

## ~FIRSTFRUITS (508)

[Hebrew, *re'-shith*]

### .. Figurative And Symbolic Use

- The earliest fruits of a season, the first results or products of anything. The Hebrew word *re'-shith*, from a root meaning, **head**, is used in the sense of first part, point of departure, or **beginning**.
- A land that Yehowah your God is caring for. The eyes of Yehowah your God are constantly upon it, from the **beginning** of the year to the close of the year. (**Deuteronomy 11:12**)
- In the **beginning** God created the heavens and the earth. (**Genesis 1:1**)
- And the **beginning** of his kingdom came to be Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. (**Genesis 10:10**)
- The **best**,
- The **best** of the first ripe fruits of your ground you are to bring to the house of Yehowah your God. You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk. (**Exodus 23:19**) Footnote
- **Firstfruits**,
- As an offering of the **firstfruits**, you will present them to Yehowah, and they must not come up onto the altar for a restful odor. (**Leviticus 2:12**)
- **First ripe fruits**,
- Is rendered from the Hebrew *bik-ku-rim*, which is used especially with regard to grain and fruit.
- All your fortified places are as fig trees with the **first ripe fruits**, which, if they get wiggled, will certainly fall into the mouth of an eater. (**Nahum 3:12**)
- The Greek term for **firstfruits** Greek, *a-par-khe'* comes from a root having the basic meaning **primacy**.

- Yehowah required of the nation of Israel that the **firstfruits** be offered to him, whether it be of man, animal, or the fruitage of the ground.
- Your full produce and the overflow of your press you must not give hesitantly. The **firstborn** of your sons you are to give to me. (**Exodus 22:29**)
- The way you are to do with your bull and your sheep is this; Seven days it will continue with its mother. On the eighth day you are to give it to me. (**Exodus 22:30**)
- The **best** of the **first ripe fruits** of your ground you are to bring to the house of Yehowah your God. You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk. (**Exodus 23:19**)
- Honor Yehowah with your **valuable things** and with the **firstfruits** of all your produce. (**Proverbs 3:9**)
- Devoting the **firstfruits** to Yehowah would be an evidence of the Israelites appreciation for Yehowah's blessing and for their land and its harvest. It would be an expression of thankfulness to the Giver of every good gift.
- And you must keep the commandments of Yehowah your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. (**Deuteronomy 8:6**)
- For Yehowah your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of torrent valleys of water, springs and watery deeps issuing forth in the valley plain and in the mountainous region. (**Deuteronomy 8:7**)
- A land of wheat and barley and vines and figs and pomegranates, a land of oil olives and honey. (**Deuteronomy 8:8**)
- A land in which you will not eat bread with scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land the stones of which are iron and out of the mountains of which you will mine copper. (**Deuteronomy 8:9**)
- When you have eaten and satisfied yourself, you must also bless Yehowah your God for the good land that he has given you. (**Deuteronomy 8:10**)
- Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, for it

comes down from the Father of the celestial lights, and with him there is not a variation of the turning of the shadow. (**James 1:17**)

- Yehowah commanded the nation, representatively, to offer **firstfruits** to him, especially at the time of the Festival of Unfermented Cakes. Then, on Nisan 16, at the sanctuary the High Priest waved before Yehowah some of the **firstfruits** of the grain harvest, a sheaf of barley, which was the first crop of the year based on the sacred calendar.
- In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings is the Passover to Yehowah. (**Leviticus 23:5**)
- And on the fifteenth day of this month is the festival of unfermented cakes to Yehowah. Seven days you should eat unfermented cakes. (**Leviticus 23:6**)
- On the first day you will have a holy convention occur. No sort of laborious work may you do. (**Leviticus 23:7**)
- But you must present an offering made by fire to Yehowah seven days. On the seventh day there will be a holy convention. No sort of laborious work may you do. (**Leviticus 23:8**)
- And Yehowah continued to speak to Moses, saying; (**Leviticus 23:9**)
- Speak to the sons of Israel, and you must say to them; When you eventually come into the land that I am giving you, and you have reaped its harvest, you must also bring a sheaf of the **firstfruits** of your harvest to the priest. (**Leviticus 23:10**)
- And he must wave the sheaf to and fro before Yehowah to gain approval for you. Directly the day after the Sabbath the priest should wave it to and fro. (**Leviticus 23:11**)
- And on the day of your having the sheaf waved to and fro you must render up a sound young ram, in its first year, for a burnt offering to Yehowah. (**Leviticus 23:12**)
- Again, at Pentecost, on the 50th day after the sheaf of barley was waved, the **firstfruits** of the wheat harvest in the form of two leavened loaves made of fine flour were presented as a wave offering.

- And you must count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day of your bringing the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths. They should prove to be complete. (**Leviticus 23:15**)
- To the day after the seventh Sabbath you should count, fifty days, and you must present a new grain offering to Yehowah. (**Leviticus 23:16**)
- Out of your dwelling places you should bring two loaves as a wave offering. Of two tenths of an ephah of fine flour they should prove to be. They should be baked leavened, as **first ripe fruits** to Yehowah. (**Leviticus 23:17**)

### **See Also FESTIVAL**

- Besides these grain offerings by the High Priest on behalf of the nation, the Israelites were required to bring the **firstfruits** of all their produce as offerings. Every firstborn male of man and beast was sanctified to Yehowah, being either offered or redeemed. The firstfruits of coarse meal were to be offered in the form of ring-shaped cakes.
- You should make a contribution of the **firstfruits** of your coarse meal as ring-shaped cakes. Like the contribution of a threshing floor is the way you should contribute it. (**Numbers 15:20**)
- Some of the **firstfruits** of your coarse meal you should give as a contribution to Yehowah throughout your generations. (**Numbers 15:21**)
- Fruitage of the soil was also put in baskets and taken by the Israelites to the sanctuary.
- And it must occur that when at last you enter into the land that Yehowah your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you have taken possession of it and dwelt in it. (**Deuteronomy 26:1**)
- You must also take some of the **firstfruits** of all the fruitage of the soil, which you will bring in from the land of yours that Yehowah your God is giving you, and you must put them in a basket and go to the place that Yehowah your God will choose to have his name reside there. (**Deuteronomy 26:2**)

- **Where they then recited certain words recorded at;**
- **And you must come to the priest who will be acting in those days and say to him; I must report today to Yehowah your God that I have come into the land that Yehowah swore to our forefathers to give to us. (Deuteronomy 26:3)**
- **And the priest must take the basket out of your hand and deposit it before the altar of Yehowah your God. (Deuteronomy 26:4)**
- **And you must answer and say before Yehowah your God; My father was a perishing Syrian, and he proceeded to go down to Egypt and to reside there as an alien with very few in number, but there he became a great nation, mighty and numerous. (Deuteronomy 26:5)**
- **And the Egyptians went treating us badly and afflicting us and putting hard slavery upon us. (Deuteronomy 26:6)**
- **And we began to cry out to Yehowah the God of our forefathers, and Yehowah proceeded to hear our voice and to look on our affliction and our trouble and our oppression. (Deuteronomy 26:7)**
- **Finally Yehowah brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with great fearsomeness and with signs and miracles. (Deuteronomy 26:8)**
- **Then he brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. (Deuteronomy 26:9)**
- **And now here I have brought the **firstfruits** of the fruitage of the ground that Yehowah has given me. You must also deposit it before Yehowah your God and bow down before Yehowah your God. (Deuteronomy 26:10)**
- **The words were actually an outline of the nation's history from their entering into Egypt to their deliverance and their being brought into the Promised Land.**

**See Also FIRSTBORN, FIRSTLING**

- It is said that the custom arose whereby each locality would send a representative with the **firstfruits** contributed by the inhabitants of the district in order, that not all would have to undergo the inconvenience of going up to Jerusalem each time that the **firstfruits** were ripe.
- The quantity of these **firstfruits** to be offered was not fixed by the Law, it apparently was left to the generosity and appreciative spirit of the giver. However, the choicest portions, the best of the **firstfruits**, were to be offered.
- All the best of the oil and all the best of the new wine and the grain, their firstfruits, which they will give to Yehowah, I have given them to you. (**Numbers 18:12**)
- The **best** of the **first ripe fruits** of your ground you are to bring to the house of Yehowah your God. You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk. (**Exodus 23:19**)
- The **best of the first ripe fruits** of your soil you are to bring to the house of Yehowah your God. You must not boil a kid in its mother's milk. (**Exodus 34:26**)
- In the case of a newly planted tree, for the first three years it was considered impure as though uncircumcised. In the fourth year all its fruit became holy to Yehowah. Then, in the fifth year, the owner could gather in its fruit for himself.
- And in case you people come into the land, and you must plant any tree for food, you must also consider its fruitage impure as its **foreskin**. For three years it will continue uncircumcised for you. It should not be eaten. (**Leviticus 19:23**)
- But in the fourth year all its **fruit** will become a holy thing of festal exultation to Yehowah. (**Leviticus 19:24**)
- And in the fifth year you may eat its **fruit** in order to add its produce to yourselves. I am Yehowah your God. (**Leviticus 19:25**)
- Contributions of **firstfruits** to Yehowah by the 12 non-Levitical tribes of Israel were used by the priests and Levites, since they received no inheritance in the land.

- And Yehowah spoke further to Aaron; As for me, look! I have given you the custody of the contributions made to me. Of all the holy things of the sons of Israel I have given them to you and to your sons as a portion, as an allowance to time indefinite. (Numbers 18:8)
- This should become yours out of the most holy things, out of the offering made by fire, every offering of theirs together with every grain offering of theirs and every sin offering of theirs and every guilt offering of theirs, which they will return to me. It is something most holy for you and for your sons. (Numbers 18:9)
- In a most holy place you should eat it. Every male should eat it. It should become something holy to you. (Numbers 18:10)
- And this belongs to you. The contribution of their gift together with all the wave offerings of the sons of Israel. I have given them to you and your sons and your daughters with you, as an allowance to time indefinite. Everyone clean in your house may eat it. (Numbers 18:11)
- All the best of the oil and all the best of the new wine and the grain, their **firstfruits**, which they will give to Yehowah, I have given them to you. (Numbers 18:12)
- The **first ripe fruits** of all that is on their land, which they will bring to Yehowah, yours it should become. Everyone clean in your house may eat it. (Numbers 18:13)
- The faithful offering of the **firstfruits** brought pleasure to Yehowah and a blessing to all parties involved.
- And the first of all the first ripe fruits of everything and every contribution of everything out of all your contributions, to the priests it will come to belong, and the **firstfruits** of your coarse meals you should give to the priest, in order to cause a blessing to rest upon your house. (Ezekiel 44:30)
- A failure to bring them would be counted by God as robbing him of his due and would bring his displeasure.
- Will earthling man rob God? But you are robbing me. And you have said; In what way have we robbed you? In the tenth parts and in the contributions. (Malachi 3:8)

- In Israel's history at times this practice was neglected, being restored in certain periods by rulers zealous for true worship. In King Hezekiah's reformation work, he held an extended celebration of the Festival of the Unfermented Cakes, and on this occasion Hezekiah instructed the people to fulfill their duty with respect to the contribution of **firstfruits** and tithes.
- Cheerfully the people responded by bringing in great quantities of the **firstfruits** of the grain, new wine, oil, honey, and all the produce of the field, from the third month to the seventh.
- So the sons of Israel that were found in Jerusalem held the festival of the unfermented cakes seven days with great rejoicing, and the Levites and the priests were offering praise to Yehowah day by day with loud instruments, even to Yehowah. (2 Chronicles 30:21)
- Then all the congregation decided to hold it for seven more days, and so they held it for seven days with rejoicing. (2 Chronicles 30:23)
- Furthermore, he said to the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to give the portion of the priests and of the Levites, in order, that they might adhere strictly to the Law of Yehowah. (2 Chronicles 31:4)
- And as soon as the word broke forth, the sons of Israel increased the **firstfruits** of the grain, new wine, and oil and honey and all the produce of the field, and the tenth of everything they brought in abundantly. (2 Chronicles 31:5)
- And the sons of Israel and of Judah that were dwelling in the cities of Judah, even they themselves brought in the tenth of cattle and sheep and the tenth of the holy things, the things sanctified to Yehowah their God. They brought in and so gave heaps upon heaps. (2 Chronicles 31:6)
- In the third month they started the heaps by laying the lowest layer, and in the seventh month they finished. (2 Chronicles 31:7)



- After the restoration from Babylon, Nehemiah led the people in taking an oath to walk in Yehowah's Law, including the bringing to him of **firstfruits** of every sort.
- They were adhering to their brothers, their majestic ones, and coming into liability to a curse and into an oath, to walk in the Law of the true God, which had been given by the hand of Moses the servant of the true God, and to keep and to perform all the commandments of Yehowah our Lord and his judicial decisions and his regulations. (**Nehemiah 10:29**)
- Also, the lots we cast concerning the supply of the wood that the priests, the Levites and the people should bring to the house of our God, by the house of our forefathers, at the appointed times, year by year, to burn upon the altar of Yehowah our God, according to what is written in the Law. (**Nehemiah 10:34**)
- And to bring the first ripe fruits of our ground and the **first ripe fruits** of all the fruitage of every sort of tree, year by year, to the house of Yehowah. (**Nehemiah 10:35**)
- And the firstborn of our sons and of our domestic animals, according to what is written in the Law, and the **firstborn** of our herds and of our flocks, to bring them to the house of our God, to the priests that were ministering in the house of our God. (**Nehemiah 10:36**)
- Also, the **firstfruits** of our coarse meal and our contributions and the fruitage of every sort of tree, new wine and oil we should bring to the priests to the dining halls of the house of our God, also the tenth from our soil to the Levites, as they, the Levites, are the ones receiving a tenth in all our agricultural cities. (**Nehemiah 10:37**)

**See Also OFFERINGS**

### **•• Figurative And Symbolic Use**

- Jesus Christ was spiritually begotten at the time of his baptism and was resurrected from the dead to life in the spirit on **Nisan 16,33 C.E.**, the day of the year on which the **firstfruits** of the first grain crop were presented before Yehowah at the sanctuary. He is, therefore, called the firstfruits, being actually the **first, firstfruits** to God.

- However, now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep in death. (**1 Corinthians 15:20**)
- But each one in his own rank. Christ the **firstfruits**, afterward those who belong to the Christ during his presence. (**1 Corinthians 15:23**)
- Why, even Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit. (**1 Peter 3:18**)
- The faithful followers of Jesus Christ, his spiritual brothers, are also a **firstfruits** to God, but not the primary **firstfruits**, being similar to the second grain crop, the wheat, which was presented to Yehowah on the day of Pentecost.
- They number 144,000 and are called the ones bought from among mankind as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb and **certain firstfruits** of his creatures.
- And I saw, and, look! The Lamb standing upon the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. (**Revelation 14:1**)
- And I heard a sound out of heaven as the sound of many waters and as the sound of loud thunder, and the sound that I heard was as of singers who accompany themselves on the harp playing on their harps. (**Revelation 14:2**)
- And they are singing as if a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders, and no one was able to master that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been bought from the earth. (**Revelation 14:3**)
- These are the ones that did not defile themselves with women, in fact, they are virgins. These are the ones that keep following the Lamb no matter where he goes. These were bought from among mankind as **firstfruits** to God and to the Lamb. (**Revelation 14:4**)
- Because he willed it, he brought us forth by the word of truth, for

us to be certain **firstfruits** of his creatures. (**James 1:18**)

- The apostle Paul also speaks of the faithful Jewish remnant who became the first Christians as being, **firstfruits**.
- Further, if the part taken as **firstfruits** is holy, the lump is also, and if the root is holy, the branches are also. (**Romans 11:16**)
- The Christian Epaphroditus is called a **firstfruits** of Asia for Christ.
- And greet the congregation that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is a **firstfruits** of Asia for Christ. (**Romans 16:5**)
- And the household of Stephanas the **firstfruits** of Achaia.
- Now I exhort you, brothers. You know that the household of Stephanas is the **firstfruits** of Achaia and that they set themselves to minister to the holy ones. (**1 Corinthians 16:15**)
- Since the anointed Christians are begotten by the spirit as sons of God with the hope of resurrection to immortality in the heavens, they are said during their lifetime on earth to have the **firstfruits**, namely, the spirit, while we are earnestly waiting for adoption as sons, the release from our bodies by ransom.
- Not only that, but we ourselves also who have the **firstfruits**, namely, the spirit, yes, we ourselves groan within ourselves, while we are earnestly waiting for adoption as sons, the release from our bodies by ransom. (**Romans 8:23**)
- For we were saved in this hope. But hope that is seen is not hope, for when a man sees a thing, does he hope for it? (**Romans 8:24**)
- Paul says that he and fellow Christians with hopes of life in the spirit have the token of what is to come, that is, the spirit, which he also says is a token in advance of our inheritance.
- Now he that produced us for this very thing is God, who gave us the token of what is to come, that is, the spirit. (**2 Corinthians 5:5**)
- But you also hoped in him after you heard the word of truth, the

**Good News about your salvation. By means of him also, after you believed, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13)**

- **Which is a token in advance of our inheritance, for the purpose of releasing by a ransom God's own possession, to his glorious praise. (Ephesians 1:14)**