



Declare all you see to the House of Israel  
הגד את כל אשר אתה רואה לבית ישראל

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## Is there actually a Feast of Weeks?

*Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me in the year.*

*The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep; seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, at the time appointed in the month Abib--for in it thou camest out from Egypt; and none shall appear before Me empty;*

*and the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou sowest in the field; and the feast of ingathering, at the end of the year, when thou gatherest in thy labours out of the field.*

*Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord YHWH.*

### Exodus 23:14-17

Among the instructions agreed to by the Children of Israel at Horeb/Mt. Sinai, was the command to keep 3 feasts a year that are dedicated to YHWH, at which times all males are to present themselves at the sanctified location He indicates. These 3 feasts are ***unleavened bread, harvest/first-fruits*** and ***ingathering*** according to Exodus 23, the time of the giving of the initial instructions which the Children of Israel swore a blood oath to observe and keep.

*And Moses came and told the people all the words of YHWH, and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said: 'All the words which YHWH hath spoken will we do.'*

*And Moses wrote all the words of YHWH, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the mount, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.*

*And he took the book of the covenant and read in the hearing of the people; and they said: 'All that YHWH hath spoken will we do and obey.'*

*And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said: 'Behold the blood of the covenant, which YHWH hath made with you in agreement with all these words.'*

### Exodus 24:3,4,6&7

Moses then went up the mountain to convey the agreement of the people to YHWH and to receive the final form of it from Him. During the time of his absence the Children of Israel built the golden calf, which angered Moses when he saw it and led to him destroying the tablets he had brought down with him, necessitating his making a second trip up the mountain to plead the case of the Israelites before YHWH, i.e. why He should not destroy the whole lot of them and start over with Moses!

The Most High YHWH accepted Moses' intervention on behalf of the Israelites, and made a new agreement with him now as the intercessor, and not with the children of Israel only; Moses is now responsible for their adherence to the instructions of the new agreement. Among these new instructions is this:

*The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, at the time appointed in the month Abib, for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.*

*And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, even of the first-fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the turn of the year.*

*Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before the Lord YHWH, the God of Israel.*

*And YHWH said unto Moses: 'Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.'*

#### **Exodus 34:18,22,23&27**

Here it says to observe the *feast of weeks*, but there has been no prior reference to *weeks* in the previous chapters, so where does this usage come from? I don't believe the Hebrew word שבועות-- which is the Hebrew used here-- should be translated as *weeks*, but rather as *oaths/vows*. The Hebrew word for 'a week' is שבוע, and the one for 'an oath/vow' is שבועה: they have the same root (שבע) and the same plural form (שבועות) so they are closely related in Hebrew but not so much so in English which can lead to misunderstanding; there is a big difference in 'a week' and 'a vow' in English!

This is further complicated by the following scripture, which is referencing the time leading to the same feast:

*And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after **the day of rest**, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving; seven **weeks** shall there be complete;*

*even unto the morrow after the seventh **week** shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall present a new meal-offering unto YHWH.*

### **Leviticus 23:15,16**

This is the Hebrew for the same scriptures:

וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם, מִמֹּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, מִיּוֹם הַבִּיאָכֶם, אֶת-עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה: שִׁבְעַת שַׁבָּתוֹת, תְּמִימַת תִּהְיֶינָה.

עַד מִמֹּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית, תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם; וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה תְּדִשָּׂה, לַיהוָה.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> verse, *the day of rest* is translated from *הַשַּׁבָּת*. In the same sentence the word *weeks* is translated from *שַׁבָּתוֹת*, which is the plural of *שַׁבָּת*! Then, in the 16<sup>th</sup> verse, we find the exact same Hebrew (*מִמֹּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת*), translated as *the morrow after the 7<sup>th</sup> week*, instead of *after the 7<sup>th</sup> day of rest*! Why is there a lack of consistency in translation? A *week*, in English, is merely a seven-day period of time, but in Hebrew there is a specific understanding of the significance of the root *שבע*:

### **שבע**

To swear, take an oath, to confirm by oath

*Seven - שבע: swear; oath – Literally to seven oneself. A common practice was to make seven declarations when making an oath. This declaration can be making the oath seven times or doing seven things to show the sincerity of the oath.<sup>1</sup>*

The abundant presence of the number *seven* in the instructions given to the Children of Israel can be better understood when we are aware of the meaning of the Hebrew root *שבע* in its ancient context. The Israelites either did things *seven* times to confirm an oath to YHWH or were stopped from doing something *seven* times in order to prevent their making an oath/commitment; i.e., you only work at your trade/job 6 days to acquire that which sustains you physically; the *seventh* day is YHWH's, wherein you should focus on that which sustains you spiritually, for *man doth not live by bread*

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<sup>1</sup> *The Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible*, by Jeff A. Benner, ISBN 1-58939-776-2, 2005 by Virtualbookworm.com, pg. 451

*only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of YHWH does man live!*  
(Deuteronomy 8:3)

This helps explain why in Exodus 34 the feast is called *שבועות*; it is a reminder of the *oaths/vows* between the children of Israel and their God, YHWH, not a counting of *weeks*. This is why in Leviticus they were told to count 7 Sabbaths, as every Sabbath is dedicated to YHWH! It is not by chance that in Exodus 34 the verse before the use of *שבועות* in the 22<sup>nd</sup> says, “*Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest; in plowing time and in harvest thou shalt rest*”, and the Hebrew word used for *thou shall rest* is *תשבות*, from *שבת*! Every Sabbath we keep we confirm our vows to YHWH, and the *Feast of first-fruits/Vows* is our celebration of that commitment! The only connection to ‘a week’ is that ‘a week’ is seven days!

*Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and ordinances.*

**Malachi 3:22**



**Happy Feast of First-fruits/Vows!**