

Why Pentecost on Sunday?

by: Ronald L. Dart

Today is Sabbath number three in the seven Sabbaths leading up to Pentecost. Why is it that most of us in our tradition, keep Pentecost on a Sunday rather than on a Monday, or on a calendar date, as some of our brethren who are also in our tradition do? There are some who observe Pentecost on the sixth day of the third month. Otherwise known as the sixth of Sivan. There are others, recently I heard a brand new argument by the way that calls for the observance of Pentecost on the fourth or fifth of Sivan. I don't know if that has a very wide following, but I did run into it recently. There is also, of course there are those of us who observe Pentecost on Sunday as we do. First, what is Pentecost? Pentecost comes from a Greek word that means fiftieth. And because it is a Greek word you will only find it in the New Testament. You won't find it in the O.T. at all. Pentecost is the fiftieth day from something. You find it in the N.T. in three places, Acts 2:1 "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they," that is the disciples of Jesus, "were all with one accord in one place."

The next one is Acts 20:16 Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus because he would not spend the time in Asia, because he was in a hurry if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Then there's the letter 1 Cor. 16:7 "I will not see you now by the way but I trust to tarry a while with you if the Lord permit. But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost for a great door and effectual is opened to me and there are many adversaries." You have these references to not only Pentecost but to other holy days as you read your way through the N.T. and it's obvious as you read that the N.T. church was keeping Pentecost as well as many of the other holy days. What is interesting and I think, I don't know how widely understood this is, but there are many Christian churches, non Sabbatarian churches that observe Pentecost. They do so because it's kind of the birthday of the N.T. church. The Anglican communion observes Pentecost, they call it Whit Sunday. The Roman Catholic church will observe it among the movable feasts that they have during the year. They call it Whit Sunday because a lot of baptisms take place on Pentecost, and they wear white for their baptism and that's white Sunday shortened up to Whit Sunday. So when you hear Whit Sunday or Whitsun in either Anglican or possibly Episcopalian or other churches, you'll know they're talking about Pentecost. In England we also had Whit Monday, and that was so that we could all have a day off from work.

There's no serious question but that the early church observed Pentecost. But what was Pentecost? What was the fiftieth day, or the fiftieth day from what? Well the origins lie in the Torah. The instructions that God gave to his people. In Lev. 23:9 "The Lord spoke unto Moses saying, speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them. When you are come into the land which I shall give you and shall reap of the harvest thereof. Then you shall

bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you, on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.” Now, if you have your bible open before you and you cast your eye up and down the columns of the other holy days that are mentioned there, you will find that every other holy day is specified to take place on a certain date on the calendar. The Passover is on the 14th day of the first month. The first day of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th day of the first month. The Feast of Trumpets is on the 1st day of the seventh month. The day of Atonement is on the 10th day of the seventh month. The feast of Tabernacles is on the 15th day of the seventh month. The Last Great Day is eight days later. Every single holy day is tied to a calendar date except this one. There is a reason for this. The day that you begin the counting for Pentecost is on this day that that wave sheaf offering is brought in and presented before God.

Now what is I think important to understand is, just looking at what's here. There is in the law first of all, no stated connection between this offering of the wave sheaf and the days of Unleavened Bread. There is this presumption, a tradition, that it is connected with the days of Unleavened Bread. The Jewish tradition calls for it to begin, the counting to begin with the day after the feast of Passover, or the first day of Unleavened Bread. That's the Sabbath that they start counting from. The Sadducean tradition was a little different from that, so is ours. But in any case there is a connection, the way we put it is, you begin counting from the morrow after the Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. And some people become confused about that, they think that the wave sheaf offering had to be in the days of Unleavened Bread, no, it's the Sabbath that had to be in the days of Unleavened Bread. The wave sheaf could actually be offered the day after the days of Unleavened Bread were over if the last day of Unleavened Bread were that Sabbath day. But what's significant about this is you read through it in Leviticus 23, there is not one word connecting this festival to the feast of Unleavened Bread.

Now, why then does this connection take place? First of all the controlling factor in the beginning of this seven Sabbath count down to Pentecost was not another holy day, it was the ripening of the grain. We know that the month of Abib, or the first month in the Hebrew calendar is called the month of green ears. It's called that because the barley is green in the ears in the field. And in this particular situation you've got to have a determining factor as to when your actually going to begin harvesting the ripe barley. When would you want to do that? You'd want to do it, wouldn't you, normally, when it's ready? What determines when it's ready? Does the equinox determine when it's ready? Not really. It's in there as a factor, but it's not really what determines it. What determines it? Really a collection of things. One is the slow warming of the climate in the spring as the sun makes its way back north. In that sense the equinox has something to do with it. But it is also controlled by the sequence of cold fronts that come through that determine the temperature fluctuations.

Now you all know that the same dates on the calendar don't have the same temperature. That some months it's cool much later in the year, some months it gets warm much earlier. The same thing happened in Palestine. And as a result of this the variations in the ripening of the crop could be rather considerable. Well because it was supposed to be the month of green ears, the priest would naturally keep an eye on things and be very careful to see to it that the first month of the year did not occur too early. If it was going to occur too early they would put a thirteenth month in. And just straightened it all out and it fell in the right time again. But even so, there was a question mark about when that grain was going to be ripe. What kept it from being ripe on the first Sabbath of the month of green ears? Nothing. The second? Nothing. The third? Nothing. What if it wasn't really ripe until the fourth? It could happen. Because of the ways the cold fronts come down and all the connections that are with it. However, with people scattered all over the landscape, with people living further north, and people living further south, with people living all the way up in Asia Minor. There seems to be some consideration that in the process of time, every effort was made to connect the wave sheaf offering with the feast of Unleavened Bread so that everybody would know where they were. I have little doubt that something along those lines did take place. But if you go on the basis of the written law, there is no earthly reason why this day of the wave sheaf could not have been one week after the days of Unleavened Bread are over. Because there is no specification whatsoever. It is only tradition that connects the wave sheaf to the Passover at all, keep that in mind.

Then it goes on to say in verse 14 "and you shall eat neither bread nor parched corn nor green ears until the selfsame day that you have brought an offering unto your God, it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings." So the new crop was not to be eaten until an offering had been made to God. God comes first. That's a simple concept. This was really a formal beginning of the harvest. The wave sheaf was cut right after sundown, right after the Sabbath. Why, after the Sabbath? Well because it was a work day. The actual cutting of that sheaf of grain was the first act in the whole harvest beginning to take place. And you don't go starting your harvest on the Sabbath, so you wouldn't go on the Sabbath day or on the holy day and cut this wave sheaf to make this offering. It was cut right after the sun went down, because there was then work to be done processing this offering all night long preparatory to taking it before God the next morning in the temple. Having processed it and having it in a little basket they would actually wave it before God in the temple to be accepted by him as the first fruits from the ground. After that, you can now eat of, you can now partake of that spring harvest.

Then he says in verse 15 "And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths shall be complete. Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you number fifty days and then you will offer a new meat offering to the Lord." So here's where the connection comes in, from the morrow after the Sabbath, even unto the morrow after the Sabbath seven Sabbaths shall be complete, and then on the fiftieth day. Which is the Pentecost day? That's where that term comes from. You actually then go into a new ceremony at that point in time.

And that day is what we call Pentecost, what in the O.T. is called the Feast of Weeks, but properly is called the Feast of Firstfruits. Because it is the offering of the firstfruits from the ground to God before you begin the spring harvest. And then of course the whole spring harvest is really called in a way firstfruits, as we'll see a little bit later as we talk about it further. When I first began observing Pentecost we were observing it on a Monday. The reason? Oh well, it was a complicated argument. For one thing the argument was made, well now look at the word from, what does from mean? Well from means away and out of. And if I told you to meet me seven days from today, when would you meet me? Well you'd meet me next Saturday, so did you count today? No. You sure didn't. You actually counted starting with tomorrow being the first day. And so this long convoluted argument began to be developed about why it was possible for that first day of the count to be on Monday instead on a Sunday. It really was a classic case of missing the forest because we had our nose right up against the tree. We missed the overall picture presented to us by the Feast of Weeks.

Now, shall we try to see if we can find a nice clean and simple solution to this question? Seems like that's always the best way to go rather than some convoluted thing that you have to explain a dozen different scriptures to get to where you want to be. The harvest began on a Sunday, they worked six days and then they rested the seventh. They did this seven times. They worked six days, rested the Sabbath. Worked six days, rested the Sabbath. They did it seven times until finally they came to the seventh Sabbath and the day after the seventh Sabbath was the fiftieth day. Now let's look at the scripture again. "You shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths shall be complete."

Now in the first place, if this day that we're counting from was the day after the first day of Unleavened Bread. One would really expect having read your way through Lev. 23 and having seen all these dates given there, that one would say on the sixteenth day of the month or on the day after the day of Passover, the day after the first day of Unleavened Bread. You shall begin counting and count these seven Sabbaths. Because all the dates are there and the effect of making this decision takes you squarely to the sixth of Sivan. And it would seem that if that was God's intent, in order to avoid anybody making any mistake, he would say, you shall count unto you seven weeks even to the morrow after the seventh Sabbath on the sixth day of the third month. But there is not one word about that. In fact there seems to be on the general line of explanation of most people who don't really pay a whole lot of attention to the intervening Sabbaths that take place during Pentecost. There seems to be an almost detached approach to the whole thing. There is absolutely no reason why you should count anything at all. You just have a date and you show up on the date, and you have a service and a potluck and sit around and chat and visit and go home. But there is much much more to that. What I think is interesting about this, the old explanation was that the word Sabbath in this second instance here, the morrow after the Sabbath meant week. Now the word here if you just take a look at it, you shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, you can even put a mark there if you would like to. The Hebrew word is

Sabbath. That's easy. From the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths shall be complete, even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath you will number fifty days.

Now the only way you can explain this so that Pentecost can be on a Monday, is that you have to take that word to mean week. Right? It's the only way you can do it. The problem with this is there is a perfectly good Hebrew word for week and that isn't what's used here. What's used here is the word Sabbath. And so you count from the morrow after the Sabbath to the morrow after the Sabbath. Now when you put it that way it is utterly impossible for us to be dealing with anything except two Sundays. Because if we're coming to the morrow after the Sabbath at the end of it, which cannot be an annual Sabbath right? Pentecost does not fall on the day after an annual Sabbath. There isn't one in there. So therefore if the latter word Sabbath can't possibly mean a holy day then why should we assume the first one does? The truth of the matter is in both cases the Sabbaths concerned are days of the week, the same day of the week, and you count from one to the other, fifty days shall be complete and you've got the whole picture.

Now, one looks at it and considers it. Now this has another consequence, if Pentecost is on the morrow after the Sabbath, it cannot be a calendar date. It's impossible, because the day after the Sabbath can fall on any calendar date. The sixth of Sivan can fall on any day of the week. Calendar dates can fall on any day of the week, so consequently it makes it utterly impossible for that to be the case. So what does one do if one wants to observe, or believes on should observe Pentecost on Sivan six, how does one explain it? Well, Pentecost is also called the Feast of Weeks, and as I've already mentioned the Feast of Firstfruits, which really should be the proper name of it. The first usage of weeks in connection with the festival is found in Numbers 28:26 "Also in the day of firstfruits, when you bring a new meat offering to the Lord after your weeks be out you shall have a holy convocation, you shall do no servile work." Now the Hebrew, the word week from the Hebrew is a passive participle of the verb to seven oneself. Now what in the world would that mean to seven oneself? It's a strange construction, we have nothing like it. When it's used that way it usually is referring to taking an oath. That to seven oneself is to really bind oneself to a particular oath through the repetition of the oath seven times. But this is a passive participle of it and the literal translation actually is "sevened". Now how do you take that then? As the literal meaning is "sevened", the usual translation of the word is week. And it's the only expression in the Hebrew that can be used to talk about a seven day period. The seven day period, the weeks that are being involved.

Now the odd thing about the Hebrew usage though concerning with a week, week is usually considered to be from Sabbath to Sabbath. In the N.T. you find the word Sabbaths used often times for weeks. Sabbaths in the plural means weeks in that way. But that's N.T. Greek, that's not Hebrew. In Hebrew you have the word shabuwa, which is this word here. Which is the word of choice if you're going to translate something as weeks. Now, continuing on "seven weeks shall you number you beginning from such time as you begin to

sickle the corn.” Now I’m in Deut. 16:9&10 “You shall keep the Feast of Weeks unto the Lord your God with the tribute of freewill offering at your hand which you shall give to the Lord your God as the Lord your God has blessed you.” Now, it says seven weeks shall you number to you beginning with the seven weeks such time as you begin to put the sickle to the corn. The word here is not Sabbath, it’s shabuwa, and it means week. So the translation or the transition is made from, see this is the Feast of Weeks and you’ve got seven weeks that have to be completed, weeks, and so when we see back in Lev. 23 unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, it really means to the morrow after the seventh week. I know that sounds weak, no pun intended, but that is basically what the argument is. The presumption is that whenever this begins it lasts until the morrow after the seventh week or the seventh period of seven days. And this is the basic idea of both those who believe in a Monday Pentecost and those who believe in a calendar date Pentecost. You basically have to do this.

Now I confronted this when I was a student in college and I learned all the explanations. But my problem as a freshman in college was that, you know I hadn’t quite gotten into the corporate culture yet. I hadn’t quite gotten into the situation to whatever I’m told from on high is the correct thing yet. And I kept reading this passage of scripture in Lev. 23:15 and it says “You shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath.” Now that doesn’t mean from the morrow after the week does it? It doesn’t make any sense to say from the morrow after the week, there isn’t any week in question. From the morrow after the Sabbath, we all know what the Sabbath is, it’s the same word that’s in the commandment that says remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. “Count to you from the morrow after the Sabbath from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths shall be complete, even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you number fifty days.” And I read that, the word in both places is the same, in both places it’s Sabbath and there was a perfectly good word out there for week if that’s what God had wanted to say. And there it was.

Now you can look at this this way also, if you believe that Pentecost is on the day after the weekly Sabbath, you have no need to explain Deut. 16. I mean there is no problem with it. If you believe that Pentecost is the day after a weekly Sabbath there are no problems to you in either Numbers or Deuteronomy about Pentecost. Because even though the word week is used, you can simply assume on the basis of this scripture that the week in question ends with the Sabbath day. So there’s no argument. The problem comes when you have to try to conclude that this passage does not mean it’s the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, that it means the morrow after the seventh week, you have got quite a bit of circumlocution to do here to make your way around through these other scriptures to try to establish that that’s what God was really talking about. Had to be that way, because you see he couldn’t possibly have counted that first day. So much hung on the meaning of one Hebrew word. And there wasn’t a person involved in the argument who could read Hebrew. And it was really weird because Herbert Armstrong when he finally made the change back to a Sunday Pentecost. Finally did so because someone who was Hebrew, who was Jewish, and who knew Hebrew told him no, the word doesn’t mean exclusively counting away out. It means

counting beginning with. And when he finally had a scholar, that he respected, tell him that's what it really meant, then he was able, you know it was almost like unlocking the door and opening up, now all of a sudden everything began to make sense to him. And the church made really an historic change when it made the change from Monday Pentecost back to Sunday Pentecost. And of course, at this point in time out there now, you will have as Pentecost comes upon us this year, you will have two groups of people involved in those that keep it on Sunday and Monday. And those keeping it on Monday are increasingly few it seems. But there is that division. Then you can divide that division one more way by the fact that some people will have a thirteenth month in this year and some will not. Because they are divided over that.

Now among these groups also though, you then have to make the division between those who observe Pentecost upon the sixth of Sivan and then there's the question of the sixth of Sivan, whether that falls, it can be a month apart depending upon whether they added a thirteenth month this year. And then you have a group of people, probably very small, who believe that it should be on the fourth or fifth of Sivan. The reason being for that, that they say that originally these were thirty day months, and instead of having the second month being a twenty nine day month, which would throw Pentecost on the sixth of Sivan, that it was a thirty day month which throws it on the fifth of Sivan. And I can't figure out why in the world he thought it might fall on the fourth but that's the argument that I saw. So how many different days Pentecost will be kept this year, the best I can figure the possibilities are that there are at least six or seven different days out there, and I'll bet it's more than that. I'll bet it's more than that. Of people who actually come together to observe Pentecost on those days and they will all be very sincere, they will all mean what they are doing, and a lot of them are going to be technically wrong. But what I'm telling you is the reason why we believe that we should do what we do. If you believe that Pentecost is on any other day than Sunday, you've got a particular set of special gymnastics that you have to use to interpret this passage of scripture. And even then, you're going counter to the plain meaning of the passage, and it just isn't necessary to do that.

There are two schools of thought among the Jews about this. The Pharisees who were very strong on the oral law, counted beginning with the day after the first day of Unleavened Bread. There's nothing in the written law, by the way to say this, I think it was probably a late decision made by the rabbis to try to nail things down, after all the law did not give you a date, it depended entirely on the ripening of the grain, and I will guarantee you that there were divisions among them early on, from the people in the South to the people in the North about when the grain was ripe. And somebody had to say well it has to be at Jerusalem, Okay fine but we don't know when that is up here. How can we know when the grains going to be ripe in Jerusalem? How can we know when we can start and when we can finally eat of this particular crop? You can hear the arguments, they go on ad-infinitum, ad-nauseam. I mean they just go on forever about it. So somewhere somebody said, we'll do it on the day after the first day of Unleavened Bread, and that's how I suspect, that whole thing got started. The Sadducees, adhering strictly to the written law counted beginning with the day

after the weekly Sabbath. And traditionally that stayed in connection with the days of Unleavened Bread. It was the Sabbath, I've already explained, that was in the days of Unleavened Bread that controlled that. Now this still left a lot of problems and I've never read anything that really tells me how the Jews solved all the problems they dealt with. God deals with patterns, with type and with anti-type, and those patterns keep getting repeated, and this is another thing and I haven't heard to many people really address this question. We use the word typology, typology means the study of biblical types. Types are models, they are things that happened in the past that form a model for what's going to happen in the future. Or things that happened in the physical sense that are a model of things that happened in a spiritual sense. And nobody really, I think has taken a look at the patterns or the types that God works in, in connection with this and really examined them.

One example for example is found in Lev. 25:2 "Speak to the children of Israel and say unto them, when you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath to the Lord." In other words, there's going to be one year in which the land would not actually be required to bear fruit. "Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in the fruit. But in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land. A Sabbath for the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard." And when you think about it, there's a lot of sense involved in that. You can't very well let the land keep a Sabbath each week. Because it's just growing all year long. So he said what you do with the land is, you go ahead and let it grow, but in the seventh year you give the land it's day off. You don't sow, you don't reap, you just put it out there and let it go fallow for one year. So the land had to have a Sabbath every so often. Verse 8 "You shall number seven Sabbaths of years unto you. Seven times seven years, and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto you." Guess what? "Forty nine." That's easy. "You shall cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month in the day of Atonement. You shall make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year." If you were speaking Greek at this point, you would probably call it the Pentecost year. Because that is precisely what it means. "And you will proclaim liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof. It shall be a jubilee to you, and you shall return every man to his possession, every man to his family."

Now I think the interesting pattern here is, you've got six years of work, one year of rest, six years of work, one year of rest, and so on through the pattern. In Pentecost you have six days of work, one day of rest, six days of work, one day of rest, through seven cycles until finally the seventh Sabbath comes along followed by Pentecost, the fiftieth day. It's exactly the same system. The problem with doing it another way is, you might very well harvest your wave sheaf on one day, be able to work that day, and then you have to take the next day off. And then you go back to work the day following and you work six days and rest the seventh. And when you get down to the end of this whole thing you're working five days and then basically Pentecost is here on the morrow after the fifth day. In other words the whole image, the imagery connected with the cycle is totally different if you don't observe Pentecost on Sunday. It almost divorce's it from the whole concept. Of the whole

parallel with the jubilee cycle, which is six days of work, one day of rest, six years of work, one year of rest, which I think is a significant pattern. Pentecost it works exactly the same way that this does, but even more important than that. There is the typology of the day.

Now you remember earlier that I made the statement that the Feast is called Pentecost. It is also called the Feast of Weeks because of the counting off of the Weeks but neither one of these terms really tells you anything about the meaning of the Feast which is why I think that the official name of this festival should be the Feast of First Fruits because that is the third name and it is in this particular title of the feast, this name for this feast, the significance of the feast that the typology, the symbolism all of a sudden comes to the surface and it is really very important. So what you need to understand is that when they went in and cut this first sheaf of grain and offered it before God, it was offered as the first fruits from the fields to God. Also though at the end of this festival, at the end of the seven weeks when you have the Feast of Pentecost, at that point in time that is also the Feast of the First Fruits. Which means that this whole period of time is a gathering in of first fruits. The first sheaf is the first of the first fruits.

Now I told you all that to tell you this, in I Corinthians 15, the resurrection chapter in verse 20, I Cor 15:20, we have this statement, "But now is Christ risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of them that slept for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Every man in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Okay the Feast of the Firstfruits then connects up with Christ who is the first fruit, that wave sheaf, that first sheaf of grain cut from the ground, prepared and taken in offering to God symbolizes the first one taken from the dead. Then there is this passage of scripture, James 1:18. "Of his own will, he begot us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." So Christ is the firstfruits, we are also a kind of a first fruit which in a way makes Christ the first of the firstfruits. Then there is Revelation 14:3. "They sang as it were a new song before the throne and before the four beasts and the elders and no man could learn that song but the 144,000 who were redeemed from the earth. These are they who are not defiled with woman for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb everywhere he goes. These were redeemed from among men being the firstfruits of God onto God and to the lamb".

Now when you begin to put these things together, some things become I think pretty important. Christ is the first fruit from the dead. The first begotten of the dead as he is called in Revelation. Now if you believe in a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection this may not pose a giant problem for you. The wave sheaf was offered on a Sunday morning in the year that Christ was crucified without a shadow of a doubt if it was not on any other day we certainly think it was there. If you believe in a Friday crucifixion, Sunday resurrection, what you believe then is that on Saturday night just after sundown the men were in the field, were all prepared and when the sun went down they cut that sheaf of grain. They went into the temple, all night long, they prepared that grain for the offering the next

morning and the next morning they went into the temple and they offered it before God. They offered it just about the same time that Christ himself was appearing before God.

You remember the sequence as he came out of the tomb? The first person I believe to see Christ alive was Mary Magdalene and she did not even recognize him, did not know who he was and as soon as he called her name, she said she knew who it was and she was ready to grasp him and he said "Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to my father". Later on, he was quite happy to allow people to touch him. The only presumption is that between the time he saw Mary and said do not touch me and the time he saw the others that he had come before the father in heaven and that he was the firstfruits presented before God from the dead. The typology is as clear as any typology could be. That also suggests that at the moment that wave sheaf was being cut on Saturday evening is the moment that Jesus Christ opened his eyes, sat up, folded up that napkin and laid it there and left the tomb. The chances are, that the earthquake did not take place until the next morning because the stone needed to be removed not to let him out but to let the witnesses in so they would know that he was no longer there. So when you put that pattern of everything together you can see then the connection that takes place between Christ's resurrection, his presentation before God as the first fruits.

Now if you believe in a Wednesday crucifixion, Saturday evening resurrection then Christ as the wave sheaf was presented on the morning after the weekly Sabbath. Not the annual Sabbath, so you have that little additional thing to look at there depending upon how you look at some other aspects of the New Testament. We also are the firstfruits presented before the father on Pentecost. That means then that the time in which we are living now is the time of that harvest, that seven weeks of harvest. There are seven weeks in which to work, each with a pause, and then there is the final pause, the seventh Sabbath, followed by the day of our presentation before God. And I cannot help to ponder whether or not this, you know we have often heard of the famine of hearing the word, one of the Old Testament prophets said, there is going to come a time of famine, not of bread or of water or of food but a famine of hearing the word of God. And they'll go here and there looking for it and they will not be able to find it anywhere and one wonders if there has been in the past and if we may even be entering into now another period of a rest in the harvest of God. I do not know if that is what is intended by this cycle of six weeks of work and one day of rest, six and one, six and one, down through all this time but it does make me wonder especially in the light of some of the events that have taken place in our own churches in recent months and years.

Anyway, he then says in vs. 17 of Leviticus 23, (Lev 23:17), "You shall bring out of your habitations, (this is the end of the seven weeks of counting down to Pentecost), You shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two-tenth deals. They should be of fine flour. They shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits onto the Lord. The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the Lord with the two lambs that are holy to the Lord for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the same day that it shall be a holy convocation to you, you shall do not customary work therein, it shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations." You notice something

that is interesting about these loaves? They are the firstfruits. And they are leavened. That leads one to think that Christ as the first of the firstfruits was offered and was presented before God during the days of unleavened bread, but bread was not even made of that grain. It was not even made into a loaf. It was presented before God as prepared grain. Then when it comes to the end of the Days of Unleavened Bread, we who are the firstfruits of God are presented as leavened loaves which suggest that we are sinners saved by grace and that those of us then come in our turn to be presented before God at the end of the days of counting down to Pentecost.

Verse. 22, "When you shall reap the harvest of your land, you shall not make a clean riddance of the corners of your field. This is Lev 23:22. You shall not make a clean riddance of the corners of your field when you reap, you are not to gather any gleaning of your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and to the stranger. I am the Lord your God". You know I understand the literal significance of this and I have often been fascinated by this verse being here. It is almost like a throw away. That when you get this harvest all and you are doing all of your harvest then leave something in the corners and leave the gleanings of it for the poor. But one almost wonders is there a symbolic thing as well about this as what it might mean. Like stragglers into the kingdom of God or those people who are in Christ but who have not been gathered. I do not know, but it sits there and it bothers me.

Now if you return for just a moment to Leviticus 25:8, "And you shall number seven Sabbaths of years unto you, seven times seven years. The space of seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto you forty-nine years. And then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement, you shall make the trumpet sound throughout all of the land." Then it says this, "You shall hallow the fiftieth year." This is the Pentecost year, what is significant about this year. The first thing you do is to proclaim liberty throughout all of the land and the inhabitants thereof. It is a Jubilee. You return every man to its possession. You return every man to his family. This is a time when land that had been sold away because of hard times and what have you came back and you go back and take possession of it again. You can rejoin your family again. A man who had been in prison would be turned loose. You know at the time of Christ's return is a Jubilee because he is going to declare the release of the captives wherever they are and all of the prophecy says that he is going to go out to these other places and free his people and he is going to bring them back into Israel and that Exodus will be so great that the first Exodus will not be remembered nor brought to mind. We are not there yet are we because we still very much remember that first Exodus, we and the Jewish people. And so that has to be a time of the proclamation of liberty, the freeing of people, the returning of people to the land and joining people back together again so the Jubilee actually looks down to, toward, and has to do with the Day of the Lord, the Coming of Christ, the freeing of captives, the returning of the land.

Now with all of that in mind, turn back to Acts, the 2nd chapter, the definitive Christian scripture on the Feast of Pentecost and see what we find here. Peter after all the noise of the fire coming through the roof of the building and the tongues descending on

everybody and preaching the gospel and everybody running together to hear what this means, and say ah, they are just full of new wine, even though they were speaking in languages that none of them had learned. "Peter who stood up with the eleven and lifted up his voice and said to them, you men of Judea and all that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you and listen to my words, these are not drunk as you suppose; after all this is just the third hour of the day. This is that which was spoken by the prophet, Joel: It shall come to pass in the last days sayeth God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions and your old men will dream dreams; and on my servants and my handmaids, I will pour out in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in heaven above, signs in the earth beneath, blood, fire, smoke and the sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before that great and notable day of the Lord comes."

The Jubilee points to the Day of the Lord. Pentecost points to the Day of the Lord. The comparison is astonishing when you consider the implications of it. It is unfortunate I think that over the years that we have not really understood that, because our formula was that Passover pictured the sacrifice of Christ, the Days of Unleavened Bread pictured putting sin out of our lives, Pentecost pictured receiving of the Holy Spirit and it passed right on by, and then depended upon the time sequence of the holy days to suggest a time sequence in all of that but yet Pentecost is every bit as much Day of the Lord as is the Feast of the Trumpets, startling when you begin to realize what the thing really meant, "And it shall come to pass that whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". The Day of the Lord, the return of Christ, the resurrection, the Jubilee, the proclamation of liberty, all of these are the type that is fulfilled, I mean the antitype that is fulfilled in the type of the Feast of Pentecost.

So, why do we observe Pentecost on Sunday? Well we do that because of the very clear wording of Leviticus 23. We do it because it says that you count from the morrow after the Sabbath to the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, you number 50 days and you know the clear understanding of anybody of that passage of scripture would take you right squarely to a Sunday Pentecost. We do it because there is no calendar date given for Pentecost, which frankly there should be if it was going to be otherwise. There was no date given if it was going to be a date on the calendar for the beginning of the counting of Pentecost, there should be a date there. There is no date there. What there is a day of the week, to begin the counting and a day of the week to end it. We also do it because of the parallel with the Day of the Jubilee. We do it because we see the symbolism that takes place in the prophetic imagery of having to do with Pentecost and we begin our count with the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread because that was the day that Christ was presented to the father.

Sometimes I think that the anti-Sunday sentiment that exists in the church sometimes goes a little bit too far because there was a presumption once upon a time, I think one of the reasons we had Pentecost on Monday as long as we did is because no one could bring themselves to believe that God would allow any holy day ever to fall on a Sunday, but the fact is that it was on a Sunday morning that Jesus Christ was presented to the father. I do not

know of any church anywhere who would argue really with that presumption. It was on a Sunday. And in the countdown that begins on that day, sorry it has to end on a Sunday. So we observe Pentecost on a Sunday. We do not condemn people who do not observe it on Sunday, I myself observed Pentecost on Monday for very many years and was blessed by God during that period of time, but I have not noticed any diminution of that blessing since making the change, in fact what I have noticed is a deeper understanding and grasp of the things that God is doing and where he is going.

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