

## The First Easter Sunday



There has been a conspiracy! Whether earthly or in the spirit world, I don't know. But this morning, at least in heaven, they will mark the greatest of all the Jewish Holidays (or Biblical Feasts) – and it isn't called Easter. There is a secret Jewish Holiday that no one wants to talk about. Well, maybe I'm being a bit dramatic, but the fact is that Yeshua (Jesus is His name in Greek) rose from the dead on a Biblical holiday. If you look in Leviticus 23, verses 10 and 11, it says...

*Tell the people of Israel, "After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the cohen, that is the priest. He is to wave the sheaf before Adonai, ... the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat."* Leviticus 23:10-11

These verses clearly say that the Firstfruits is on the first Sunday, after the first Saturday, after Passover. Not so fast – the Pharisees and the Sadducees had a disagreement about this. The Pharisees claimed that since Passover itself was a rest day, it was the Sabbath – so Firstfruits would be the day after Passover.

However, the Sadducees maintained that the Sabbath was referring to an actual Saturday – not a special Jewish holiday. So Firstfruits would always fall on a Sunday. Yet, we don't hear much from the Sadducees after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. Thus, the pharisaical view became the dominant view in Judaism. In fact today, many Jews confuse this Firstfruits of Leviticus 23 with the Firstfruits during Shavuot (Numbers 28:26). The Hebrew for Leviticus 23 is different than Numbers 28. In Leviticus 23 the words are Reshit Katzir, where in Numbers 28 he uses Bikkurim – but they both refer to a Firstfruits offering.

I think the Scriptures are clear that the Sadducees got this one right. How do I know? We'll, we are commanded in the very next passage to count seven Sabbaths from Firstfruits to the feast of Shavuot – or Pentecost.

From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the Lord. (Leviticus 15-16)

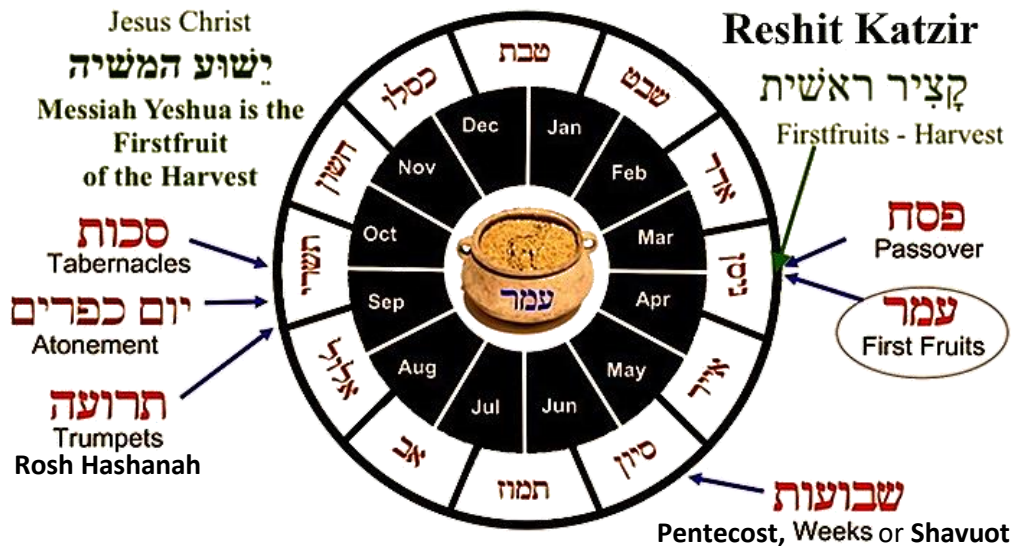
If Firstfruits, or the bringing of the Reshit Katzir, did not begin on an actual Sunday (“on the day after the Shabbat”), then you could not count off seven Sabbaths. The Lord said that it must be exactly 50 days, ending “the [Sunday] after the seventh Sabbath.” In other words, while Passover day is considered to be a day of total rest – a Sabbath – whatever day fell 49 days after that would not necessarily be a Sunday, as the day of the week would change every year.

Why is this even important?

Okay – hopefully I am not boring you to death – there is a powerful reason I am sharing this. If the Firstfruits offering was to be brought on the Sunday after the Saturday after the beginning of Passover, then that means that Yeshua not only died on a Jewish Feast day (Passover), but rose from the dead on the Jewish holiday – Firstfruits! Paul understood that Yeshua rose from the dead on the Firstfruits (despite being a Pharisee), for he said in his famous discourse on the Resurrection of Yeshua in 1 Corinthians 15:

*But the fact is that the Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have died. For since death came through a man, also the resurrection of the dead has come through a man. For just as in connection with Adam all die, so in connection with the Messiah all will be made alive. But each in his own order: the Messiah is the firstfruits; then those who belong to the Messiah, at the time of his coming; then the culmination, when he hands over the Kingdom to God the Father, after having put an end to every rulership, yes, to every authority and power. 1 Corinthians 15:20-24*

Yes, Yeshua – the first among the resurrected sons of God, rose in newness of Life on Firstfruits. Yet, is it really the greatest of all the Jewish Holidays? When you consider that it pointed to the resurrection of the Messiah, I think it is safe to elevate to the top – but that is just one man’s opinion. Today, make sure to remind your friends (in a spirit of humility) that it is the Jewish Feast of Firstfruits, when Messiah conquered death, hell and the grave! The truth is, no matter what you call today, let’s all focus on the wonderful gift of life that Yeshua secured for us when he rose from the dead.



**Source:** “Yeshua Rose from the Dead on a Jewish Holiday and No One is Talking About It!” by Ron Cantor