

Abib, Wavesheaf, Bride and the Plan of Salvation

by Brian Convery, December 25, 2003

INTRODUCTION

We are told in John 4:23,

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.”

Yes, at this time we are to be worshipping the Father as He has commanded, in spirit, and in truth. So how do we do this? Where do we start? Who will show us the way?

The answer to all 3 of these questions is to be found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

So what is our part in it?

2 Timothy 2:15,

“Earnestly study to show yourself approved to God, a workman unashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Each and every individual who wishes to worship the Father in spirit and in truth has both the moral and the commanded responsibilities to PERSONALLY seek out how to complete that task from the inspired scriptures, the very word of God. There is no other way to do it. It is a very personal undertaking. Others can assist along the way but that is all they can do, for it is up to YOU!

Our loving Creator has set up a wonderful plan of Salvation for all of mankind. It is about the creation of an Eternal Family with all its various components. The apostle Paul teaches us the following in Ephesians 3:14-15,

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the entire family in heaven and earth is named.”

The plan of Salvation is for all of creation and can be seen throughout it as we are told in Romans 1:20,

“For the unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things made, both His eternal power and Godhead, for them to be without excuse.”

As well it is patterned throughout the entire bible.

Many do not understand this plan, its process, or where to find it depicted in the scriptures. Few realize it is detailed, and in fact characterized, in the commanded Festival and Sabbath observances of God.

Today we are going to show you a mystery as the apostle Paul refers to it. This hidden truth is a key to worshipping the Father in both spirit and truth.

We are taught by Christ in Matthew 5:17-18,

“Do not think that I came to annul the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to annul, but to make fuller. Truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, in no way shall one iota or one tittle pass away from the Law until all comes to pass.”

All has not come to pass! Much of what is foretold in the scriptures has yet to occur. At this time we are only at the onset of the incredible plan of salvation. There is much yet to happen. Christ continually instructed the disciples and thus us, that the plan of salvation was tied to a theme of agriculture and it's harvests in the land of Israel. We are going to see just why He did so and how you individually have a responsibility to understand and observe these wonderful events commanded by God.

In Colossians 2:16-17 we read,

“Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a feast day or a new moon or Sabbaths which are a foreshadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.”

These are decisive words for one who has set his heart to worship the Father in spirit and truth. We are not to be affected by the naysayers and mockers of the body of Christ. We are to be striving to be at one with our Christ, with no one coming between us. Only then will

we be learning to correctly worship our Father.

The Feast days, New Moons, and Sabbaths hold the key to understanding the magnificent reality of what is in store for us. They are rehearsals of the real thing to come.

In Leviticus 23:2 we read,

“Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them. The set appointed times of the Lord which you shall proclaim holy gatherings, shall be these. These are My set appointed times.”

We can continue on through the chapter and receive instruction about each of these set appointed times or feasts which are to be holy gatherings, times of public rehearsal, a foreshadow of the reality of the plan of salvation. At present we are involved with the first phase of that plan. As we read through this incredible chapter we see that God ties each of these specific festivals (moedim, set appointed times) and Sabbaths to specific months, days, and series of days in the year. God has left us with this very specific instruction, so that those who seek to worship Him in spirit and truth will be able to do just that, at the very times He commands.

In brief we are told that the weekly Sabbath is on the 7th day, the Passover of the Lord is on the 14th day of the first month, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is in the first month from the 15th through the 21st day, the Feast of Pentecost is 50 days count from the first day of the week (Sunday) which falls during the 7 day festival of UB, the Feast of Trumpets is the 1st day of the 7th month, the Feast of Atonement is the 10th day of the 7th month, the Feast of Tabernacles is the 15th through the 21st of the 7th month and the Feast of the Great Last Day is the 22nd day of the 7th month. It is apparent that God has set a calendar in place to determine these eventful days. It is extremely important that this fact be established in all our minds. It is not by chance that God used the Hebrew word “moedim” to describe these days. Most translators convert it to the English word “Feast”. Its basic meaning is quite simple, “set appointed times,” which so accurately depicts God’s intent. These great moments in the calendar year are so extremely important to God and thus to us that He emphasizes it

in verse 37 of this chapter beyond a shadow of a doubt.

“These are the set appointed times of the Lord which you shall proclaim holy gatherings of public rehearsals, to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering and grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, EVERYTHING ON ITS DAY.”

Many naysayers and mockers of the body of Christ say none of this is of any importance any longer. Does that hold up to the scriptures? Certainly not!

We will read shortly from some New Covenant scriptures to show that Christ kept these set appointed times and so did His disciples many decades after His death. But first let’s review a few of the Old Covenant scriptures which teach us these Festivals and Sabbaths are to be kept now and will be kept in the future.

Exodus 31:13,

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you.”

And verse 17,

“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

Once again God tells us of the importance of these days. They will be important to Him for how long? FOREVER! God here tied that importance as well, to the creation of heaven and earth. We will get to that shortly.

In Ezekiel 20:19-20 we read,

“I am the Lord your God: walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.”

The scoffers in turn state all this is done away with. That’s right, even the clear statements of God that tell us it will be in effect and important to Him forever.

Let’s look to the time after the return of Christ. Ezekiel 46:3,

“Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before the Lord on the Sabbaths and the New Moons.”

Verse 9,

“But when the people of the land come before the Lord on the appointed feast days, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate; and whoever enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. He shall not return by way of the gate through which he came but shall go out through the opposite gate.”

Zechariah 14:16-17,

“ And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem shall go up year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, on them there will be no rain.”

Remember we are to rightly divide the word of truth for all scripture is given to us by the inspiration of God to be used in determining doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. That is what we are doing here today. It is so very vital to our ability to worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth. Jesus the Christ did that very thing and set the example for us.

Matthew 12:8,

“For the Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath.”

Mark 1:21, 6:2 and Luke 4:16 show us it was His custom to keep the Sabbath day. In Luke 22:15 we see Christ and His disciples keeping the Passover of the Lord. In John 7:37 we see Christ keeping the Feast of Tabernacles and the Great Last Day.

In Acts 18:4 we see Paul keeping to this command. In 1 Corinthians 5:8 we see Paul keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread and teaching others to do likewise. In 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 we see Paul teaching the keeping of the Passover of the Lord.

There are many more examples we could turn to, but it

is evident that these important set appointed times of meeting between God and those whom truly wish to worship Him, were, are, and will be kept, throughout the time periods delineated in the scriptures from cover to cover. So being armed with this understanding and conviction that we must be keeping these very specific days appointed by God on the day and in the month He has commanded, let's once again, as we always do, turn to the inspired word of God for instruction.

Remember Christ said, “I will never leave nor forsake you.” So let's get into the technical aspects of this study and see that God has set this knowledge before all who would seek it out.

We read earlier that God has a first month and a seventh month in Leviticus 23. This obviously means that God has left us the means of determining how to select these days and months. Once again God has a calendar and we are to know how to use it in our pursuit of worshipping the Father.

In this study we will focus on the first phase of the plan of Salvation, the building of the family of God, to determine where the Abib fits in and the part we as the Body of Christ play in that.

SCRIPTURAL COMMANDS

In Leviticus 23 we receive a lot of instruction as to the plan of salvation. Here we are taught the names of the feasts of the Lord, their dates, and their timeline in prophesy, and key elements about each of them.

However we do not receive all we are to know about each of these individual feasts in this chapter.

Remember how God teaches us from the scriptures.

Isaiah 28:9-10,

“Whom will He teach knowledge? And whom will He make to understand the message? [2 very clear questions asked and now comes the answers] those weaned from milk and those drawn from the breasts. [Not babes but maturing individuals who can eat on their own, now the method!] For precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little there a little.”

It should be obvious to all that God has placed patterns

of doctrine running throughout the bible. We do not get our instruction in one line or in one word. That is why we are instructed to study to show ourselves approved to God, rightly dividing the word of truth. Doctrine is scattered throughout the scriptures, here a little, there a little, line upon line, and precept upon precept. That is exactly the process we are going to use in this study, as is our habit.

The most significant instruction coming to me personally in Lev 23 is found in the first two verses.

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.”

Here God clearly tells us if it is not listed here in the following sequence of scriptures on the feasts that it is not one of His feasts, which are to be holy convocations. God makes this point before He moves on to give the instruction He does on each of these very special appointed times of meeting.

Now does God have other moedim, appointed times? Yes He does, but they are not in their entirety or in part, times of holy convocation. For instance the day of the new moon. None of its commands are for a holy convocation. Try as you might it isn't in there. It is a day in which work can be done, unless it falls on a weekly Sabbath, or unless we are considering the first day of the seventh month, which is the Feast of Trumpets. It is a moedim however. We are to take the time after sunset and observe the first crescent of the moon to proclaim the beginning of the month. We can make it special to all if we wish as David and Saul did by having a special meal. That tradition was carried down to the time of the second temple in Jerusalem. After the testing of the witnesses and subsequent acceptance of their observations, the Sanhedrin would have a great meal for its members and for the participants in the sighting. This particular day is important to God and ourselves because this establishes the first day of each month, which is necessary in proclaiming the feasts, which are to be holy convocations to God. It is vitally important to be able to discern this day accurately and not assign random days to each month as is done with the Rabbinical Calendar, which is used by many Churches

of God. It is not my purpose to belittle or chastise anyone in this study, but at times I will be using obvious examples to make the point. My purpose is to share with you the peace we have been given. Each individual can do what he or she wishes with it. The reason I bring up the main point of Lev 23:1-2 at the onset of this study is because it affects the readers understanding of the true worship of God. He has clearly and boldly told us which feasts are holy convocations and which are not, and as we will see He even goes beyond that.

In this study we are directly concerned with the timeline created in verses 4-8. It is within this timeline that the most awesome event in the creation of time takes place. It's true significance is something that has been kept from the vast majority of mankind by the great deceiver, Satan the devil. The truth about this event passes human reasoning and comprehension. It is only comprehensible by God giving those He has called His holy spirit. This great event is tied deeply to the barley harvest in the land of Israel. Let's cover this time line in verses 4-8 and then take it one step further.

“These *are* the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the LORD'S Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work *on it*.”

Here we have the Passover of the Lord and the Days of Unleavened Bread. Verse 4 told us these are feasts (moedim, appointed times of meeting) of the Lord. It also tells us they are holy convocations which must be proclaimed at their appointed times. That is why we go on in verses 5-8 and are taught that the fourteenth of the first month is the Passover of the Lord and that the fifteenth of the same month is the start of the days of UB. We are told this first day of UB is a holy convocation as well as the seventh day. Now this is very important. Verse 6 tells us the fifteenth is the start of the seven days of UB. In verses 7-8 we are told that

only the first and last day of the seven are holy convocations. But they are something else as well. There is no customary work to be done on either of these days. Here we see these 2 days of holy convocation taking on an added command from the seventh day Sabbath delineated in verse 3. We do not see that stipulation applied to days 2-6 do we. In fact we cannot find it in any of the scriptures throughout the bible for these 5 days. So if these days fall in sequence where they do not happen to be on a weekly Sabbath one is not restricted from doing customary work. But, what about the fourteenth? Does it tell us here or anywhere else in the scriptures that it is a holy convocation in which no customary work can be done? No it does not! In fact it even qualifies the time on the fourteenth as twilight.

So here we see that we have 2 feasts of the Lord. His first two in the timeline of the plan of salvation. The first is on the 14th of the first month and is the Passover of the Lord. The second is the feast of Unleavened Bread which verse 6 tells us starts on the 15th of the first month. Lev 23 goes on to teach us that this feast consists of 7 days. That means it starts at sunset at the beginning of the 15th and ends at sunset at the end of the 21st. The first day and last day are holy convocation in which no customary work can be done. Notice however one thing common to each of the seven days is that one MUST eat unleavened bread on each day.

We will cover many more truths about this 8-day period of time later in this study. It is very important that at this point we start to address the term Abib and how it all fits with Leviticus chapter 23 and the instruction from God. As we will see this is vital information to how we worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

In verses 5 and 6 we were told that these feasts were to take place in the first month of the year. So how do we know what the first month of God's calendar year is? Do we follow Rabbinical Judaism's Calendar to get the answer? No we do not! Rabbinical Judaism is so confused as to the calendar of God that they actually openly declare the seventh month as the beginning of the year. We are not going to cover that error in any detail in this study for it can be found in our Calendar

of God study. Instead we are going to turn to the pages of the bible, the inspired word of God to get the answer to my questions.

In Exodus 12 we read about God instructing Moses as to what he is to teach Israel about the Passover and days of UB. Look what God starts with. Ex. 12:2, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

In Ex. 13:4 in addressing the first day of UB God says, "On this day you are going out, in the month Abib."

Dueteronomy 16:1 tells us, "Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the Lord your God. For in the month Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night."

Numbers 33:3, "They departed from Ramses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians."

Exodus 34:18, "The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, in the appointed time of the month Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt."

It is beyond the shadow of a doubt that God has declared the Abib as the first month of His calendar year. So, does it start in the fall in the seventh month as the Rabbinical Calendar does? Are we somehow supposed to tamper with the days of that month starting it on the last day of the sixth month or sometimes on the second or third day of the 7th month as does the Rabbinical Calendar and then somehow count backwards from the day of our choosing to determine the start of Abib and the feasts in the first month? We all need to individually answer these questions in light of the fact that we are each accountable for keeping our appointed times with God on the precise day He commands. He does not leave us any excuse to not do so in this the end of the age with the knowledge we have at our disposal.

The answers to these profound questions are found throughout the bible. Let's cover two of them as they relate to the sacrifice of the Passover of the Lord. In Ex 12:5 we read,

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.”

These lambs had to be in their first year of life. This is crucial with its implication. We are not talking about lambs a few weeks old here. We are talking about lambs nearing the end of their first year. Any blemishes, which would show up, would do so by that time. Think of the unthinkable happening. The Passover is kept at the wrong time and the lambs from the year before are all older than their first year and the ewes have not given birth. The time for giving birth of the sheep is but one of the many “appointed times” in the animal kingdom. There are many studies completed by learned men today in the sciences that tell us the time of mating or “estrus” in the female of the species such as sheep, goats, deer, etc., is controlled by the decreasing amount of sunlight in the fall of the year in our part of the world. More specifically recent studies are proving the incredible part the light or lack of it from the moon plays in this timing unless man tampers with the natural process. Yes, as knowledge increases it has its ups and downs. That is why the birthing time is so intricately tied to the beginning of the year. It is one of the many signs the Sanhedrin would use in contemplating the start of Abib before they changed their ways. God would not have set Israel up for failure. He put in motion a system to always ensure that lambs in their first year would always be available for the Passover sacrifice if Israel held true to the methodology He had set in place for declaring the proper dates for the feasts of the Lord. It's all about correct timing and obedience to God.

That exact principle also applies to the second point. That point is the name of the first month and what it means. God names things with a purpose in mind. The Hebrew word Abib is only used a handful of times in the scriptures so it should be easily understood from the few contexts it appears in, or one would think so. There are many arguments being floated about the proper use and meaning of this word. We are not

concerned with those arguments for it's meaning is clearly determined in how God uses it.

Let's look at several concordances, etc., to first see what is commonly said about the word Abib.

It is Strong's #24 and it says of it,

“from an unused root (meaning to be tender); green, ie. A young ear of grain; hence the name of the month Abib or Nisan.”

The ISBE (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia) says of it,

“[abib-young ear of barley or other grain; Cf Ex. 9:31 Lev. 2:14] The first month of the Israelite year, called Nisan in Neh. 2:1, Est. 3:7, Abib in Ex. 13:4, 23:15, 34:18; Dt. 16:1. Abib is not properly a name of a month, but part of a descriptive phrase, the month of young ears of grain. This may indicate the Israelite way of determining the new year (Ex. 12:2), The year beginning with the new moon nearest or preceding this stage of the growth of the barley. The year thus indicated practically corresponds with the old Babylonian year, and presumably came in with Abraham. The pentateuchal laws do not introduce it, though they define it, perhaps to distinguish it from the Egyptian wandering year.”

Now the Brown, Driver, Briggs,

“1) fresh young ears of barley Ex 9:31; Lev 2:14. 2) month of ear forming, or of growing green, Abib, month of Exodus and Passover, Ex 13:4, 23:15, 34:18...”

The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance says of it,

“to be tender.”

We can see that all these publications agree on one thing. The barley is at a particular stage of its growth! This is extremely important to grasp. Because in naming this month Abib, God is telling us it will be identified by the state of growth of barley in Israel. Why not anywhere else? Because in Lev 23:10 God ties this function directly to the “land which I give to you.” We will cover this in greater detail later when we study into the application and function of the Abib. Israel received this piece of real estate forever. They

were tied to it for the worship of God.

It is very safe to say that Abib is describing an agricultural state or stage of barley growth.

In Exodus 9 we read about the 5th, 6th, and 7th plagues which afflicted Egypt. The key component of the 7th plague was hail, very heavy hail. In verses 31 & 32 we read,

“Now the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the head [abib] and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops.”

Let’s read these verses from the J.P. Greens Interlinear Bible.

“And the flax and the barley were smitten. For the barley was in the ear [abib], and the flax in blossom. And the wheat and the spelt were not smitten, for they were late.”

Let’s do a little analysis here. We see that the hail had smitten the barley and the flax. We also see the hail had not smitten the wheat and spelt. God has a major lesson for us to learn here. He is going to show us a characteristic of Abib barley. The Hebrew word for smitten here is #5221 in the Strong’s.

“Nakah, a prime root; to strike (lightly or severely, literally or figuratively).”

The BDB says of it in brief,

“smite 1a) with a single non fatal blow 1b) smite repeatedly. 2) Smite fatally 3) smite attack, attack and destroy 4) of God a) smite with a plague, disease, etc.,”

So how are we to apply that word here in Ex. 9: 31-32? It’s obvious. God is talking about destroying the barley and the flax crops. In verse 25 we read,

“... and the hail struck every plant of the field, and it broke in pieces every tree of the field.”

So here in chapter 9 it is clear to see what God is saying when He says the barley and the flax were smitten. But he also told us under these conditions the wheat and spelt were not smitten or destroyed. Why Not? And why did God give us so clear a contrast and so detailed a narrative about this? Because, He is

giving us a major clue to a characteristic of Abib barley. He says the barley was Abib!

In our journeys to Israel to inspect the barley we have discovered what took place here with the barley in Ex 9 to be a sign of Abib barley. When the plant reaches a specific stage of maturity, the stock can be broken easily. Nehemia, a participant on the inspections, calls this the “slap test”. When it reaches this stage it is in the agricultural condition called Abib. That stage is clearly demonstrated in the field by taking several stocks intact and then slapping them below the heads with your fingers. If Abib they break off. That is what happened when the hail struck the barley. It snapped and fell to the ground, thus being destroyed. When barley is in a younger stage of growth it is more flexible and pliable and will not break. That was the condition of the barley last year in Israel throughout the country. When the worst snowstorm in 30 years hit the Judean Hills in March the barley was all flattened, but it did not break for it was far from being in the state of Abib. After the snow melted it sprang up again. Some of the barley was in head and some was not. None of it was Abib.

There are some who mistakenly teach that if the barley has a green ear visible it can be proclaimed Abib. That is a terrible error, which needs to be corrected. Abib is a very particular and specific agricultural state of barley growth. It does not “float” through the growth cycle of the plant, as we will clearly see in the technical portion of this study. The reason why the wheat and the spelt were not destroyed confirms this. The first grain crop harvested in Israel is barley. The wheat harvest started approximately one and a half months after the barley harvest started. It is a “later” crop. The Hebrew word describing their condition here is #648 in the Strong’s.

“Aphiyl; from the same as 651 (in the sense of weakness); unripe: not grown up.”

The BDB says of it,

“adjective (darkened, concealed, thence) late, of crops...”

So why is this so significant? Because that is an agricultural stage of maturity! When the scriptures say it was, “darkened, concealed” this means the plant

looked like a blade of grass with the head having not yet emerged. It was still very young and still concealed in the shaft or in the “boot”. Thus it does not see light. At this stage it is very flexible. This is not all merely a “coincidence”. God is explaining to us about the state of Abib and contrasts it with that of a much younger stage of growth He calls Aphiyl. In Chapter 12:2, He tells us that this time frame is the month of Abib and it is the start of His calendar year. He names the month after the clearly visible sign of Abib barley. There is no significance to God using the barley in Egypt other than it being an example to Israel of how they were to determine the process of counting months when they “came into the land”.

So did God give us any more clear scriptures to use in identifying this all-important state of Abib? Yes He did and following the principle of Isaiah 28 in how He teaches us we need to turn to Lev 2:14. From the J.P.Green Interlinear Bible,

“And if you bring near a food offering of firstfruits to Jehovah, fresh ears roasted with fire, kernels from a garden, you shall bring near your firstfruits for a food offering.”

Now the NKJ,

“If you offer a grain offering of your firstfruits to the Lord, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits green heads [abib] of grain, roasted on the fire, grain beaten from full heads.”

Here brethren we are instructed as to what is the minimum stage of maturity to be an acceptable firstfruits grain offering. We are taught here the grain must be Abib. As well we are instructed that the Abib heads of grain will have kernels that can be husked [geres]. That means the kernel must have substance to it. In fact enough substance so that it can be dried by roasting it in fire to make it hard enough to grind into flour. That is why the NKJ translation says, grain beaten from full heads” and the J.P.Green says, “of kernels” for they are expressing the same thing in the use of the Hebrew “geres”. It is #1643 and Strong’s says of it,

“from an unused root meaning to husk; a kernel (collection), ie; grain: beaten corn [old English for grain etc].”

The BDB says of it,

“a crushing, but only concretely of that which is crushed, groats, grits, ...”

These Abib heads of grain need to be able to be crushed or ground to produce flour. In order to do this they need to be hard kernels. God says it is acceptable to help that hardening process by roasting the heads in fire to reach the necessary degree of dryness to be crushable. We will see later that there is a very specific time in the growth of the barley where it is physiologically mature but still contains too much moisture to allow it to be ground. This minimal standard is called, “the threshold of Abib”. Prior to this state of maturity we cannot proclaim the barley to be Abib.

So why is this important?

To answer this let’s put this biblical knowledge to work as it applies to the plan of salvation and the part enacted by Christ and His spiritual body the bride. We will see in spiritual and physical terms why this stage of maturity called Abib is so crucial to worshipping the Father in spirit and truth.

Christ plays the fundamental role in both the feast of the Passover and of UB. There are many who can recite that Jesus is the essence of the Passover. But ask them to explain it in detail and one most often hits a roadblock. Because of sin willingly being allowed by Adam to enter in, it became necessary for man to be redeemed from its bondage. Something of greater value than all mankind had to be offered in its place. God (Elohim) decided it would take the very life of the one who created heaven and earth. John 1:1-3 tells us His name was Word. Verse 14 tells us He was the same Being that later became Jesus the Christ. It was His shed blood that atoned for the sins of mankind. This understanding is widely accepted. But that isn’t all He did! That is just His first act. Because man has rejected the instructions given in the scriptures to keep the festivals of God the vast majority of mankind are ignorant to the plan of salvation, to the building of the family of God. So let’s spend a little time back in Lev 23 to see what Christ’s very important SECOND role was during these early festivals.

Lev 23:9-14,

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the Lord. Its grain offering shall be two tenths of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering of wine, one-fourth of a hin. You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”

A lot here brethren!

On the Sunday, which falls during the feast of UB we find a function taking place, which very few today understand. In it we find the second major role played out by Christ in the plan of salvation. This second role and start of the second step in the plan could not have taken place unless He had first lived a sin free life and then shed His innocent blood to reconcile man to God the Father. Once Christ had shed His blood there had to be an acceptance of that sacrifice. The sheaf of barley, which is waved before God on the first day of the week during the days of UB, is a defining moment for the body of Christ as well as for all mankind. This wavesheaf of barley, the firstfruits of the first harvest in Israel, is representative of Jesus Christ.

In 1 Cor 15:20-23 we are told that Christ is the firstfruit. In James 1:18 we are told that the church is to be a firstfruits of God’s creation. In Rev 14:4 we see that a group of 144,000 who have been purchased by the blood of Christ will be firstfruits to **BOTH**, God and the Lamb.

How and when does this take place?

Back in 1 Cor.15: 20-23 we read there is an order to all this. [J.P.Green]

“But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He became the firstfruit of those having fallen asleep (from Genesis onward). For since death is through man, also through a man is the resurrection of the dead, for as all die in Adam, so also will all be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruit; afterward those of Christ [that is His body] at His coming.”

The scriptures go on to give a further time line but this is the one we are focused on here in the first harvest festivals. The scriptures clearly tell us Christ is the firstfruit. The scriptures also tell us that without His being accepted by the Father we would not be acceptable to God either. That is why the wavesheaf is accepted on **OUR** behalf as we read in Lev 23. The reasons are clear if we understand the mystery spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 5, which most of mankind does not comprehend. Ephesians 5:32,

"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

Let’s read a little about this mystery to understand about the Wavesheaf offering of Christ, the second Adam, and in particular about the second Eve, who has come from and is a part of His body. Verses 22-31,

“Wives, submit to YOUR OWN husbands, as to the Lord [not some supposed benefactor called a minister]. For the Husband is head of the wife, as also is Christ Head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body [unlike the first Adam]. Therefore just as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their OWN husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish [just like Him because it is His body, with no leaven in it because the first harvest is leaven free as depicted in the 7 days of UB and His being waved during it]. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of

His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and become one flesh.”

That is exactly what the church and Christ are doing. This is a great mystery to the world. We are at one with our Husband for it is He who washes us by the water of the word and no other. This second Eve will be without spot, without wrinkle, and without blemish. She will be holy! To those called of the Father this should not be a mystery. Christ and His bride are one! When Christ our Wavesheaf is offered to God for acceptance on our behalf we find the start of this acceptance commencing. This is the start of the firstfruit harvest, the unleavened harvest of mature members of the body. The bundle or sheaf of barley, depicts Christ and those members of His body who will become His beloved Bride and thus qualify to be the wife in the household of God.

On the first day of the week, the day after the Sabbath, Christ was accepted by the Father as the firstfruit of many brethren. That is why this day starts the count to the feast of Weeks, which is also the feast of Firstfruits of the wheat harvest. On the 50th day a door has been closed to one harvest, that of the Bride [the barley] and is opened to the start of another [the wheat] with that being the other members of the household. Remember Rev. 14. The bride is a firstfruits of both the Father and the Lamb. The last qualifying time for this function in the household of God is contained in its entirety within the 49-day count to the feast of Weeks. There is a separation that takes place on the 50th day. After that there is a group who will be firstfruits unto Christ and His body. Rev 21:17

“And the spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who thirsts come. And whoever desires, let him take of the waters of life freely.”

First we see the bride, the body of Christ, before any other new members of the family come.

In Lev 23 God the Father is accepting the entire body of Christ, the second Eve, as part of the body of His beloved Son. She will be without blemish, she will be leaven free, and that is why God has set the start of this process of acceptance during the days of UB. It can

never start outside of them. That is why it always starts on the day after the weekly Sabbath, which insures it will NEVER start outside of the 7 days. It also ceases 49 days after it’s start, 7x7, which signifies her perfection as to being without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. She has made herself ready to be the wife in the growing family of God as depicted throughout the scriptures. Rev 19:7-8 tells us,

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has MADE HERSELF READY. And to her it was GRANTED to be arrayed in fine linen [clothing of the priest] clean and bright, for the fine linen is the RIGHTEOUS ACTS of the saints.”

It takes a lot of WORK on our part to keep leaven out and try to maintain as leaven free a situation as we can and Christ will pick it up from there. No one else can do our part for us. We are to rightly divide and apply the scriptures to our lives. It is up to each of us individually to decide to worship the Father in spirit and truth. Are we focused and committed enough to do that? Do our works, our righteous acts proclaim this? I ask this in the context knowing full well we all are subject to the pulls of the flesh. That is not what we are to let distract us. God forgives and forgets, but man does not. God focuses on what we do right and our struggle in that direction. That is why the bride is GRANTED to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright. Are we making ourselves ready or are we abrogating that personal responsibility to another? Proverbs 31:29,

“Many daughters have done well but you excel them all.”

Now let’s take this understanding back to Lev. 23: 9-14 and cover it in more detail.

Verse 10,

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.”

Here we can see that this firstfruit offering, this sheaf of barley is tied directly to the land of Israel. No other barley from any other area is acceptable to God. That is why they had to wait until they had entered the

promised land of Israel to start this offering. Can you imagine the chaos and confusion that would result from people disregarding this command and using barley from other geographical areas of the world such as Arizona, Australia, Brazil, Russia, etc. Those called of God would be keeping the feast days at all different times, some even 6 months apart. Well brethren that very thing is happening today. It is a terrible thing! When we have the knowledge to worship the Father in spirit and in truth we have a personal responsibility to follow it and use it.

Let's look at the Hebrew word used here for sheaf. Some even try to distort this to confuse the brethren. It is #6016 in Strong's. It is used in two ways, sheaf and omer. The BDB says of this,

“swath, row of fallen grain, heap of sheaves.”

When used as omer it says,

“small drinking cup or bowl = a measure.”

It tells us the proper translation for it in Lev 23:10-14 is sheaf as well as in Dt 24:19, Job 24:10 and Ruth 2:7,15.

Verse 11,

“He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.”

Once again notice it is being waved to be accepted on **OUR BEHALF**. That means the entire body of Christ, not just the Head!

It is also being waved on the day after the Sabbath. That is the 7th day Sabbath or commonly known as the weekly Sabbath. Thus the day being spoken about is the 1st day of the week! How do we know this? For one because if it were any other day it would from time to time fall outside of the 7 days of UB. That would be a terrible error! That would represent the body of Christ as containing leaven. That would defile it and the plan of salvation as laid out by God in the very keeping of these appointed times of meeting. But it is even easier than that to prove the day called the Sabbath here is the weekly Sabbath. Every day of the week was identified by only a number except the Sabbath. It was used to define all the other days. Some teach that this Sabbath spoken of here is a high

Sabbath. Well let's see what is correct by using the Hebrew language.

Sabbath here in verse 11 is #7676 in the Strong's, “Shabbath, intensive from 7673; intermission, ie (specifically) the Sabbath.”

This is the word, which is used for the seventh day Sabbath throughout the scriptures. There are some people who erroneously attach the meaning of #7677 Shabbathon to Shabbath. Strong's says of 7677 Shabbathon,

“from 7676; a sabbatism or special holiday.”

Every other credible concordance shows the same difference. A shabbathon is the designation given to what we call a high holy day or annual Sabbath. Do a quick word study and see this is true. Each has its own function and rules. The rules of the weekly Sabbath are more restrictive than those of the annual Sabbaths. That is why we can read in Lev 23:32 that the more restrictive rules of the Shabbath are applied to the Shabbathon of Atonement. God did this to ensure that no food whatsoever, not only would be eaten on this day, but could not even be prepared on it as well. Thus the day becomes a total and intense intermission. God clearly identifies which of the two He is talking about here in verse 11. There is no guessing which it is. It is not the day after an annual Sabbath (shabbathon) but the day after the weekly Sabbath (shabbath) thus making the day for the start of the count, the first day of the week. We refer to it by its pagan name of Sunday. There is no scriptural, or linguistic way around that. There is a simplicity in Christ, which we are to be aware of, recognize, and follow. (Verses 12 & 13) This symbolism speaks loud and clear for itself. Verse 14,

“You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the SAME day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”

Here God is clearly telling us that no grain from the first harvest can be used for consumption in any form whatsoever, until this firstfruit wavesheaf offering has been performed. What day did it start on? The Sunday that falls during the 7 days of UB! How do we know

that the seven week count to Pentecost starts with this harvest on this day and that it could not be started earlier and stored? Duet. 16:9,

“You shall count seven weeks FOR YOURSELF [God isn’t doing it for us with a fixed date]; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you put the sickle to the grain.”

It is because of this very clear command to count for ourselves, using this very clear God given instruction as our guide, that we travel to Israel to inspect the barley just prior to the end of the 12th lunar month each year. Just as we use the first crescent of the New Moon as seen from Israel, so too do we use the visible state of Abib barley from there as well.

Here a little, there a little, line upon line, and precept upon precept. God’s patterns run throughout the scriptures. They are the simplicity in Christ. Not one contradicts another. They are always clearly explained if we learn to use the bible as our teacher in the manner that God says it should be used.

Daniel 12:3-4 tells us the following for our time,
“Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. But you Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Knowledge has increased and rather than running to and fro we are to be worshipping the Father in spirit and truth.

Why do people run to and fro? Amos 8:11-12,
“Behold the days are coming says the Lord God, that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. They shall wonder from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, but shall not find it.”

Very sobering words for our time, yet very positive if we take our instruction from the word of God. We need to stick to the scriptures to gain the knowledge of how to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. We do

not follow the traditions of men, and we do not follow the mindless babblings of groups of men devoid of the spirit of God. Many at this time are having the same knowledge of the Abib and its significance revealed to them who are separated by land and sea and who have never had any contact with one another in any form. Do we have the character to follow it or are we going to rely on another way we have been told is of God but cannot be found in the scriptures but only in the ravings of Rabbinical Judaism.

THE HISTORY OF BARLEY

Let’s now spend some time in the history of barley and the plant itself. In this aspect of the study we are going to see once again that God is true to His word.

Our study of that history starts in Malachi 3:6,
“For I am the Lord I do not change.”

Hebrews 13:8,
“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

Do we believe that brethren? Do we believe God is immovable in His desire to complete the plan of salvation from start to finish as it is patterned in the scriptures and more particularly through the feasts and their functions?

We read in Romans 11:29,
“For the gifts and calling of God are without change of purpose.”

That’s correct, both the calling and the gifts which are given to the individual members of the body to complete that calling are without change of purpose. God’s singleness of mind and purpose will be fulfilled. We can read of this resolve and commitment in Numbers 23:19.

“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said and will not do! Or has He spoken and He will not make it good!”

If our faith encompasses these statements from God, then we must believe what the scriptures tell us about worshipping the Father in spirit and truth. Christ tells us in Hebrews 13:5, that He will never leave nor

forsake us. Let us see just one more way that our King and Creator has kept this promise to us by our study of some very important historical and scientific information compiled by individuals who have no bone to pick about the scriptural use of this incredible plant.

We read in Leviticus 23 earlier, that Israel was to use the barley crop in the Promised Land for this tremendously important aspect of the worship of God and thus the plan of salvation. This is of critical importance to the bride of Christ.

In the article, “Barleys History” by Sarah Wroot and David Pickergile we can read the following statement, “Barley hasn’t had any of the marked mutations that we see in wheat, so it’s still very similar to early cultivars.”

The spiritual magnitude to this statement is unknown to its authors, but not to us, the called of God who understand and believe that Christ is our wavesheaf of barley and that His body will consist of this humble early crop. It is a landmark to our conversion and the assurance of the hope, which lies in us.

Remember Romans 1:20,
“For the unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, BEING UNDERSTOOD BY THE THINGS MADE, both His eternal power and Godhead for them to be without excuse.”

Not only has Christ maintained His promise to us, He has left us very clear and discernable reminders every step of the way, even to keeping the barley without the many mutations that wheat has undergone. Follow this through. The wheat harvest is the second harvest in Israel. It commenced at Pentecost or the feast of Firstfruits. Exodus 34:22,

“And you shall observe the feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of Ingathering at the years end.”

Keep in mind this firstfruit offering of wheat has to follow the same rules, as did the barley harvest. It started after the 49 day harvest of the barley. This wheat harvests firstfruit contain leaven and there are

two groups offered. Leviticus 23:16-17,

“Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring from your habitations two wave loaves of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven, they are the firstfruits to the Lord.”

As we read earlier the bride of Christ is of His body and she will be without spot, wrinkle and blemish and in fact, will be holy. That is what the early harvest will be like. We are going to see that the barley crop has been maintained in that manner for a particular species of barley to this present day. That is not the same with the wheat. It has suffered through many, many mutations. As we see the wheat firstfruits is baked with leaven. It is not without spot, wrinkle, or blemish in the language of the bible is it. We will not spend any more time on that aspect of the plan of salvation for it is for the later festivals. You can find it talked about in greater detail in our study of Pentecost. The firstfruits of the barley harvest are without blemish but that is not the case with the second harvest, that of the wheat. Barley can be categorized in two general classifications: domesticated [*Hordeum Vulgare*] and wild [*Hordeum Spontaneum*]. Every single line, strain or species of barley originated in the eastern Mediterranean region, according to every historical and scientific writing on the subject. To most of these authors that narrows it down enough to accommodate what they have to say in their respective studies. That however does not apply to all of them. One such study by a group of participants can be found published in the Society for Molecular Biology and Evolution. It can be viewed or downloaded off of the Internet. The group is lead by A. Badr who is with the Faculty of Science, in the Botany Department at Tanta University in Egypt. They were not satisfied with regionalizing [Eastern Mediterranean] the origin and spread of Barley. They decided to track down if they could through the technology we have available to us today the original progenitor species and its location. Let’s listen to some quotes from this remarkable study to see God does not change to His purpose.

“ The domestication history of barley is revisited based on the assumptions that DNA markers [Romans 1:20] effectively measure genetic distances and that wild populations are genetically

different [come out of her my people lest you share in her plagues] and they have not undergone significant change since domestication. The monophyletic [single] nature of barley domestication is based on allelic [a gene which is the vehicle of an allele, one or more characteristics] frequencies at 400 AFLP polymorphic loci studied in 317 wild and 57 cultivated lines. The wild populations from Israel/Jordan [ancient borders of Israel] are molecularly more similar than any others to the cultivated gene pool. The results provided support for the hypothesis that the Israel-Jordan area is the region in which barley was brought into culture. Moreover, the diagnostic allele 1 of the home box gene BKn-3, rarely but almost exclusively found in *Hordeum Spontaneum* [wild barley], is pervasive in western landraces and modern cultivated varieties.”

The marvels of science can at times be used for a good purpose. For in this very lengthy research study we find that the wild barley growing in the ancient territory of Israel was not only the first to be domesticated but it is also the genetic source of barley grown in the west. For those of you who understand the migrations of the 10 northern tribes of Israel and where they are to be found today this academic study should only further your belief in its validity as well as God keeping His promises. These western nations today are growing barley from and still very similar too that which their ancient ancestors cultivated. The spiritual ramifications to all this are very significant. At the time of Ingathering the remnants of these nations will be brought home to the land of Israel to learn who and what they are to God.

The following quotes are from this article, *The Origins and Domestication History of Barley (Hordeum Vulgare)*.

“*Barley (Hordeum Vulgare)* is one of the former crops of Old World agriculture.”

“*Hordeum Spontaneum* and *Hodeum Vulgare* are morphologically similar, with the cultivated form having broad leaves, shorter stem and awns, tough ear rachis, a shorter and thicker spike, and larger grains (Zohary 1969). The wild progenitor *H.*

Spontaneum is still colonizing its primary habitats in the Fertile Crescent from Israel and Jordan to south Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan, and southwestern Iran (Harlan and Zohary 1966; Nevo 1992). In the same area, *H. Spontaneum* also occupies an array of secondary habitats, such as Mediterranean maquis, abandoned fields, and roadsides.” [We have seen this with our own eyes. It grows everywhere in Israel]

“In summary, allele 1, found almost exclusively (but rarely) in the Israel-Jordan region, characterized the wild progenitor which generated, monophyletically, the cultivated Western gene pool of today.”

“The AFLP data now strongly supports the monophyletic domestication of barley.”

“Some races of wild barley, moreover, have a strong tendency to behave as weeds. Helback (1959) wrote, I never saw a field of any crop in Kurdistan in which wild barley was not to be found growing as a weed.” [Be in the world but not of the world]

“As shown by archeological data, two –rowed forms of *H. Spontaneum* [wild barley] with brittle rachises, apparently collected from the wild (Zohary and Hopf 1993) were already being harvested by humans in the Fertile Crescent prior to the appearance of agriculture.”

“In conclusion, our suggestion is the Israel-Jordan area in the southern part of the Fertile Crescent has the highest probability of being the geographical area within wild barley was domesticated. [Ex. 19:5-6, Now therefore if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be to me a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.]. Wild populations found in the southern part of the Fertile Crescent in western Iran have also contributed germplasm to the cultivated barley on its way to the Himalayas. In the present state of our research, it is possible to pinpoint only with loose precision two geographic areas within the Israel-

Jordan region in which the first domestication of barley may have taken place.”

We have just read a little bit of the research work completed by these scientists. This work is important from several obvious reasons, but one that cannot be dismissed is that it is in no way tainted or slanted based on religious or political prejudices. The researchers are Egyptian and German. If anyone could build a case for work being prejudiced by its authors on those basis one would think it could be a subject, which points to Israel in such a positive way.

Their findings support God’s command that it is the barley found [which today grows wild everywhere] in Israel which must be used for the Abib timing and thus the start to the calendar year and the proclaiming of the appointed times of meeting or feasts. Finding the barley in the agricultural, physiologically mature state of Abib at the end of the 12th lunar month is the catalyst for proclaiming the start of God’s year. God never intended Israel to leave the Promised Land. As a result of repeated sin she was scattered around the world as a curse. Now she could no longer have at her disposal the very tools and implements found only in Israel for the true worship of God until now. This knowledge has been lost to most if not all. But, in these last days, the Father is opening these wonderful truths to spiritual Israel and to physical Israel as well. Will we grasp them for the treasures they truly are!

When we travel to Israel we search the land for Abib barley. We do not look to the domestic varieties [H. Vulgare] which are cultivated, but rather to the wild barley [H. Spontaneum] which grow freely with no human manipulation involved. This barley grows like a weed all over the land of Israel.

Elevation is a key component in our search for Abib barley. Most do not understand that that is one of the physical reasons why the barley harvest lasts for seven weeks. Altitude plays a key part in the maturing of the barley as we have found during our inspections. Temperature is directly related to elevation. From the slopes of the Judean Hills to the deserts of the south and the low areas of the Dead Sea region we check the growth of this wild barley.

Wild barley can be found in both 2 row and 6 row types. It is my personal preference to use only the 2 row type for many reasons of which some are confirmed in the forgoing research. This wild barley is incredibly resilient. It grows in rocky soil without any apparent source of water. It also grows in the finest soils found in the land and some of the most well maintained gardens. It grows along roadsides and in parking lots. This resiliency is considered to be a curse to many moderns in Israel but to the called of God it is a blessing of a promise kept. One aspect of its growth will have spiritual significance to many. When wild barley is found growing in an irrigated field it does not mature as quickly as that growing without any artificial watering. The stocks of the watered barley grow thick, tall, and do not develop heads until well after the free growing barley, which is dependant on the rains for its moisture. It looks great but has no fruit to offer when it needs to. We are to have only one source of water and that is that given by God. To allow ourselves to be artificially watered, and to become dependant on that water will slow our growth and delay it so that we will not be ready for the firstfruit harvest time.

Most folks today do not realize that barley is the world’s most important crop for feeding livestock. But its uses do not stop there. It is used in processed foods in the form of barley flakes: barley bran, and barley flour. It is malted for use in beer, flavorings, sweeteners, and extracts. It is used in building construction products such as particleboard, sub-flooring, walls and roof sheeting. It is used in paper and newsprint products. Its starch is used in paper coating and surface sizing, paints, starch based detergents and biodegradable plastics.

Many refer to barley flour as the poor mans flour of the bible. It is used in the 5 loaves of bread in John 6:9,13. The book of Ruth for the most part takes place during the 7 week barley harvest. It is very appropriate that this type of Christ and His bride is depicted during these very important times of the first harvest.

THE HOW TO PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND METHODS OF INSPECTION

With all of this understanding of the spiritual and the

physical, we are ready to investigate the methods of how we determine if the barley is at the minimum acceptable state to qualify for the term ABIB. We will be reading and viewing lots of technical material in the form of charts, photos, and script to demonstrate once again that the scriptures are very accurate in their description and command as to what is acceptable for both the wavesheaf offering and the Abib. Remember that the stage of maturity, which is the minimal acceptable stage for Abib, is when the plant has a head with kernels that can be ground into flour after they have been roasted in fire to dry them out. We will see that even when the barley is in head (green) it can be many weeks away from having kernels that can meet this minimal requirement commanded by God.

There are 3 scientific scales or codes, which are used today to assess the growth of grain crops. We are going

to use the one, which is most universally accepted today. It is called the Zadok Code. Many of you may recognize the name as one intricately tied to the Temple. It is from this lineage that the priests will come from in the millennium. Ezekiel 40:46 states, “The chamber which faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar; these are the sons of Zadok, from the sons of Levi, who come near the Lord to minister to Him.”

I have included a modified chart from, “The growth and Development Guide for Spring Barley” by P.M. Anderson, E. A. Oelke, and S.R. Simmons. I highly recommend you review their work on line. Similar charts and information can be viewed from many other sources as well.

Figures 1 & 2 in this article are also from their article.

The web link for “The growth and Development Guide for Spring Barley” by P.M. Anderson, E. A. Oelke, and S.R. Simmons. is: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/cropsystems/DC2548.html>

Timetable with approximate days after emergence and growing degree days (base 40 degrees F) required to attain various growth stages locally (Minnesota). (Figure 1)

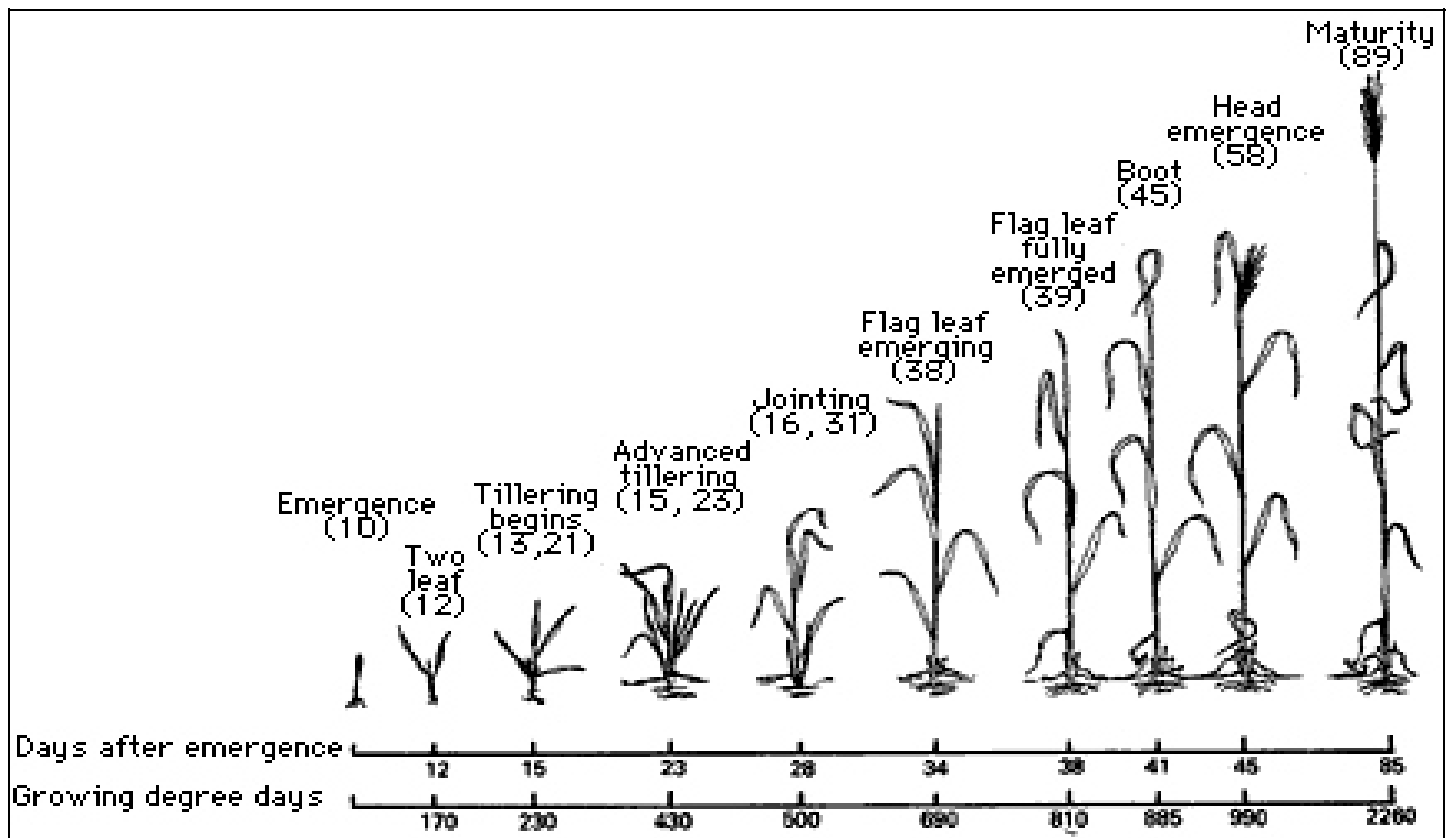


Figure 1

Table 1. Condensed summary of the Zadoks two-digit code system for growth staging in barley.

Zadoks code		Description	Zadoks code		Description
1st stage	2nd stage		1st stage	2nd stage	
0		Germination	5		Boot swollen
	0	Dry kernel	7		Flag leaf sheath opening
	1	Start of imbibition (water absorption)	9		First awns visible
	5	Radicle emerged	5		Head emergence
	7	Coleoptile emerged	1		First spikelet of head just visible
	9	Leaf just at coleoptile tip	3		One-fourth of head emerged
1		Seeding development	5		One-half of head emerged
	0	First leaf through coleoptile	7		Three-fourths of head emerged
	1	First leaf at least 50% emerged	9		Head emergence complete
	2	Second leaf at least 50% emerged	6		Flowering (not readily visible in barley)
	3	Third leaf at least 50% emerged	1		Beginning of flowering
	4	Fourth leaf at least 50% emerged	5		Half of florets have flowered
	5	Fifth leaf at least 50% emerged	9		Flowering complete
2		Tillering	7		Milk development in kernel
	0	Main shoot only	1		Kernel watery ripe
	1	Main shoot plus 1 tiller visible	3		Early milk
	2	Main shoot plus 2 tillers	5		Medium milk
	3	Main shoot plus 3 tillers	7		Late milk
	4	Main shoot plus 4 tillers	8		Dough development in kernel
	5	Main shoot plus 5 tillers	3		Early dough
3		Stem elongation	5		Soft dough
	1	First node detectable	7		Hard dough, head losing green color
	2	Second node detectable	9		Approximate physiological maturity
	3	Third node detectable	9		Ripening
	7	Flag leaf just visible	1		Kernel hard (difficult to divide with thumbnail)
	9	Flag leaf collar just visible	2		Kernel cannot be dented by thumbnail, harvest ripe
4		Boot			
	1	Flag leaf sheath extending			
	3	Boot just beginning to swell			

As you can see the scale consists of 10 stages of growth numbered from 0-9. Each one of these stages consists of a series of growth intervals depicted by visual identifying features. For the sake of this study we are primarily going to focus on stage number 8. The reason being is that if we do not find barley in this stage of development at the end of the 12th month we must add or intercalate a 13th month to the calendar to make sure we have barley in the state of Abib in the first month of God's calendar. Barley before this stage can in no way be physiologically mature enough two

weeks later to meet the minimum requirements for a firstfruit offering of grain. This process can never be treated as a guessing game and cannot involve any personal agenda. The scriptures are very precise in what they teach us on the subject. During our inspections in years past we have found barley growing in stages 3-9 at the end of the 12th lunar month. A rule of thumb which can be taken lightly is that the lower the altitude and more arid the climate the more mature the grain at that time. I have read recently where some church groups teach that if the barley is in green head

it can be proclaimed Abib. That is a very big mistake and can result in keeping the appointed times of meeting a month early. The emergence of the green head from the “boot” can be clearly seen in stage 5 of the scale. That means the actual kernels may be as long as a month or more away from reaching physiological maturity and thus qualifying to be proclaimed Abib.

Look what this study has to say about this particular stage of growth, 6-8 in regard to the kernel development.

“Kernel Development and Maturity: Once head emergence and pollination have occurred, kernels begin to develop (figure 2). The length of the barley kernel is established first, followed by its width. This helps explain why ‘thin barley’ developed under stress conditions is usually as long as normal grain, but is narrower. Figure 2 shows the physical changes as the kernel develops. The first period of kernel development, designated the ‘watery ripe’ or ‘milk’ stages, lasts about 10 days. Although the kernels do not gain much weight during this phase, it is extremely important because it determines the number of cells that will subsequently be used for storing starch. Kernels crushed in this stage initially yield a watery substance, which later becomes milky. Kernels that are storing starch and growing rapidly are characterized by a white semi-solid consistency termed ‘soft dough’. This period usually lasts about 10 days following the milk stage. Finally, as the kernel approaches maturity and begins losing water rapidly, its consistency becomes more solid, termed ‘hard dough’. This is when the kernel also loses its green color (figure 2). When kernel moisture has decreased to about 30 to 40 percent, it has reached physiological maturity, and will not accumulate additional dry mater. [This is of utmost importance to the bride of Christ. It is at this time the plant will not add any more mass to itself. There is a time when the door is closed to further participants (Matt. 25:1-13). It is also at this point in the growth of the barley that it is able to reproduce its own kind. I hope we sit and ponder that for a moment. That is what our Christ is doing for us. He is able to take from His body, the second Eve after the God kind!] The final yield potential

has been established at this time. An easily identified field indicator of this physiological maturity is 100 percent loss of green color from the glumes and peduncle [the stem and the long thin spikes on the outside of the head]. Although the moisture content of the grain is still too high for direct combining, it can be swathed and windrowed [exactly the method used by ancient Israel. And it could be roasted to get rid of the rest of the moisture. Exactly as to the instructions of God for a minimal state of Abib.] When kernel moisture has been decreased to 13-14 percent, the barley kernel is ready for combining and threshing.”

Isn't that incredible. To receive such clear support for scripture from the sciences is quite amazing and reassuring.

The stage of “hard dough” is what we look for at a minimum during our inspection of the wild barley. It makes our task much easier if we find quantities of barley in the 9th stage of Zadoks Code. That is where the kernel is very hard. In fact we have found barley in this stage in multiple locations at varying altitudes in a given year. Last year we did not find any barley at this stage at all, thus a 13th month was added or intercalated. As a note of caution I repeat we do not use any domestic growing barley because it can be manipulated through planting times, irrigation, etc. As well we do not use any wild barley subject to “green house” effects. One example of this is barley growing within a few feet of a black top road. The black top road surface absorbed large amounts of heat and can transfer this to the barley which if conditions are right can cause it to mature much more quickly than free growing barley just 10-12 feet away. This unnatural source of heat disqualifies this grain from use. We are to use barley, which is totally dependant upon God's cycles of sunlight, rain, and temperature. There is a

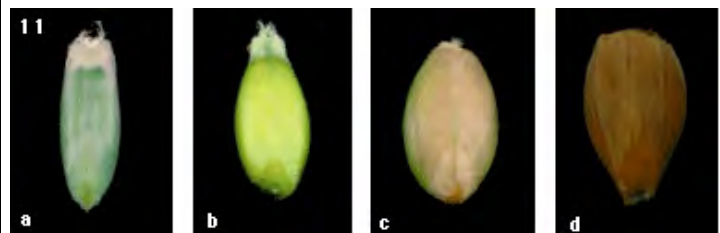


Figure 2

major spiritual lesson in that for us brethren. We are to be dependant on God alone and His word.

We as the called of God who are at this time qualifying to be the bride must not in our zeal for this knowledge try to manipulate it to meet any other goal. It is freely received and must be freely given. It is our God given command and responsibility to inspect the barley in Israel as the body of Christ. In doing so we are in actuality inspecting our own maturity as to the bride, for we are part of the wavesheaf, for we are of that body. God has given us this incredible marker of time as to proclaiming the Moedim, the appointed times of meeting between Him and us. In doing so, we have no preset, divisional, or exclusionist agendas. It is from our desire to worship the Father in spirit and truth and to come to the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of

the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature and fullness of Christ that we do this. We do not want to be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men [Rabbinical Judaism and those who teach it whether deceived or not] in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but rather we desire to speak the truth in outgoing concern, and wish to grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, Jesus the Christ, from whom the whole body is joined and knit together by the gifts of all who are placed in that body, effectively working to cause growth of it so we may be edified by ourselves, through Christ in love. Following are some pictures taken from our trips to Israel to inspect the Barley. They are accompanied by comments pertinent to them.

In this photo we can see a small patch of wild barley. It is important to note that it contains both 2-row and 6-row types of barley. The 2-row is the taller plants for the most part in this picture, such as the ones being handled. The 6-row variety, are located in the lower left hand corner. They appear to have bigger “kernels”. The 2-row variety has only one kernel form at each node in the head of the plant. 6-row have 3 kernels form in each node giving them the visual perception of having bigger kernels but in reality they do not.





The following 3 pictures represent how resilient and efficiently wild barley grows and re-seeds itself all over Israel.

Picture #1 is barley growing in Jerusalem



Picture #2 is barley growing in the Jordan Valley



Picture #3 is barley growing in the Negev Desert along side some cultivated and irrigated farm fields.



Here in this photo we find wild barley (some in a state of Abib) growing on the slopes of the Old City walls in Jerusalem. This patch is about a 5-10 minute walk from the Temple Mount.



Here we can see kernels are in the “soft dough” stage. This is one day before the end of the 12th lunar month thus it would not be ready by the middle of the next month to satisfy the minimum standards of a firstfruit grain offering. Thus it cannot be proclaimed Abib. There are some who teach that not only in this state can it be used but even weeks earlier in its growth stages. We have seen that is not true from the scriptures as well as being supported by the scientific knowledge of such things.



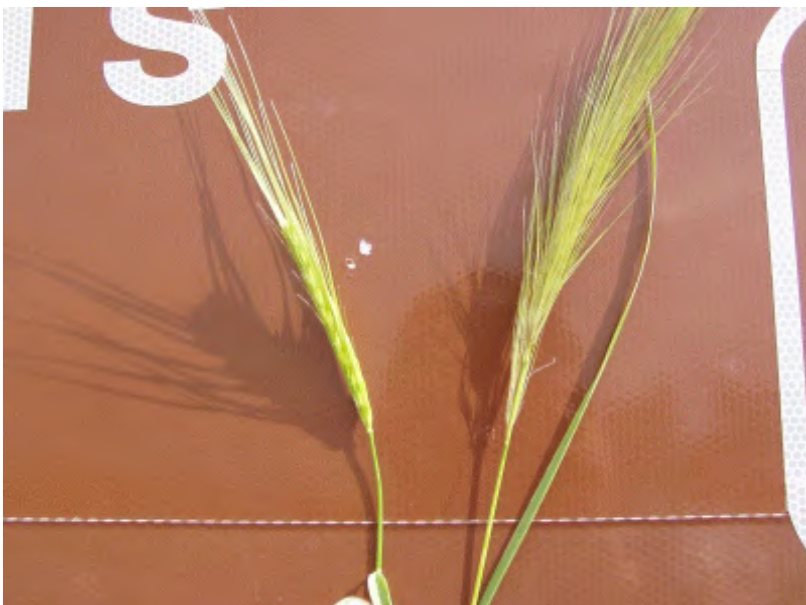
A field of barley growing in the Jordan Valley farmed by Israelis. Notice the desert state of the mountains in the distance. That is the rugged area that separates the Jordan Valley from the coastal lands of Israel.



This is the road, which leads to Jericho and the Dead Sea from Jerusalem. As one descends to those lower altitudes the sparseness of the surrounding hills is very pronounced. With this said look at the lower right hand corner and see wild barley flourishing.



Here we have a picture with deep spiritual implications to the church. We see oats and barley growing together. But that is not all! There are many Tares mixed in as well. The Oats are very discernable at the top. However the Tares or Darnel (rye grass) is not visible to most who would look at this photo. If the barley were a little younger it would be impossible to tell the difference between the two. Notice in the following picture how they both have a head, which emerges from the boot. As well they both have a flag leaf. The obvious difference at this stage is the barley has very visible nodes in the head where the Tare does not. Tares lack the fullness of fruit in the later stages of development. If these plant's heads were still in the boot all one would have to look at would be the stalk with a flag leaf. You could not discern between the barley and the Tare then.



Only when the head is visible can we discern between the barley and the tares. Even at this stage of growth it is hard to discern between them at a distance. Only upon close examination is it possible to make a determination.

Matthew 13:24-30, “Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ He said

to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

The desert is in bloom in the Jordan Valley. Some young barley is visible.



I hope this information can and is of value to you in your quest to develop a more intimate and personal relationship with our betrothed and through that pursuit, we all learn how to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. This study goes hand in hand with our Calendar of God study and that of the Passover of the Lord and Pentecost and all its Fullness. In using these tools given to us by our Creator we are able to proclaim accurately the appointed times of meeting which are commanded to be kept at the very time God commands of them. May your walk in the way, and your joy in Christ, be exemplified in your keeping of the feasts of God, and may it be greatly magnified.

Our peace we give to you