

## Joy Comes in the Morning

*“For His anger lasts for only a moment, His favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may stay for the night, but joy comes in the morning” (Psalm 30:6).*

This year the feast of Firstfruits (of the barley harvest) was yesterday, Sunday April 28, 2024. In my 25Apr20 message entitled *Know the Truth* I shared that in modern Jewish Translations of the Torah, the text of Lev. 23:11 (וְהֵנִיף אֶת־הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְיָ לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יְנִיפּוּ תְּכַהֲרֶהּ) (in particular, the word *Ha-Shabbat*) has been altered to *conveniently* match the modern Jewish interpretation of when the day of Firstfruits takes place. 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). “<sup>11</sup> 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) “<sup>11</sup> 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 *Aviv/Nisan 15* is called *Pesach* in modern Jewry], then the day of firstfruits is fixed in the Jewish calendar to be on *Aviv 16* and consequently *Shavuot* will always be 50 days later 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. Therefore, the date varies year-by-year depending what day the Shabbat of the Passover Week falls on the Jewish calendar and requires counting (or some simple math) to determine. This year the 50 days, or *seven complete Shabbatot* from yesterday (*Aviv/Nisan 20*) will be on *Sivan 20* (06/16/24), when *Kol Simcha* will celebrate *Shavuot*. or the Feast of Weeks (the word week in Hebrew is *shavua* and its plural is *shavuot*).

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 in that split second, he also saw the eyes of the Master looking straight at him. Peter was undone, in that he was not only confronted but by the look of his own Messiah! What did Peter see/felt? Was it different for Peter than it was for Judas hours earlier? Ponder that thought for a moment... We also experience Messiah’s look the moment we let Him down and betray Him. Our spirit man need only look inside our innermost being, the temple where the Holy Spirit resides. I believe Peter began his repentance immediately upon experiencing *Yeshua’s Look of Love*. If we do not see His eyes, then we do not have the same experience. While the earth held *Yeshua* for the predicted three days and three nights, I can only imagine the heartache and emptiness inside Peter’s soul. There was the small talk of remembering His prophetic utterances while He was alive. But he is surrounded by nine of the eleven who 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*:

*“20<sup>1</sup> Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it is still dark, Miriam from Magdala comes to the tomb. She sees that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. 2<sup>2</sup> So she comes running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Yeshua loved. She tells them, “They’ve taken the Master out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they’ve put Him!” 3<sup>3</sup> Then Peter and the other disciple (John?) set out, going to the tomb. 4<sup>4</sup> The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and arrived at the tomb first. 5<sup>5</sup> Leaning in, he sees the linen strips lying there. But he didn’t go in. 6<sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter comes following him, and he entered the tomb. He looks upon the linen strips lying there, 7<sup>7</sup> and the face cloth that had been on His head. It was not lying with the linen strips, but was rolled up in a place by itself. 8<sup>8</sup> So then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also entered. He saw and believed. 9<sup>9</sup> For they did not yet understand from Scripture that Yeshua must rise from the dead. 10<sup>10</sup> So the disciples went back to their own homes... 11<sup>11</sup> But Miriam stood outside the tomb weeping. As she was weeping, she bent down to look into the tomb. 12<sup>12</sup> She sees two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where Yeshua’s body had been lying. 13<sup>13</sup> ‘Woman, why are you crying?’ they say to her. She says to them, ‘Because they took away my Master, and I don’t know where they’ve put Him.’ 14<sup>14</sup> After she said these things, she turned around. And she sees Yeshua standing there. Yet she didn’t know that it was Yeshua. 15<sup>15</sup> Yeshua says to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?’ Thinking He’s the gardener, she says to Him, ‘Sir, if You’ve carried Him away, tell me where You’ve put Him, and I will take Him away.’ 16<sup>16</sup> Yeshua says to her, ‘Miriam!’ Turning around, she says to Him in Aramaic, **Rabboni!** (which means **My Teacher**). 17<sup>17</sup> Yeshua says to her, ‘Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet gone up to the Father. Go to My brothers and tell them, ‘I am going up to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.’ 18<sup>18</sup> Miriam from Magdala comes, announcing to the disciples, “I’ve seen the Lord,” and what He had said to her... 19<sup>19</sup> It was evening on that day, the first of the week. When the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Judean leaders, Yeshua came and stood in their midst! And He said to them, **“Shalom aleichem!”** 20<sup>20</sup> After He said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21<sup>21</sup> Yeshua said to them again, **“Shalom aleichem!** As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” 22<sup>22</sup> And after He said this, He breathed on them. And He said to them, **“Receive the Ruach ha-Kodesh!** 23<sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; but if you hold back, they are held back.” 24<sup>24</sup> One of the Twelve, Thomas called the Twin, was not with them when Yeshua came. 25<sup>25</sup> The other disciples were saying to him, “We’ve seen the Lord!” But he replied to them, “Unless I see the nail prints in His hands, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand in His side, I will never believe!” (John 20:1-25).*

When we mess up; and when we who know better, when we go ahead and willfully sin (iniquity) and when the result is ruination, and there is no more life, then the **resurrection kicks in**, and we are given a **second chance**. **Yeshua** is the **Lord of the Second Chance!** This is what Peter and the disciples experienced. The same power of the resurrection is available to us today. Is **Yeshua** really the **Lord of the Second Chance?** How often can we sin and be forgiven? Seventy times seven. Yes Virginia! One thousand times Yes! Even more than seventy times seven! (**Matt. 18**) I know Peter was devastated by his sin, guilt, remorse, and shame – as I would be. But notice the **first message** of the Resurrection to Peter: *“7<sup>7</sup> 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 He already forgave him! So, 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. Joy indeed comes in the morning because it is a pattern established forever in the Resurrection! Are you ready to do this? As for me, I am taking full advantage of my second chances. Happy last day of Unleavened Bread to all of you! **Chag HaMatzot 7 Sameach!**