth in Bethlehem.

The Barley Harvest is a pivotal, providential event in the Book of Ruth that allows the story to unfold, specifically by providing the setting for Ruth to meet her future redeemer, Boaz. It is a time of provision that enables Ruth to glean in Boaz's fields. This timing is crucial to the plot, leading to their marriage and Ruth's inclusion in the lineage of King David.

- A time of Provision: The harvest represented a time of abundance and renewal in ancient Israel. It provided an opportunity for Ruth and Naomi, who were in a desperate state, to find food.
- The meeting with Boaz: The harvest season is what puts Ruth in the fields to work, where she happens to glean in the fields of Boaz, a man of noble character and a relative of Naomi's deceased husband.
- Symbol of Hope: The harvest symbolizes new beginnings, hope, and God's providence, which parallels the spiritual renewal that Naomi and Ruth would experience.
- A setting for Redemption: The harvest's timing makes it possible for the kinsman-redeemer custom to be initiated, as Boaz is able to legally and generously protect and provide for Ruth during this time.

God is the Master Orchestrator. He is the One who allowed Naomi to hear about the good fortunes of the people of Israel that prompted her to return in the first place.

- God has been merciful to His people by replacing the famine with fertility.
- He is the One who will give the harvest.