

CHAPTER 8

HOW A “TRADITIONAL” SUNDAY PENTECOST VIOLATES GOD’S LAW AGAINST WORKING ON THE SABBATH!

*"And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers." NRSV ~
Apostle Peter*

WHY is there all the discussion in the Talmud about when the Passover falls on a Friday, as evidence against beginning the count toward Pentecost from the morrow after the weekly Sabbath? Let's see what obviously happens when you count from the weekly Sabbath, as many still do, by applying Isaiah's principle of scriptural comparisons... "HERE A LITTLE – THERE A LITTLE (Isa.28:10)."

Lev 23:5 On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD's Passover.

6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

And...

Deut 16:9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.

On the 14th day of the 1st month (Abib) is the Passover (Lev.23:5). On the following day, Abib 15, is the first annual Holy Day of Unleavened Bread (Lev.23:6). By comparing the two accounts that give instruction concerning the day on which the Pentecost count was to begin, we see that the count to Pentecost: 1) was to begin on the morrow after the annual Holy convocation, Holy Day or "Rest" (Lev.23:15), and 2) was to begin "from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain" (Deut.16:9). This is why this feast is sometimes called "the Feast of Harvest" (Ex.23:16). Since

harvest work was to begin on the same day the Pentecost count commenced, this **work day** could not occur on a weekly Sabbath or annual Sabbath Day of Rest! Harvesting is WORK, and work was not – AND IS NOT – to be done on any of God’s Holy Days – weekly or annual Sabbaths!

God’s people have long known biblically that the days begin and end “between the evenings,” i.e., between sunset and evening. Thus, each Sabbath or Feast Day actually begins the evening before. When the Passover falls on the weekly Sabbath day (Friday night sunset to Saturday night sunset), then this makes the next day (**Saturday evening sunset to Sunday evening sunset**) **become the first Holy Day of Unleavened Bread.**

Whenever Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath for a Friday evening Passover service, the following Sunday is the 1st High Day of Unleavened Bread – and therefore a Holy Day of Rest (Lev.23:7). Labor was not to be none on ANY of God’s Holy Days (Lev.23:7, 8, 21). **THEREFORE THE “SICKLE” COULD NOT BE “PUT TO THE GRAIN” ON THIS SUNDAY!** To begin a harvest on God’s Feast Sabbath would violate God’s command and is sin! **Can God’s Word be any clearer?** And still, many people either don’t realize or just ignore what their Bibles plainly say, choosing instead to follow tradition and customs of men (Isa.29:13). Perhaps this is done by some because they have never been truly taught to really *think* and deeply *study* God’s Word, but only to “pay, pray” and blindly follow?

There is no man alive who will ever get this student of God’s wonderful Words to believe that God or Moses had Israel out swinging their sickles and harvesting their grain on the 1st Holy Day of Unleavened Bread, as to do so is clearly contrary to God’s own Words and thus is sin (Lev 23:21)!

This is plain speaking, I know. Don’t let any man “*think for you,*” or replace God’s wonderful words with “traditions of men.” Please don’t let anyone prevent you from growing in truth through intimidation or church governance over your beliefs and spiritual understanding. Better men than I are still deceived by this and other erroneous teaching of men. I am not a judge. Nor do I proclaim any self-importance or greatness. God is Great! My understanding of God’s Word is God’s gift to me, and I share it with you all joyfully. I hope each of you will receive God’s revealing words with the same love, acceptance, appreciation and open-minded willingness that I

have. God is the true teacher. Thank God, His Truth will make all of us free – when we are willing to open our eyes and follow it (Rev.3:18, John 8:23)! Thank God for the freedom to study, learn and grow in His awesome Truth!

*“ 7 On the first of these days you shall **gather for worship and do none of your daily work.** 8 Offer your food offerings to the LORD for seven days. On the seventh day you shall again **gather for worship, but you shall do none of your daily work** (Lev 23:7-8) TEV.*

***On that day do none of your daily work, but gather for worship. Your descendants are to observe this regulation for all time to come, no matter where they live”** (Lev 23:21) TEV.*

To prevent this sin of working on the Holy Day, the Sadducees changed their methodology for counting Pentecost, and then reckoned that the count needed to be from the weekly Sabbath that falls OUTSIDE of the Days of Unleavened Bread! But most churches who keep a Sunday Pentecost (7 weeks after Easter) do not even realize this, even though many of them have been led to believe they are following the Sadducean system.

Why would various churches claim – and teach – that the Jews are in charge of all calendar matters, and that they are following the Traditional Jewish Calendar and the Sadducean method of counting Pentecost – when in fact, especially when Passover falls on a Friday – they are not following EITHER? The reality is that those who keep a Sunday Pentecost either keep it incorrectly but in innocence and ignorance - OR - they base their decision upon their own counsel, their own ideas, and their own calendar and calendric interpretations! The point is many who believe they are following the priestly method of the Boethusian Sadducees are actually creating a new modern and unbiblical method for counting Pentecost. Why would an organization teach its adherents that they were following the Jews or the Sadducees when, in fact, they were not? (Nor were they following the Pharisees’ calendar!)

EXODUS 19: HOW A QUESTION

SPAWNED THIS STUDY

Passover on a Friday is not the only time a Sunday Pentecost presents the problem of laboring on the Sabbath. Many believe, as does this author, and as the Church of God has traditionally taught that the giving of the Decalogue – the Ten Commandments – took place on Pentecost. Like a Friday Passover, this also presents a problem...

This whole study concerning Pentecost was inspired by a question that has been asked of many ministers, many times. The question was, “On what scriptures do we base the teaching that the Law was given on Pentecost?” The answer is found in Ex.19. Many times I have counted this off for those who have asked. However, this particular time, for whatever reason, as I answered I verbally counted both the number of days as they elapsed *and* named each day of the month at the same time. Previously, I had always just counted off the number of days – “day 46, day 47, etc.” As we counted off the days together from Ex.19, verbally calling off the names of the months as we went, the undesired sound of “Sivan 6 – day 50” rang out in my ears and began “haunting” me, until it drove me into a thorough study of Pentecost. I had always counted the days beginning from the day after Israel’s exit from Egypt to Mount Sinai 50 days later, without realizing that 50th day was also Sivan 6! How could day 50 – Pentecost – the day God gave Israel His “10 Words” – fall upon Sivan 6? The Church of God had long taught that Pentecost was the day God spoke His Ten Commandments, but it had also taught that Pentecost was not and could not be on Sivan 6. They exclaimed: “That day did not even require a count.” Boy was I in for a surprise! Yet, as we had counted out loud together, naming each day of the month as we went, Sivan 6 was day 50 – the date when God’s Great Voice thundered out His 10 Basic Laws of Love and Respect from the top of Mount Sinai! **This was NOT what I wanted to see and hear!** My “comfort zone” was in great danger.

I thought: “Surely some careful study will disprove this ‘aberration’ of Pentecost falling upon Sivan 6.” Instead, further study only confirmed my need to face the Truth and be corrected by God’s Word!

Let’s see how the church has counted Pentecost; and in opposition, how numerous commentaries and scholars have counted it – the same way the Pharisees have long counted it. First, notice the Bible tells us plainly the day Israel left Egypt:

Num 33:2 “Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the LORD. And these are their journeys according to their starting points:

3 They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians.

We know the month of Abib was the 1st month of the year for Israel (Ex.12:2). We also know that they left Egypt on the 15th of that month (Num.33:3). Given thirty days for Abib and Israel leaving on the 15th, we can begin our count toward the giving of God’s Law. We’ll begin to count the number of days of Israel’s journey from the 16th of Abib (the morrow after that first Holy Day of Unleavened Bread when Israel departed from Egypt) toward Pentecost when God gave all mankind the wonderful guiding gift of His Decalogue – a true law of love. Counting then, beginning from the morrow after that Holy Day on Abib 16th, to the end of that month would be 15 days. We continue our count by examining the details given to us by Moses beginning in Exodus 19:1-3:

Ex 19:1 In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai.

2 For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain.

3 And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel"

Adding the sum of:

- The 15 days journey during the first month of Abib,
- Plus the traditional 29 days of the second month, gives us 44 days.
- Adding one more day for the 1st day of the 3rd month of Sivan when Moses climbed the mountain – brings us to **Sivan 1, DAY 45, (15 + 29 + 1 = 45 days since Israel left Egypt).**

SIVAN 1, DAY 45

The word “month” in verse 1 is the Hebrew word “chodesh” (or “hodes”), meaning new moon. It is the same word used by David and Jonathan when

they were planning for David's safety, in accordance with how Saul acted at the special New Moon (chodesh) dinner celebration (1 Sam.20:18). The sages and commentators, and church have agreed that the phrase, in Ex.19:1, "on the same day," literally means "*on the same day of the new moon.*" Therefore we have day 45. Let's now continue in Ex.19:4-7:

4'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.

5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.

6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

7 So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him.

In order for Moses to descend the mountain and then deliver God's message to the people took another day:

SIVAN 2, DAY 46

Then, Ex.19:8:

8 Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.

After Moses spent the day telling the people about the covenant conditions from the LORD, the people confirmed that they would keep the words of this covenant (verse 8). Moses then ascended the mountain again and brought "back the words of the people to the LORD." This takes another day:

SIVAN 3, DAY 47

9 And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

10 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes.

11 And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

When God was speaking to Moses on Sivan 3, 48 days from when Israel left Egypt – 47 days counting from the morrow of their departure on the second day of Unleavened Bread – He gave instructions for Israel to “BE READY for the THIRD DAY.” God told Moses, “ON THE THIRD DAY THE LORD WILL COME DOWN UPON MOUNT SINAI...!”

SIVAN 3, DAY 47 + 3 = SIVAN 6, DAY 50!

This is why a seeming endless number of scholars, the church and the Pharisees, all teach that God gave His Law on Pentecost! **What the church evidently didn't realize is that by agreeing with and teaching this traditional doctrine and “Pentecost count,” they were also agreeing that the count of Israel's journey out of Egypt began from the second Day of Unleavened Bread (Num.33:3), (the morrow after the first annual Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread - NOT from the weekly Sabbath – and also that the Law was given on a SIVAN 6 Pentecost!**

But that's not all. What's even more incredible is that *if God gave His Law on Pentecost and on a Sunday, by necessity that would VIOLATE GOD'S WEEKLY SABBATH!*

Consider... God said that they were to “consecrate themselves,” clean themselves and wash their clothes. They were to “clean house” so to speak, and make themselves and their camp ready for God's presence. Of course the Maytag Company did not yet exist. Washing clothing was hard rigorous work, done the old-fashioned way. It usually involved scrubbing and beating ones clothes over a creek-side rock, and then rinsing and ringing them, before hanging them to dry. They could hang their clothes to dry by a fire, to speed things up a bit, but the work was still hard. The point is this: God told Israel to do the **work** of consecrating themselves and doing their laundry on these two days in preparation for His presence on the third day. This they were told to do during the two remaining days (DAYS 48 & 49, Sivan 4 and 5), so that they would be READY for God's presence on the 3rd day – DAY 50, SIVAN 6 (Ex.19:11)! God began to deliver His Decalogue very early in the morning of Sivan 6, Day 50. Their **work** of preparation was to be completed prior to this day.

Think! If the Law was given on Pentecost and Pentecost was on a Sunday, then the children of Israel would have had to WASH THEIR CLOTHES ON THE WEEKLY SABBATH! Even considering the few who actually believe Pentecost falls on a Monday, one would STILL have to *believe* that God had Israel cleaning and doing their laundry on the Sabbath, for the Law to have been given on a Sunday or a Monday Pentecost! **CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? This author cannot believe that!** God was not commanding Israel to labor on and break the Sabbath!