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1. Every year, when the Jew went out into his fields and saw that his wheat, barley, grape vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olives, and dates were beginning to ripen, he would mark his "first fruits" by tying a straw around them. When they had ripened completely, he would bring them to the Temple in Jerusalem and present them to the Priests any time between Shavuot and Sukkot. These offerings—including oil from his olives and wine from his vineyard—were known as *bikkurim*.

2. The offering of the first fruits was a festive occasion accompanied by good cheer and rejoicing. Hence an *onan* (i.e., one in deep mourning between the time of the death and the burial of a close relative) was not permitted to participate in this *mitzvah*.

There is some difference of opinion as to whether women were obliged to perform this *mitzvah* since this is one of the commandments that had to be fulfilled at a specific time (*mitzvah she-ha-zeman geramah*) and such commandments as a rule are not obligatory for women.

3. The procedure for the offering of the first fruits was as follows: The farmer bringing the offering would take an amount equal to at least one-sixtieth of his first fruits and place it into an attractive basket for presentation at the Temple. If he used a wicker basket, the Priest kept the basket; if the basket was of gold, the Priest returned it to him after taking out the offering. The farmer also took with him seven doves: some of these served as ornaments for the offering and others he carried separately. Those that served as ornaments were sacrificed as burnt offerings; the others were given as a gift to the Priests. When he reached the outskirts of Jerusalem, the farmer was given a joyous welcome by the inhabitants of the city. When he entered the courtyard of the Temple, the Levites would chant psalms. He would then approach the Priest on duty and, still holding the basket upon his shoulder, would recite the biblical declaration: "I declare this day unto the Lord our God that I have come into the land which the Lord swore to our fathers to give us" (Deuteronomy 26:3). He would then lower the basket and hold it in his hands by its rim, and the Priest would place his hands beneath it and lift it. The farmer would then recite the prescribed biblical passage summarizing the history of the people of Israel and proclaiming his gratitude for the land that God had given to him and his people (Deuteronomy 26:5–10). After that, he would place his offering near the southwest corner of the altar, bow, and leave the Temple. He would spend the night in Jerusalem, returning to his home the next day.

The mitzvot
Abraham Chill

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And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard, —R. Hisda said in R. 'Ukba's name, and others state, Mar 'Ukba said in R. Zakkai's name: The Holy One, blessed be He, said unto Noah: 'Noah, shouldst thou not have taken a warning from Adam, whose transgression was caused by wine?' This agrees with the view that the [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine. For it has been taught: R. Meir said: That [forbidden] tree from which Adam ate was a vine for nothing else but wine brings woe to man. R. Judah said: It was the wheat plant, for an infant cannot say 'father' and 'mother' until it has tasted of wheat. R. Nehemiah said: It was the fig tree, for whereby they transgressed, they were taught to make amends, as it is written, And they sewed fig leaves together. Sanhedrin 70a