

## The Firstborn Son

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The Feast of Pentecost is integrally associated with the concepts of **"the firstborn son"** and **"firstfruits"**. These concepts have a long history and very significant symbolic meaning. (Gn4:4, Ex13:1-2, 22:29b, 34:20bα, Rv1:4-5a)

**Holy Days and the Plan of God:** The **"harvest theme"** of the Holy Days was modelled around the agricultural cycle of ancient Israel – **symbolically, the theme looks to the "harvest" of human beings into the Family of God**. The Spring Holy Days look to the first resurrection: **Passover** – Jesus' death and Jesus' resurrection; **Feast of Unleavened Bread** – holiness, putting out sin and living by the Way of God; **Pentecost** – the Holy Spirit and "firstfruits".

**Rights of the Firstborn Son:** In ancient near eastern culture, **the firstborn male of animals and man was considered sacred**, i.e., animals were to be sacrificed and in Israel humans were to be "redeemed". Human sacrifice frequently took place (2Kg26a, 27a, 16:2-3, 2Chr33:1-2, 6a). **Esau was the "firstborn son"** of Isaac, therefore the **"birthright"** and **"blessing"** of Isaac belonged to him. Jacob legitimately purchased the "birthright" but he swindled the "blessing" (Gn25:29-33, 27:1-4, 18-19). Prior to entry into the Promised Land, Moses formalized the status of the "firstborn son" (Dt21:15-17, 25:5-6).

**The Firstborn of Egypt:** YHWH legitimized his removal of the Israelites from Egypt on the basis of the "firstborn son" (Ex4:22-23, 12:29-31). **By slaying the "firstborn" of Egypt to free Israel**, YHWH claimed the right to all the "firstborn" of Israel (Ex13:11-15).

**"Firstborn" and "Firstfruits":** The **"firstborn son"** is also called the **"firstfruits"** (Gn49:3, Dt21:17). YHWH extended the consecration of "firstborn son" to include **"firstfruits" of produce** with the **"Feast of Harvest of firstfruits"** – Pentecost (Ex23:16a, 19a). The root verb, בָּכַר - **bakar**, means "to be born first"; it is seldom used. The masculine noun, בֶּכֶר or בְּכוֹר - **b\*kor**, means "firstborn". The plural masculine noun, בְּכוֹרִים - **bikkurim**, means "firstfruits".

**Symbolic Use of "Firstborn" and "Firstfruits":** YHWH made it clear that his claim on the "firstborn" was symbolic – all the **"firstborn" were redeemed by the tribe of Levi** (Nm3:5-7, 12-13, 15, 40-41a). The Feast of Firstfruits of the harvest is associated with two "wave offerings" of firstfruits – **the "waving motion" presents the offering before God which makes the waved object Holy for service to God** (Lv23:10-11, 15-17, 20). The Levites were presented as a "wave offering" to make them holy to serve in the Tabernacle (Nm8:14-15). Jesus had to be presented before the Father (Jh20:17). Participants in the First Resurrection must be presented before God the Father in a covenant meal (Rv19:7-9a).

**Christ is the Firstborn:** "He is the image of the invisible God, **the firstborn of all creation**. ... He is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**, that in everything he might be preeminent. ... making peace by the blood of his cross" (Cl1:15-20) "Jesus Christ ... **the firstborn of the dead** ... who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood" (Rv1:4-6).

**True Worshipers are the Firstfruits:** "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above ... that we should be a kind of **firstfruits** of his creatures" (Jm1:16-18). "Christ has been raised from the dead, the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep ... Christ the **firstfruits**, then at his coming those who belong to Christ" (1Cr15:20-23). "... we ourselves, who have the **firstfruits** of the Spirit ... who are called according to his purpose ... to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the **firstborn among many brothers**" (Rm8:19, 22-23, 28-29). "God chose you as the **firstfruits** to be saved ... so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2Th2:13-14).

**Jesus Christ is the "firstborn son", the wave sheaf, the firstborn from the dead.** Through Jesus Christ all human beings can have their sins forgiven and have the opportunity to be part of the Family of God. **The Plan of God unfolds:** True Worshipers from the time Abel to the inception of the New Testament Church, and True Christians since then, are represented by **the two loaves of firstfruits waved on Pentecost** – they will participate in the First Resurrection. Jesus Christ was always Holy, yet he had to be presented before the Father after the resurrection; participants in the First Resurrection are presented before the Father in a covenant meal before returning to earth to **fulfill the Plan of God by bringing salvation to the rest of humanity**.

This material is based on the paper **"True Worship of the True God"** located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/>