

חג השבועות
חג הביכורים
Chag HaShavuot - Chag HaBikkurim
תשפ"ו 5786

The primary place where information can be found about the **Appointed Days of the L-rd** is in parashat Emor, which is located in Leviticus chapter 23. In regard to both ראשית (the first day of counting the Omer) and the Feast of Weeks חג הבכורים there are no dates provided. This has significant implications. It is incorrect for Rabbinical Judaism to give fixed dates for both of these two commandments, ראשית (the first day of counting the Omer) and Feast of Weeks חג הבכורים. When studying thoroughly the section which deals with these special observances, it becomes most clear that fixing a date for the first day of counting the Omer is not what G-d had intended. Within this passage, it is stated,

וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמֶּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הַבְּיָאָכֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שֶׁבַע שַׁבָּתוֹת
תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה.

“And you will count for yourselves from the day after the Shabbat, from the day you brought the Omer wave offering there will be seven complete weeks.”

Leviticus 23:15

In addition to this verse, it is also stated,

עַד מִמֶּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה.

“Until the day after the seventh Shabbat, you will count fifty days and you will offer a new grain offering to the L-rd.” Leviticus 23:16

If in fact the meaning of the Hebrew phrase מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת, is referring to the High Shabbat of the first day of Unleavened Bread, i.e., the fifteen day of Nissan (Aviv), then there is a serious problem, because there are not seven High Shabbats during this period of time. This is why the Word of G-d does not provide any dates. There is a very different formula which the L-rd wants His people to follow. When the Scripture states, מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת, the day after the Shabbat, it is indeed referring to the normal seventh day Shabbat. This would mean that both ראשית (the first day of counting the Omer) and Feast of Weeks שבועות must also be on the first day of the week. It is important for one to know that it was on ראשית that Yeshua was raised from the dead. This fact is well attested in the Scriptures. In fact, the Apostle Paul states twice in 1 Corinthians 15 that Yeshua is the ראשית (See 1 Corinthians 15:20 and 23).

In Leviticus 23:16, the reader is also informed that there are a total of fifty days between the day one begins counting the Omer and the observance of the Feast of Weeks. Why exactly fifty days? The number fifty also relates to the concept of the Jubilee.

וְקִדְשְׁתֶּם אֶת שְׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה וּקְרַאתֶם דְּרוֹר בְּאַרְץ לְכָל-יֹשְׁבֵיהָ יוֹבֵל הוּא תְּהִיָּה
לְכֶם

“And you will sanctify the fiftieth year and you will proclaim liberty (freedom) in the Land for all of its inhabitants it will be a Jubilee for you.” Leviticus 25:10a

There is a very close connection between the term Jubilee and the Hebrew word דְּרוֹר. This word means freedom or liberty. The fact that there are exactly fifty days of counting the Omer directly relates to what occurred on the Feast of Weeks after Yeshua was resurrected from the dead by His heavenly Father on the first day of the counting

of the Omer. One learns from Acts chapter two that it was also on the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) that the Holy Spirit was given to believers. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit which enables believers to do what was given on the Feast of Weeks after the Children of Israel had come out of Egypt. It was at Mount Sinai that G-d gave His people the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are the foundation for the entire Torah. Hence, the liberty and freedom which the Holy Spirit provides to every believer is the ability to do the will of G-d. In other words, the Holy Spirit is provided to believers so we are set free (given liberty) and can serve G-d by doing His will. It is when a person is doing the will of G-d, that this one has a witness which is pleasing to G-d and reflects the character of G-d.

The Bible states,

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם.

“And G-d created the man in His image, in the image of G-d He created him, male and female, He created them.” Genesis 1:27

What is the proper understanding of this verse? It is not that humans look like G-d, as G-d is Spirit (See John 4:24); rather, we were created to reflect G-d’s character. It is only through the gift of the Holy Spirit that one can do this. This truth is also related to a miracle that Yeshua performed in John chapter 5. It was during a festival in which Yeshua went up to Jerusalem to observe that He did this miracle. It related to a lame man who received healing and was set free to worship G-d. In fact, it was only after this man was healed, that Yeshua met him in the Temple (See John 5:14). This one had been in this lame condition for thirty-eight years. Nevertheless, it was not a problem for Yeshua to restore him so that he could do the will of G-d. It is very significant that after Yeshua met this man in the Temple, he went and spoke to the leaders of the Jewish people about Yeshua

Who had healed him. This man was not afraid, but was empowered to do the will of G-d, and did not have any fear of the leaders who could put him out from having a worship experience with G-d. This man was more interested in obeying Yeshua and pleasing His heavenly Father than anything that those leaders could do to him.

This is an important lesson for every believer. We should not ever hesitate to obey G-d; rather we should be quick to ignore fear and choose to do the very things which manifest the character of G-d in our lives. This is how those who actually know the G-d of Israel behave. Not with fear and uncertainty, but with a boldness and an unwavering commitment to do the commandments of G-d, not for salvation; but rather to testify to others that we have been saved and it is this salvation experience which is causing us to behave in this manner.