

The
Plain Truth
About
PENTECOST

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THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT PENTECOST

God revealed a Monday Pentecost. It is the *day* which is holy. Yet, there are other significant components of the Holy Day which must be understood. The wavesheaf represents Christ. The spring harvest itself pictures the first harvest of souls determined in the overall plan of salvation. There is no sacredness attached to the specific count—with the exception that the count must be correct to arrive at the day—that *day* which is holy. The Bible was written in Hebrew and Greek—not in English. How did those who spoke only Hebrew for nearly 1500 years prior to the time of Christ fulfill the obligation to count Pentecost? It is for sure, they did not use English. Further, how did Christ, His Apostles, and other ministers of that first century count Pentecost? To insist that one must count in English—a claim that the revelation of our day, in English, is the *only* correct count and formed the basis of the revelation which occurred prior to the establishment of "the work" of these last days—is foolish and at best manifests a total lack of honesty and integrity. Did the revelation change? If it did not, then Christ did not correctly count Pentecost because He did not speak in the English language. Therefore, if Christ received His own revelation in Hebrew, and the revelation of today was in English, then revelation changed. Or we are correct in what we have said from the beginning, God can make His Truth known in any language. Certainly, the count in Hebrew is different from that of the English. However, the essentials of the doctrine are substantiated regardless of the language of the count. More about this later.

Both Counts Lead to Monday

The English count leads to a Monday Pentecost. At the same time, the Hebrew count leads us to a Monday Pentecost. And in comparable fashion, every significant aspect of the Holy Day is left in harmony with that of the English. But, to say that the Hebrew is counted in the same way as English is ridiculous. Such a person is left open to ridicule and contempt. All the facts are against him.

We should take no exception with an English count. Neither should we reject a Hebrew count. After all, the Bible was written in Hebrew—that is, the Old Testament. Even more importantly, the law was given in Hebrew. That law is found in Leviticus 23. It is imperative that we know and understand how it was written and how it is counted in the Hebrew. Would it not seem foolish to adamantly state: "I do not care how it is counted in the Hebrew; God revealed it to us in the English; therefore, we will accept only the English count"? How are you going to give an answer for the faith you hold if someone insists you accurately count "the count" from the Hebrew, the language in which the Old Testament was written? Some may get by insisting on the right to hold to the English count. However, the ministry must be able to explain under all given situations. It is for that reason we have had to face the real issue of the count in the Hebrew.

Further, for anyone to insist that the Hebrew count is the same as the English manifests a total ignorance of the Hebrew. The Hebrew does not count in the same way as the English. Yet, both counts will bring us to a Monday Pentecost and neither count will do violence to the meaning of the Holy Day, including the meaning of wavesheaf.

What Is the Revelation?

Was God's revelation in the last days an English count—and an English count only? If so, how can people in other areas, those who speak different languages, ever come to know and appreciate the truth concerning Pentecost? Or, is the important thing to come to the knowledge of the Holy Day set apart by God and to understand its significance in the great plan of God?

Indeed, God did reveal the knowledge of the true Pentecost in the English language. Equally certain is the fact, God gave the original knowledge of Pentecost to Moses and the children of Israel in the Hebrew language. Further, Christ taught the truth and counted the Pentecost count in the Hebrew language. Therefore, language is *not* the important factor involved in any aspect of the truth. What counts are the concepts—the Ways of Life sustained and spoken into existence by God.

Anytime there is a translation from one language into another, major problems are confronted. A good translator tries to convey in the new language what is contained in the original. When one reads from the language into which the subject material has been translated, it is imperative to ascertain what was intended in the original. In other words, the same message must be evidenced in both, even though differing approaches are necessitated due to constraints of each language. In the case of Pentecost, the English count and the Hebrew count are entirely different. Despite this fact the same message must be conveyed. Further, when studying or making an attempt to count the Pentecost count it is most imperative that the two counts not be confused. To intermingle the two results in total confusion. A problem which some are experiencing.

Now let us get to the gist of the subject. Is the language of the count that which is sacred and holy? Or is it merely the means by which we may properly locate the day which God made holy? Further, is the count inherently sacred or is the basic significance of that count—factors on which the count is predicated—of prime importance? Remember, *if* the count is of itself inherently significant it becomes most obvious, since the law was written in the Hebrew, the only count acceptable to God is the one made in Hebrew. To say that the only acceptable count is the English is to deny the veracity of the law which was written in Hebrew and even more importantly, it would deny the count by Christ and His Apostles since they spoke in Hebrew and Greek. To say that the count in both the English and the Hebrew are one and the same is to deny every factor of the two languages. On the other

hand, to conclude that both languages substantiate the inherent significance of the day, as well as making it possible to arrive at the correct day, makes the whole issue all the more glorious.

The Pentecost count begins from the morrow after the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread. The day following that Sabbath is wavesheaf Sunday. The wavesheaf depicts the resurrected Christ. The harvest which is depicted between the time of the Days of Unleavened Bread and the observance of Pentecost represents the first harvest of souls as determined by God.

The English count is quite simple. Since the Scripture says to count or number fifty days "from the morrow after the sabbath," one day from Sunday, the beginning point, is Monday or day one. Forty-nine days later is Pentecost Monday, the fiftieth day. Because the English count concludes on the fiftieth day, that does not mean the word Pentecost means fiftieth "day." The word Pentecost simply means fiftieth, referring to the count only.

Now let us take a look at the issue from the perspective of the Hebrew. Remember, do not attempt to compare the two counts. What we are interested in is the product. Will the Hebrew count result in the same picture as that which we were taught from the English? Keep in mind the factors, mentioned above, which are the revelation.

The Two Counts in Hebrew

Let us begin by quoting the law. "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord" (Lev. 23:15–16).

1. By law we are required to count fifty days—"number fifty days."
2. In the Hebrew that count begins on Sunday. Compare verse 11 of Leviticus 23. "And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." Was the wavesheaf offered to God on Sunday or Monday? *If* the Hebrew requires that the "from the morrow" used in verse 15 be interpreted to mean Monday; then the "on the morrow" of verse 11 requires exactly the same thing. Wavesheaf day would therefore be Monday, not Sunday. However, if the "on the morrow" of verse 11 requires a Sunday (Wavesheaf Sunday), then the "from the morrow" of verse 15 requires a Sunday, also. The expression is exactly the same in Hebrew. How can it mean one thing in one of the above verses and the exact

opposite in the other? If words do not mean anything, then, indeed, we are hopelessly lost in confusion.

3. The expression, "from the morrow" (Lev. 23:15) and the expression, "on the morrow" (Lev. 23:11) are exactly the same in Hebrew. They both dictate a Sunday reckoning.
4. Ex. 12:15 proves the above point. It reads: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from [Hebrew is *mi*] the first day until [Hebrew word is *ad*] the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." The *mi* above *requires* that the first day be counted. It is inclusive. Inherent factors make that deduction obvious. We must eat unleavened bread for a period of seven days. The first day of unleavened bread is the first day of the count. If it is true in this text, why is it not also true in Lev. 23:15?
5. In Ex. 12:15 two Hebrew words are of imperative significance. They are *mi* ('From the first day') and *ad* ('Until the seventh day'). When they are used in conjunction, time restraints are very specific. Of that combination the *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament* states: "Like other Hebrew prepositions it [*mi* or *min*] is used in many combinations. *Min* plus '*ad* means literally from . . . to, or inclusively" (*T.W.O.T.*, p. 512). Of the word *ad* Gesenius says: "of time . . . even unto this day, i.e. . . . the limit being included" (*Hebrew and English Lexicon* by Gesenius, p. 606).
6. Since both the *mi* and *ad* are used in both Lev. 23:16 and Ex. 12:15, the first and last days of the count *must* be included.
7. In Hebrew the first day of the "count fifty" must be included. And due to the usage of the *ad*, the last day of the count must be included, also.

Second, let us now consider the count in Num. 28:26 and Deut. 16:9. We read: "Also in the day of the firstfruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the Lord, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation . . ." (Num. 28:26). What weeks?

In Deuteronomy we read: "Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn" (Deut. 16:9).

1. In both of the above cases we are dealing with weeks, not days. There are seven weeks which must be counted. Since a week is a period of seven days

and there must be counted seven weeks, we are confronted with a period of forty-nine days—not fifty.

2. The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, follows the count in every case. Where does the disparity between forty-nine and fifty fall? It can be either at the beginning or ending of the count—no other time. Yet, we have already seen that all counts are immediately followed by the day of Pentecost or as it is called in the Old Testament, the Feast of Weeks. Therefore, the beginning of the two counts is on different days. The fifty count begins on Sunday and the forty-nine count begins on Monday.
3. As we have seen, in the Hebrew both the first and last days of the count are included. There is no difficulty with the count of forty-nine. But the fifty count still troubles some. Yet, if we count the entirety of the forty-nine days (Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:9) of the seven complete weeks, we are forced to count the entire number of the fifty days (Lev. 23:15,16). To do anything less is to be totally inconsistent and dishonest.
4. Wavesheaf Sunday prefigures Christ. Regarding the harvest of the firstfruits and the wavesheaf, let us read the following in Ex. 23:14, 16: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. . . . And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field. . . ." In Ex. 23:19 we read: "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." In Ex. 34:22 we read: "And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest" Ex. 34:26 states: "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God." And finally in Lev. 23:10 we read: ". . . then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest"

Summarizing the above five texts, what conclusions can we determine?

1. A feast follows the weeks of the early harvest.
2. This early harvest is called the firstfruits of the labors of Israel.
3. That the first of the firstfruits, or wavesheaf, must be taken to the House of God and presented to the priest. Notice: The sheaf was not a separate item; it was taken from the general harvest, offered up to the priest to be accepted on a specific day (Lev. 23:10–11). Secondly, any partaking of the harvest of that year was forbidden until after the wavesheaf had been presented and was accepted (Lev. 23:14).

The First Harvest in Type

The Feast of Weeks looked forward to the receipt of the Holy Spirit (Compare Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1). The receipt of that promised Holy Spirit initiated a new beginning. With the receipt of it the called became the firstfruits of the plan of God (Rom. 8:23). In fact James specifically calls the first-called the begotten firstfruits. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth [via the Holy Spirit], that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). The whole harvest is called a harvest of firstfruits. But, what is the relationship between Christ and all human beings called to be firstfruits? Paul explains in I Cor. 15:23. "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Indeed, Christ depicts the first of the firstfruits—the first sheaf, wavesheaf, of the harvest of wheat in the days of ancient Israel. Paul explained this in Rom. 8:29 where he said: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Christ was the firstbegotten (Heb. 1:6). However, it is imperative to remember that He is but the first of many brethren to be begotten and ultimately to be born into that family—the firstfruit harvest of souls. Further, we must remember He is not separate. He is a part of that first harvest; He is the first of the firstfruits—the wavesheaf which had to be waved and accepted of God.

The spring harvest depicts a harvest of the firstfruits. It is a harvest of those begotten by and ultimately born of the Holy Spirit. It is a spiritual harvest which will be accomplished at the time of Jesus Christ's return (Rom. 8:23; Matt. 9:37–38; 13:30, 39).

Christ is the first of those firstfruits. That is, He is a part of that harvest which occurred between the Sunday following the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Weeks: Pentecost occurs after a count of fifty days, including that day which represents Christ and His acceptance by the Father—for He is a part of the harvest, unless we exclude Him. And: Pentecost occurs seven weeks—forty-nine days—from the Monday on which the generalized harvest began and concluding the day before that Holy Day which pictures the harvest of the firstfruits.

To exclude the day which represents Christ and His acceptance is to exclude Him from that initial harvest. That first day is His; but as the historical pattern of the physical harvest of ancient Israel and the New Testament explanation of the antitype (the spiritual harvest of souls) reveal, the first of the firstfruits—wavesheaf—*is* a part of the general harvest. It, therefore, is a part of the count in Leviticus 23. Christ's day is excluded from the count in Num. 28:26 and Deut. 16:9, which prefigure the generalized harvest of the firstfruits of human beings. The picture is complete and beautiful.

Acts 2:1

Does not Acts 2:1 prove that Pentecost is the fiftieth day? Indeed, it does *not* if we will read it from the original Greek. Let us take a look at it from the Greek.

The original is translated as follows: "And during the accomplishing of the day of Pentecost they were all with one accord in the same place." Let us not forget the Greek definition of Pentecost. It simply means the fiftieth. Let us now replace the Greek word Pentecost with its English equivalent. Those who lay heavy emphasis upon the necessity of using only the English for the count should not mind this transition. What does it reveal in the English? "And during the accomplishing of the day of fiftieth they were all with one accord" That is sufficient to make it very clear that if the term Pentecost means the day to be observed, the Apostles were already too late. The day was coming to a close. Checking the usage of the Greek word which is translated "accomplishing" (*sumpleeroo*) you will find this application. In Luke 8:23 we read: "But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were *filled* with water, and were in jeopardy." Does not the word in this text imply that the boat was virtually full of water? It was not just beginning to take on water; it was filled. Next, in Luke 9:51 we read: "And it came to pass, when the time *was come* that he should be received up" Had the time come, as Jesus said; or was the preparatory time just beginning? Which? Jesus said, the time had come for this fateful event of history to occur.

The above two texts are the only places the word *sumpleeroo* is used besides the usage in Acts 2:1. Translating Acts 2:1 on the basis of what we have read in the other texts, one can honestly come to no other conclusion than that the fiftieth day had come to an end—that is, the fifty-count was fulfilled, it had come to the full, the count was completed. Now, according to Luke, in Acts 2:1, the apostles and others were all gathered together in anticipation of the celebration of what proved to be a most monumental Holy Day.

The Hebrew count supports everything which we believed, initially, as a divine revelation. The harvest pictures the first harvest of souls which is to occur at the return of Christ. Christ is that wavesheaf which had to be accepted before the generalized harvest could begin. But Christ is a part of the first harvest of souls; even as the wavesheaf was a part of the firstfruits—called the first of the firstfruits.

Taken to a logical conclusion, anyone refusing to place Sunday in the Hebrew count, is rejecting Christ—in the fact they are saying that He has no part with them, that is, that His day does not form a part of the firstfruits count.

The Jews have long recognized the inconsistency of their manner of observing Pentecost on Sivan 6 when, if fifty days are counted inclusively (beginning with Nisan 16), then Sivan 7 would be the date. Jewish scholars since the time of Maimonides, during the

twelfth century, have interpreted Leviticus 23:15 to mean that one should reckon forty-nine days from the time of the cutting of the first sheaf (article, "The 613 Commandments," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*). Again, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1972 edition, article "Jewish Holidays") admits that Jews count forty-nine days, not fifty. To count fifty days the way the Jews do today, would place their Pentecost on Sivan 7. So they have interpreted Leviticus 23 to mean "count forty-nine days." But in order to be "covered," many Jews add a second day of Pentecost, keeping both Sivan 6 and Sivan 7. The Bible remains clear that fifty complete days are to be counted—not forty-nine, as many Jews do and as the Worldwide Church of God now does.

Pentecost Only Holy Day to Count

Pentecost is the only Holy Day that we must count. God tells us to count fifty days and then observe Pentecost. He did not say to count forty-nine and then observe it! But the intellectuals and the scholars have for centuries fought among themselves, trying to count fifty. Only one way is right, and no man will ever find that way except through revelation! Once revelation is accepted, the physical falls into alignment. The historical and technical substantiation of that revelation—that is, the sorting-out of truth from the maze of confusion—then becomes achievable.

I Timothy 6:3–5 tells us to withdraw ourselves from those who engage in ". . . strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth . . ." In II Timothy 2:13–14 Paul states that even if he, an apostle, believed not, God yet abides faithful. God cannot deny Himself. We are admonished to ". . . strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." So when someone changes doctrine over "the meaning of a word requiring much technical research," relying on the "scholars" of this world, beware! He is on the wrong track. Verse 15 gives the remedy, the way out of the morass of confusion and strife created by those who strive about words: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing [Dividing what? What the 'scholars' tell you? *No!*] rightly dividing the word of truth"—the Bible! The foundation of God stands sure (Verse 19), regardless of what men believe. On Pentecost, more than perhaps any other doctrine, ". . . hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (I Cor. 1:20).

God *counts, declares* or *numbers* (the Hebrew word is the same) days at their completion. "And the evening was, and the morning was, the first day" (Gen. 1:5, marginal rendering).

Leviticus 25 gives the account of Jubilee, or the fiftieth year, which has long been used to show the truth of a Monday Pentecost. Verse 8, "And thou shalt number [here is the same Hebrew word used in Leviticus 23 for 'count'] seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven

times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years." Exactly forty-nine years, not one more, are numbered or counted toward Jubilee. Now is Jubilee the forty-ninth year, the last year of the count? Verse 10 states, "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty [jubilee] throughout all the land" Forty-nine years are counted toward Jubilee, and at the conclusion of that count the Jubilee begins. God is a consistent God (Jas. 1:17). He always counts the same! For Pentecost, Leviticus 23 tells us to count fifty days, not forty-nine, and at the conclusion of the count observe God's true day of Pentecost.

Leviticus 15 gives another example of how God counts time. Verse 13, "And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing" Is he all finished with his cleansing process on the seventh day? No! Not until the eighth day, after the count of seven days, is he brought before the priest for an offering and to be proclaimed totally clean. See also verse 28 for the parallel account of an unclean woman.

Those who keep Pentecost on Sunday include Wavesheaf Sunday as the first day of the count, but exclude the last day of the count, counting only forty-nine days.

Conclusion

In relation to time, inclusive counting must be used with the Hebrew word *mi*. Since *mi-mohorat* is used in Leviticus 23:15–16 at the beginning and end of the count, a total of fifty days must be counted before observing Pentecost. Deuteronomy 16 has a different word for "weeks." It is not the perfect Bible "sabbaths" of Leviticus 23. Deuteronomy 16 gives a time period of forty-nine days to count; whereas Leviticus 23, using a different starting point, tells us to count fifty days. Both result in a *Monday Pentecost*.

With these two points in mind, problems and complications can be avoided. Two additional points also need to be remembered. Wavesheaf Sunday can *never* be Nisan 15, a Holy Day. There was an obvious reason why the *min* in Leviticus 23:15 was translated *from* by the King James translators. English is the universal language. The true Gospel was preached primarily in English (Isa. 28:9–13). God saw to it that apart from a technical understanding of Hebrew counting, His true people would keep Pentecost on the correct day. The English count, using the word *from*, would clearly lead to a Monday Pentecost. Now that the rule of Hebrew counting with respect to *min* is understood—that the count is always inclusive—the *mi-mohorat* found at the beginning and end of the fifty-day numbering requires an inclusive count. Thus, a Monday Pentecost. The original Hebrew, and the honest examination of clear Scriptures, once again demonstrates the validity of "the faith once delivered"—and that "the foundation of God stands sure."