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the Spring Feasts of Israel
Matzot & Reshit
the Feast of Unleavened Bread

by haRold Smith
a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

"On the fifteenth day of the same month is **the festival of matzot**; for seven days you are to eat matzah (unleavened bread). Leviticus 23:6

"When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring an omer (sheaf [of Barley]) of **the firstfruits of your harvest** to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before YaHoVeH, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." Leviticus 23:10-11

"You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the omer of the wave offering. **You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath**. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to YaHoVeH." Leviticus 23:15-16

Although the traditional, orthodox religion of Judaism has counted them as one eight day feast, scripture tells us there

are actually two separate feasts. **Pesach** ([click on highlighted words to view content](#)). (what has been co-opted by Christianity as "Passover") is the first of the Feasts of YaHoVeH that would be given to them through Moses and the second was the Feast of *Matzot* (Unleavened Bread). YaHoVeH would give the children of Jacob (renamed "Israel") five more Feasts but *Pesach* is predominate. Israel had been in the land of Egypt for 430 years. The time of this event would be the last night they would spend as slaves in Egypt. YaHoVeH had already given out nine plagues against Pharaoh and the tenth one was about to come. On the 10th day of the first month (Nisan) of the year, they were to take a lamb and set it aside from all the other lambs to examine it for four days. Then on the 14th day of the first month they were to kill the lamb, put **the blood** of the lamb on the lintel and on the two side posts of the door of their homes. Then they were to roast the lamb and eat it in their homes, for on this night YaHoVeH was coming through the land (not a "death angel") and wherever He saw the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of the home, He would "pass over" that home, sparing the first born in that home. This night Israel would experience national deliverance by the hand of YaHoVeH from Pharaoh. This was the beginning of the exodus to the land of Canaan that YaHoVeH had promised to them in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Beginning the day after the Feast of *Pesach* is the week-long Feast of *Matzot* (English Unleavened Bread) celebrated in the Land of Israel with an excitement that is truly remarkable to experience. From a balcony overlooking the hillside upon which a settlement is built, the songs being sung from other homes nearby by the men, women and children of this Land wafts up from every corner of the canyon floor, swirling past one's ears with an unabashed exuberance as they made their way upward - a sweet smelling scent in the nostrils of **YaHoVeH**. Being quietly secluded from above offers a vantage point to be able to view the events taking place on the portico below of another small group as they suddenly arose from the table where they had been eating. Singing joyously loud they locked arms and proceeded to dance with abandon to the music they voiced, extolling this God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was a moment that personified the Spirit resonating throughout this wonderful Land of inheritance. Both *Pesach* and *Matzot* commemorate the time when the Israelites left Egypt under the mighty hand of power of this One True Holy One of Israel to cross the Red Sea, redeemed from the yoke of bondage to walk in freedom. Yeshua kept this feast of *Pesach* Himself as a holy convocation in [Luke 22:7-20](#). In like manner, those of us who have embraced the Words of YaHoVeH exemplified in the Life of Yeshua ([Exodus 20:1-17](#)), remember our deliverance from bondage through the blood of the Lamb (just as Israel was delivered from Egypt in the Exodus).

The second feast, *Matzot*, demonstrates a holy walk. In scripture, the **figurative imagery** relating to sin is leaven and the *Elohim* of Israel asked for a week of eating "sinless" bread. The bread they took with them was not puffed up, it was baked without yeast - it was unleavened. There simply was not time, in their haste to leave, to allow the bread to rise. Even in Israel right now, for days preceding the *Pesach Seder* (meal), in remembrance of this time of deliverance, stores quit selling bread and every crumb of leaven is swept from and thrown out of the houses of the people. Following the rabbinical orthodox tradition, before *Matzot* begins there are some preparations to accomplish. First, a week or so before *Pesach*, the whole house must be cleaned. The purpose of this is to remove all leaven from the house (**Exodus 12:19-20; 13:7-8**). Until all leaven is removed from the house it is not worthy for the feasts to be celebrated. Then the evening before *Pesach* the husband of the house will take the children with him, a candle, a feather and a wooden spoon, and they will search the house for leaven. He is conducting a religious ceremony in which he symbolically searches for the last vestige of leaven in every room of the house. Usually, it is the wife who has cleaned the house, but in ten different locations she has left pieces of leaven for the husband and children to find. When they find the 10 pieces, the husband takes the leaven on the wooden spoon along with the feather and candle, wraps them in a linen napkin, and takes it outside to a fire in the backyard (bonfire in city locations), and throws it all into the fire. In so doing it states that this house is now worthy to celebrate the feasts. As we walk in Yeshua, "the Bread of Life," we don't "abolish" *Matzot* but, rather, **in elevating it** we demonstrate a continuous keeping of this feast - which is exactly our instruction from the Hebrew Apostle *Sha'ul* in **1Corinthians 5:8**.

"For as by a man came death by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Yeshua shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Yeshua the firstfruit, then at his coming those who belong to Yeshua."

The Feast of *Reshit* (Firstfruit - **11Corinthians 15:21-23** above) is actually a feast within a feast, a celebration of the firstfruit of the barley harvest that begins the day following the Feast of *Pesach* (but only after a *Shabbat* - **Leviticus 23:10-11**). Since *Reshit* is celebrated only after a *Shabbat* means it could happen anywhere within the week-long feast of *Matzot*. *Reshit* is where the first collected sheaf of barley (known as an omer) is waved before YaHoVeH to honor His Goodness of provision for the children of Israel. Yeshua fulfilled this feast by being resurrected on the day of the feast. The question is, other Hebrew people were resurrected from the dead, so how is Yeshua the Firstfruit of Resurrection? The answer is because there are two types of resurrections: The first type is merely a restoration back to natural life. This means that one would die again later; those who were raised before the Resurrection of Yeshua all died again. The second type of resurrection is true resurrection life when *"...mortality puts on immortality and corruption puts on incorruption"* and one is no longer subject to death (**1Corinthians 15:53-54**). When Yeshua was raised from the dead He was no longer subject to death. This is the Firstfruit of the resurrection. The term *Reshit* means that there is more to come. When the priest waved the omer of the barley harvest before YaHoVeH as the Firstfruit he was thanking YaHoVeH for the abundant harvest that they were about to have. The firstfruit were the very first of the harvest, as it was only the beginning of the abundance of the harvest that was about to follow. Messiah Yeshua, the Firstfruit of the Resurrection, meant that He was the first of the resurrection that would never see death again. The abundance of the harvest of the resurrection means that there will be an abundance of resurrections in the future at the Day of YaHoVeH (**Zechariah 14:5**). Yeshua gave His Father His proper First Fruits offering; graves were opened, dead people rose and were seen after His resurrection in Jerusalem (**Matthew 27:53**). Our Lord, not unlike any farmer of the soil, gratefully brought before the Father a few early "crops" of what will be a magnificent harvest later on.



Rbarley sheaves - esurrected Firstfruit

With this third feast, however, Christianity has confused the issue by substituting an ancient pagan fertility rite with the original directions of **Leviticus 23:10-11**. Today, Christianity has an amalgam of a Babylonian festival with a scriptural holy convocation calling it "Easter." As it happens, since YaHoVeH uses the things that come up out of the ground spontaneously and miraculously after the long, dead winter to represent the Resurrection of Yeshua, where Easter is concerned, Christianity has confused a pagan ritual with Firstfruit. Each spring, the Babylonians saw the genuine first fruits of the ground and assumed it would be a fine time to ask their goddess, Ishtar (Easter), for new babies. They worshiped the things in nature which represented fertility, such as the rabbit and the egg. The people wore new costumes, in keeping with the new buds on the trees and shrubbery. Today, we continue the Babylonian rite with our Easter Bunny and our painted eggs and our new outfits for the Easter Parade. An egg

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hunt, of course, represents the attempt to conceive a baby (see [No Other God](#) for more on the origin of Easter), .
The first day of *Matzot* is also the first day of the "Counting of the Omer" - the forty-nine days leading up to the *Feast of Shavu'ot* (what has been co-opted by Christianity and re-named as Pentecost) on the fiftieth day.

Matzot & Reshit, a discussion

***"By this all will know that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another (the brethren)."***

John 13:35

the Spring Feasts of Israel
Part One: Pesach - 3Days&3Nights
Part Two: Matzot & FirstFruit
Part Three: Shavu'ot



???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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