

What a Difference a Day Makes

♪ *Lord what a difference a day makes There's a rainbow before me Skies above can't be stormy Since that moment of bliss ...and the difference is You* ♪ (Cuando Vuelva a Tu Lado by María Grever, 1934, English Lyrics by S. Adams)

This year the feast of Firstfruits (of the barley harvest) coincides with tomorrow, Easter Sunday. In my 4-25-20 message entitled *Know the Truth* I shared that in modern Jewish Translations of the Torah, Lev. 23:11 has been altered to conveniently match the modern Jewish (Pharisaic) interpretation of when the day of Firstfruits takes place: **יָא וְהֵנִיף אֶת־הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְיָ לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יִנִּיֶּנּוּ הַכֹּהֵן** Consider the literal, Bible-Ort (Orthodox, *Artscroll*), JPS 1917, KJV, TLV and the RVA's translation of the Hebrew word *Shabbat*:

"Then he shall wave the sheaf before Adonai for your acceptance; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it" (Literal). "He shall wave it in the motions prescribed for a wave offering to God, so that it will be acceptable for you. The priest shall make this wave offering on the day after the first day of the [Passover] holiday" (Bible.Ort). "And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it" (JPS 1917). "And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it (KJV). "11 He is to wave the omer before Adonai, to be accepted for you. On the morrow after the Shabbat, the kohen is to wave it" (TLV) "11 El cual mecerá el omer delante de Jehová, para que seáis aceptos: el siguiente día del sábado lo mecerá el sacerdote" (RVA).

If the day of the offering is the day after the first **Day of Unleavened Bread** [note that *Nisan 15* is called *Pesach* in modern Jewry], then the day of firstfruits is fixed in the Jewish calendar on *Nisan 16* and consequently *Shavuot* is always on *Sivan 6*. The Torah clearly states that the day of firstfruits is the day **after the Shabbat** during the week (seven days) of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then the date varies year-by-year depending on the Jewish calendar and requires counting (or some math) to determine. This year the 50 days, or *seven complete Shabbatot* from tomorrow (*Nisan 22*) will be on *Sivan 12* (5-23-21), when *Kol Simcha* will celebrate *Shavuot*.

We know that *Yeshua* was *in the heart of the earth three days and three nights* (Matt. 12:40) and he was interred at sundown of *Nisan 14-to-Nisan 15* then obviously He resurrected at sundown on *Nisan 17-to-Nisan 18*, at the start of the first day of the week and at the conclusion of the weekly *Shabbat* during the Feast of Unleavened Bread that is on the Feast of Firstfruits the year of His death. What a difference this day makes! And while tomorrow is not *Nisan 18*, it is the Day of Firstfruits 5781 and also an anniversary of His resurrection on firstfruits!

For the apostle Peter this day was an epic difference maker. Three days earlier he had pledged *"Master, I'll lay down my life for You!"* (John 13:37) but: *"Yeshua answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Amen, amen I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times!"* (John 13:37). Peter then ensued to deny Him three times while making a spectacle of himself: *"60But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" And immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. 61And the Lord turned and looked straight at (beheld) Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.' 62And Peter went out and wept bitterly"* (Luke 23:60-62).

Can you imagine how Peter felt at the moment when *Yeshua turned and looked straight at him*? Not only did Peter realize his failure but then he also experienced the eyes of the Master looking straight at him at that moment. We can also experience Messiah's look at the moment we let Him down and betray Him if we would only look inside our temple, where the Holy Spirit resides. You see, Peter began his repentance immediately upon experiencing *Yeshua's Look of Love*, but since we do not see His eyes then we do not. While the earth held *Yeshua* for the predicted three days and three nights, I can only imagine the heart ache and emptiness inside Peter's soul. There was the small talk of remembering His prophetic utterances while He was alive, but clearly the eleven were fearful, astonished and numb while they hid behind closed doors frightful of the Judean leaders. It was not until the evening (sunset) of that first day of the week (John 20:19) that the resurrected *Yeshua* stood in the midst of them and said *Shalom Alechem*.

When we mess up; and when we who know better than to go ahead and sin and ruin our lives, the **resurrection kicks in**, and we are given **another chance**. *Yeshua* is the **Lord of the Second Chance**. This is what Peter and the disciples experienced. The same power is available to us today. Rabbi, is *Yeshua* really the Lord of a second chance? How often can we sin and be forgiven? Seventy times seven, Virginia! Yes, seventy times seven! (See *Matt. 18*) I know Peter was devastated by his sin and guilt as I would be. But notice the **first message** of the Resurrection to Peter: *“⁷ But go, tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going before you to the Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you’” (Mark 16: 7-8)*. Go tell Peter? Peter is singled out. Evidently *Yeshua* **IS NOT** going to reject him because the fact is that He is not angry at all. Amazing! The Lord sends word to the disciples that He is coming to see them in the Galil and singles Peter the traitor out saying in effect ***Peter, I want to see you!***

Today we can choose to forgive our debtors and be ourselves forgiven. That is the **Power of the Resurrection** – a **Second Chance** to get it right. Are you ready to do this? As for me, I am taking full advantage of my second chances. Let us pray... Happy last day of Unleavened Bread to all of you! *Chag HaMatzot 7 Sameach!*