

FIRST FRUITS

Deuteronomy 26:1-11



BIKKURIM

An overview of First Fruits and counting the omer



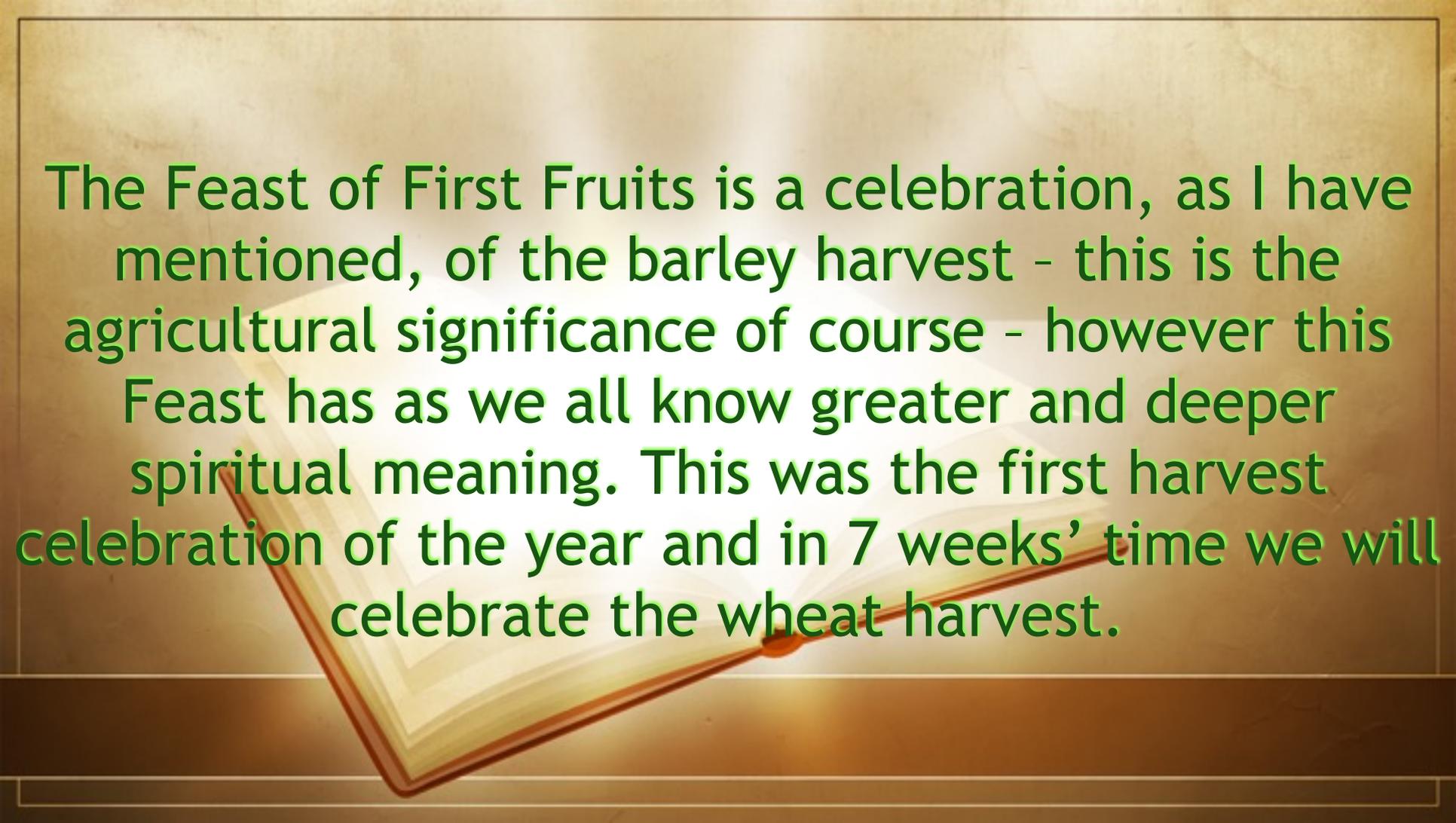


Today we are here to celebrate 'Bikkurim' / First Fruits and upon this day we also begin to count 7 full Sabbaths and the day after the seventh Sabbath - which from 'First Fruits' is a period of 50 days when we then celebrate Shavuot - Feast of Weeks.

3 times a year all the men were commanded to come up to Yerushalayim, at the feast times of Pěsaḥ/Unleavened Bread - at Shavuot and at Sukkoth - all of these feasts are centred on harvest celebrations and offerings. During Unleavened Bread we have First Fruits which is the beginning of the barley harvest - Shavuot (Feast of Weeks/ Pentecost) is the celebration of the beginning of the wheat harvest and Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles) it is the fruit harvest.

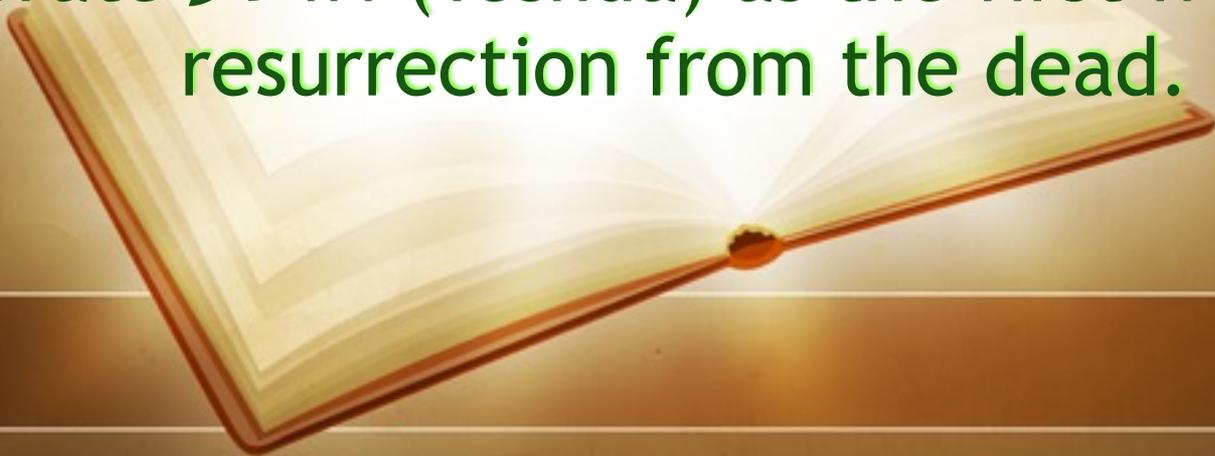
Today I want to share with you a little on just what season we are in and celebrating right now and will share a little on what First Fruits is all about as well as what the counting of the omer symbolises for us leading up to Shavuot, with the hope to stir your hunger and passion to give your very all as a daily living sacrifice unto יהוה (YeHoVah).

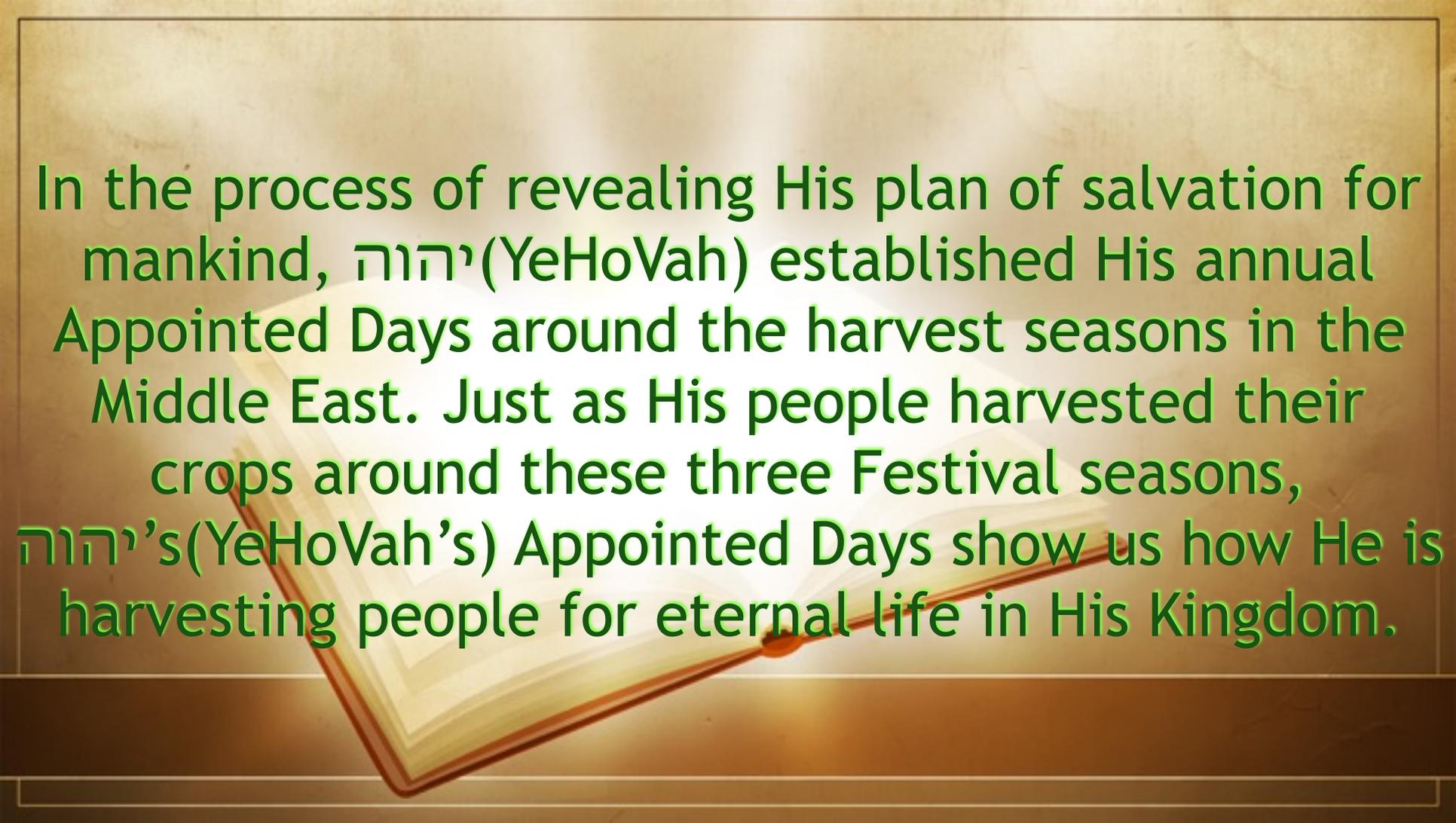




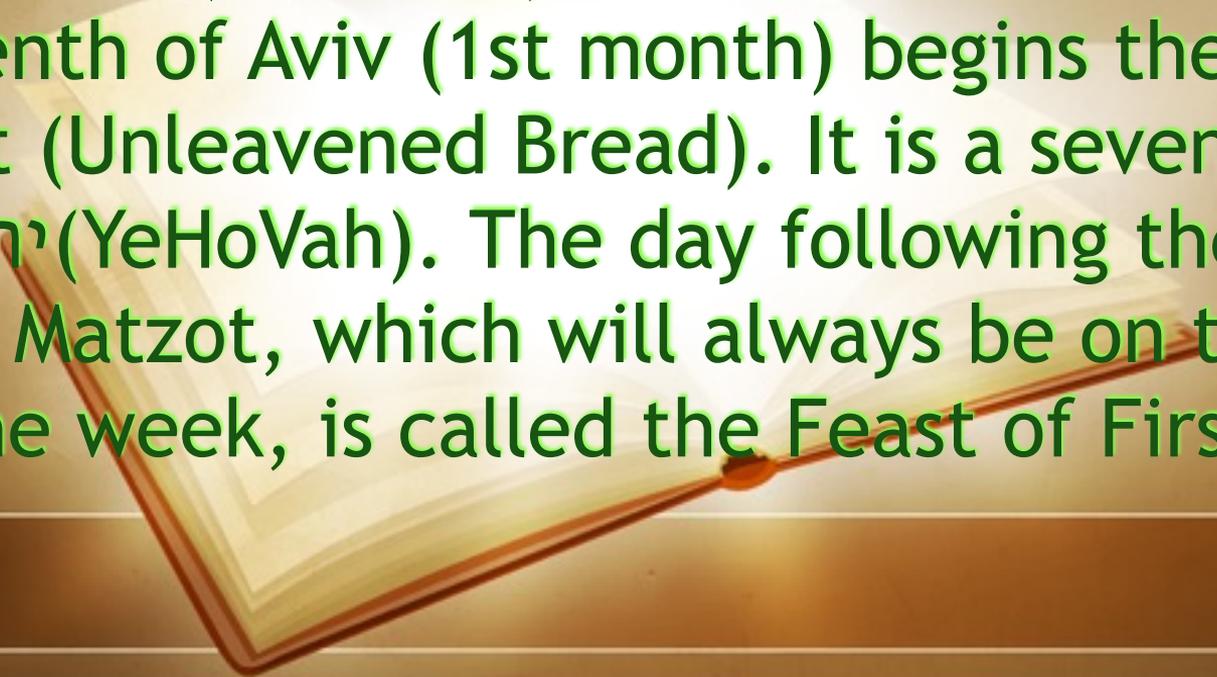
The Feast of First Fruits is a celebration, as I have mentioned, of the barley harvest - this is the agricultural significance of course - however this Feast has as we all know greater and deeper spiritual meaning. This was the first harvest celebration of the year and in 7 weeks' time we will celebrate the wheat harvest.

What this Festival of First Fruit assures us is the sure and blessed promise of a future harvest to come. This truly is a time of celebration, as we celebrate יהושע (Yeshua) as the first fruit of the resurrection from the dead.

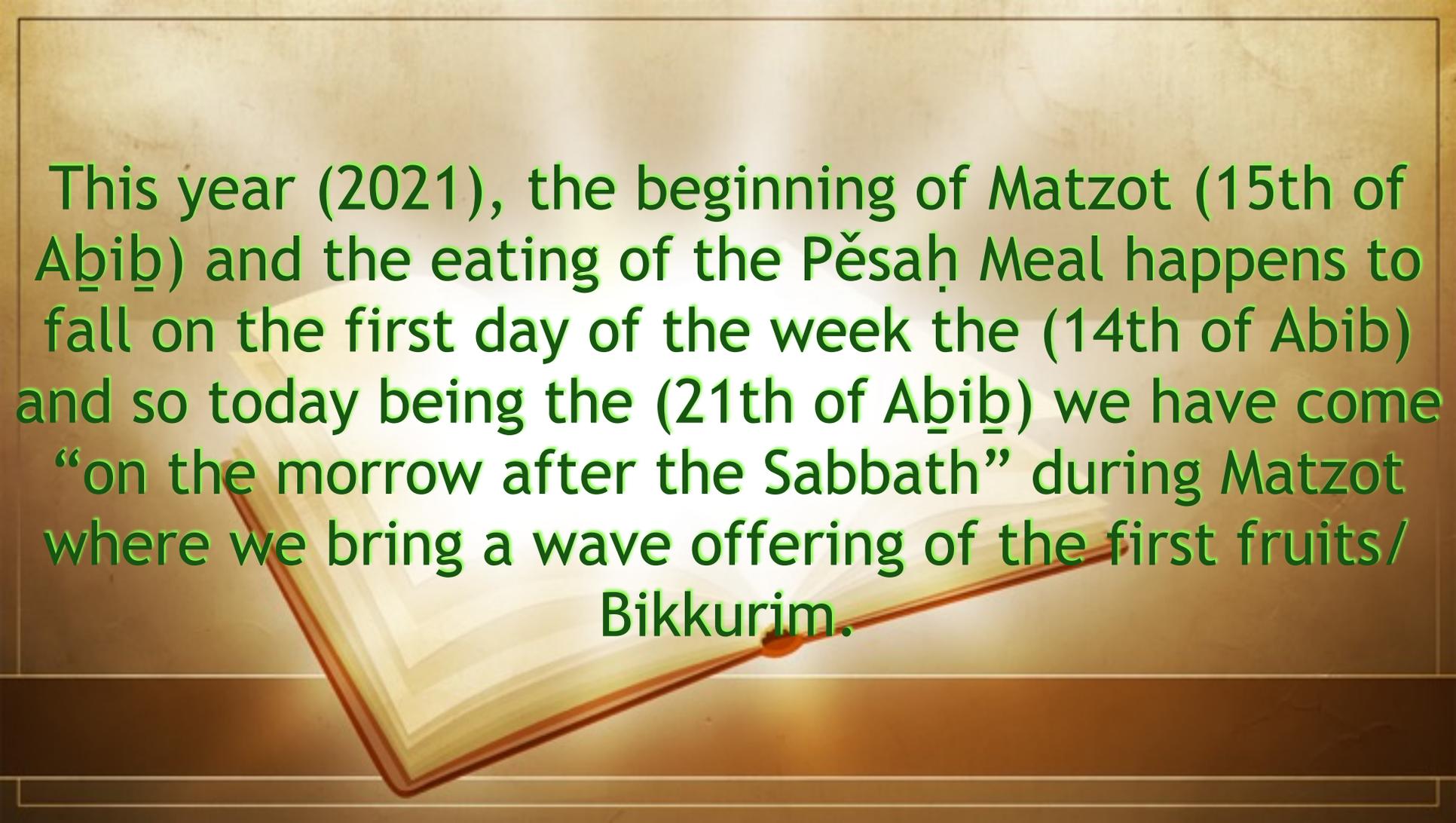




In the process of revealing His plan of salvation for mankind, יהוה (YeHoVah) established His annual Appointed Days around the harvest seasons in the Middle East. Just as His people harvested their crops around these three Festival seasons, יהוה's (YeHoVah's) Appointed Days show us how He is harvesting people for eternal life in His Kingdom.



The Appointed Feasts have meanings that build upon each other. Together they progressively reveal how יהוה (YeHoVah) works with humanity. The fifteenth of Aviv (1st month) begins the Feast of Matzot (Unleavened Bread). It is a seven day feast to יהוה (YeHoVah). The day following the Sabbath during Matzot, which will always be on the 1st day of the week, is called the Feast of First Fruits.



This year (2021), the beginning of Matzot (15th of Abib) and the eating of the Pěsaḥ Meal happens to fall on the first day of the week the (14th of Abib) and so today being the (21th of Abib) we have come “on the morrow after the Sabbath” during Matzot where we bring a wave offering of the first fruits/ Bikkurim.

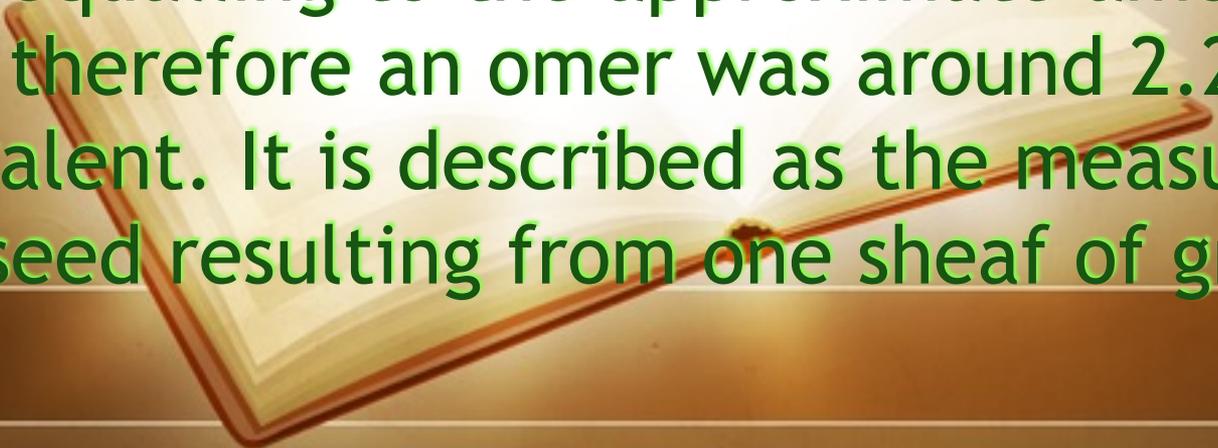
Matzot and the counting of the omer must begin on the first day of the week and to assume that it will always fall on the 16th regardless of what day of the week it is, simply denies the work of Messiah! יהושע was 3 days and 3 nights is the heart of the earth and what we celebrate on this day is His offering up of the first fruits of those who were raised after His resurrection, giving us a guarantee of a harvest to come.

So while Messiah fulfilled the requirements of this Feast, we will always have, as commanded, Bikkurim on the day after 'the' Sabbath during Matzot and begin to count the omer on this day!

When the barley harvest was ready to be reaped, a sheaf of the first grain would be brought to the priest who would wave it before יהוה (YeHoVah).

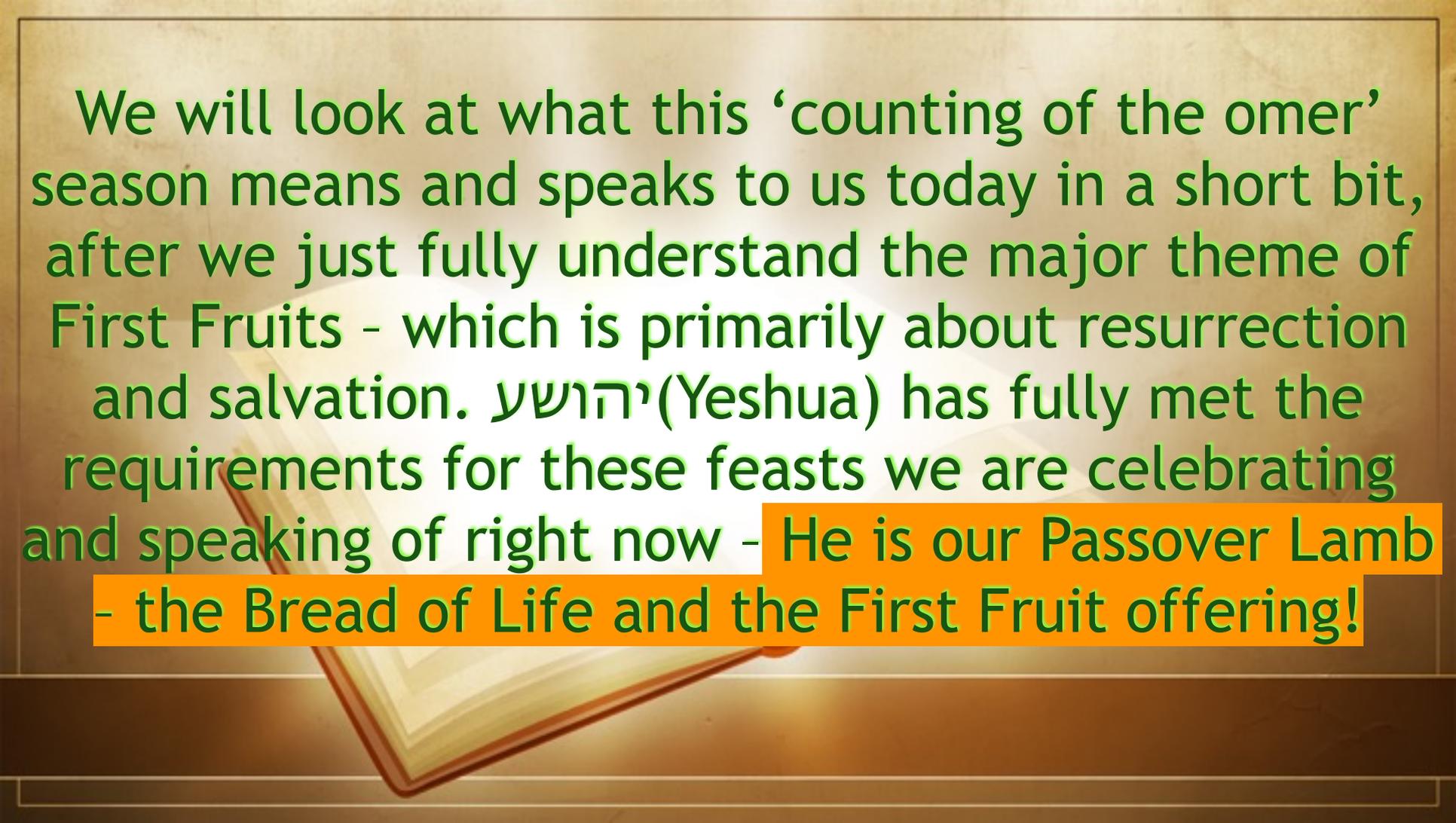
This was called the 'the sheaf of the first fruits' and would take place on the day after the Sabbath.

יהוה (YeHoVah) commanded the people to bring a sheaf of the harvest. Sheaf in the Hebrew is 'omer' which was the dry measure of food stuffs, and was a 1/10th part of an ephah - a dry measurement of grain equalling to the approximate amount of 22 litres, therefore an omer was around 2.2 litres dry equivalent. It is described as the measure of the seed resulting from one sheaf of grain.



An omer was also deemed by יהוה (YeHoVah) to be the sufficient measure of 'manna' that an average person could eat in one day. Therefore an omer or sheaf also symbolises a single person and is in fact a picture of oneself being turned over to יהוה (YeHoVah) for the process of becoming useful to His community - His Bride!





We will look at what this ‘counting of the omer’ season means and speaks to us today in a short bit, after we just fully understand the major theme of First Fruits - which is primarily about resurrection and salvation. יהושע (Yeshua) has fully met the requirements for these feasts we are celebrating and speaking of right now - He is our Passover Lamb - the Bread of Life and the First Fruit offering!

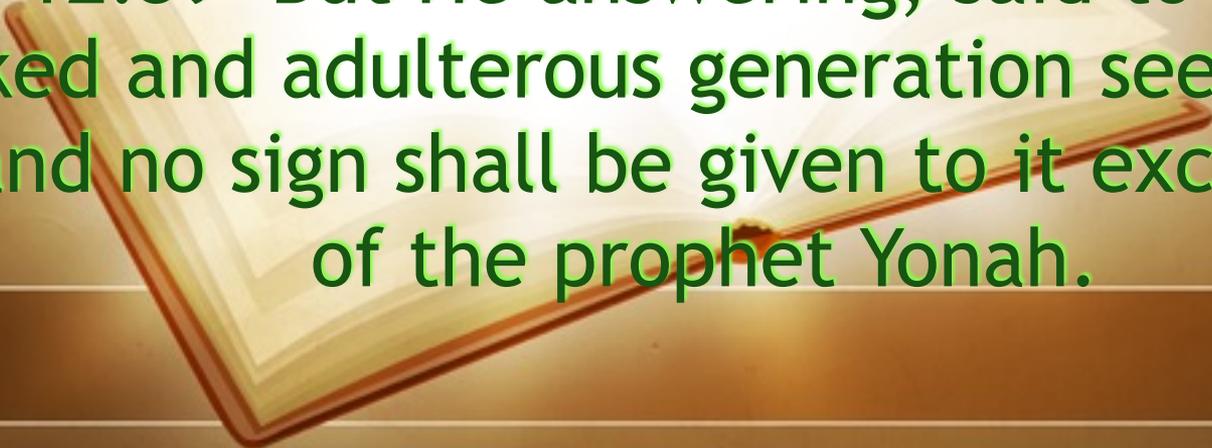
יהושע (Yeshua) was resurrected at the end of Shabbat and at the start of the first day of the week (at Saturday sunset), offering Himself as the first fruits to all generations fulfilling the sign of Yonah (Jonah) - 3 days and 3 nights and becoming the first born among those who sleep!



The Sign of Jonah

Mat 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from You.”

Mat 12:39 But He answering, said to them, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Yonah.



Mat 12:40 “For as Yonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of the great fish, Jon 1:17 so shall the Son of Aḁam be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Mat 12:41 “Men of Ninewěh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Yonah, and look, a greater than Yonah is here.

Mat 12:42 “The sovereignty of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Shelomoh, and look, a greater than Shelomoh is here.

The Chronology of Jesus Christ's Death, Burial and Resurrection



¹ John 19:31; Mark 16:12;

Luke 23:54

² John 19:31; Leviticus 23:4-7

³ Matthew 27:62

⁴ Matthew 26:26-28

⁵ Matthew 26:47-52

⁶ Mark 16:8

⁷ Matthew 27:48-50

⁸ Matthew 27:57-60

⁹ Mark 16:1

¹⁰ Luke 23:56; Exodus 20:8-11

¹¹ Matthew 28:1-6; Mark 16:1-6;

Luke 24:2-3; John 20:1

¹² Luke 24:7; John 20:9

יהושע (Yeshua) is the first fruit of the Barley Harvest! Let us look at some Scriptures that speak of Messiah as the 'first':

1. יהושע is the firstborn of Miryam/Mary:

Matthew 1:23-25 ““See, a maiden shall conceive, and she shall give birth to a Son, and they shall call His Name Immanu'el,” which translated, means, “Ĕl with us.” 24 And Yosēph, awaking from his sleep, did as the messenger of יהוה (YeHoVah) commanded him and took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she gave birth to her Son, the first-born. And he called His Name יהושע (Yeshua).”

2. יהושע (Yeshua) is the first-born of the Father:

Hebrews 1:6 “And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, “Let all the messengers of Elohim do reverence to Him.”

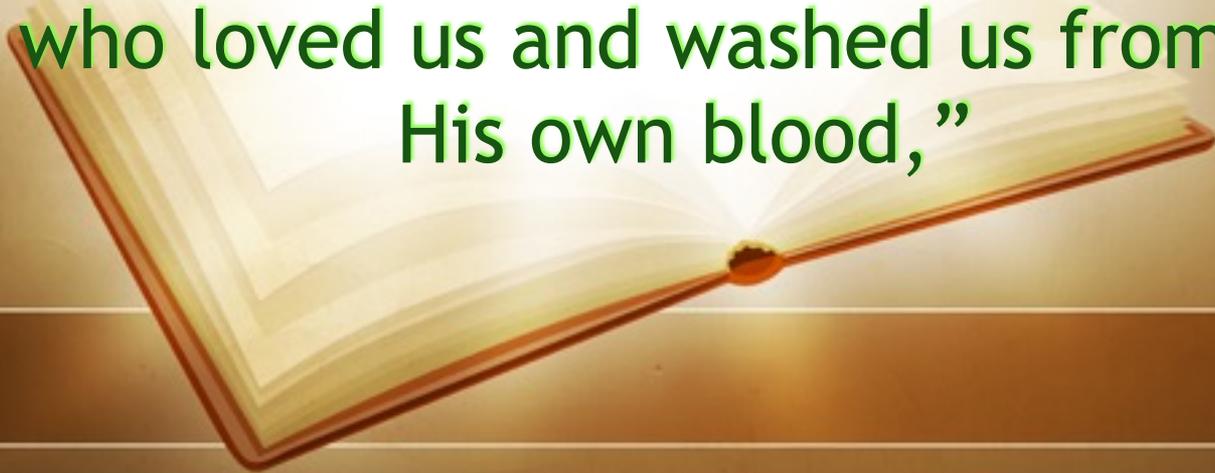


3. יהושע (Yeshua) is the firstborn over all creation:
Colossians 1:15 “who is the likeness of the invisible
Elohim, the first-born of all creation.”



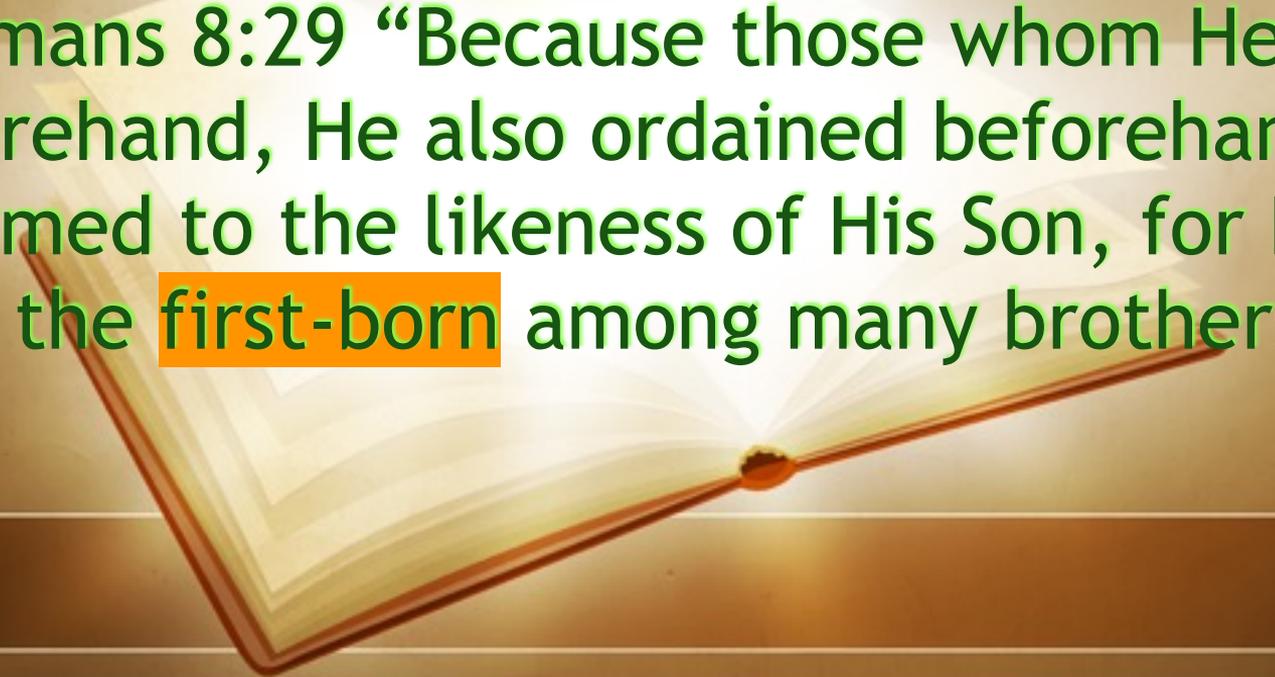
4. יהושע (Yeshua) is the firstborn from the dead:

Revelation 1:5 “and from יהושע (Yeshua) Messiah, the trustworthy witness, the **first-born** from the dead, and the ruler of the sovereigns of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,”



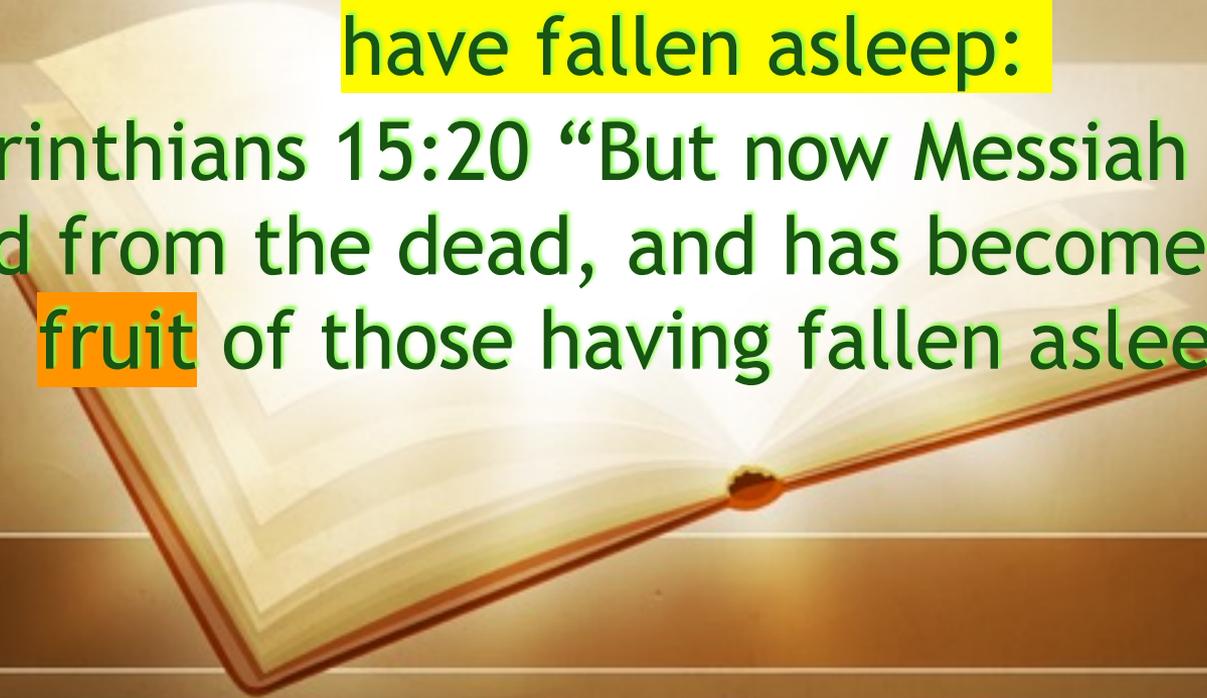
5. יהושע (Yeshua) is the firstborn of many brethren:

Romans 8:29 “Because those whom He knew beforehand, He also ordained beforehand to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, for Him to be the **first-born** among many brothers.”



6. יהושע (Yehsua) is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep:

1 Corinthians 15:20 “But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, and has become the first-fruit of those having fallen asleep.”



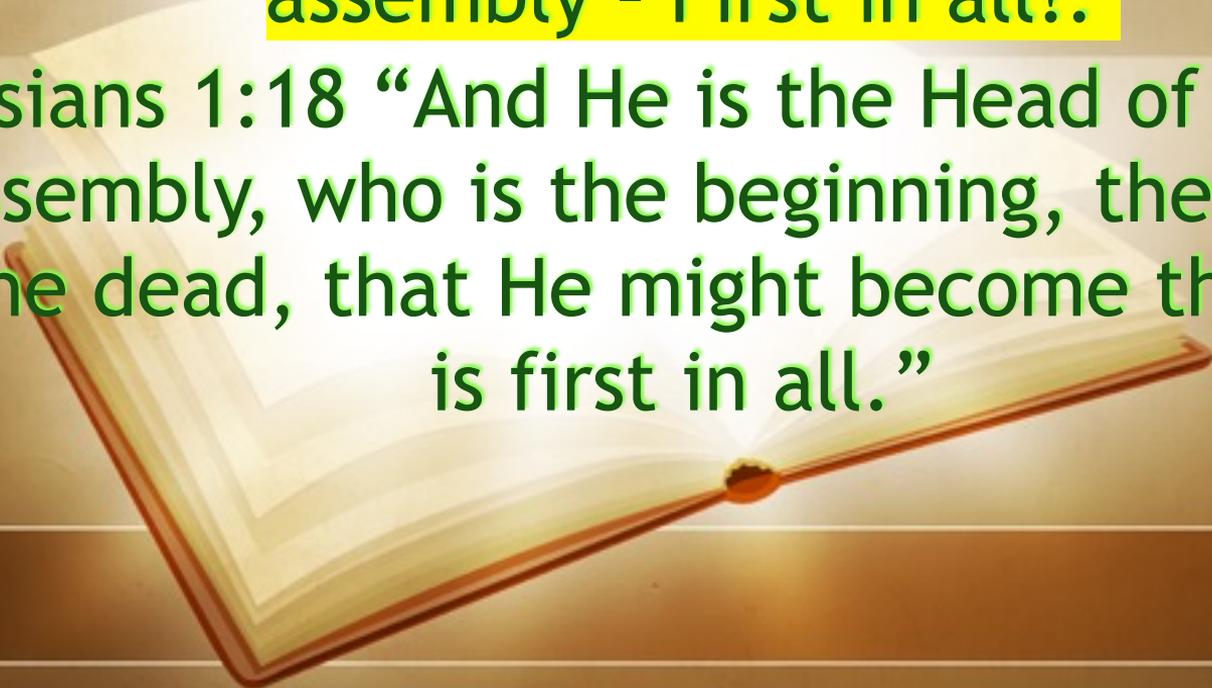
7. יהושע (Yeshua) is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Aleph and the Tav:

Revelation 22:13 “I am the ‘Aleph’ and the ‘Tav’, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

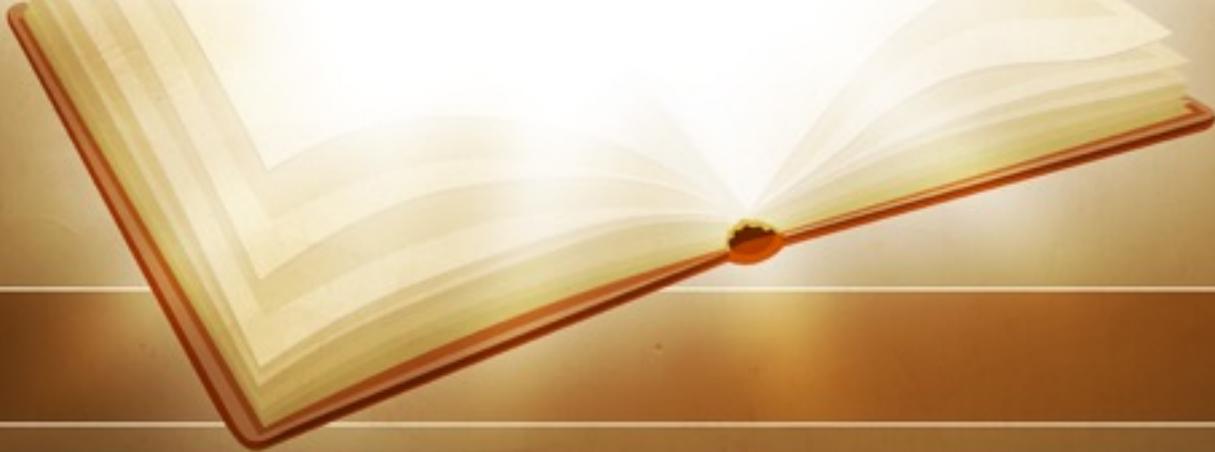


8. יהושע (Yehsua) is the head of the body, the assembly - First in all!:

Colossians 1:18 “And He is the Head of the body, the assembly, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that He might become the One who is first in all.”



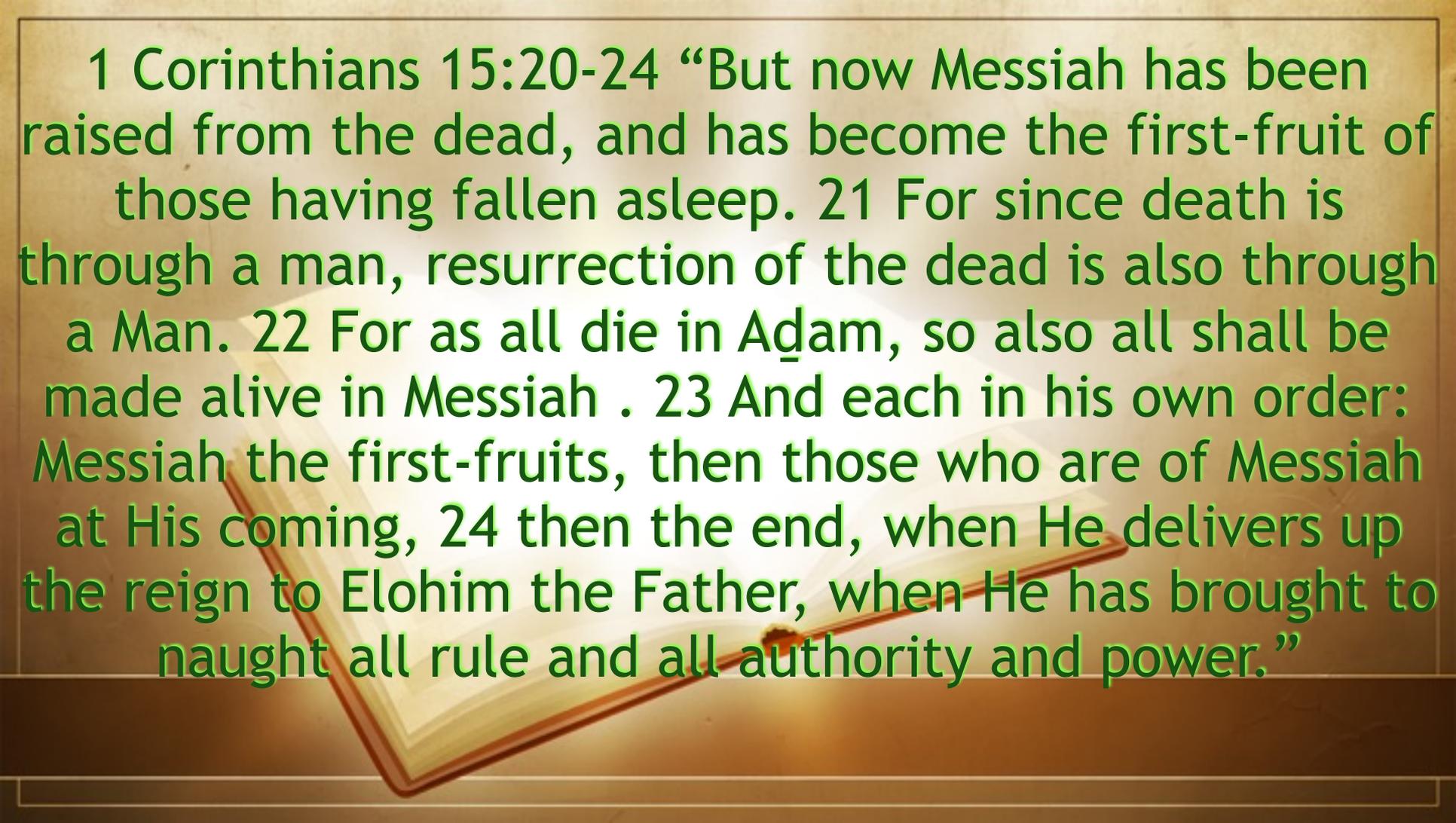
He is the most set-apart One of ELOHIM and He is both the first born of ELOHIM and the first fruit unto ELOHIM.



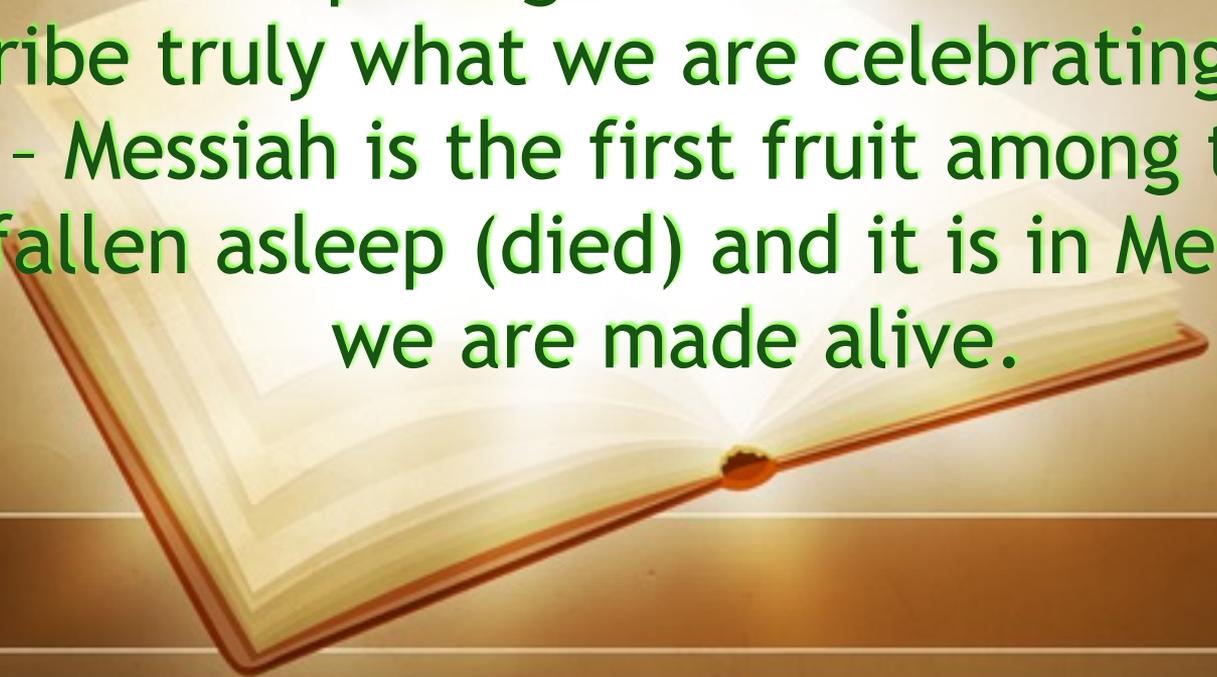
In Messiah what assurance we have is that 'in Him' we are redeemed - Pěsaḥ speaks of our redemption, Matzot or Unleavened Bread speaks of our sanctification -being set-apart (cleaned up from leaven) and First Fruits is the assurance of our promise of eternal life and resurrection in Messiah.

Blessed are those who have part in the first resurrection for the second death has no power over them!!!



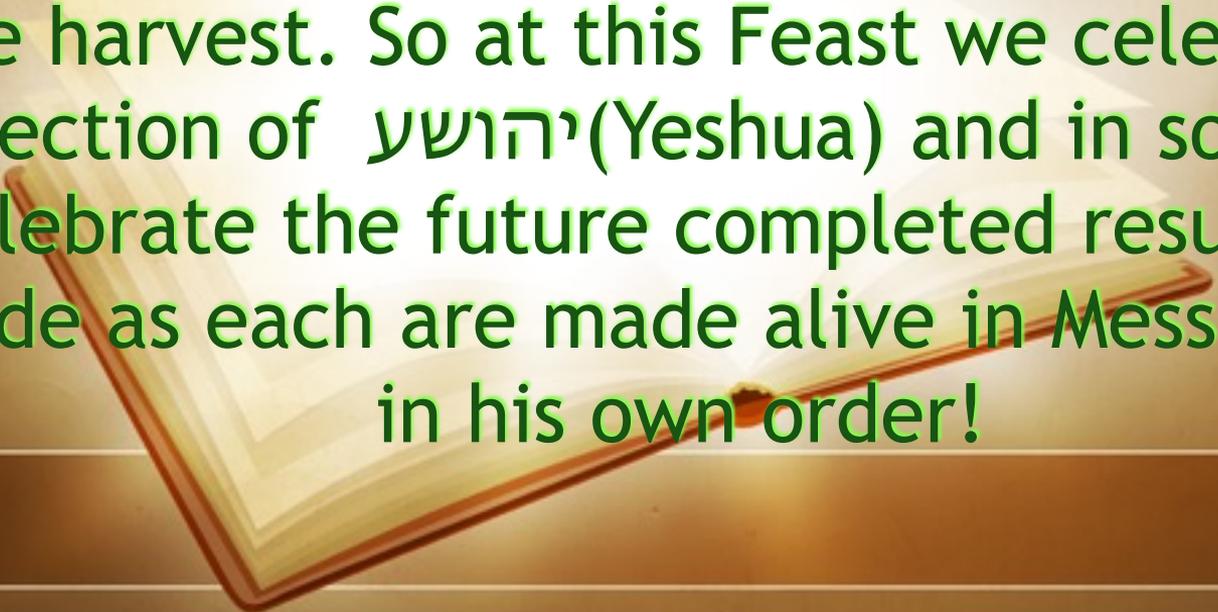


1 Corinthians 15:20-24 “But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, and has become the first-fruit of those having fallen asleep. 21 For since death is through a man, resurrection of the dead is also through a Man. 22 For as all die in Adam, so also all shall be made alive in Messiah . 23 And each in his own order: Messiah the first-fruits, then those who are of Messiah at His coming, 24 then the end, when He delivers up the reign to Elohim the Father, when He has brought to naught all rule and all authority and power.”



A wonderful passage that Sha'ul is writing to describe truly what we are celebrating on First Fruits - Messiah is the first fruit among those who have fallen asleep (died) and it is in Messiah that we are made alive.

This passage is read as a commentary on the order of resurrection but Sha'ul is also referring here to First Fruits - In that יהושע (Yeshua) in being the first to be raised has fulfilled this Feast - securing the future harvest. So at this Feast we celebrate the resurrection of יהושע (Yeshua) and in so doing we also celebrate the future completed resurrection of His Bride as each are made alive in Messiah - each in his own order!



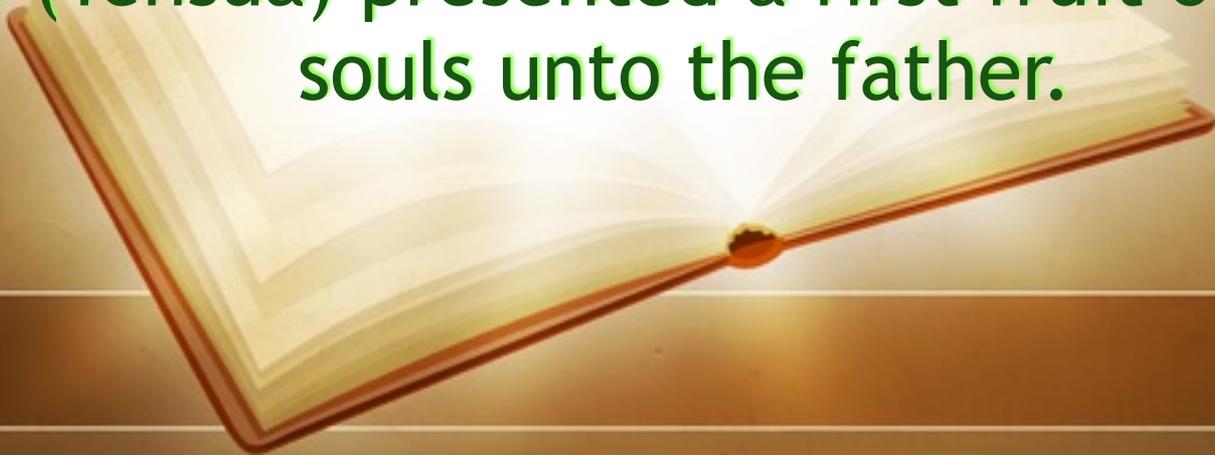
יהושע's (Yeshua's) resurrection was in affect a sheaf
wave offering presented before the Father as first
fruits of the harvest to come! He also presented His
first-fruits offering to the Father on this day:



Matthew 27:52-53 “and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the set-apart ones who had fallen asleep were raised, 53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, they went into the set-apart city and appeared to many.”

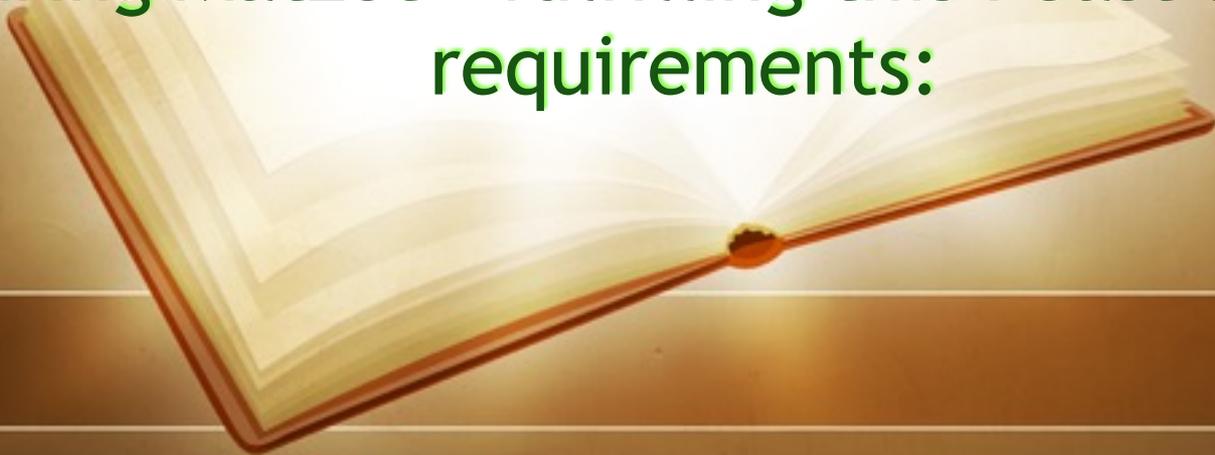


A scripture not often understood and even very quickly skipped through lack of understanding - יהושע (Yehsua) presented a first fruit offering of souls unto the father.



Those graves that were opened when He died lay open for 3 days and 3 nights and after His resurrection, the dead from the tombs that were opened came out of the tombs and appeared unto many - picture the scene - at His death the temple veil was torn, there was a huge earth quake and tombs of many were opened and they stayed open for 3 days and 3 nights until יהושע (Yeshua) was raised, after which the dead of those who were in those tombs came out and appeared to many.

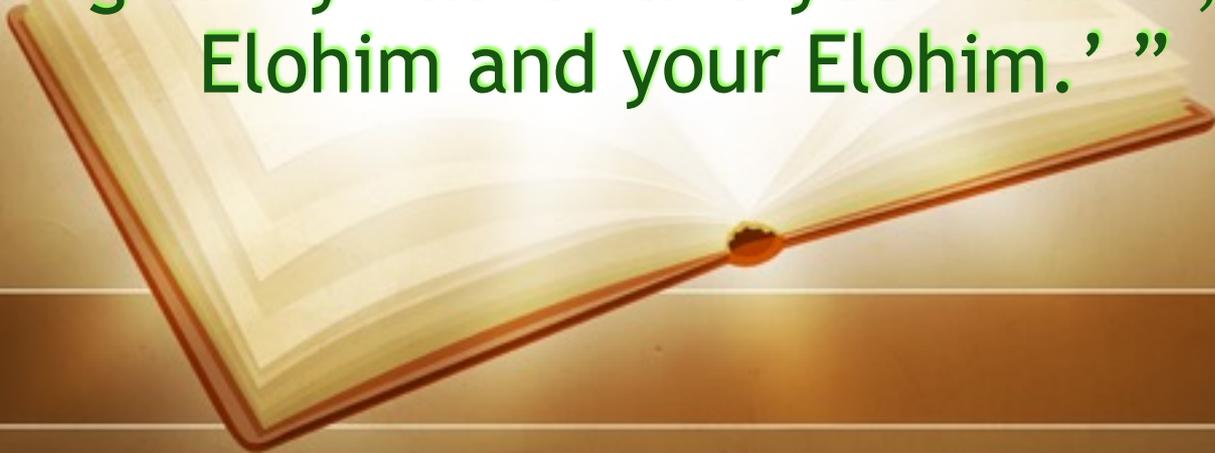
These raised ones were taken up when He ascended and presented the first fruit offering unto the Father on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath during Matzot - fulfilling this Feast and its requirements:



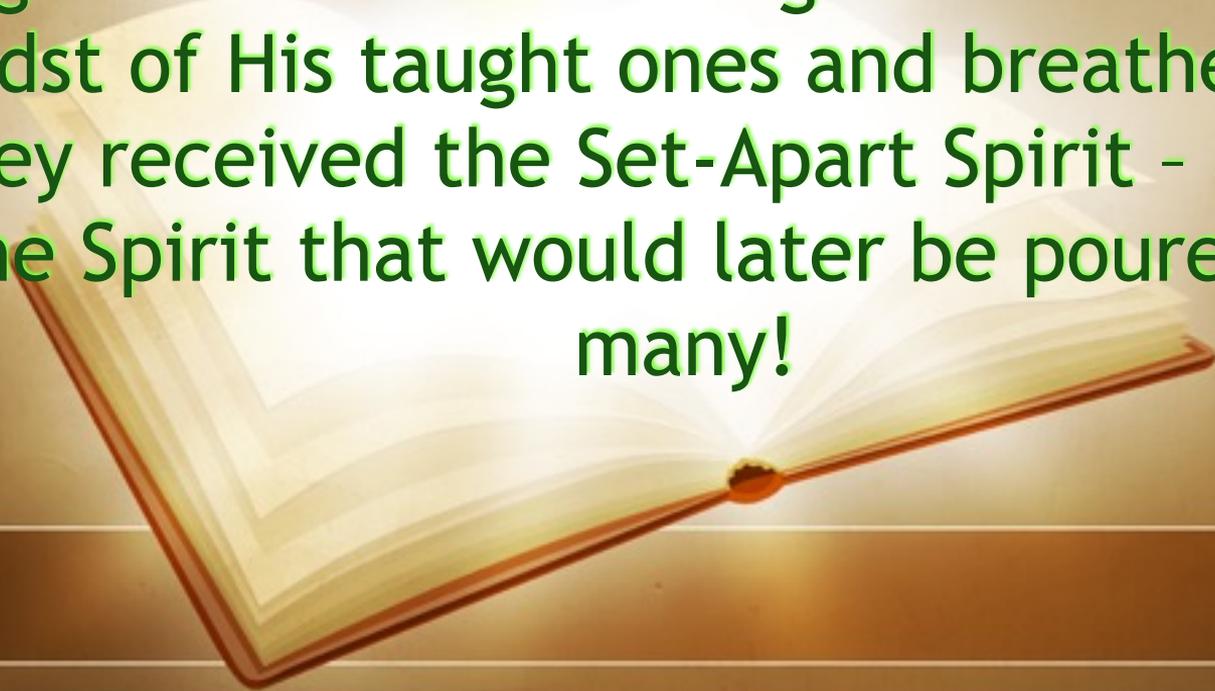
Leviticus 23:12 “And on that day when you wave the sheaf, you shall prepare a male lamb a year old, a perfect one, as a burnt offering to יהוה.
(YeHoVah)”

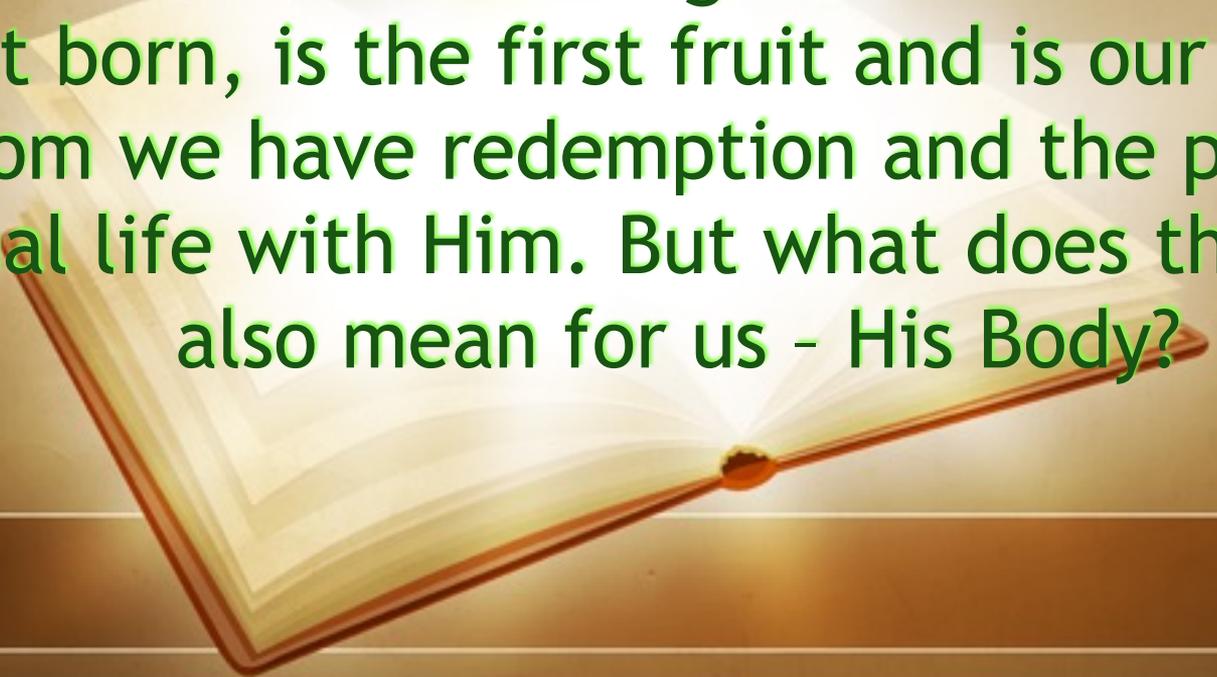
He is our High Priest who presented the wave offering, being the ‘year old perfect lamb’ ascended up to the Father!

John 20:17 “יהושע (Yehsua) said to her, “Do not hold on to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My Elohim and your Elohim.’ ”



That day He ascended and presented the first fruit offering and the next evening He came and stood in the midst of His taught ones and breathed on them and they received the Set-Apart Spirit - a first fruit of the Spirit that would later be poured out on many!





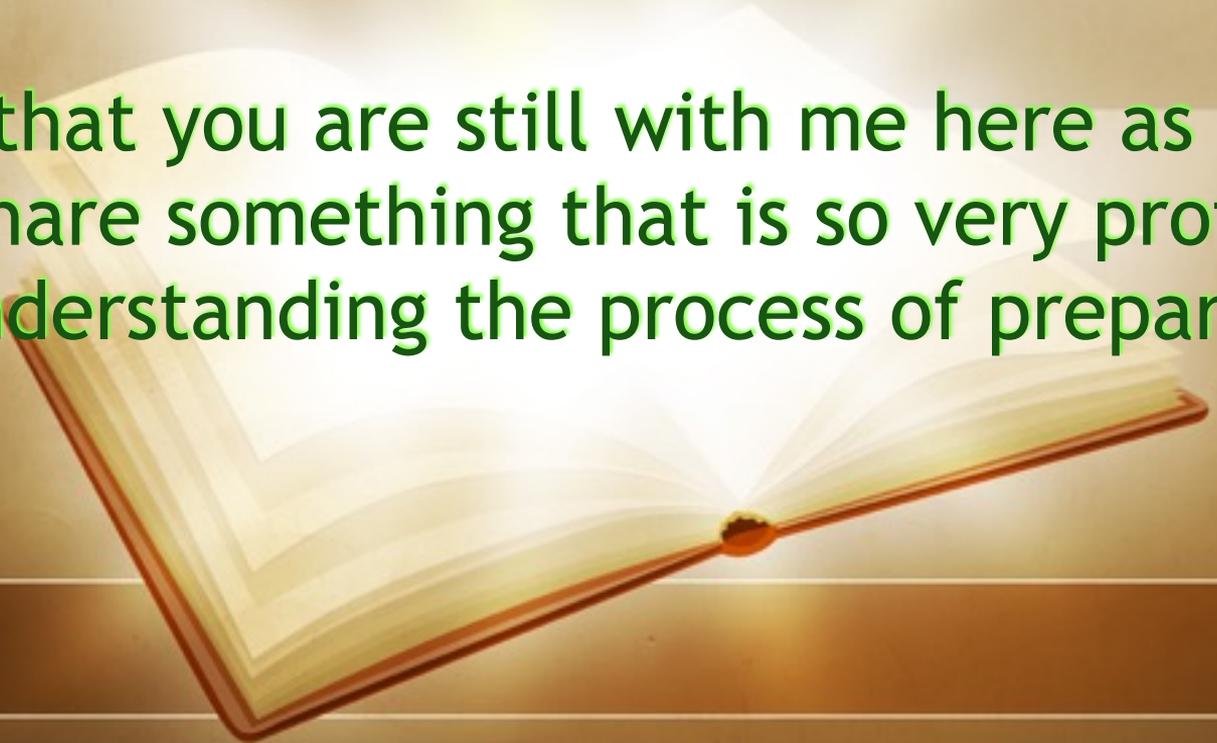
So what we are celebrating is the fact that Messiah, the first born, is the first fruit and is our High Priest in whom we have redemption and the promise of eternal life with Him. But what does this season also mean for us - His Body?



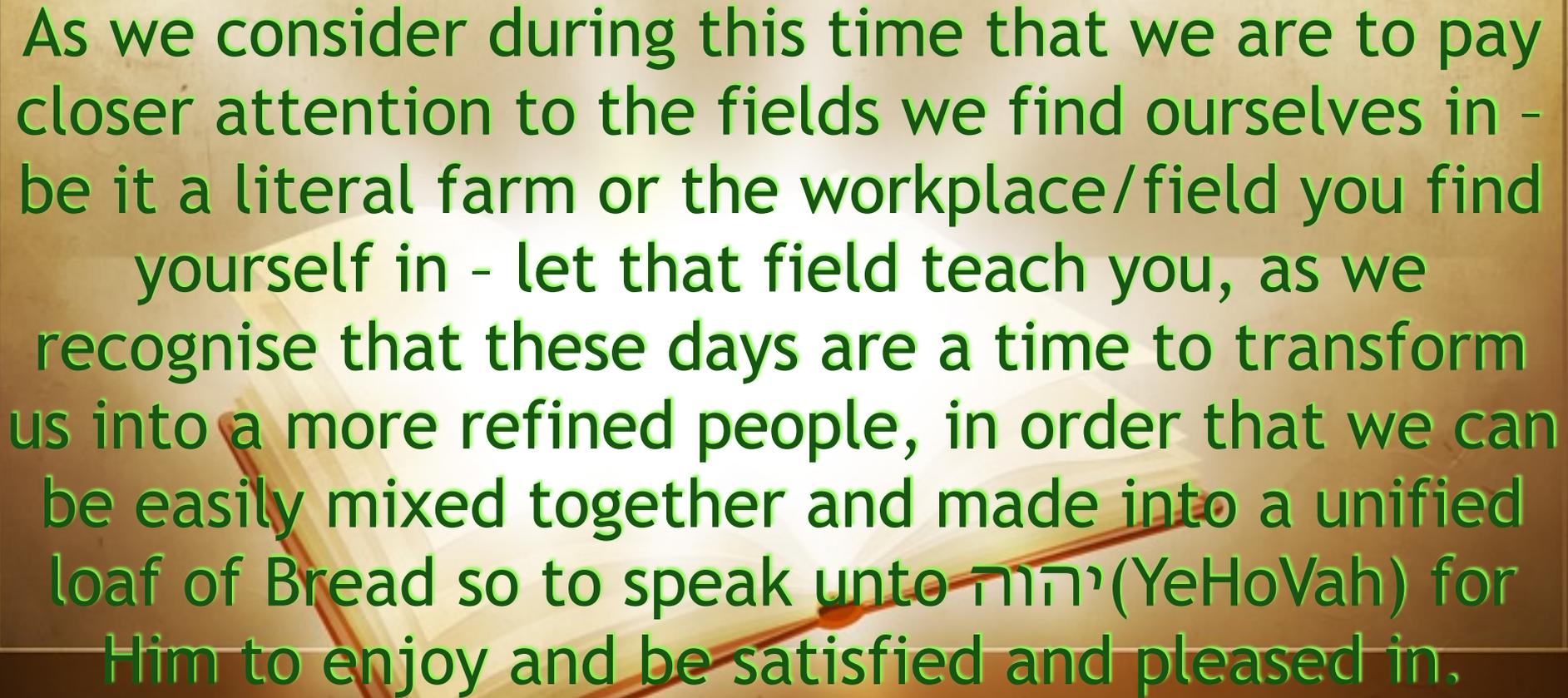
This counting of the omer from the start of the barley harvest unto the start of the wheat harvest reflects a great lesson for us - this speaks to us about a time of being refined - making oneself count for the Kingdom and taking an honest account of where one fits in and how well one is progressing toward fulfilling the calling of the Father in one's life:

Counting the omer is not a time to sit back and relax and in a sense have the misconceived idea of 'once saved always saved', no - this is a time of diligent preparation and humble obedience to walking in and becoming more effective as part of His Bride who has prepared Herself.



An open book is shown from a slightly elevated perspective, lying flat. The pages are a bright, glowing yellow, suggesting they are illuminated from within or by a light source. The book's cover is a dark reddish-brown color. The background is a textured, warm-toned surface, possibly parchment or aged paper, with a subtle gradient from light to dark. The overall atmosphere is one of wisdom and enlightenment.

I hope that you are still with me here as now I want to share something that is so very profound in understanding the process of preparation.



As we consider during this time that we are to pay closer attention to the fields we find ourselves in - be it a literal farm or the workplace/field you find yourself in - let that field teach you, as we recognise that these days are a time to transform us into a more refined people, in order that we can be easily mixed together and made into a unified loaf of Bread so to speak unto יהוה (YeHoVah) for Him to enjoy and be satisfied and pleased in.

This First Fruit feast is a wave offering of the sheaf of barley and at Shavuot there is a wave offering of leavened bread, so let us look at the process of making bread and preparing it for a wave offering unto יהוה (YeHoVah)! There are several steps or processes which as we look at I hope that we are all reminded and realize just what is expected of me in being a part of the body or loaves if you will of Messiah!

The High Priestly Prayer

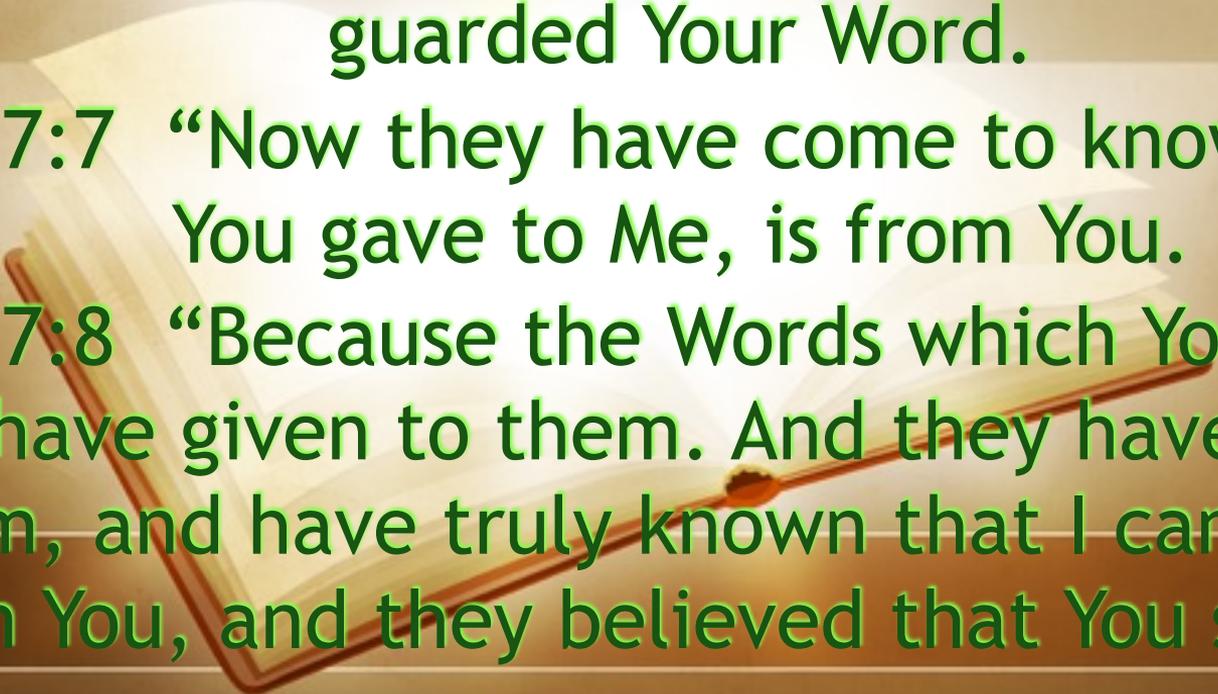
Joh 17:1 יהושע said these words, and lifted up His eyes to the heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come. Esteem Your Son, so that Your Son also might esteem You,

Joh 17:2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give everlasting life to all whom You have given Him.

Joh 17:3 “And this is everlasting life, that they should know You, the only true Elohim, and יהושע Messiah whom You have sent.

Joh 17:4 “I have esteemed You on the earth, having accomplished the work You have given Me that I should do.

Joh 17:5 “And now, esteem Me with Yourself, Father, with the esteem which I had with You before the world was.



Joh 17:6 “I have revealed Your Name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have guarded Your Word.

Joh 17:7 “Now they have come to know that all You gave to Me, is from You.

Joh 17:8 “Because the Words which You gave to Me, I have given to them. And they have received them, and have truly known that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.

Joh 17:9 “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

Joh 17:10 “And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I have been esteemed in them.

Joh 17:11 “And I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Set-apart Father, guard them in Your Name which You have given Me, so that they might be one, as We are.

We are commanded to know Elohim's Name!

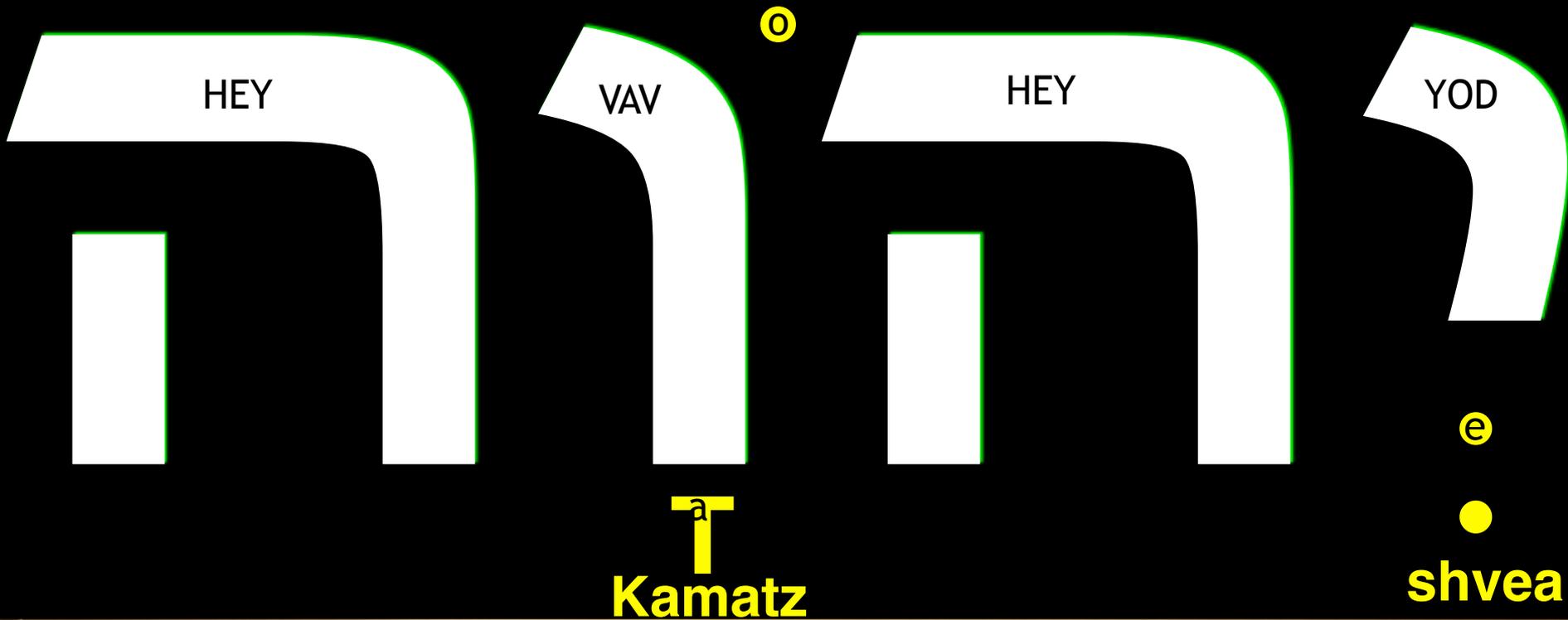
Hey Waw
Vav Hey Yod
יהוה

(Father of selfless Love)

Isa 52:6 “Therefore My people shall know My Name, in that day, for I am the One who is speaking”. See, it is I

Ye-Ho-Vah

Cholam



Joh 17:12 “When I was with them in the world, I was guarding them in **Your Name** which You have given Me, and I watched over them, and not one of them perished except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be filled.

Joh 17:13 “And now I come to You. And I speak these words in the world, so that they have My joy completed in them.

Joh 17:14 “I have given them Your Word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:15 “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the wicked one.

Joh 17:16 “They are not of the world, as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:17 “Set them apart in Your truth - Your Word is truth.

Joh 17:18 “As You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world.

Joh 17:19 “And for them I set Myself apart, so that they too might be set apart in truth.

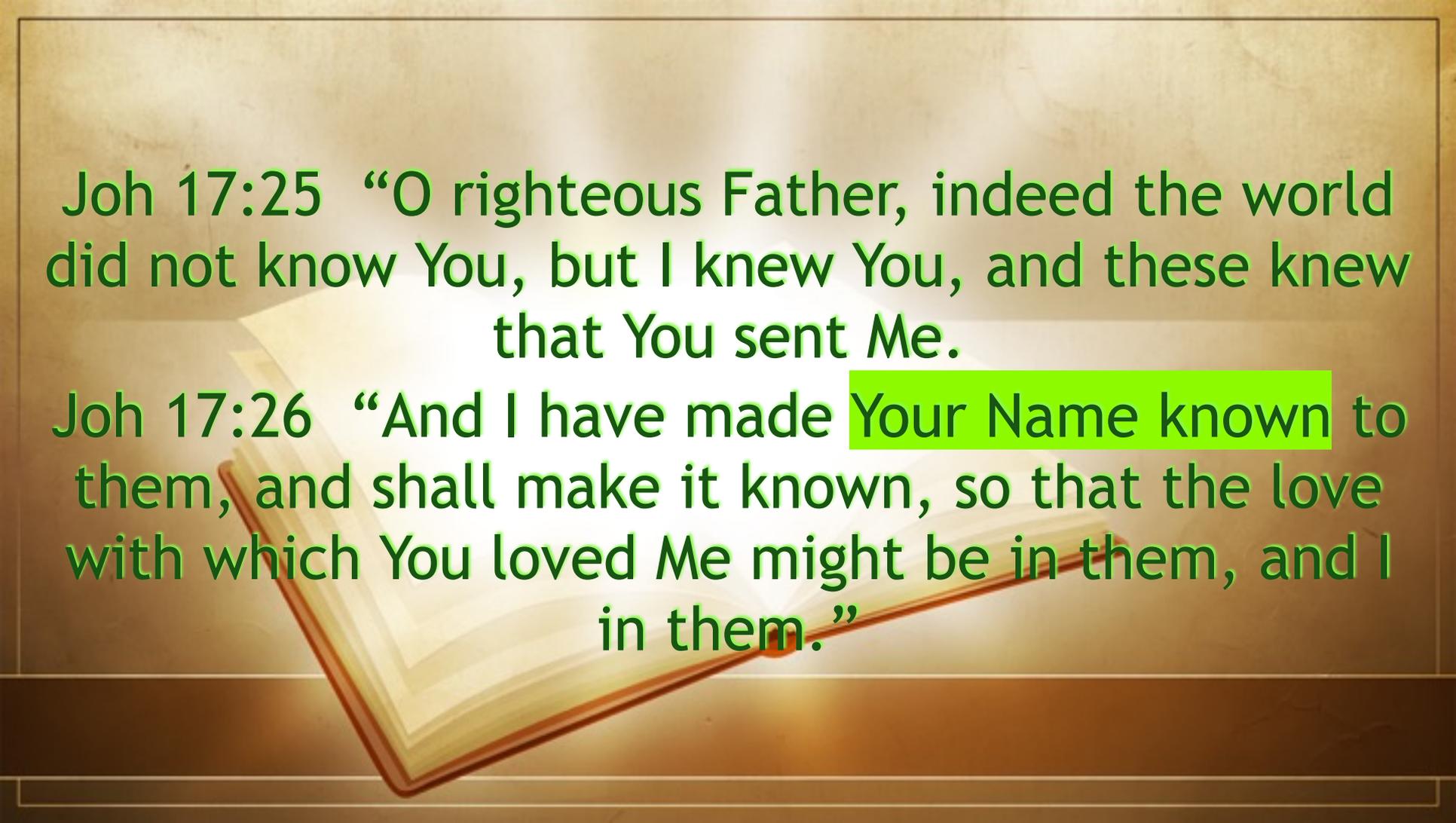
Joh 17:20 “And I do not pray for these alone, but also for those believing in Me through their word,

Joh 17:21 so that they all might be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, so that they too might be one in Us, so that the world might believe that You have sent Me.

Joh 17:22 “And the esteem which You gave Me I have given them, so that they might be one as We are one,

Joh 17:23 “I in them, and You in Me, so that they might be perfected into one, so that the world knows that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Joh 17:24 “Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me, might be with Me where I am, so that they see My esteem which You have given Me, because You loved Me before the foundation of the world.



Joh 17:25 “O righteous Father, indeed the world did not know You, but I knew You, and these knew that You sent Me.

Joh 17:26 “And I have made Your Name known to them, and shall make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me might be in them, and I in them.”

BIBLICAL HOLIDAYS

SPRING HOLIDAYS

FALL HOLIDAYS

Passover

First Fruits

Pentecost

Trumpets

Tabernacles

Jesus' Death

Resurrection

Holy Spirit

Unleavened
Bread

Day of
Atonement

BURIAL

50 DAYS

Historically fulfilled during
Jesus' first coming

The Church

To be fulfilled during the
second coming of Jesus

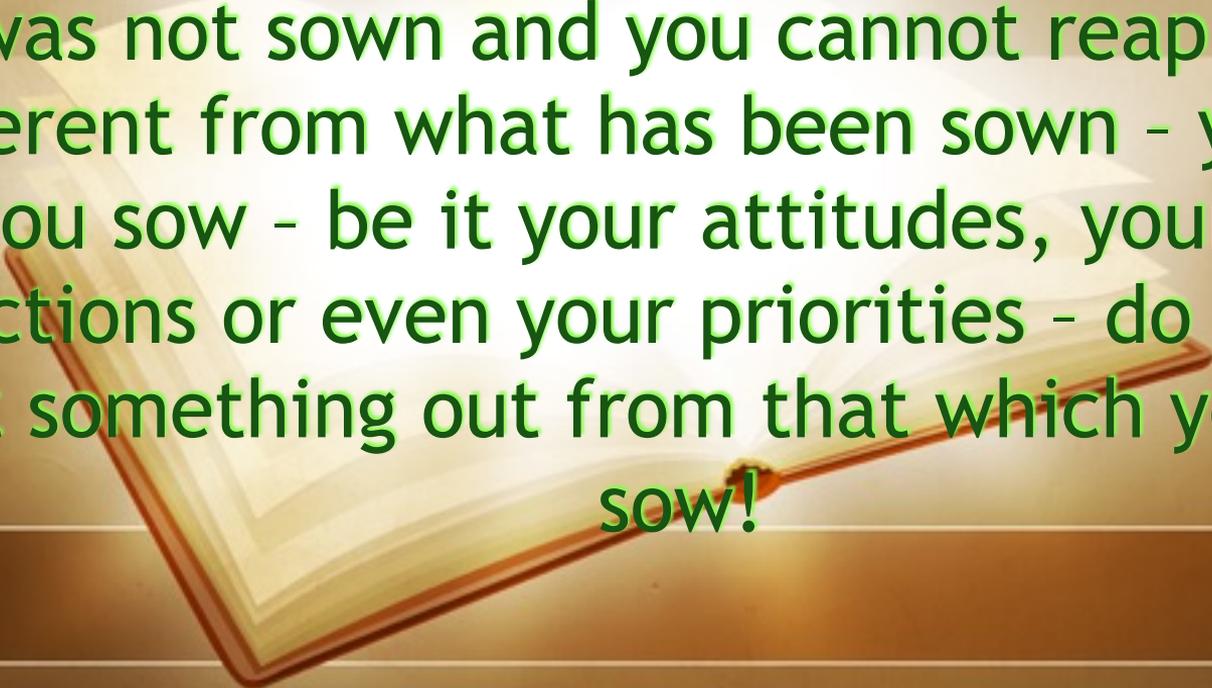
1 - SOWING OR PLANTING:

The Hebrew term that is used for sowing or planting also carries with it the meaning of 'scattering' - as pictured by a farmer who 'scatters his seed'.

The ancient practice of scattering was called to 'broadcast' the seed from a bag that was hung over one's shoulder.

We, as a people of Elohim, have been scattered over the whole earth and long to be replanted, if you will, into our native soil.

I am sure that we are all aware of the sowing and reaping principle - nothing can be reaped from what was not sown and you cannot reap something different from what has been sown - you reap what you sow - be it your attitudes, your thoughts, your actions or even your priorities - do not expect to get something out from that which you did not sow!



Gal 6:7 Do not be led astray: Elohim is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap.

Gal 6:8 Because he who sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh, but he who sows to the Spirit shall reap everlasting life from the Spirit.

Gal 6:9 And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not grow weary.

If you want an intimate growing relationship with יהוה, then you need to sow the time and effort in seeking Him! יהוה scattered Yisra'el and we get a greater understanding of this from the book of Hosea, which I encourage you to read.

Scattered but watched over - for this scattered seed will bring in a bountiful harvest for reaping!

The Hebrew root word for sow or sowing is זָרַע zera - Strong's H2233 which means, 'a sowing, seed, offspring' and comes from the primitive root זָרַע zara - Strong's H2232 meaning, 'to sow or scatter seed'.

We also recognize through the process of becoming an acceptable Priesthood and Bride, we are to sow righteousness and seek יהוה (YeHoVah):

Hosea 10:12 “Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap according to loving-commitment, break up your tillable ground, it is time to seek יהוה (YeHovah), till He comes and rains righteousness on you.”

2 - GROWING:

There is always a season or period between sowing and reaping - it never happens immediately.

It is during this time where growth occurs and this season of growth is a time, in a sense, for us to think about what was done wrong and how we can do better. One of the keys to overcoming the period of growth, or period of 'exile' if you will, is simply just that - grow and grow and grow - and to grow, we have to realize that we have inherited some lies - ok more than just some - we inherited a whole lot!!!

But, in realizing this, we also begin to grow and realize and know יהוה's (YeHoVah's) power and more importantly - His NAME!!!

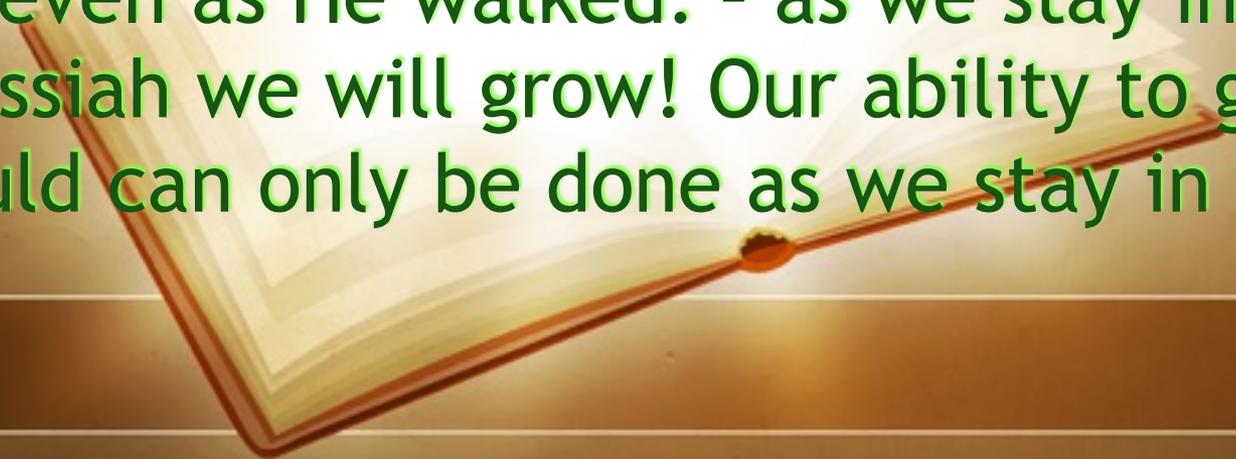
To 'know' is to walk in His Torah - for as 1 John 2:3 says that we know that we know Him when we guard His commands!

And as love for יהוה (YeHoVah) and one another grows, through obediently guarding His commands, we can 'outgrow' our 'exile' from the Promised Land - the more the world grows dim before our eyes and has no effect on pulling us away from obedience and therefore be ready to be lifted up when He comes and be replanted where we belong - together with Him in His Land!!!

Two Hebrew root words that are translated as
'grow' or 'growing' are

1) הָלַךְ halak - Strong's H1980 which means, 'walk, to go or come, grow, wander, travel' and

2) צָמַח tsamah - Strong's H6779 meaning, 'to sprout, spring up, grow' - we know that a derivative of this word is צֶמַח tsemah - Strong's H6780 which means, 'a sprout, growth, branch, shoot' and is used in prophetically referring to Messiah who shall come forth from the Branch of Dawid.



When looking at these words for grow, or growing, it makes the verse in 1 John 2:6 very clear: The one who says he stays in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked. - as we stay in, and walk in, Messiah we will grow! Our ability to grow as we should can only be done as we stay in Messiah.

3 - REAPING:

This reaping process is simply a separating of the harvest from the field that it grew in.

Grain must be reaped or else it cannot be used.

We too, just as Abraham, may have to be reaped out of our circumstances and even our families.

Grain, when reaped, is gathered into storehouses - and this is a wonderful picture of what we see happening more and more, in these last days - pretty much the equivalent of Him gathering, or assembling, His grain into communities - because, to put it plainly - a single kernel of grain cannot make much bread - and certainly not enough for an offering unto יהוה (YeHoVah)!

Once gathered together, this is when the real preparation begins - say what - yes, this is when it begins!

What has erroneously been taught in the church today, is that this is the final stage for those blinded hopefuls and they do not realize what lies ahead in the process of making bread!

This is only the beginning and the next steps are what shape us into what we need to become in order to be presented to יהוה (YeHoVah) as a prepared Bride!

This is His storehouse, or rather, one of His storehouses, where He will gather together much grain - grain that is ready to be prepared to be made into an acceptable offering of bread unto יהוה (YeHoVah)!

The word 'reaping' is translated from the Hebrew root word קָצַר qatsar - Strong's H7719 - 'to reap, harvest'

4 - THRESHING:

Ouch - the sound of this word already makes you realize why the church chooses to stop blindly at reaping, and why they developed a false rapture teaching that sadly for them seemingly removes them from the rest of the bread making process!

Admittedly, most would prefer to stay at the reaping stage - sitting quietly in a barn being no use to anyone at all and it is easy to understand why - nobody likes to be 'threshed'.

It almost sounds like 'thrashing' and guess what - it is!!!

Boy - many who have left the reaping stage into threshing or thrashing, soon want to jump back to the safe old barn of a no good premature stop!

The Hebrew word for 'teach' literally means to 'prod with a stick' and so it is with threshing - which is simply the applying of pressure to grain - be it from beating it or grinding it or letting heavy animals trample on it - with the purpose in mind to loosen the shells and separate the grain from the chaff - or the stalks from the husks - which is still pretty much useless at this stage.

It is the stalk that represents that which attached us to the field that we came out of and we do not want that to be an ingredient in the bread!!!

Most of what we bring in from the field - be it dogmas of Rome, doctrines of man, theologies, misguided moral codes and even wrong priorities, that we have picked up along the way - is no longer useful to us, once we have grown enough and have been separated from the system - threshed out in other words - which is not always painless I might add - and we are now threshed out enough to begin studying the Torah.

The omer basket is filled with kernels and each one has a husk that has to be removed.

All too often though we don't want this to happen as we can so often find ourselves hiding from one another behind the husks so to speak - those very things that need to go!

We cannot be a part of the bread if we hang on to the 'hull' - the 'hull' is the outer part of a seed or fruit.

We must begin to be honest and give an account for ourselves and ask,
“What am I still attached to that It's useless to the Kingdom?”

In this threshing process, we must allow other trusted brothers and sisters in the body to 'loosen' our kernels - after all, in the process of making bread, it is people who do the job!!!

Each of us is responsible to help one another in these processes - and is a great honor and privilege that requires faithfulness and trustworthiness!

For we are, in effect, taking what 'protects' people into our hands and whatever we learn about them in the process must be used to help them and build them - not harm or destroy them!

We need to be 'threshed' out of the field from which we have come from and we must realize that we cannot keep holding on to those things that previously shaped our thinking, especially when it contradicts the Torah!

All we can do is repent, which is a critical step in being able to move on - threshing is a must - not easy but it is a must - those husks and hulls must be loosened off of us and we need to let go of those things that we thought gave us security as we realize that, in our vulnerable state, our only security is in יהוה!

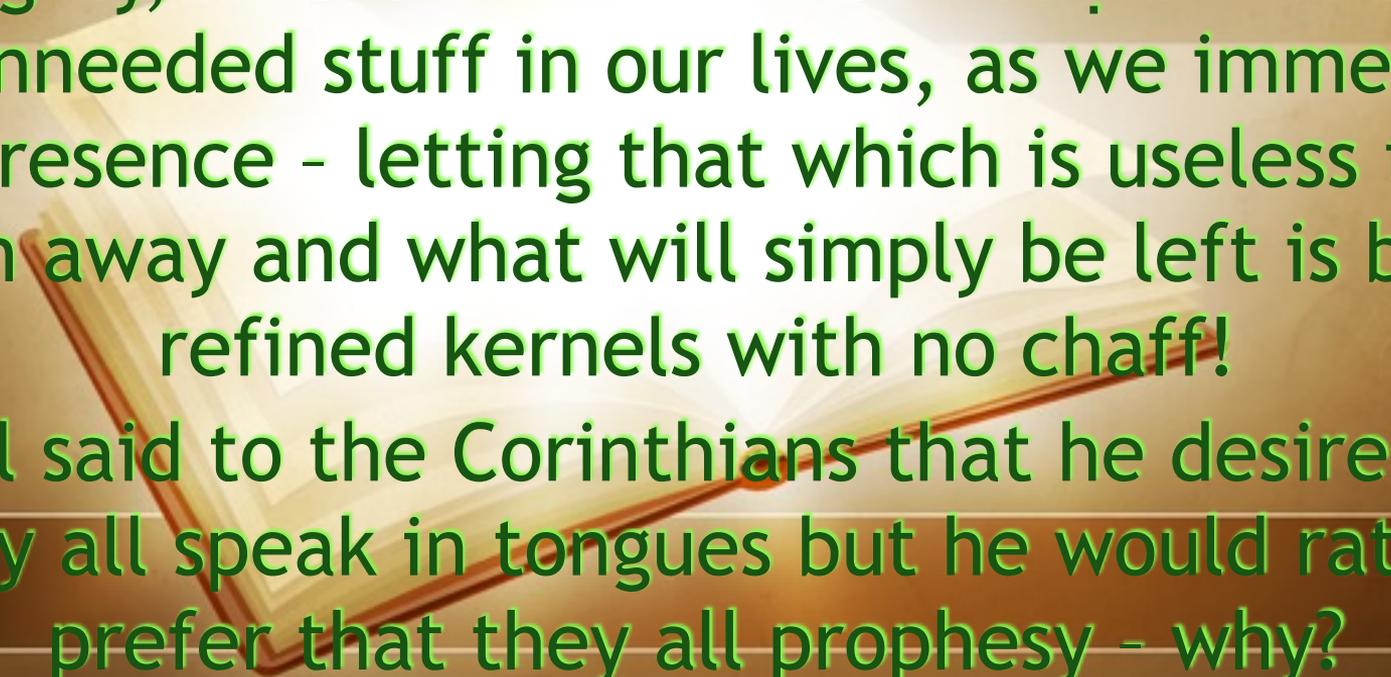
Threshing, in Hebrew, is the word דָּוַשׁ dayish - Strong's H1786 and comes from the primitive root verb דָּוַשׁ dush - Strong's H1758 which means, 'to tread, thresh or trample'.

5 - WINNOWING:

Another step in the process, that involves a 'fork' that looks like a rake.

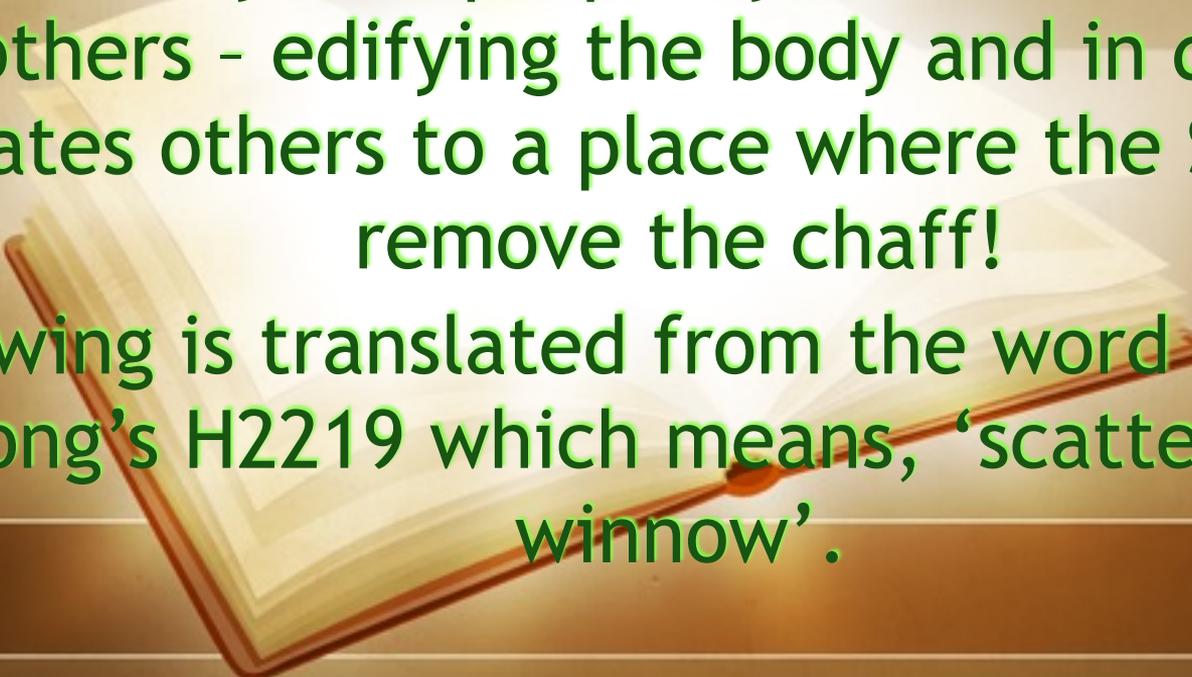
The threshed grain is thrown up into the air, in order to expose it to the wind, which will blow away the lightweight particles and the heavier - that is the more important - will be left behind!

This process worked better on a hill top and so you find many threshing floors being on higher ground to allow this process to take place after threshing.



This process reflects to us an elevating of one another - lifting one another up in prayer and edifying each other up into the presence of the Almighty, where the 'wind' or RUAH blows away the unneeded stuff in our lives, as we immerse in His presence - letting that which is useless to be blown away and what will simply be left is better refined kernels with no chaff!

Sha'ul said to the Corinthians that he desires that they all speak in tongues but he would rather prefer that they all prophesy - why?



Because prophecy builds up the body - tongues is for the individual unless there is an interpretation for the body, but prophecy, in itself, is there to edify others - edifying the body and in doing this it elevates others to a place where the Spirit can remove the chaff!

Winnowing is translated from the word זָרָה zarah - Strong's H2219 which means, 'scatter, fan or winnow'.

6 - PARCHING:

After being separated from the lighter elements - all that 'airy fairy fluffy junk', so to speak, that just clogs up our lives and is actually of no use - all the 'hot puffed up air', so to speak - once that is gone, guess what?

The heat is turned up!!!

What - seriously?

Yes - it gets hotter!

Once we are a taught people who have been elevated, we can be exposed to things that we would never have considered before.

It is interesting to note, at this stage, that it would be useless to 'parch' a single kernel - so, we are all parched together!

No one has to go through this alone!

This is not a 'burning' of the grain, but rather, a process of removing moisture from the kernels and makes the grain even lighter, and what this pictures for us, is that, at this stage, we begin to give less weight to the 'me, myself and mine' kind of attitude and rather consider what is best for one another and the whole bread, so to speak!

You know, it is so difficult to ‘give up’ individual rights - but we can when we are in it together! Parching may cause tears - in fact, more often than not, it will, and so, as one lets go of selfishness and pride - the removal of moisture happens!

To parch, in Hebrew, comes from the root word קָלָה qalah - Strong's H7033 which means, ‘to toast, parch, and scorch slowly’.

7 - CRUSHING:

Come on Pastor, crushing... when does it stop?

This is even a scarier process I know!

In Ancient times, all bread, was what you would call, 'stone ground'.

In fact, at many archaeological sites many ancient 'millstones' were found.

A millstone is where two huge concrete stones are used for crushing.

Grains were crushed between two stones - and, in many ways, the two stones of a millstone can picture for us the two stone tablets upon which the Torah was written.

The kernels are not destroyed in this process - far from it - they, in fact, now become very useful and fully useable - for now, all the kernels have actually become part of one flour mix - inseparable - which is a picture of a people with the same purpose.

It is at this stage where we can safely say that a bird cannot come and snatch away a single kernel, as there is no way to identify the part of a single kernel, as they are now so mingled and mixed in together.

You see, it is like this - as we obey the Torah, love יהוה and love one another - what happens?

We become inseparable and become as one!

To crush or grind, in Hebrew, comes from the root word טָחַן taḥan - Strong's H2912 which means, 'to grind' and the word טַחָנָה taḥanah - Strong's H2913 is translated as a grinding mill!

8 - SIFTING:

In the 2nd Temple times the wheat for the offering at Shabuoth was sifted 13 times!!!

Each time becoming finer and finer!

13 is the numerical value for the Hebrew word 'eḥad' - meaning 'one or unified' and יהושע (Yeshua) Himself prayed that we would be one!

The closer we get together, through obedient living and fellowship, the more refined we become.

Those who are crushed with us are our true neighbors!!!

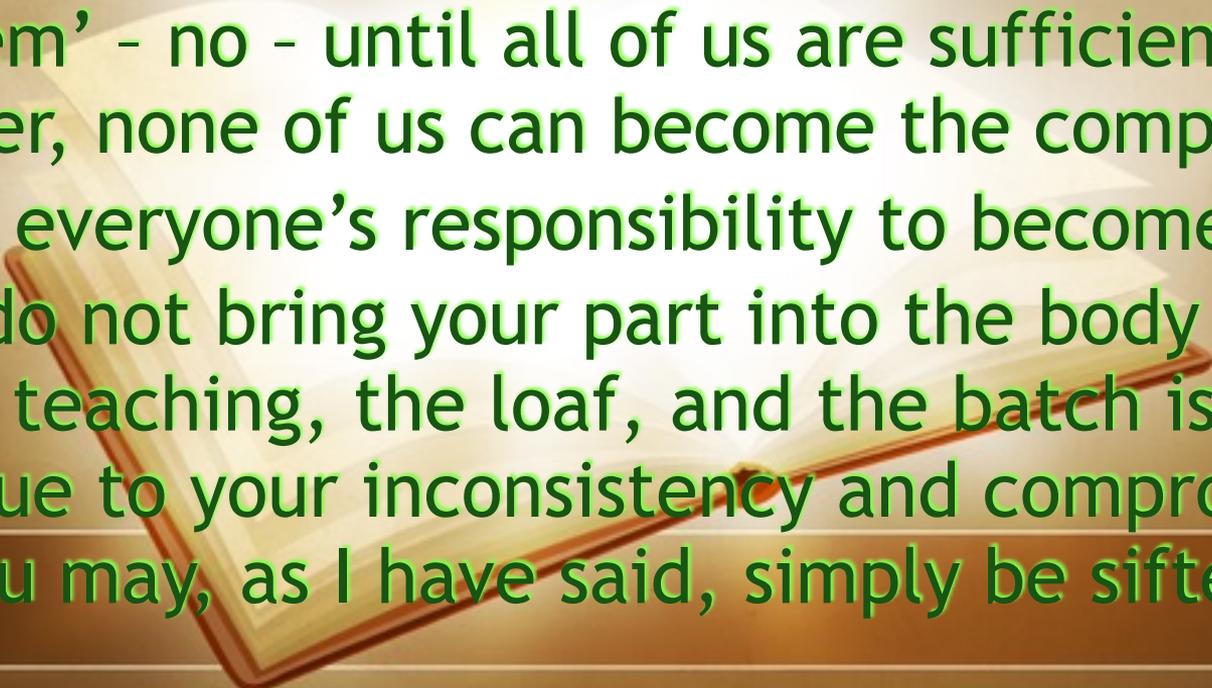
One thing we must realize is simply that if I do not bring my part and am causing disruption in the body, causing the refining of the body to stumble then as it is sifted again, I may just be sifted out!!!

The Hebrew word for sift is נִנּוּחַ nuph - Strong's H5130 which means, 'to quiver, move to and fro, shake'

9 - TESTING:

Then comes the testing - as a body or as a loaf!
The Temple treasurer would come, at this stage
and plunge his hands into the refined flour and it
needed to be so fine that no flour was to be seen
on his arms.

In fact, they were so strict that if any adhered to
his flesh it would have to be sifted again.



This, although seemingly a strict procedure, pictures for us that we are in this together - it is not a case of 'well that is their problem' or 'it is someone else's problem' - no - until all of us are sufficiently refined together, none of us can become the complete bread. This is everyone's responsibility to become a part of! If you do not bring your part into the body or, for sake of this teaching, the loaf, and the batch is failing the test, due to your inconsistency and compromise, then you may, as I have said, simply be sifted out.

Satan is the one who desires to sift us out - he asked יהושע (Yeshua) if he could sift Kěpha!

Let us be careful that we are not sifted out, by continually failing the tests!

The Hebrew root word נָסָה nasah - Strong's H5254 means, 'to test, prove, try' and is used in:

Deuteronomy 13:3 “do not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for יהוה (YeHoVah) your Elohim is trying you to know whether you love יהוה (YeHoVah) your Elohim with all your heart and with all your being.”

10 - BAKING:

Once tested, it can now be baked and presented fresh unto יהוה (YeHoVAh) as the first fruit of wheat, which is at the feast of Shabuoth and is leavened bread - why?

Because it has been permeated with the Kingdom: Mattithyahu/Matthew 13:33 “Another parable He spoke to them, “The reign of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until all was leavened.”

This bread is leavened with the Kingdom - not with sin as leaven represents for us at the feast of Unleavened Bread.

At Shabuoth 2 loaves are presented, representing the 2 houses of Yisra'el, which once were scattered but now are being brought back and the promise of this is seen in the fulfilment of both these first fruit offerings of the barley and the wheat.

There are a couple of different Hebrew words that are used for what we translate as 'bake' and 3 of these are:

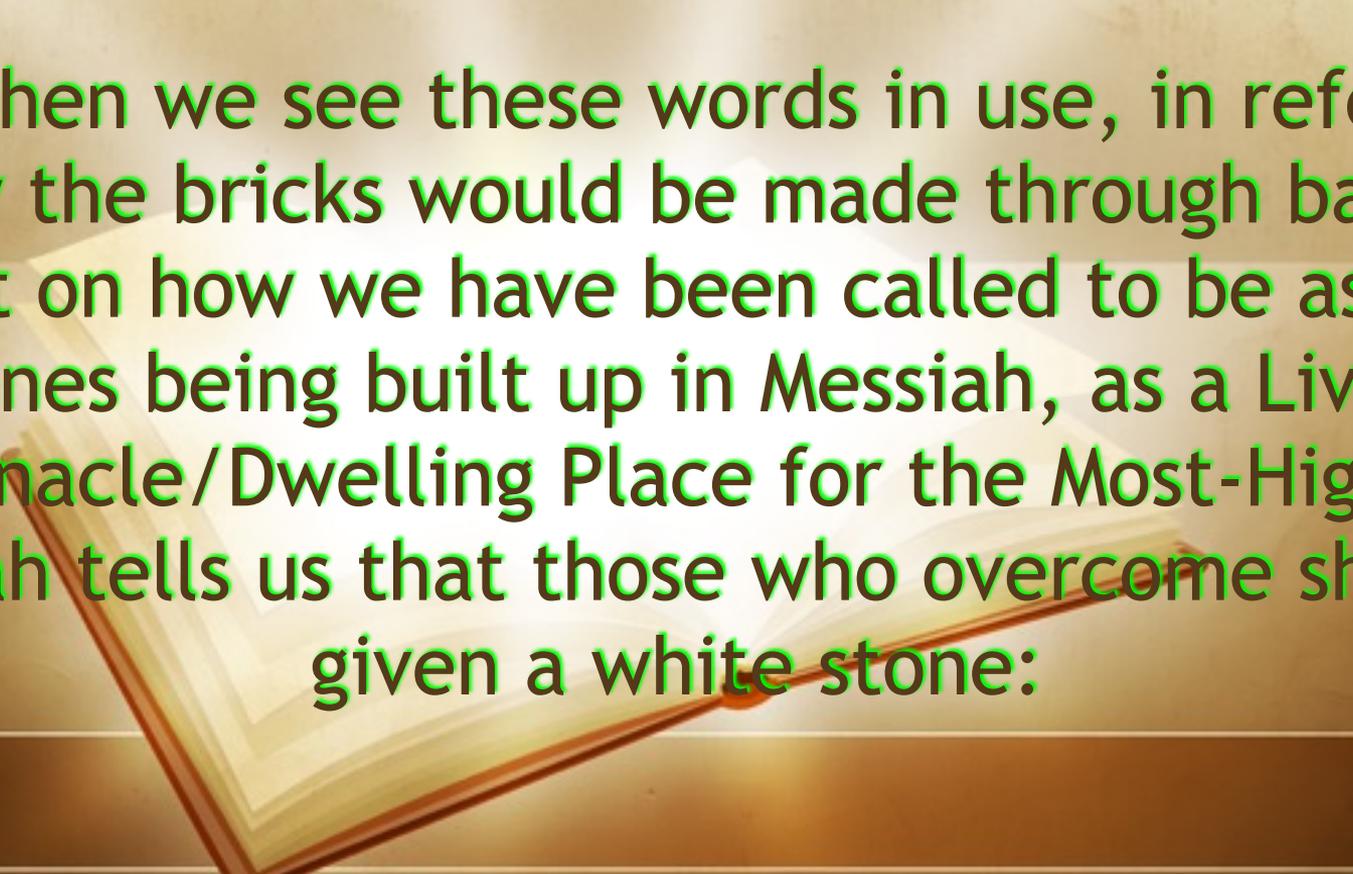
- 1) אָפָה aphah - Strong's H644 meaning 'bake, cook';
- 2) בָּשַׁל bashal - Strong's H1310 which means, 'bake, boil, seeth, ripen, grow ripe' and
- 3) שָׂרַף seraph - Strong's H8313 which means, 'burn or to be set on fire'.

I find that all of these collectively give us a great idea of how the ultimate process of bringing us together, as being presentable as an acceptable offering of Bread before the Father, is that we are to grow and 'be on fire' for Him.

Another word, which, for me, carries wonderful significance in the baking process, is the Hebrew word לֶבֶן laban - Strong's H3835 which means 'to make bricks' and in its primitive root form it means, 'to make white'.

This word was used in Berēshith/Genesis 11:3 when the men wanted to build a tower to the heavens and wanted to make bricks and bake them.

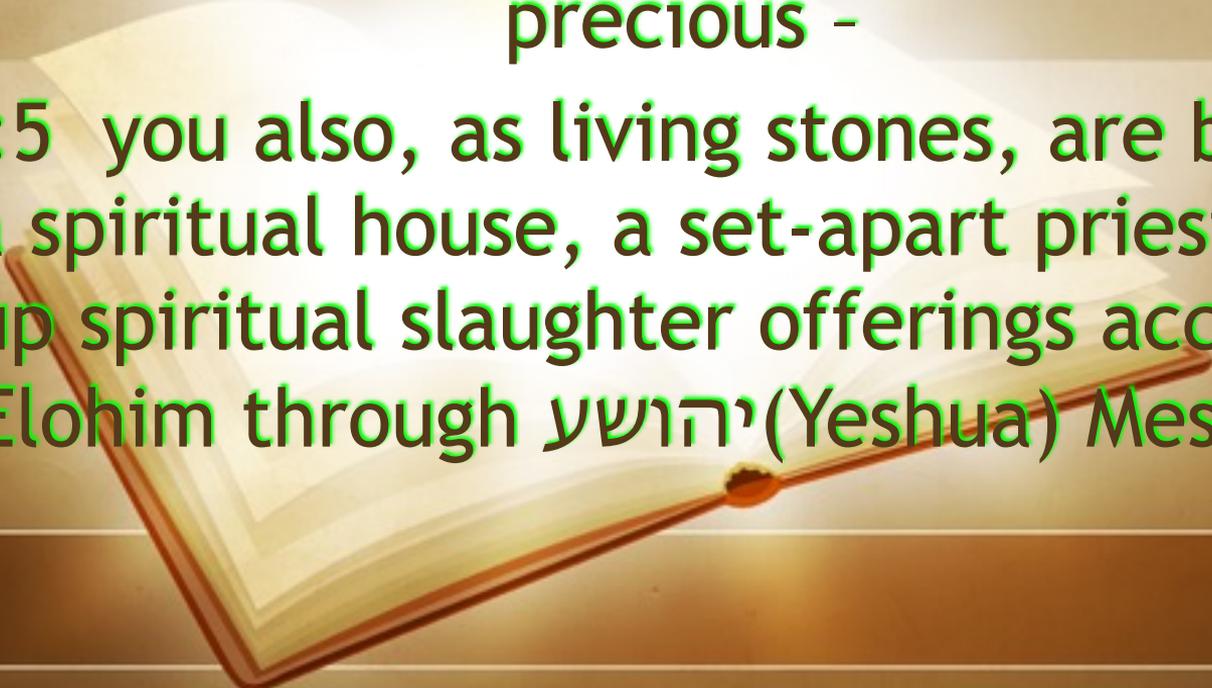
This was a wicked time and a wicked plot, which caused יהוה (YeHoVah) to come down and confuse the languages!



But, when we see these words in use, in reference to how the bricks would be made through baking, I reflect on how we have been called to be as living stones being built up in Messiah, as a Living Tabernacle/Dwelling Place for the Most-High and Messiah tells us that those who overcome shall be given a white stone:

1Pe 2:4 Drawing near to Him, a living Stone -
rejected indeed by men, but chosen by Elohim and
precious -

1Pe 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built
up, a spiritual house, a set-apart priesthood, to
offer up spiritual slaughter offerings acceptable to
Elohim through יהושע (Yeshua) Messiah.



Revelation 2:17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes I shall give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I shall give him a white stone, and on the stone a renewed Name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

The process of making bread carries great significance for us, in understanding how we are to be overcomers in Messiah and be on fire for Him, aměn!

