

The background of the image is a close-up of a field of golden wheat. The wheat stalks are in sharp focus in the foreground, with their long, thin awns extending upwards. The background shows a vast field of similar wheat stretching towards a clear blue sky. Soft, golden light rays emanate from behind the wheat, creating a halo effect and a sense of divine light. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

*The
Magnificent
Meaning
of
Pentecost*

A Kind of First Fruits

*“Then saith he unto his disciples,
The harvest truly is plenteous,
but the labourers are few”*

(Mathew 9:37-38)

The Magnificent Meaning of Pentecost

This booklet is offered free as an educational service to the public. Scriptures are from the King James Bible

The Magnificent Meaning of Pentecost

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,
they were all with one accord in one place.*

Acts 2:1

Many believers are of the opinion that Pentecost was fulfilled thousands of years ago when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles in flames of fire. However, this unique holy day portrays an even more meaningful event than most realize. Its profound theme is reflected various times, and in many scriptures throughout the Bible. However its glorious fulfillment will occur only during the last days. Continue reading and discover more about Pentecost, its history, and profound meaning through the ages.

From the Beginning

The feast of Pentecost portrays a vital and majestic part in every true Christian's life. It is so vital that God literally envisioned and created this unique day before humans existed. This is revealed in the very first page of your Bible. As the author of Genesis states:

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for **signs**, and for **seasons**, and for days, and years (Genesis 1:14).

Prior to the existence of humanity, God placed the sun and moon in their relative positions for "signs" and "seasons." The Hebrew word translated "sign" is "*oth*" and means either "sign" or "mark". It is the same word God used

when speaking of His Sabbath, claiming, “It is a **sign** between me and you” (Exo. 31:13; 13:9; Deut. 6:8).

The word translated “seasons” is “*mô’ādāh*” in Hebrew, referring to “...an appointment, a fixed time, season, or **specifically a festival**. It can mean a year, or by implication an assembly convened for a definite purpose...” (Lev. 23:2, Strong’s H3259).

Thus, this profound verse in Genesis demonstrates that on the fourth day of creation, God positioned the astronomical calendar in the vastness of space for the express purpose of observing both His weekly and annual Sabbaths at their appropriate times.

The Creator created the Sabbath for the first humans on the seventh day of creation. Later, He revealed His holy days to the prophet Abraham, and re-established these unique days when making His covenant with Israel from atop Mount Sinai. Further, God reflects the theme of Pentecost throughout the entire Bible. Christ kept Pentecost as an example for us, and He gave His apostles the Spirit on this very day. Further, its ultimate fulfillment taking place during the end time will astonish the entire world as Christ marries the church on the day of Pentecost. Further, this unique holy day will continue to be observed in the millennium and until the earth no longer exists (Mat. 5:18).

Cain and Abel Observe Pentecost

The earliest record of this required offering is likely found in the biblical account of Adam’s children, the brothers—Cain and Able. While dissimilar in righteousness, the Bible describes these two men coming together on the exact same day to give God His obligatory offering of the fruits of their land and animals.

Recorded in Genesis, these verses verify that Pentecost was observed from the very beginning of man's creation. Many miss this connection because, in the course of translating the King James Version, scholars incorrectly interpreted a verse vital to our understanding.

By this mistranslation, God’s intended meaning became obscure. For example, the King James Version states that the brothers, Cain and Able, brought their offerings “**in the process of time,**” (Gen. 4:3). However, if readers note the marginal reference, or a commentary providing a more literal translation, they will discover that the verse should actually read, “**At the end of days.**” Thus, these two, brothers, likely came at the same time to give their offering —**at the end of counting days.**

It was only after the end of forty nine days that an individual was permitted to present God their offering on Pentecost. Cain gave of his crop, and Able of his flock (Exo. 13:1-2, 12-16). Both offerings were given on this day (Lev. 23:17-19).

The Name Pentecost

Originally, after counting forty nine days, the 50th day was celebrated as the Feast of Harvest or Feast of Weeks as seen in Exodus 23:16, and 34:22. However, due to the New Testament, either being written in, or translated into, Greek, the name of this festival underwent a change. “Pentecost” eventually became the Greek name for this feast. The term was derived from the word “penta” meaning five, and “cost,” meaning to “count.” As a result, the celebration is now more commonly known as “Pentecost.” However, due to this change in name, many focus on the count while overlooking the magnificent meaning of both the prior Wave Sheaf offering and the feast following it—that of Pentecost.

God gave the Rules for His Marriage to Israel on Pentecost

In Jeremiah 3:14, God stated that He was married to Israel. This naturally brings up a question. When did this

marriage take place? The answer is that God presented His terms for marriage at Sinai on Pentecost.

It was on this very Holy Day that God revealed His requirements for Israel's marriage to Him. It was also on this very Pentecost that all the people answered His proposal with a joyous and unanimous, "yes" (Exo. 24:3).

The knowledge of God's weekly and annual Holy Days had been lost during Israel's slavery in Egypt. Therefore, after freeing Israel, four hundred and thirty years later, God revealed His Holy Commandments to His people from atop the mountain (Exodus 12:40, 20:19-20).

Jewish tradition validates that the law was given on Pentecost. Further, while the Scriptures do not literally state this, all evidence points to no other conclusion. Consider the time that Israel arrived at Sinai.

In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, **the same day** came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount (Exodus 19:1-2).

Some claim we cannot be certain regarding exactly when it was that Israel arrived at Sinai. Was it the first day of the month, or the fifteenth day? However, when the Scriptures are read in context, the answer becomes obvious.

Consider that it would be highly unusual if God destroyed the first born of Egypt on the day of Passover, the same day Christ would die for mankind. Then He took Israel out of Egypt on the first day of Unleavened Bread, the day on which the count toward the wave sheaf offering began. Finally, in the context of this obvious pattern of historic events occurring on God's Holy days, it would be

profoundly strange if the Almighty's next miraculous event, of establishing the laws of His covenant with Israel, did not occur on the next Holy day—Pentecost.

Numerous examples validate the timing when the people met with, and heard, God speak. For example, the International Standard Version of the Bible reads:

On the third **New Moon** after the Israelis went out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came to the desert of Sinai (Exodus 19:1).

Jamison Faucet and Brown concur that Israel arrived at Sinai the 1st day of the third month, stating:

In the third month—according to Jewish usage, the first day of that month—“same day”—It is added, to mark the time more explicitly, that is, forty-five days after Egypt—one day spent on the mount (Exo. 19:3), one returning the people's answer (Exo.19:7, Exo.19:8), and three days of preparation, making the entire time fifty days...

The Pulpit Commentary weighs in, echoing this same thought. They write:

In the third month, the month Sivan, corresponding nearly with our June, When the children of Israel were gone forth. Rather, "after the children of Israel had gone forth," or "after the departure of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt." Compare Exo.16:1, where the expression used is the same, "The same day." Literally, "on that day"—this can only mean "on the day that the month began"—on the 1st of Sivan. (45 days from Unleavened Bread)

Logic, and these quotes from highly respected scholars represent substantial evidence that the Holy Scriptures are referring to Israel arriving at Sinai and setting up camp on the first day of the month of Sivan.

In this context, it is not unreasonable to consider that, from their departure fleeing Egypt, their baptism in the Red Sea (1Cor. 10:2), until setting up camp at Sinai, the same day in the third month would have been 45 days.

Then, on the 46th day Moses would have climbed the mountain from which God would present His proposal to Israel. Moses then returned and called a meeting of the elders. He relayed God's words to them, and all the people agreed.

Next, Moses went back up the mountain and reported to God that the Israelites agreed. Each climb up and down the mountain, organizing, and informing the people would likely take a full day. Thus, it would bring the timing to 2 days after arriving—the forty seventh day.

Next, God told Moses to inform the people to wash their clothes in purification and preparation for the third day when The Almighty would reveal Himself and present His requirements for their relationship (Exo. 19:15).

Thus, Israel's purification was complete on the forty ninth day from their departure from Egypt. Finally, on the fiftieth day, God's glory appeared to all from atop the mount on the day of Pentecost.

God Reveals His Law

On Israel's first Pentecost, after leaving slavery in Egypt, the people witnessed God atop the mount, now called the "Black Mountain"—a name reflecting the once fierce flaming fire of God's presence. That day the ground violently quaked and the powerful voice of Almighty God

thundered His Holy commands creating a spectacle beyond human conception.

All of God's people who stood at the base of the mount literally heard God speak. His voice caused the earth to shake as His voice thundered the Ten Commandments. At this profound display, Israel feared for their lives.

Terrified by the mountain on fire, and the power of God's voice, the people pleaded with Moses to speak to them instead of the Almighty God. Moses then proclaimed the Eternal's Holy Days, and various judgments to the people. As Moses recorded the event:

And all the people saw the thundering, and the lightning, and the **noise of the trumpet**, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die (Exo. 20:18-19).

It is more than interesting to note the glory and power of God as the rocky mountain burned with fire at God's presence. Then, on the day of Pentecost, thousands of years later, in Acts 2, Pentecost was also accompanied by flames of fire as God's Spirit was given to Christ's apostles and by this, enabling those He called to understand His plan for mankind, and the importance of keeping His laws.

As will be demonstrated later, these events occurring after Israel left Egypt appear in an orderly manner and coincide with both the symbolism of the Wave Sheaf and the count to Pentecost.

Moreover, it will also be inspiring for many to realize that the seventh trumpet and the resurrection will also occur on Pentecost. This time, it will not be to give

God's spirit, but to literally convert His people to Spirit, thus enabling them to live in God's spiritual kingdom.

As previously noted, at one time, Pentecost was called the "feast of weeks." That is because seven weeks were counted beginning the day after the weekly Sabbath occurring during Unleavened Bread. In addition, the term "feast of harvest" is sometimes used because Pentecost was observed at the **end of the wheat harvest**.

A Type of the Marriage Supper

On this particular Pentecost, God gave Israel His Commandments. These were His rules regarding those who would enter into a relationship with Him.

Next, while Israel remained at Sinai, God invited specifically chosen leaders to come up the mountain and eat and drink in a supper with Him. As the Eternal commanded Moses:

Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him (Exo 24:1-2)... Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not His hand: **also they saw God, and did eat and drink** (Exo 24:9-11).

These verses present a type of the first resurrection and the marriage supper on a sea of glass. It points to the final and glorious fulfillment of Pentecost at Christ's return. Not all Israelites were qualified to see the Almighty

at that time, just as not all professing Christians will be qualified to attain the first resurrection and marry Christ.

When the faithful end-time church is resurrected, they too will be only a few taken out of many. As they are brought up to heaven, they will be with our Savior, and eat and drink at His marriage supper while standing on a sea of glass. There, Christ will miraculously provide wine for the saints to enjoy with Him as He once did with His apostles (Luke 22:18).

This permanent marriage covenant will occur on Pentecost and last for all eternity. Thus, the ratification of the first covenant at Sinai was a type of the future marriage covenant between the faithful followers of the Almighty.

In a similar fashion, God will determine the leadership positions among those Saints who will come before Him and rejoice at their resurrection to meet with Christ where they will enjoy their grand marriage supper:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, **blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb**. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God (Rev. 19:6-9)

In this context, there is an additional and inspiring parallel found in the marriage supper after the exodus, and the marriage supper of the lamb after the resurrection. This parallel is the **sea of glass**. Notice the Apostle John describing the jewel like substance, on which the saints stand with God, after their resurrection. They will be on a brilliant sea of glass. As the apostle John wrote:

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, **stand on the sea of glass**, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints (Rev. 15: 2-3).

After viewing the resurrected saints standing on a glistening sea of glass, notice that there also appears to be similar imagery of this same unique glass on Mount Sinai. Acting as a type of Christ, Moses led only a few chosen Israelites, out of their massive numbers, into the presence of God where they ate and drank. As these men witnessed a majestic vision of the great God of Israel, They took note of where the Almighty was standing:

Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were **a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity** (Exodus 24:9-10).

This description focuses on the fact that the men literally saw an image of the God of Israel and were unharmed. According to Exodus 33:20, God said, "No man shall see me and live." Thus the elders of Israel likely saw a vision that reflected the marriage supper, and it was similar to a vision Ezekiel saw—an image of the throne of God set on this same sapphire floor while the literal and frightening glory of God was hidden from them all:

And above the firmament over their (the angel's heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance

like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it (Ezekiel 1:26).

Throughout the Bible, we see types and shadows of the Father, Christ, heaven's glory, God's throne, and the New Jerusalem. This experience by a few Israelites who were blessed by God on Pentecost is insightful regarding the ultimate marriage supper of the Lamb and the saints.

Was Pentecost a part in the Marriage of Ruth and Boaz?

As the law given from atop Mount Sinai reflects Israel's marriage to God on Pentecost, the book of Ruth also reveals a view of Pentecost and marriage from an entirely unique perspective.

The story begins during a severe famine in Judah. A woman named Naomi followed her husband, Elimelech who, during a dearth, decided to relocate his family to the nation of Moab. While there, Naomi bore the two sons, Mahlon and Chillon, both of which married the Moabite wives, Orpah and Ruth.

Tragically, both Naomi's husband and her two sons died childless. As a result, all the women became widows. Later, upon hearing that Israel's drought had subsided, Naomi, determined to return to her home in Bethlehem. At this point, she advised both of the other women to return to their Moabite families. However, Ruth decided to dedicate herself to accompanying Naomi to Judah, and caring for her there. Ruth implored her, saying:

Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: **thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God**; Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I

be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if
ought but death part thee and me. (Ruth 1:16,17)

Thus the two women arrived at Bethlehem during the end of the wheat harvest that culminated with the celebration of Pentecost. Further, God had ordered the farmers not to harvest the corners of their fields so that the poor could lawfully have a place to glean (Lev 23:22). As a consequence, Ruth found herself gleaning in the fields of a man named Boaz. Naomi noticed how well Boaz treated Ruth, and encouraged her to continue gleaning in his field:

So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and **of wheat harvest**; and dwelt with her mother in law (Ruth 2:23).

As the wheat harvest was coming to a close, just prior to the feast of Pentecost, Boaz took note of Ruth's dedication to Naomi, who in turn, witnessed the unique kindness that Boaz had bestowed upon Ruth. Moreover, she knew that Boaz was aware that Ruth was a candidate for levirate marriage. As the encyclopedia explains:

The term levirate marriage is from the Latin *levir* meaning husband's brother or brother-in-law, referring to marriage between a widow and her deceased husband's brother. If a married man died without a son, his brother was to marry the widow. The practice is reflected in three Old Testament texts: Gen 38.6–11, the Book of Ruth, and Dt.25.5–10. (www.encyclopedia.com)

In that context, Naomi counseled Ruth to go to the place where the men camped and humbly lie at the feet of Boaz, trusting that he would treat her appropriately. At this time, Boaz awoke, and seeing Ruth, told her that he would seek levirate marriage with her however, there existed a

relative who was closer. Boaz approached this individual explaining the situation, at which time, the closer relative exempted himself. Consequently, Boaz found that he had first choice. He then took Ruth to marry, and they became the grandparents of the great king—David.

As an aside, a Moabite was not to have access to the Temple. However, as Paul later revealed, God accepts converted Gentiles (Deut 23:3, Gal 2:7-8). Ruth's loyalty to Naomi makes it clear that she had fully converted, believed in, and would keep God's law in sincerity and truth.

Ruth's Story Reflects God's Plan to Marry His Church

Jewish Tradition requires reading Ruth every Pentecost.

Elimelech Means God King—A type of God the Father

Boaz—is a type of Christ, a relative of the God King

Naomi is a type of God's Israelite Church

Ruth is a type of God's Gentile Church

Boaz is a type of Christ—The Redeemer

Boaz marries Ruth during the time of the wheat harvest when Pentecost is celebrated

Similarly, Christ will marry His Church on Pentecost

The Wave Sheaf Offering Portrays Christ Ascension

The feast of First fruits, also called Pentecost, is of enormous importance to every true Christian. However, there exists a prior, and vital, ceremony that is inextricably connected to Pentecost, but one that occurs prior to it. That is the Wave Sheaf offering. Further, the meaning of this observance must be understood before the full significance of Pentecost can be grasped.

The observance of the Wave Sheaf took place in the following manner. Prior to traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, each land owner was to harvest their first crop of barley. They were to bring a specific amount of the first and finest of this first harvest to Jerusalem during the week of Passover. As God had commanded:

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the (weekly) Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD. And ***the grain offering*** with it shall be two tenths of an ephah of fine flour (two Omers) mixed with oil, a food offering to the LORD with a pleasing

aroma, and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, a fourth of a hin. And you shall eat neither bread, nor grain parched or fresh until this same day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings (Leviticus 23:9-14).

Prior to harvesting their barley, each Israelite searched his crop to find the first and best barley to ripen. Farmers would often mark this sheaf by tying a string around it to distinguish it from the remainder of the crop. Once the harvest was complete, they would take this “premiere” sheaf of the first grain to ripen to Jerusalem for the Passover week celebration. There, each head of household would present their offering.

The Wave Sheaf was an Omer

This unique sheaf was the very same amount for each individual. As Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance demonstrates, the wave sheaf was the equivalent of an Omer chosen from the entire crop. Strong’s describes the word “Omer” in the following way:

H6016). ... properly a *heap*, that is, a ***sheaf***; **also an *omer***, as a dry measure:-**omer**, sheaf.

In other words, the grain was harvested and piled in sheaves. However, an Omer of grain was kept separate. Then, the first Sunday after Unleavened Bread, the head of household would bring his Omer of the first fruits of barley to the priest who prepared it, and offer it to God on the individual’s behalf. As the Jewish Encyclopedia states:

Most modern Bible translations use the word "sheaf," however, the priests did not wave a sheaf. (They)... cut a sheaf, beat out the grain,

then ground the first of the firstfruits into flour and offered **an omer** of that flour... though the bringing of the ‘omer’ ceased with the destruction of the Temple, the days between Passover and Pentecost are (still) called the “omer days”...The Rabbis, contrary to the Septuagint and later non-Jewish translators, consider the word "omer" as designating ...(the amount of grain)... therefore they hold that the wave-offering did not consist of a sheaf, but was an “omer” of grain (Rashi 10).

This clarifies that the translation “sheaf” should be understood as “Omer.” This is important because some falsely argue that the Wave Sheaf included stalks and all. Also consider that each landowner was to harvest their entire crop **prior to** presenting this offering. As God commanded:

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf (an omer) of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest (Leviticus 23:10).

Contrary to later writers, but clearly stated in the Scriptures, the entire harvest was to be complete before offering the first fruit. Thus, the harvest would include cutting the first grain for the Wave Sheaf as well as harvesting the rest of the entire crop prior to the offering.

Barely was usually planted in the 7th month and harvested the first month of the following year. The workers would cut the stalks with hand sickles and lay them on the ground. Others would follow behind, tying the stalks into upright bundles, thus this prevented any rot from ground moisture and also protected the grain from varmints. Next, the sheaves were taken to a cleared area where they were threshed to remove the barley from the

stalks. The barely would then be winnowed to further remove any chaff.

Finally, the grain would be put through a sieve to remove pebbles, chaff, or tares—anything that was not grain. An entire harvest generally took from a week to a month depending on the size of the crop. It might also take a number of days for the land owner to transport their first fruit offering of barley to Jerusalem where, as the head of the house, he was to present it to the priest.

Additional time elapsed while waiting for the Sunday that fell during the days of Unleavened Bread when the offering would take place. If the offering had consisted of an entire sheaf—stalk and all, it would have likely dried out and crumbled in either the hands of the individual bringing it, or in those of the priest offering it.

Each Israelite was commanded to offer God the fruit of their field. The fruit would naturally be the grain and not the stalks. The stalks were neither offered nor eaten, but were commonly used for making bricks. Finally, receiving the offering, the priest was required to winnow and sift the offering to comply with God's Scriptural requirement. (Deut. 26:1-10).

The biblical instructions regarding the three grain offerings to be presented to the Almighty are found in Leviticus. These three consisted of the free will offering, the wave sheaf offering, and Pentecost offering. While the following biblical verse does not reveal great detail, it does answer the question regarding how the grain offerings were to be presented to God. Note the following:

And when **any will offer a meat (grain) offering** unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon: And he shall bring it

to **Aaron's sons the priests**: and he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar...a sweet savor unto the LORD (Leviticus 2:1-2).

Aaron's Sons

It should be understood that Aaron was a descendant of the Tribe of Levi (Exo. 14:4). Therefore, in many cases, his son's were often spoken of as Levites or Priests. However not all Levites were priests.

This distinction is made to remind readers that all the land owners brought their offerings to one of the Priests. In this context, it must be remembered that writings from the deeply corrupt second temple era describe the High Priest incorrectly performing a single ceremony on behalf of the entire nation of Israel.

This was never God's intention. The Almighty God had commanded Moses to speak to all those of the house of Israel. He declared that all land owners were to raise barely in its season, and every land owner was to bring an offering of that barely to the priest at the appropriate time—the day of the Wave Sheaf offering (Lev 23:10)

Symbolism in the Offering

Grain offerings were to be of fine flour. It was a measure of prepared grain, rather than the sheaf consisting of the entire stalk. In addition, the individual bringing the offering presented more than the grain alone.

They also brought their offering in a basket containing additional grain, wine, and a lamb, all a part of their offering. And, as stated earlier, this was to take place on the first Sunday after the weekly Sabbath that occurred during the week of Unleavened Bread (Deut. 26).

And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf **an he lamb** without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat (meal) offering thereof shall be **two tenth deals of fine flour** mingled **with oil, an offering** made **by fire** unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the **drink offering** thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin (Leviticus 23:12-13).

Christ's Symbolism in the Offering

The lamb portrayed Christ's sacrifice—as the Lamb of God

The fire portrayed the excruciating pain He endured

The wine pictured the blood He spilled for us

The oil symbolized God's Spirit, strengthening Him

Frankincense pictured Christ's prayers rising to God.

Lifting and waving the Omer portrayed Christ's ascension to the Father as God's firstfruits of humanity

Additional Symbolism in the Wave Sheaf

As with other offerings, a portion was waived by the priest as an offering to God, and the rest became the priest's gift (Num 18:8). The entire offering portrayed aspects of Christ's sacrifice and His ascension on the wave sheaf day. As the Apostle Paul wrote of Christ:

But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the **first fruits** of them that slept (1Co 15:20).

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the **firstborn** from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence (Col 1:18).

The Omer Portrayed Christ

During the Exodus, after God brought Israel out of Egypt, and free from Pharaoh's tyranny, the people had little to eat on their journey. Consequently, God provided *manna* to sustain His people. The amount each person was to collect amounted to the same measure designated for the wave sheaf—an Omer. As Moses recorded:

This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, **an Omer for every man**, *according to* the number of your persons (Exodus 16:16).

Centuries later, Christ made an interesting correlation between Himself and the *Omer*. This occurred when the Savior performed a miracle of providing food for a massive group of people. Shocked at such an incredible phenomenon, a number of those watching desired to ask Him a unique question.

The Jews understood that the Messiah was to be like Moses (Exo 18:18). Accordingly, they desired that Jesus produce *manna* as Moses had done. Christ's answer made the point indelibly clear. The *manna* had not come from Moses, but from the Father. Moreover, the *manna* prefigured something of great importance. It portrayed the Father sending Christ whose words God's people were to feed upon! For example, the Apostle John recorded Christ's profound statement in which He said:

Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. **For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.** Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life:** he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst (John 6:31-35; Also see Judges 7:12-14).

This verse provides an intriguing analogy. As the Israelites journeyed through the desert toward the Promised Land, Christ gave each individual an *omer* of *manna* daily. This *omer* portrayed God's first fruit (Christ) who fed Israel during the exodus and forty years in the wilderness.

Christ spiritually feeds those of the Old and New Covenants. He'll feed those during the millennium, and He will feed man spiritually even to earth's ultimate end. Each person is to be daily nourished spiritually by Christ on their journey to God's glorious Kingdom. For a fascinating parallel where Christ is portrayed by an Omer, see Judges 7.

Christ's miraculous provision of the *Omer* of *manna* came to an end when the people entered the Promised Land. In like manner, we are being led on our journey, and once we reach the Kingdom of God, Christians will no longer need to be fed through Christ's Spirit. They will themselves be Spirit. As Paul writes:

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (1Co 15:41-49).

The Meaning of the Wave Sheaf Offering

Many fascinating events took place before Christ ascended to the Father. The Savior had been raised from the dead at the end of Saturday at sundown—the beginning of Sunday. However, He did not ascend to the father that night. He remained on the earth, evidently waiting for something. What was that something? He was waiting for the first fruits to be lifted up to God the Father.

Later, that same Sunday morning Mary Magdalene rushed to the tomb. There, she found it empty. Christ was still on earth that morning—and seeing her, He spoke:

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her (Joh 20:15-18).

Christ waited on earth until 9:00 A.M. when the Omer would be waived and He would rise to the Father. After Mary's encounter, she rushed to tell the disciples, and upon hearing her story, John and Peter ran to the grave:

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then, went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and **he saw, and believed** (John 20:3-8).

What Did John See That Caused Him To Believe?

The apostle John was first to look into the grave, but he was still uncertain. Then, after Peter arrived and looked inside, John reentered the grave and looked more carefully. What he saw then absolutely convinced him!

After Christ's brutal death on the Roman stake, John was aware that Christ had been buried by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. John understood that they would have followed the Jewish burial tradition. As the Apostle wrote:

And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about **an hundred pound weight**. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury (John 19:38-40).

They followed the customary burial method in Judah. In that context, consider the burial of Lazarus who had died and was raised during Christ's ministry. He was also bound with bed clothes according to Jewish tradition. However, after Christ raised him, he could not possibly free himself. Others had to remove his bed clothes after he was raised.

However, Christ's burial was uniquely different! His body was likely wrapped with the standard linen bed clothes and covered by a mixture of myrrh and Aloes. This cloth, laden with Aloe, would have dried over three days, gluing the cloth together. Therefore, when John saw Christ's bed clothes, they were not simply lying on, or draped over, a stone. The enormous amount of aloe, similar to our Aloe Vera, had dried and thickened.

Christ would have virtually been inside a cast. It would be absolutely impossible for an ordinary man to rise and walk while bound as Christ was. Thus, what John likely saw was a solid rounded form constructed of cloth strips, but having no person inside. Viewing this sight served as absolute proof to John. Christ did not need anyone to remove His grave clothes. As a Spirit Being, He arose right through his grave clothes, leaving a form that John would recognize. The Savior's grave clothes portrayed a type that God had long ago built into the creation a constant reminder of our ultimate and glorious destiny—the butterfly's cocoon.

Christ Ascends to the Father

After Christ's brutal crucifixion and His miraculous resurrection three days and nights later, at 9:00 AM, the first sheaf was waved, and Christ ascended to the Father to be glorified. There He was given a kingdom, and afterward He returned that same day. As King David wrote:

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool (Psalm 110:1).

There is yet an additional point of interest in the verse above. After receiving His throne at God's right hand, Christ is referred to as "Lord," and as *Strong's Dictionary* defines this word, Christ's new identity is revealed:

An emphatic form of H113; the *Lord* (used as a proper name of God only: - (my) Lord.

Christ experienced this enormous change in status after His resurrection to Spirit. His ascension to the throne of

heaven, His presentation, and His ultimate acceptance by the Father took place on the day of the Wave Sheaf.

The prophet Daniel was privileged to view this very event in a dream many centuries before it occurred. His vision was an incredible one in which the Savior would ascend to heaven, be presented to the Father, be accepted by Him, and then He was given the privilege of sitting at the Father's right hand as King of Kings. As the prophet Daniel wrote:

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and **they brought him near before him**. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed (Daniel 7:13-14).

In Daniel's vision, readers are given insight into the Wave Sheaf—the symbol of Christ. He rose from death as Sabbath evening turned into the beginning of Sunday. Then He waited until 9:00 A.M. when the priest was to wave the grain toward heaven and back again. At that moment, Christ ascended to heaven and was presented to the Father. There He was accepted and transformed to the glorious Spirit being that He was prior to His human existence.

After Christ's ascent and His return to Earth, the Savior continued to teach His disciples on various occasions, during a forty day period. He first appeared to His disciples to encourage the twelve:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,
All power is given unto me in heaven and in
earth (Mathew 28:18; Daniel 7:13-14).

An Incredible Irony

In one sense it is understandable how, throughout history, the wave sheaf offering has been misunderstood by both the Jewish people, and the Christian Churches of God. While we portray Christ as the world's Savior, and teach that He was sacrificed for each of us, today God's commanded Wave Sheaf day is missing and needs to be reintroduced to God's people during the week of Unleavened Bread.

Occurring after Passover, but during Unleavened Bread, this day represents Christ's resurrection, His ascension, and His presentation to, and acceptance by the Father. These things represent a vital truth, one that should be preached, but, has seemingly been lost by many.

Thus, while the church may take pride in the fact that they observe, and understand, the meaning of God's Holy Days, it must be admitted that this day is sometimes ignored among vast numbers of believers. Further, it is easy to see why. The Wave Sheaf is not an official day of rest like the commanded Sabbaths. Further, through time, it has tended to be overshadowed by the meaning of the Days of Passover and Unleavened Bread. Further, without a Tabernacle and a legitimate Priesthood, it is not too surprising that the day has taken a position with some as though it no longer applied to us. As a result, it has become lost in the minds of many.

However, as Christians, we should value what the Wave Sheaf pictures. We should recognize the day is an intrinsic part of the meaning of the Days of Unleavened bread and honor Christ by remembering its meaning.

Moreover, it is not difficult to do. This unique and extremely vital ceremony is not hard to celebrate in our day and age. For example, consider that the day is observed on a

Sunday. Hence its truth can be preached on the preceding Sabbath to remind us of the glorious work of the Father, and Christ as our King. It leads us to rejoice in appreciation, and profound respect for all the Savior has done for us!

How the Wave Sheaf Offering Became Corrupt

Pharisaic practices that opposed God's priestly code were introduced into the wave sheaf observance. Thus, today many harbor the opinion that only the priests grew the offered grain, and only the High Priest presented a single Wave Sheaf offering for the entire nation.

However, God gives instructions that apply to the High Priest, to his sons, to the Israelite people, and even to believing strangers among Israel. Moreover, in every case, God makes it clear exactly who He is speaking to.

In the case of the Wave Sheaf, He commanded that the local people were to cut the sheaf and bring their barely offering to Jerusalem. There the representative of each family presented their offering to the priest. As God stated:

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When **ye** be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf (omer) of the first fruits of **your harvest** unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf (omer) before the LORD, **to be accepted for you**: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it (Lev 23:10-11).

Accepted For You

This short comment, in the verses above carries enormous meaning. All that applied to Christ as types in this offering reflected the Savior's work with and for each one of us that we too might one day also have acceptance before the His throne (2Cor.5:10).

God's Commanded Offering Was Changed

Many may wonder who was in control of the temple and sacrifices during Christ's day. Were the Sadducees in control or the Pharisees? Whose theology held precedence in that first century?

Sadly, the answer reveals that the ideas of men had taken priority over what God had sanctified. For centuries, human beings have made their own decisions regarding worship. As they did, various celebrations and feasts were changed in ways differing from those God had ordained. This tendency has been true for all, and is clearly reflected in the history of the Jewish people. For example, in Christ's day, the High Priest was of the line of the Sadducees and God had placed them in charge of the temple and its sacrifices. The Scriptures make this clear when describing the reaction to the teaching of the Apostles:

Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation (Acts 5:17).

Thus, the Sadducees were comprised of those placed in leadership positions in the temple from the time of Ezra's reformation. However, not everything they believed was true. For example, the Sadducees wrongly believed that only the first five books of the law were legitimate, and therefore they taught that there was no resurrection from the dead. However, their belief did accept that the first five books of the law were to remain unchanged and observed exactly as originally written.

The Sadducees Lost Their Ecclesiastical Power

The Sadducees were primarily composed of the wealthy aristocracy, and over time, they grew to be known for their political corruption. For example, after the Maccabeus revolt, the Sadducees desired to align themselves with the Hellenized society instilled by Antiochus Epiphanies. Their desire was to enhance trade, grow the economy, and put more money in their pockets.

However, after the enormous success of Maccabeus in routing the Greek forces, two major events took place. First, the Jews greatly expanded their control over other territories. This included those of the Diaspora who had located nearby, various Hellenized people, and even some rural and uncivilized tribes.

A second factor developed after the Jewish defeat of the Greeks. The common people experienced a religious resurgence. Personal study of the Scriptures became popular and they took on a higher priority by most people of the land (p. 106, *A History Of The Jews*).

Thus, the wealthy, priestly line, integrated various portions of Greek culture, and at the same time, the local people put more emphasis on study of the Scriptures. This radical change caused a new group to emerge—those who were called “Pharisees” or separate ones—separate from the Temple and the priestly Sadducees.

This new group of religious separatists also taught that when God gave Moses the written law, he also transmitted an oral law. They believed this oral law was to allow adjustments to the written Law in order to adapt to changing cultural and societal norms. Thus, this “oral law” led the Pharisees to make embellishments contrary to the written law—even though God expressly forbid doing so.

In addition, as Jewish history progressed beyond the Greek era, the Jews found themselves faced with a new

threat—the powerful empire of Rome! Judah became a client state of Rome, and in 40-39 B.C., Rome appointed Herod as the overseer of the Jews. As Rome’s ruler in Israel, Herod placed whoever he pleased in the position of High Priest. One such position became of enormous significance to Jewish religious practice. This was the appointment of a Pharisee as the “segan” or Captain of the temple—a position just under that of the High Priest, and often filling the High Priest’s position if he were to become ill.

As the respected historian, Paul Johnson wrote:

By downgrading the importance of the high-priest, a hated Sadducee, Herod automatically raised in importance his deputy, the segan a Pharisee, who got control over all the regular Temple functions... (by) bringing the Pharisees into the Sanhedrin... (they) ensured that even the Sadducee high-priests performed the liturgy in a Pharisaical manner. (pp. 109, 117-118, *A History Of The Jews*).

In addition, upon Herod’s death, Rome split the Jew’s territory among Herod’s sons. One was Alexander Jannaeus who married his brother’s widow, Salome. Before Alexander died, he advised his wife to show favor to the Pharisees. Thus, after the death of Jannaeus in 76 B.C., Salome ruled alone. Consequently, during her reign the number and influence of the Pharisees grew enormously.

Thus, during Christ’s time, the Sadducees still functioned in a priestly role, but Rome had forced some Pharisaic practices upon the Sadducees. This compelled the priests to conform to a number of Pharisaic beliefs. For example, while not approved by God, the Pharisees gained power in the temple and Sanhedrin. Thus, while the priests

were theoretically in charge, they were often forced to follow the authority of Pharisees and their Roman rulers.

To further separate themselves from the temple, the Pharisees built Synagogues in which the common people tended to worship on the Sabbath. A further change was that of the priestly observance of the wave-sheaf and the count to Pentecost. The Priests themselves now grew the Wave Sheaf in a designated place, and it alone was offered by the High Priest. This became their practice even though God commanded it to be harvested & offered by each land owner (Lev. 23:10).

The Pharisees also mistakenly believed that when the Scripture commanded offering the wave sheaf on the morrow after the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread, it referred to the annual Sabbath, the 15th. Thus they chose this day even though the weekly Sabbath is spoken of in Leviticus 23:3 and the identical words are repeated in the same chapter, 8 verses later regarding the count to Pentecost.

This pharisaic mistake caused Pentecost to always occur on the same day—the sixth of Sivan instead of being counted as the Scriptures dictate. Thus, when the Pharisees determined the time to cut the wave sheaf, the sons of Boethus, heirs in the line of the Sadducees, and High Priests, objected. As the Mishna records:

“The Boetheusians say: ‘The cutting of the sheaf does not take place at the end of the day of the feast [the first of the seven days of unleavened bread], but only at the end of the next regular Sabbath’” (Menahoth, 10, 3).

Consequently, the Sadducees remained priests. However, they were often politically pressured to follow the Pharisaic demands. Over time, many other changes

occurred. The priests began sacrificing the Passover lamb rather than the domestic ceremony God originally commanded. They also proclaimed the new month by sighting of the moon, something God never ordered. The High Priest also began to offer a single sheaf for the entire nation, and the priests grew, cut, and prepared the first fruit and Pentecost offerings the wrong way at the wrong times.

The fact that Rome gave offices to the Pharisees in the Temple, or that they built Synagogues for Sabbath worship, did not make the Pharisee's method of counting the Holy Days valid! No matter what men might do, Scripture is, and always must be, the basis for how God is to be worshipped.

Thus, regarding the day of the wave sheaf offering, the priests functioned contrary to God's Word. The Bible verses clearly state that God's original instructions referred specifically to the Omer grown and brought to the priests by the common people and not that of the High Priest alone.

God's original command was that once Israel had settled in the Promised Land, and reaped their first barley crop, each landowner was required to set aside the first fruit of their harvest and bring it in a basket to Jerusalem during the days of unleavened bread. See (Deut 26:1-14).

It should also be understood that God did not give the priests an inheritance in the land (Num. 18:20-21). While each Levite may have had a plot of land for their personal vegetable garden outside the city walls, they did not raise entire fields of barely to harvest. The priests were not dependent on what they raised for their sustenance. God had given them the tithe for their support (Lev 23:10).

The Wave Sheaf Portrayed Christ as the First to be Raised

The Wave Sheaf reflected Christ in numerous ways. For example, God commanded that, although the barley harvest was entirely complete, none could be eaten until the Wave Sheaf was offered. As Moses had written:

And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: *it shall be* a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings (Leviticus 23:14).

The fact that the harvest was not to be eaten until the wave sheaf was offered, pictured an important part of God's plan. Christ was to be the first to live a perfect life—and He was the first to be harvested from the earth in a miraculous resurrection to Spirit before any others could be resurrected.

Christ was the first to ascend to the Father. He was first, setting an example of the path all believers are to follow. His sacrifice and resurrection reveal the hope of all Christians. We are to live as He lived, and ultimately be lifted from the earth in our own resurrection. As Paul states:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and...earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, **the firstborn from the dead**; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence (Colossians 1:16-18).

It is of enormous importance to realize that Christ was the first. As those who believe and follow Him, this fact reassures us that ultimately, sincere Christians will follow!

As the Apostle reminds us, Christ is the first born among many brethren (Romans. 8:29).

Christ's Resurrection and Ascension

The unique ceremony of First Fruits was designed by God to portray Christ being raised from the dead as the sun was setting Saturday. Then His ascension to the Father took place Sunday morning when the wave sheaf was offered. Ascending to His father in heaven, He was presented to God as the first fruit of mankind before returning to the earth to teach His disciples (John 17:5; Dan. 7:13-14; John 20:17).

Christ returned to the earth that same day proving His resurrection to His followers. Further proof would be revealed during a forty-day period, in which He taught and prepared them for the celebration of Pentecost. The celebration on that unique day included the miracle of receiving God's Holy Spirit (Matthew 28).

On the day that Christ permanently ascended, Israel was to celebrate this momentous event with profound meaning for every believer. As Paul wrote:

But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and*
become the firstfruits of them that slept (1
Corinthians 15:20).

Christ is the first fruit of God's plan of salvation, and the fact that He was first, we have His example to follow so that we too will one day rise from the dead. This incredible truth leads to the profound meaning of God's next holy day—that of Pentecost.

The Timing of the Wave Sheaf Offering

It is important to remember that God's Holy Days are prophetic. They are a spiritual road-map in which each

observance foreshadows a pivotal event destined to take place in God's majestic plan (Colossians 2:16-17).

Thus, we see that Christ died on the Passover. He ascended to the Father on the Wave Sheaf day, and the Holy Spirit was bestowed to the Church on Pentecost. These events occurred on the very day God's feast occurred. Therefore, when each has been fulfilled, its timing reveals the next step in God's plan for mankind.

For example, prior to leaving His followers on Earth and ascending to the Father, Christ commanded that they wait in Jerusalem. As Luke recorded:

And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father**, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence (Acts 1:4-5).

Christ said, He must leave before sending the Spirit (John 16:7). How many days were they to wait? Christ ascended to the Father on Sunday, and returned the same day. Then His followers saw Him intermittently during a forty day period, in which Christ told them to **wait ten more days** until Pentecost. It is likely that Christ had to tell them to wait this exact amount of time for a in important reason. The corruption of the Pharisees that was accepted by the priesthood led to celebrating both the Omer and Pentecost on the wrong days.

After telling the apostles how long they were to wait, Christ ascended past the clouds, through space, to the heaven of God's throne. There He became our King and High Priest before sending God's Spirit to His faithful followers on the next Holy Day—that of Pentecost.

Sending the Holy Spirit would take place on Pentecost, a later celebration that mirrored the Wave Sheaf offering. For thousands of years believers presented their First fruits. Then 50 days later, on Pentecost, they gave their free will offering in proportion to the blessings the LORD their God had given them. This offering was a tribute to the Almighty King—and was to be shared with all. Ironically, Israel had performed these celebrations for centuries, never recognizing the full meaning of them (Deut. 16:9-12).

Why State that Pentecost Had Fully Come?

By Christ as our example, we should begin our count when He began His—the day after the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. Christ’s believers followed His instructions and were in the right place, at the right time, keeping Pentecost in unity. As Luke writes:

When the Day of Pentecost had **fully come**, they were all **with one accord** in one place (Acts 2:1).

Speaking of the day God’s Spirit was given to the Church, Luke wrote that Pentecost had “fully come.” What do these two important words convey? Moreover, why would Christ cause these words be recorded in the Scriptures regarding the count to Pentecost?

The answer is that in the Hebrew calendar, months alternate between 30 and 29 days. As a result, the month of Sivan always contained 30 days. (www.hebrew4christians.com).

Therefore, at the time of Christ’s death and resurrection, the Pharisees, upon whom Rome gave preference, observed Pentecost on Sivan Six. However, for those counting from the day after the weekly Sabbath,

as God commanded, Pentecost occurred later—and always on Sunday.

The Pharisaic count to Pentecost was unscriptural. This sect began their count from the day after the first Day of Unleavened Bread, the annual Sabbath, not the Sunday after the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. Thus, the sect of the Pharisees, and the common people observed Pentecost earlier than commanded. However, Christ’s followers celebrated **the day of Pentecost when it had “fully come.”**

Therefore, if the Savior had simply said “wait until Pentecost,” it may have misled His followers. They may have come together and celebrated the same day the Pharisees did—days earlier. Tragically, the question of the timing in the count to Pentecost continues to rage among some today. As a result, not all believers keep this Holy Day at the same time and thus are not in one accord. Sadly, such a circumstance should not exist!

Is it possible that this incident was another reminder from God to the people of all ages to follow His Word and not that of men? It is only by adhering to His Word that we can worship together, and be in one accord.

The Wave Sheaf—Pentecost Connection

A vital truth of God is revealed in the Wave Sheaf and its relationship to Pentecost. These two offerings are interrelated and inseparable. However, once understood this connection gives Christians an enormous reason to rejoice.

The Wave Sheaf was the first offering, and it portrayed Christ’s resurrection and ascension to the Father for acceptance and glorification. The Wave Sheaf also began the count to the day of Pentecost—the Holy Day that portrays the magnificent destiny of Christ’s faithful

followers. Pentecost foreshadows a time when God's true believers will also ascend to the Father to be accepted, by Christ, glorified, and marry our Savior (2 Cor. 5:10).

The Magnificent Meaning of Pentecost

Rich as it is with symbolism, the Wave Sheaf has enormous meaning for every true Christian. Further, the similarity between the Wave Sheaf and Pentecost reflects an incredible truth. As stated earlier, if Christ was the first to be raised, then others are destined to follow. Thus, the first offering of the Wave Sheaf foreshadowed the harvest of the Son of God—our Savior. Then, that Wave Sheaf offering begins a count of seven weeks to a time that foreshadows the grand harvest of faithful and true Christians—God's Church—on Pentecost. As the Almighty instructed Moses:

And ye shall count to you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even to the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat-offering to the LORD. Ye shall bring out of your habitations **two wave-loaves of two tenth-parts: they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, they are the first-fruits to the LORD.** And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be *for* a burnt-offering to the LORD, with their meat-offering, and their drink offerings, *even* an offering made by fire of a sweet savor to the LORD. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits *for* a wave-offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall

be holy to the LORD for the priest (Leviticus 23:15-21).

Beginning with the Wave Sheaf, the Israelites were to count seven Sabbaths, not weeks, but forty-nine days containing seven Sabbaths (Strong's H7676). The following day, the 50th day, was Pentecost which occurred on the "morrow," the day following the seventh Sabbath. It was the second feast in which its unique offerings were also to be lifted up, waved, and accepted by God.

Two Wave Loaves

In contrast to the Wave Sheaf whose single loaf was made without leaven, on Pentecost, two loaves were offered that were baked with leaven—a biblical symbol reflecting sin. These loaves were waived, and along with two lambs that were offered up and given to the priests. The fact that the loaves were leavened points to the Pentecost offering being a reference to God's people.

Pentecost portrays Christ's Church that is comprised of human beings throughout seven eras of both Old and the New Covenants. It includes Gentiles and Jews. These, like all humans, have leaven—a symbol of the law of sin and death that is part of every person's human nature.

This law in our flesh that leads us to sin will be forgiven through Christ's sacrifice and our overcoming sin. Consequently faithful believers will ultimately ascend to God having overcome sin and been made perfect. Still, they will do so, possessing a history of sin pictured by the leavened loaves in the Pentecost offering.

While we are to strive for perfection in this life, as human beings, we cannot fully attain such a state! True Christians still sin (1 Jn. 1:8). It is literally an integral part of our nature—it is in our flesh (Rom. 17:17-18). It is

Christ alone who will enter the Kingdom of God without having experienced sin. As Paul reminds us of his condition, he writes:

Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, **evil is present with me** (Rom 7:20-21).

The leaven mixed into the cakes works to puff them up, symbolizing pride and sin. It is weighty evidence that the single **unleavened first fruits of barley grain** represented Christ as the sinless first fruit to God (Lev. 23:13). Then, afterward, the **two leavened loaves** of Pentecost picture God's first harvest of human souls from both Old and New Covenants—Israelites and Gentiles, both of which have a history of sin.

It is also of interest to note that the Pentecost offerings are also called first fruits. As Herbert Armstrong once wrote:

The day of Pentecost, originally called the Feast of Firstfruits, pictures the Church as the first after Christ to be **begotten and born** as children of God during the Church age (Armstrong, *Mystery of the Ages*, P. 167)

The Scriptures are full of statements that make this truth clear. Pentecost portrays the harvest of the first fruits of humanity. Notice just a few examples:

Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; **they are the firstfruits** unto the LORD (Leviticus 23:17)

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that **WE** should be a **kind of firstfruits** of his creatures (James 1:18).

Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that **we should be a kind of firstfruits** of his creatures (James 1:18)

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause **he is not ashamed to call them brethren** (Heb. 2:11).

I looked, and lo, a lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred *and* forty four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads... these were redeemed from among men, ***being the first fruits*** to God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:1-4).

Thus, it should be clear. Christ was the very first to be resurrected on the day of the wave sheaf. The celebration of Pentecost followed 10 days after Christ's ascension, and on that day, His followers received the Holy Spirit. This spirit was God's seed, from which His chosen would ultimately mature spiritually, and ultimately be born again composed of spirit, on a future Pentecost (1Peter 1:3).

Faithful Christians will ultimately experience an entirely new birth from physical life. They will be changed from flesh to spirit as new, and perfect, sinless beings.

As Christ was the first fruit of the Father, these believer will also become Christ's first fruits. As such, they will ultimately be born in the same image as that of the Savior. As Paul wrote:

And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the **firstfruits** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for

the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body
(Romans 8:23).

The resurrection of Christ consists of God's first fruit—our Savior—Christ. This is portrayed in the celebration of the wave sheaf. Then on Pentecost two lambs and two leavened loaves were offered. The two loaves represent God's people from the Old and New Covenants. The two lambs also represented Christ's sacrifice for those who would seek righteous during either the Old or New Covenant.

Interestingly, the number seven appears again with the offering of an additional seven lambs (Lev. 23:15-18). The inclusion of this number leads one to ponder, could the seven lambs represent Christ's sacrifice for each of seven church eras reflected by the seven bright, burning lamps that are before Christ's throne? (Rev. 1:20)

As stated, Christ is the firstfruit portrayed by the wave sheaf loaf made without leaven. Later, those who become His first fruits are portrayed by the two loaves that are leavened. They will follow the pattern Christ has set. They will be raised from the dead, or simply changed if alive at the time of the resurrection. They too will rise to heaven, be accepted by the Father, and return to Earth with our Savior. As Paul writes:

But every man in his own order: Christ the
firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's
at his coming (1 Corinthians 15:23).

Two Spiritual Harvests of Mankind

The Holy Days portray God's transcendent plan for mankind's salvation. Thus, after the Wave Sheaf offering portraying Christ's resurrection, there is another resurrection that will be comprised of those seeking to live Christ's way.

The Pentecost harvest pictures those who lived faithfully, and were led by God's Spirit, during the first 6,000 years of mankind's history. They will be raised, made immortal, and recreated in Christ's spirit image (Rev. 20:6; Php. 3:21).

Faithful Christians Are Christ's Brethren

It is understood that by Christ's resurrection, He became the first born from the dead. The fact that He was the first indicates that others will also be born. They will be resurrected—born from the dead. As Paul states:

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** (Romans 8:29).

These, the faithful to Christ during the time when the world was ruled by Satan, will rise from the grave in what the Bible calls the first resurrection. They are Christ's first fruits (Rev. 20:5-6; Jam. 1:18). Their rebirth will be comprised of all the faithful saints and it will occur at the blowing of the last of seven trumpets (1 Cor. 15:52; Rev.11:15-18. These are Christ's first harvest of humanity.

The Apostle John also makes it clear that those who follow Christ will ultimately be born of Spirit—just as our Savior was. As the Apostle wrote:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, yet it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, **when he shall appear, we shall be like him**; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:1-2).

When John said that the saints will be like Christ, God's apostle did not mean that they will be similar. No! He was declaring that they will be composed of the same Spirit and radiate the same spiritual glory. As the Book of Hebrews boldly states:

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause **he is not ashamed to call them brethren** (Hebrews 2:11).

The Apostle Paul also verified that those Christians who will be resurrected at the last trump will be raised as spirit beings just as Christ was. As Paul states of our Savior, Christ:

Who shall **change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself (Philippians 3:21).

Jesus is the first fruit, and believing Christians are also a kind of first fruits. Thus, He and the resurrected saints are a part of the same family. Faithful Christians are of the first resurrection since they were first to trust Christ, and first to have been sealed by His Spirit. As Paul explains:

That we should be to the praise of his glory, **who first trusted in Christ**. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit** of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:10-14).

Christians have been called to be a part of the Church of the first born. This too identifies them as part of the same harvest in which Christ was first. As the author of Hebrews states:

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the **general assembly and church of the first-born** who are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect (Hebrews 12:22-23).

Faithful Christians will be made perfect at the resurrection. They will be a made up of God's first harvest of mankind. They too will be first fruits with Christ!

This incredible truth is the fulfillment of the meaning of Pentecost. Just as the Wave Sheaf portrayed Christ's resurrection and His ascension and change to Spirit, Pentecost pictures converted believer's harvest—meaning their resurrection and miraculous change to glorious spirit.

These will be part of the first of Christ's harvest. They will be like the Savior, and honored by being invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. As John wrote, "these are the true sayings of God," (Rev. 19:9).

Those in this first resurrection will rise to marry Christ in Heaven. This glorious truth is also reflected in the one who made a path that we are to follow (1Joh. 2:6). As the book of Hebrews continues to state:

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in **bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain** of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).

The word “**captain**” also means “forerunner” in the Greek, and it refers to an individual who blazes a trail, by which others are enabled to follow. Christ was the forerunner. He was the first to live righteously and ultimately be harvested—resurrected from the dead by Almighty God.

Moreover, His Church will be comprised of those who chose to genuinely follow Him in this life. Then, they will also be harvested, (resurrected) and taken to heaven at the seventh trump, just as Christ was taken to the Father on the day of the Wave Sheaf offering. Again, as Christ was God’s first fruit, faithful Christians are Christ’s first fruits.

Pentecost perfectly portrays the Christian’s resurrection and ascension to glory. It is also the beginning of an intimate spiritual bond and ever-growing relationship with Christ and the Father that will continue to develop throughout all eternity.

From this evidence, it should be clear. The Almighty’s feast of Pentecost portrays having received God’s seed of the Holy Spirit, maturing spiritually, and finally concluding with spiritual birth—a resurrection into the Spirit world, God’s family, and his glorious Kingdom.

Understanding the Seventh Trump

Realizing that God’s Holy Days portray events in His plan for mankind (Col. 2:16-17), most members of the Church of God were taught that the return of Christ would occur on the feast of Trumpets. However, this Holy day primarily reflects God’s wrath, not the resurrection of the

saints. Further, God's wrath is not complete with the seven trumpets. His punishment is an entire year long:

(1) For *it is* the **day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences** for the controversy of Zion (Isaiah 34:8).

(2) The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound; To proclaim **the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God...**(Isaiah 61:1-2).

(3) For **the day of vengeance** *is* in mine heart, and **the year of my redeemed** is come (Isaiah 63:4)

Drawing from these verses, it's clear that the Lord's wrath will last an entire year. Further, God's year of wrath begins with the trumpet plagues as stated in Revelation 6:17 and 8:1-2.

In the past, many of us were mistakenly taught that, at the seventh trump, God's wrath was ended. It was taught that at the seventh trump, the resurrection would take place, ending the great tribulation of the saints. However, in the end time scenario, we may not have considered the seven vial plagues. These plagues actually occur after the resurrection of the saints.

The Mystery is Finished

By thinking all was complete at the seventh trumpet; many were focused on themselves alone. To us, it all ended with the true Christians being resurrected. However, God's plan for the end time, and Christ's return, is not complete with the saints being resurrected

at the blowing of the seventh trump. We had misunderstood a vital statement made by the Apostle John in which he declared:

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, **the mystery of God should be finished**, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets (Revelation 10:7).

At the seventh trumpet the mystery of God is finished, but what is that mystery, and how does the *year of wrath* apply? God's mystery has eluded the great minds of science, religion, and philosophy for millennia. However, the truth was always there. The Scriptures reveal that it is all just a part of God's majestic plan for mankind. God is reproducing Himself through man!

Thus, at the seventh trumpet, the resurrection of the saints will occur. They will be changed into glorified Spirit. They will be like Christ and live on the same pure level of existence that He does. Notice how this is reaffirmed by the Apostle Paul as he explains that attaining this mystery is the ultimate purpose for mankind and what it is that true Christians will eventually inherit. As Paul reveals in his letter to the Colossians:

To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the **glory of this mystery** among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the **hope of glory** (Colossians 1:27).

God's Church has been blessed to understand this magnificent mystery. Like those who received the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost, we too have been given the very same magnificent gift of His Spirit.

However, we have not received the Spirit simply to provide us with a connection to the mind of God. Like human reproduction, God's Spirit is a seed (1John 3:9). His seed impregnates our human spirit, making us a partaker of His divine nature. We then become a child of God, and as such, we have the incredible hope of experiencing a birth into the glory of God's family. As Paul also dictated:

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, ***Abba***, Father (Galatians 4:6).

Now Christians may call the Father by the term Abba. However, until Christ appeared, no one knew there was a Father. Therefore, part of the Savior's ministry was to declare the Father to us (Mat 6:9, Luke 10:22). Thus, those who repent and receive His Spirit are able to pray to God using a unique family term.

Originally Abba was an intimate term used only by children toward their Father. The fact that the Apostle Paul used this word in prayers to God presents an enormously expanded understanding of God's relationship with each individual.

Prior to this profound statement, mankind had not addressed God with an endearing term. Instead there were primarily expressions of formality, power, and majesty. But the term Abba, or "dear Father," not only retains the sense of respect and admiration that a father deserves, but it does much more.

It reflects a familiarity born of intimacy, love, and unity that comes as a result of having the Father's Spirit. We are His children, and as our physical father passes his DNA on to his child, God passes His nature on to us. His

Spirit merges with ours, and a new life is begotten. As the Apostle Peter wrote:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:4).

We have been given the Father's nature. We are begotten by His Spirit, and we are now on a life long journey of change and growth until our resurrection.

Now we are learning selfless service toward others. We are growing each day to reflect the character of God until we are finally born again in the image of the Almighty Creator.

Every faithful Christian's journey of spiritual development will ultimately lead us to the very throne and Kingdom of God. It will take us to majestic heights—a future beyond our human imagination. We will one day be born again, bearing God's likeness. And, it is by His Spirit that we carry within us this grand hope of eternal life and glory with God the Father and Christ.

By this spirit we possess the opportunity to follow Christ's example and be counted among the first harvest of mankind who will be born in His image. This is a pursuit the likes of which there is no other. There is nothing more rewarding—nothing more worthwhile than attaining the mystery of God—to literally be His child and an integral part of His royal family. For more information on this subject, please read our booklet, *Born Again*.

Later, Paul would explain the mystery saying it was that believers would be changed and become incorruptible—an immortal Spirit. As the Apostle wrote:

Behold, **I shew you a mystery**; We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible**, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and **this mortal *must* put on immortality** (1Corinthians 15:51-53).

Paul reveals that the mystery of God is actually the Eternal's purpose for creating mankind. Humans who desire to accept, and internalize His way of life as their own will become one with Him. As the Apostle wrote:

Having made known unto us **the mystery of his will**, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times **he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth**; *even* in him (Ephesians 1:9-10).

God's mystery is a resurrection to Spirit life for faithful mankind, but it is much more. God's mystery includes marriage to our Savior, becoming His intimate Bride, and joining His leadership team in the glorious Kingdom of God. The words of the Apostle Paul describe this truth clearly stating:

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife,

and they two shall be one flesh. **This is a great mystery:** but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Even the mystery, which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints (Ephesians 5:31-33).

At the seventh trumpet, all true Christians will finally experience God's magnificent mystery. It will be a time of rejoicing as God glorifies faithful humans, enabling them to live on the same level of life, and enjoy the marvelous wonders of Spirit existence as the Eternal does.

On another level, consider that God's Church is frequently portrayed as a woman, and rightfully so. Christ will literally marry the Church, and that marriage will take place on the day of Pentecost. As the author of a vital part of Scripture, the apostle Matthew writes:

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son (Mat 22:2)

The Seventh Trump is Not the End of God's Wrath

This is a magnificent truth. The fulfillment of the mystery of God at the blast of the last trumpet is not the end of God's wrath. There is more to come! Notice that the seventh trumpet is actually a signal initiating the third woe for mankind. It is a warning sign of far worse and devastating plagues yet to occur.

God's Apostle explains that, after the sixth trumpet is blown, at the seventh and final trump, the resurrection of the saints takes place but it is also the third woe. As the Apostle John wrote:

The second woe is past and, behold, the **third woe** cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:14-15).

Notice the pattern God uses in the book of Revelation. The tribulation begins with the seven seals. The **seventh seal** initiates the **seven trumpet plagues**. As the final seventh trumpet sounds, the resurrection of the saints takes place, but the seventh trump **IS** the signal of humanity's **third woe!** It is no less than the clarion call for seven vial plagues—the most terrifying and unimaginably destructive plagues in all history up to this time.

The Vial Plagues Occur after three and one-Half Years

Thus we see that the first trumpet plague initiates the year of God's wrath, and the saints are resurrected at the seventh trump. The Scriptures also reveal that the resurrection of the saints takes place at the end of the 3 ½ year tribulation, but the year of God's wrath is still not yet complete. As Mathew writes:

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. **And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,** from one end of heaven to the other (Mat. 24:29-31).

The verses above make this truth certain. The saints are resurrected from the great tribulation that comes upon the Church. But, exactly how long is the great tribulation? The answer is found in numerous other verses, in which all state that it will take place over a 3½ year period.

Both Daniel and the Apostle John show that the beast will persecute believers for this length of time. John also reveals that a small number of the faithful will be protected for this same period. Notice Daniel's account:

And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand **until a time and times and the dividing of time** (Daniel 7:25).

The Book of Revelation explains this exact timing regarding the protection of His saints. As John writes:

...to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent (Rev. 12:14).

Using God's 360-day calendar, the two witnesses will minister their warning for 3 ½ years. Note John's words:

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot **forty and two months**. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy **a thousand two hundred and threescore days**, clothed in sackcloth (Rev. 11:2-3).

The ministry of the two witnesses will continue for 1,260 days. This is the same length of time as the great tribulation. During their prophesying, it will be impossible to kill them until the end of their ministry. Tragically, the Beast will be able to kill them, but after 3 ½ days they will rise again—they will be called up to meet Christ in the clouds of heaven. This may possibly occur at the same time as the general first resurrection—that of God’s Saints. As the Apostle John wrote:

And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe (the sixth trumpet) is past; and, behold, **(the third woe cometh quickly)** and the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:11-15).

At the sound of the 7th trump, God’s chosen will be resurrected after 3 ½ years of a horrifying and destructive tribulation on earth. Only then does the third woe begin—seven terrifying vial plagues. The saints will not be harmed, however. As the Apostle John explains—the saints will view these final plagues from the safety of heaven:

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. **And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.** And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.” **And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues,** clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles (Revelation 15:1-6).

Thus, the tribulation will be 3 ½ years in length. It will end at the sound of the seventh trump which will reveal the mystery of God to the entire world—the resurrection of His saints. He will change faithful Christians from flesh to Spirit, draw them to Himself, and they will eat and drink during Christ’s marriage supper upon a glorious sea of glass. There they will marry the Savior and enjoy a supernatural supper with Him. This is the marriage supper that was once foreshadowed by the 70 elders, Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu—those chosen out of the millions of Israelites at Sinai to eat and drink with the Eternal while He stood on clear sapphire stone. Further, this great marriage was also portrayed by Ruth’s marriage after the wheat harvest when Pentecost was observed.

From heaven the saints will meet with the Father, Christ, and the angels. There they will ultimately marry their Savior, brother, and High Priest. After the marriage supper, and the pouring out of the vial plagues by the Father, the saints will return to the earth with Christ and begin to establish His Kingdom.

This scenario reveals that the start of the 3 ½-year tribulation begins when God's seven seals are systematically opened. Next, there will be seven trumpet plagues. The seventh trump is the resurrection, but it is also the signal to initiate God's vial plagues on the earth. From the vantage point of heaven, the resurrected saints will witness God the Father as He begins the last part of His wrath—the pouring out these vials.

These plagues will destroy the Beast's armies that had come to Jerusalem. These vials will demolish much of the existing nations—and any—and all possible enemies of Christ. They will effectively remove any possible resistance to the Kingdom of God (Rev. 14-16).

During these final plagues, the saints will be in heaven. There, they will experience meeting thousands of their companions from ages past. They will experience the glory of the Father, and enjoy the magnificent marriage, prior to following Christ's return to Earth (Rev. 19:17). For more information as to where the saints are during these vial plagues please read the free booklet entitled, *Beyond the Clouds* offered by the Eternal Church of God.

An End-Time Scenario

The prophet Daniel spoke clearly, and specifically, regarding both the last days and the beginning of the great tribulation all of which are a result of the Beast power. According to the prophet Daniel:

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. ...And **he (The Beast) shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain**; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him (Daniel 11:40-41, 45).

And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waits and cometh to the **thousand three hundred and five and thirty days** (Daniel 12:11-12).

Many have interpreted these time periods, although most have not considered the actual context of Daniel's words while doing so. The result is that many interpretations have simply been the ideas of men.

First consider that there are three separate events mentioned. Further, there are three distinct time periods in the verses above. These unique events are:

- 1) The king of the south will provoke the beast to attack. The beast will come down and take over the Middle East.
- 2) He will set up his headquarters in the temple and demand that the sacrifices be stopped.
- 3) He will claim that He is God (Rev. 13:8). As Paul warned us:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who ...exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that **he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God** (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

It is this vile act by the beast that prompts the tribulation. This vain and wicked future event will require massive armies to surround Jerusalem that they might protect this wicked man who has set himself up in what is an enormously religiously charged area (Luke 21:20). As Matthew described this end time event:

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes... For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be (Matthew 24:15-18, 25).

The Temple Institute already plans to build this temple. They have prepared the menorah, priestly clothing, musical instruments and other items. Thus, the temple absolutely will be built, but not because of the Institute's pressure, but as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy which states that the beast will literally sit in the Holy place in the temple. He will do away with the sacrifices, and ultimately declare himself God—an act that will initiate a war of rebellion in war torn Jerusalem.

When this occurs, God warns believers who are living in Jerusalem to leave without taking any possessions or food. First, realize that they are to flee in order to get out of harm's way as the bullets fly. Jerusalem will be teeming with soldiers, gunfire, and explosives to protect the beast power from Jewish opposition (Luke 21:20).

Further, those who flee as God commanded will not need food or winter clothing. God will not send those who worship Him to desolate mountains with no food or proper clothing. In all likelihood, that very night, they will be taken to a place of safety where they will miraculously be provided for by God. For more information please read the booklet titled, *The Place of Safety* by the Eternal Church of God.

In Summary

The beast takes over the Middle East in 45 days
He takes up residence in Jerusalem's temple
He stops the sacrifices, and 30 days later, the beast declares himself to be god
This starts the tribulation that continues for 1260 days
Total 1335 days

The beast's claim to be God is the abomination of desolation. It is likely the catalyst initiating the pouring out of the seven Seals and the 3 1/2 year tribulation. In this scenario, it is likely that the trumpet plagues will begin during the second year of the tribulation (Rev. 8:1).

Because God's Holy Days represent the events that take place during His plan of salvation, it is also likely that

each trump will reveal the next plague on the Eternal's appointed Holy Day picturing the event. As Scripture states:

Blow the trumpet in the new moon, **in the time appointed**, on our solemn feast day (Psalm 81:3).

Thus, it is likely that the first trumpet plague would begin on the Feast of Trumpets. It then follows that the next six trumpets would each be blown on a successive Holy Day. Consider the chart below:

The Year of the Lord

Trumpets	Trump 1—Hail and Fire
Atonement	Trump 2—Babylon tossed into the sea
Tabernacles	Trump 3—Waters made bitter
Last Great Day	Trump 4—Heaven's light darkened
1st Day of DUB	Trump 5—Demon Locusts attack mankind
Last Day of DUB	Trump 6—1/3 of Humanity Dies
Pentecost	Trump 7—Saints Resurrected
Trumpets	The Vial Plagues Begin

In this scenario, the seventh trump would sound on the Feast of Pentecost. On this day the Saints would be harvested—raised from the dead—and born again as immortal Spirit Beings who literally marry Christ in heaven.

This seventh trump is the last of God's trumpet plagues, but not the end of God's wrath. Besides sounding the resurrection on Pentecost, it is the beginning of the final seven vial plagues which will continue until the “**year of the Lord**” is complete.

The Seven Vial Plagues

(1). The first vial gives those who have the mark of the beast a terrible, painful sore (Revelation 16:1-2).
(2). The second vial causes the sea to become blood, killing all living things in it (Revelation 16:3).
(3). The third vial is poured out on the earth's fresh water systems, turning the rivers and fountains of water into undrinkable blood (Revelation 16:4).
(4). The fourth vial is poured out on the sun, causing it to scorch mankind (Revelation 16:8).
(5). The fifth vial is poured out on the beast and his kingdom filling it with darkness and those within it suffer enormous pain (Revelation 16:10).
(6). The sixth vial dries up the Euphrates so that the kings of the east can cross it. Demons motivate the kings of the earth to gather together at Armageddon where they will ultimately fight Christ. (Revelation 16:12-15).

(7). The seventh vial is poured out and the worst earthquake in man's history occurs, in which the kingdom of the beast is divided three ways. A hail storm consisting of massive 60- pound boulders of ice come down, crushing everything they strike (Revelation 16:16-21).

The Seven Last Plagues

The Apostle left us a written record describing the saints after their resurrection. They follow Christ to God's throne, and from heaven's sea of glass, they witness God's judgment—the final vial plagues. As John stated:

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up **the wrath of God**. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (Revelation 15:1-2).

Consider that it would take significant time for these final vial plagues to be complete. Since it is certain there will be 3 ½ years of tribulation on the Church, it is likely that the trumpet plagues begin on the feast of Trumpets in the latter part of the 3 ½ year period. Then at the end of the 3 ½ years, the seventh trump is blown on the feast of Pentecost. The resurrection of the saints will occur then, and during the following marriage supper, God's seven vial plagues will be poured out, thus completing His **year of wrath** on the following feast of Trumpets.

These events also continue to occur on God's holy days. On the Day of Atonement, Satan will be imprisoned.

Five days later, on the Feast of Tabernacles, Christ will return to earth with the saints. He will touch down on the Mount of Olives, and once again tabernacle on earth. He will dwell with humanity (John. 1:14). Then, during the days of the Feast of Tabernacles, those Israelites still alive would likely experience the second exodus as they are miraculously rescued from around the world and returned to the Holy Land that will once again become their nation (Jer. 31).

Finally on the last Great Day of that year, the day ultimately portraying the white throne judgment will also be a Day of a terrible judgment of Christ’s enemies. Those armies that came to Jerusalem to protect the beast will turn their weapons on the Savior to destroy Him & His Saints:

And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver...(Zech 14:12-14):

Continuing Events after the Seventh Trump

<i>The Seventh Trump The Feast of Pentecost</i>	<i>Resurrection of the Saints</i>
<i>Day of Atonement</i>	<i>Satan is put away</i>

<i>Feast of Tabernacles</i>	<i>Christ tabernacles with the Saints to establish the Millennial Kingdom</i>
<i>The Last Great Day</i>	<i>The Second Resurrection And The White Throne Judgment</i>

After the thousand years has ended, the rest of humanity who had died never having the opportunity to be called of God will be raised from the grave to live a hundred years. As the Apostle John wrote:

But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished, Rev 20:5.

It is likely that this event is represented by the “Last Great Day occurring after the Feast of Tabernacles and its portrayal of the thousand year rule of Christ on earth. Up to this time, those who have only known Satan’s way will finally be able to experience God’s way for the first time during this final century of the physical earth. However, Satan will also be loosed for one last time, and thus, all humanity will have had the opportunity to choose God’s way or reject it by following Satan. As the Apostle John writes:

Rev 20:7 -15 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and

devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet (were cast) and shall be tormented day and night for ever, and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:1-8)

A Magnificent Truth

God's Holy Days reveal a path to understanding the vital events leading to the Kingdom and family of God. Moreover, truths revealed by the days of the Wave Sheaf and Pentecost are precious. These days have been planned and created before humanity existed. Further, after Christ's sacrifice for us, individuals can now be called by God and receive His Spirit that will live and grow in them.

Their eyes can be opened to God's way. They can see that Christ was resurrected, to become Spirit on the day of the Wave Sheaf. Then God's Covenant was manifest on Pentecost as He sent the seed of the Holy Spirit to His Church. Finally faithful believers will be raised from the dead or changed from flesh to Spirit at the seventh trump occurring on Pentecost. May all believers experience this spectacular fulfillment of the day of Pentecost, and all the

events that will follow as God continues to expand His eternal Kingdom?