Leviticus - Commentaries by Edward B. Dennett

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The distinction between the "sheaf of the firstfruits" and the two loaves, which are also called first fruits, is exceedingly beautiful. The former is Christ, for the priest was directed to "wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath" (the first day of the week) "the priest shall wave it." v. 11. Thus it is that Paul writes, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20)—the first sheaf to be waved before the Lord before the ingathering of the harvest. And of what a harvest is He, as the first fruits, the pledge! Concerning Him in this character, another has written, "It" (His resurrection) was the beginning of the true harvest—harvest gathered by power outside and beyond the natural life of the world. According to the Jewish law, nothing of the harvest could be touched before. Christ was the beginning, the first-born from the dead.

With this first of the first fruits were offered sacrifices for a sweet savor, but not for sin. It is clear there was no need for it. It is Christ who has been offered to God, quite pure, and waved before God- placed fully before His eyes for us, as raised from the dead, the beginning of a new crop before God—man in a condition which not even innocent Adam was in, the man of God's counsels, the second Man, the last Adam. Not all hanging on obedience, which might fail, and did; but, after God had been perfectly glorified in the place of sin, past death, past sin (for He died unto sin), past Satan's power, past judgment, and consequently by this, wholly out of the scene where responsible man had stood, on a totally new footing with God after His finished work, and God perfectly glorified. Such a work too as gave Him title to say, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again," and made it God's righteousness to set Him at His own right hand in glory.

Following upon this, they were to number fifty days unto the morrow after the sabbath, and offer a new meat offering unto the Lord, composed of two wave loaves, of two tenth deals of fine flour, baken with leaven, "the firstfruits unto the LORD." It is no longer Christ here, but those who are His, the first fruits of His creatures. (See Jas. 1:18.) They are considered as being on earth, and leaven is found in them. Therefore, though offered to God, they were not burned as a sweet savor (Lev. 2:12); but with the loaves was offered a sin offering, which answered by its efficacy to the leaven found in them. They are the saints of which Pentecost commenced the gathering.

Once more we find the expression first fruits in Scripture. Of the hundred and forty-four thousand who will stand on Mount Sion with the Lamb (Rev. 14), it is said, "These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." v. 4. These are the first fruits of the earth, after the Church has been caught away to be with the Lord, and will be gathered from among the two tribes who will be in the land during the sway and power of antichrist. They will pass through the unequaled sorrow of those days (see Matt. 24:21, 22), and the Lord will give them a special place with Himself in the kingdom; they will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. As the ingathering at Pentecost was the first fruits of the Church, these will be the first fruits of the kingdom.