

## The Wavesheaf and the Selfsame Day

### **Did Israel Offer the Wavesheaf in Joshua 5?**

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I have chosen to give this sermon on this particular weekend because it is an anniversary weekend. First and foremost, it is the anniversary of Christ's crucifixion and entombment, and later on His resurrection. As significant as that event is to all of mankind, there is much more than that, because other significant things also took place (or began to take place) on this particular weekend.

It is also the anniversary of the events given in Genesis 14 and 15, when God made a covenant with Abraham. In addition to that, it is the anniversary of the events in Exodus 12 through 14, when Israel went out of Egypt and began its pilgrimage through the wilderness. And finally it is the anniversary of those events recorded in Joshua 5, when Israel came into the land of promise.

The things that are recorded in Joshua 5 are not about a Wavesheaf offering, and we shall see as we progress through the sermon that the events of Joshua 5 are recorded to show God's faithfulness to His promises.

We're going to begin this sermon in Galatians 3:15-17, and then Galatians 3:26-29.

Galatians 3:15-17 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls or adds thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He says not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

Galatians 3:26 For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

This is spoken directly to you and me regardless of the time in which we live.

Galatians 3:26-29 For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We will note here at this time the mention of "four hundred and thirty years," because this too plays a significant role in showing God's faithfulness to His promises. With that fact in place, God's faithfulness is the reason for our being enabled to be children of God.

I want you to notice an alternate translation of Galatians 3:17. This translation appears in my Study Bible, and I want you to see this because it will help you to understand the significance of

what Paul is writing right here. It's just a matter of rearranging it into more modern English so that it rings more true to the way we would read it today. Paul writes:

Galatians 3:17 I say this: the law which appeared four hundred thirty years later cannot void the covenant earlier ratified by God so as to make the promise ineffective.

The key words for us here today are: *covenant*, *ratified*, *promise*, and *four hundred thirty years*. The events recorded in Genesis 14 and 15 and Christ's crucifixion in the New Testament are like parenthesis, with the events of Exodus 12 and Joshua 5 sandwiched in-between as examples of God's faithfulness.

Exodus 12:37-42 And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them: and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual [food]. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even *thselfsame day* it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is *that* night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

This is very strong wording there about this particular date that occurred exactly 430 years after something else. We can notice then here in this series of verses: Israel leaves Egypt; unleavened bread; and 430 years exactly to the selfsame day of an earlier event.

I will tell you that this earlier event appeared in Genesis 14 and 15. What is recorded there in Genesis 14 and 15 is Moses' recording of God making a covenant with Abraham. And so Israel left Egypt on the *exact* (and we're going to see how *exact* in just a little bit here) anniversary of that event. That *selfsame day* is the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib—the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 12:43-51 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall you break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with you, and will keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it: and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourns among you. Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the *selfsame day*, that the LORD did bring the children of

Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.

Verse 51, where it says "and it came to pass the selfsame day that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies," is positioned at the end of this paragraph that begins in verse 43. That does not mean that they were circumcised "the selfsame day," but rather that verse is a reference back to verse 41: "And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years."

At this point (verse 51) in the story of the events that took place in Egypt, the males had already taken the Passover, and therefore the men were already circumcised. They couldn't have taken the Passover, which occurred at the beginning of chapter 12, unless they had been circumcised. So this section then, from verse 43 through 51, is a reminder of a command given earlier. They didn't get circumcised after Passover and then immediately get up and leave Egypt within the same few hours period.

Remember, the events that we're going to read of here occurred exactly 430 years right to the day as the Exodus from Egypt.

Genesis 14:18-20 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

As we go through this portion of chapter 14, and then through to chapter 15, verse 17, I want you to notice the progression of time as we move from event to event. As we do this, I want you to mentally compare this sequence both with Christ's observance of Passover preceding His crucifixion and burial, as well as the flow of events as the Israelites progressed through Exodus 12. You are going to see that there are a great number of parallels between the two, tying them together.

We begin with something that we have already read. In Genesis 14:18, bread and wine are brought forth by Melchizedek (Christ). Did not Christ bring forth bread and wine to be taken by His disciples? The answer to that question is obvious.

We are beginning a time-line here. In chapter 15 we're going to begin at verse 1 and we're going to read through the first six verses.

Genesis 15:1-6 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me you have given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir. And behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth out of your own bowels shall be your heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall your seed be. And he believed in

the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Here comes the second step in this progression of events. Following the "bread and wine" incident, Abraham asked for clarification of his status with God, because earlier, in Genesis 12, God had implied that Abraham's family would be great. After Abraham asked for clarification, then the promise is given by God, and God uses an illustration using *stars*. In order for Abraham to see stars, this had to take place at night.

I think you know what the beginning of this chapter says:

Exodus 12:5-6 Your [Passover] lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; you shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And you shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

This is one of those places where the word "evening" is from the term in Hebrew *ben har arbayim*. In modern English it means "twilight" or "dusk." The description of the meaning of this word is that the sun has gone down, but light continues to remain for a period of time, and at this time of the year it probably would have been very close to about 45 minutes. Following that, it would be dark.

Abraham was brought bread and wine by Melchizedek. The next thing we see in Genesis 15 is the mention of "stars." It is *dark*. The Passover took place in that period of light before it became dark. That was the time that *we*, in our observance, would be normally eating Passover, just as the sun goes down, and in that period. That's where we are time-wise. By the time you see stars, it is now dark. You are beginning to see that time is moving.

Now let's go back to John 13. When we inject the calendar into this, when *ben ha arbayim* takes place, the 13<sup>th</sup> of Abib has ended and the 14<sup>th</sup> begins. The 14<sup>th</sup> is Passover day. This is undoubtedly when Melchizedek brought forth the bread and wine. Then came Abraham's vision when it was dark and the stars were out. It is clearly into the 14<sup>th</sup>, because it is dark.

We will now go to a New Testament scripture here.

John 13:30 He then having received the sop went immediately out; and it was *night*.

It was dark. That was after the footwashing. That was after the bread and the wine. You are beginning to see the parallels develop between Genesis 14 and 15, Exodus 12 to 14, and the Gospel accounts of Christ's crucifixion. They are all parallel with one another.

I Corinthians 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread.

*Night*. We have perfect agreement here so far. The time-line is moving. It has gone past sundown. It is now into the dark part of the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Genesis 15:7-9 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord GOD, whereby

shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

That is, "Prepare a sacrifice."

Genesis 15:10-17 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that your seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

Sunset is the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and time-wise we are moving into the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>—Passover day. As daylight hits, Abraham asks for evidence that God will follow through, and he receives the command to prepare a sacrifice, and this prophecy regarding his family is the reaction that he gets. Verse 12 shows that this action of preparing a sacrifice is on the *daylight* part of the 14<sup>th</sup>, because when we get to verse 12, the sacrifice has been all prepared, and the sun was going down. That brings us up to the *end* of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Very interesting.

Many have wondered why Christ was sacrificed during the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> in the *afternoon* rather than at the beginning, and seemingly more in alignment with Passover. Was not the Passover lamb slain at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, after *ben ha arbayim* began? Yes, it was. So people think because He was sacrificed sometime during the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> that there is something wrong there. No! We have the answer right here in Genesis 15 as to why He was sacrificed in the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> rather than at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Now here is the answer:

Even as the covenant of promise with Abraham (that we're reading of here in Genesis 14 and 15) was ratified by this sacrifice that we see Abraham making here, Christ's sacrifice provides the ratification of the New Covenant. Christ's sacrifice, by God's decree, had to align with the ratification of *the covenant of promise with Abraham*, not the Passover. It aligns time-wise *exactly* with Genesis 15.

Verse 12 specifically states "when the sun was going down." Therefore, this sacrifice in Genesis 15, like Christ's sacrifice, took place in the afternoon. In the very late afternoon, what happened at Christ's crucifixion? A *great darkness* occurred. Here in Genesis 15 a *great darkness* occurred to Abraham. In addition to that, a *great horror* fell upon him. Now what does that picture? There are two possibilities.

Abraham was made by God to experience a very small taste of the horror that Christ had to face in His crucifixion and burial. God scared him to death almost by putting the *fear* in him.

It could also be a precursor of the darkness and the earthquake that took place at Christ's crucifixion.

I prefer the first one though, that Abraham, as the father of the faithful and the number 1 antecedent ancestor of Jesus Christ, had to experience a bit of what God's Son in the flesh was going to have to go through a thousand fifteen/seventeen hundred years later.

There is something else here that is not so readily apparent at Christ's crucifixion. Abraham had to beat off some vultures. It says that when the fowls came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. Vile birds are the Bible's symbol of demons. This gives the impression that there was a great spiritual battle going on during which the demons were taunting and persecuting Christ in order to induce Him to give up as He was hanging on the cross. You can see that in some of the psalms about everybody gawking at Him, and taunting Him.

It was not only human beings. We can understand it was demons as well, who were doing everything to break His courage and to break His spirit. That is why Abraham had to experience a little of that.

It says very clearly that God forsook Jesus. "Why have you forsaken me?" Christ asks, because now He was on His own completely and totally for the first time in His life, and Abraham had to go through a little bit of that—the great horror and darkness.

Now where does that bring us to time-wise? It brings us up to the end of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Maybe part of that horror that Abraham had to experience was the fear, let's say, of being buried alive, of being put in a grave. I don't know. There are things that we can speculate on, but that is put in there so that we will understand what Abraham was going through and how it parallels what Christ had to go through. It parallels even to the exact days and to the exact times of the days as the events were progressing.

Genesis 15:17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, ...

Now it was dark. What time is it? The Firstborn, Christ, is in His grave. Therefore, time-wise we are now into the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib. We have come all the way from *ben ha arbayim*, at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and those events progressing one after the other through Genesis 15. And now at verse 17 we are beginning Abib 15—the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Whether you realize it or not, I'm going to tell you what we see here in Genesis 15:17 is the *official* beginning of *The Night To Be Much Observed*, not Exodus 12; Genesis 15:17. Exodus 12 merely records *one fulfillment* of the *first Night To Be Much Observed*.

Exodus 12:41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Genesis 15:17 is *the point* from which the 430 years began. The 430 years ended at Exodus

12: 41 — *right down to the day*. It was the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib. Let's read that.

Exodus 12:41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Here, beginning in verse 42, God gives the official *name* of the beginning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread: "*It is a night to be much observed.*"

Exodus 12:42 *It is a night to be much observed* unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt.

Far from being "Armstrong's folly," as people were wont to call it every once in a while, taunting *him*, it is a night of very great significance to the salvation story of God's people. The significance is, that because the firstborn of the Egyptians had been slaughtered, and the descendants of Abraham had been released from their slavery and were free to go out of Egypt, the firstborn of Egypt thus becomes a type of the Firstborn, Jesus Christ,—the sacrifice for our sins that enslave us to spiritual Egypt. Two major things in the salvation story have already occurred on The Night To Be Much Observed.

Genesis 15:10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

Genesis 15:17 And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

In Abraham's day covenants were sometimes agreed to by preparing a sacrifice, cutting in two pieces, halving it exactly. They would lay the pieces out on the ground. Then those making the covenant had to pass between the divided carcass. What this was is that it symbolized the seriousness of their intention in this kind of covenant, because the divided carcass represented what would happen to them if they didn't keep their oath. They were committing themselves to be cut in two if they broke their word.

That was not the way every covenant was agreed to, but rather it was the way really serious ones were agreed to. They placed their lives at risk. If either didn't keep that covenant, they were pledging their life. They would give it up. Then after they passed through, the carcass was burned, thus symbolizing their acceptance.

What is interesting here in this case is that God is the only one shown passing between the divided carcass. Now what this does is it first of all shows God's seriousness at meeting the requirement of the covenant. It also shows that God was not holding either Abraham or his descendants to the same stringent requirement to the covenant as He was holding Himself. This promise therefore was going to be met by God's grace, and not man's works. Nobody will meet the terms of the covenant on the basis of works. It's by grace.

The smoking oven and the burning torch symbolized God in many instances in the Bible. In the Old Testament especially, God represents Himself through the image of fire: the burning bush;

the pillar of fire in the wilderness. It is very likely that as He passed through the divided sacrifice the fire consumed it. This shows His acceptance. The burning of the sacrifice by fire means "fire out of heaven" from an invisible source. Whoom! It just appeared there, and turned it into a charred mess. God has done that in the past too. When the Tabernacle was built, God ignited the first sacrifice. When the Temple was built, God ignited the first sacrifice. When the Levitical ministry and the priesthood under Aaron was consecrated, God ignited the sacrifice, and that's what He did here. God consumed it out of heaven.

The 14<sup>th</sup> then thus symbolizes the ratification of the promise by sacrifice, and the 15<sup>th</sup> symbolizes what it accomplishes by giving visible evidence of God's faithfulness as the Israelites go out free. See, He's keeping His promise, and *here* is the evidence.

When Israel left Egypt on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>—The Night To Be Much Observed—it marked the beginning of the fulfillment of the physical aspects of that promise. There was race and grace. Abraham's descendants did leave Egypt with great substance, exactly as the promise says, and Christ's sacrifice marks the beginning of the spiritual fulfillment.

What we're going to do here is to feed this scenario into the first five chapters of the book of Joshua.

Joshua 5:10-12 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna anymore; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Far too many people out there have only been reading of the events here in Joshua 5:10-12, and then reading a smooth-sounding explanation, and thinking that this explanation must surely be correct. But they are not correct. There is much more involved here.

I have seen explanations coming from some of the splits that were actually only a couple of paragraphs long about how to count Pentecost in these odd years when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath. I'll tell you, those people did no favor for their brethren with those brief reports.

I want to thank a man named Richard Travers. He's from Clifton, Colorado, and he helped me make a couple of connections that were really helpful in putting this sequence of events together here beginning with Genesis 14. What he did was trigger something I already knew but really hadn't connected it to Joshua 5:10-12.

Now get a picture in your mind, or look at some Bible map of Israel as it kind of appeared whenever the Israelites were approaching from off the Sinai Peninsula. When they approached Israel, the Promised Land, they came up from the south, because that's where the Sinai was. It was south of Israel. As they went north, when they reached the land of Moab they were not allowed to go across the land of Moab. These Moabites were distantly related to Israel. They were cousins of the Israelitish people. What the Israelites did then was they made a sharp right-hand turn and headed east 90 degrees roughly. Just imagine a beltway going around a modern city.

Now they're on the beltway heading east. When they went so far, actually on the border of Moab on the eastern side, they made a sharp left-hand turn and headed north again. When they reached the northern border of Moab they made another sharp left-hand turn and they headed west. When they made that last turn and headed west, they encountered groups of Midianites and they went to war with them and they defeated every one of them.

By the time they reached the eastern side of the Jordan River, they were now well inside the eastern portion of the Promised Land. It was at this point that the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and one-half of Manasseh approached Moses to claim the land on the eastern side as theirs. It was granted to them with the proviso that their armies go with the remainder of the Israelites until the western side of the land was conquered. They agreed, and so their women and children began to take up residence on the eastern side of the Jordan River. You can find these things described between Numbers 31 and Numbers 33.

As we begin this section of the sermon I want us first to go to Joshua 1, and I want you to see just very briefly what God required of Joshua, and in turn what Joshua required of the Israelites. This is important to the story. In verse 7 God is speaking.

Joshua 1:7-8 Only be you strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper whithersoever you go. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success.

The events in Joshua 8: 35 took place at Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. What they are doing is reconfirming the covenant.

Joshua 8:35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

Everybody who could understand who was there listened to a sermon by Joshua in which he went over the law and passed it on to the Israelites as a witness against them.

Now Joshua is near his death, and it says:

Joshua 23:6-8 Be you therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that you turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left: That you come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: But cleave unto the LORD your God, as you have done unto this day.

I just want you to see how serious Joshua was in heeding the admonition of God given to him before they ever went across Jordan and into the western side.

We're going to progress in a time-line again, and I want you to see it is parallel to what we saw

in Genesis 14 and Genesis 15, and also with what occurred in Christ's crucifixion. It's somewhat different events, but the time-line is exactly the same.

Joshua 1:10-11 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals [food]; for within three days you shall pass over this Jordan to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God gives you to possess it.

"Prepare food." Brethren, where did this food come from? It could not have been manna, because manna couldn't be stored. They had to prepare foods that would last for a period of time. We can speculate. It could have included some meat slaughtered from the herds and flocks they traveled with through the wilderness. I don't think there will be any argument there. There could have been some there. But it could also be the first bit of evidence that the Israelites were already gathering and eating of the produce of the land that they were conquering. Now which land? The narrative does not say. It could certainly include things from the Promised Land because some were already taking up evidence in it on the eastern side of Jordan. Again, it doesn't say, but that remains a question.

Now let's go to Joshua 4. You see, this is one of the issues in the argument that is going on regarding the Wavesheaf and when it occurred.

Joshua 4:19 And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

This verse gives us a handle on the dating. We are confronting the same sequence of days in Genesis 14 and Genesis 15 and Exodus 12 and Christ's crucifixion. Joshua's command in Joshua 1:11 to prepare food therefore took place on Abib 7, because in Joshua 4:19 they have just crossed the Jordan. It is the 10<sup>th</sup> day. Now what happened on the 10<sup>th</sup> day in Israel? That was the day that they chose the lamb. In Christ's crucifixion sequence, the 10<sup>th</sup> day was the day that He made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the back of an ass. In a sense, He was crossing His own Jordan at that point, and the people were beginning to choose Him as the Lamb that would be slaughtered.

Joshua 5:2-9 At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make you sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt that were males, even all the men of war died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out [of Egypt] were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness till all the people that were men of war which came out of Egypt were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that he would not show them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that flowed with milk and honey. And their children whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they

were uncircumcised because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp till they were whole [healed]. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal [meaning *rolled away*] unto this day.

Now we're getting a handle here. When did the circumcision take place? Well, for logistical reasons, ... (and this is my own speculation), ... I feel that it was on Abib 11, because in order for over two million people to cross over Jordan it would take a certain amount of time to do that. Once they got into the land they had to spread out all over the place so that they would camp. Where they spread out to was Gilgal, which was several miles to the west after they crossed the Jordan River. So for logistical reasons, it had to be, I feel, at least Abib 11 for the day of the circumcision. You just don't move two million people and better all that quickly.

The "rolled away" statement in verse 9 is especially intriguing, because God here officially *rolled away*—that is, forgave—Israel's shameful captivity in Egypt. They were now free to begin inheriting the land. You can see types of this that occurred before.

Do you remember when Moses was on his way to Egypt from his forty years journey with Jethro and his family? What happened on the way there? God stopped him and was threatening to kill Moses, and Zipporah took out a knife quickly and circumcised their two boys.

Before Moses could represent God, his children had to be circumcised. From this we can understand I believe that Moses was circumcised, but he had neglected to circumcise his own children, and therefore God made sure that they were circumcised.

Now here we have a repetition of this. Before Israel could represent God even in the Promised Land when they went to war, that circumcision represented a means of sanctification, setting them apart from the people of the land. A circumcised sanctified army was going to represent God in conquering the land.

In addition to that, they were about ready to take Passover, and Exodus 12 shows very clearly that you had to be circumcised *before* you took the Passover. So now they are prepared to take the Passover.

In the New Testament our circumcision is of the heart. It is a cutting away of the human nature that begins, and that makes us then sanctified to begin to represent God as His witness and as His sons under the New Covenant.

Those circumcised remained in Gilgal in the camp until they were healed. This did not matter in regard to the Passover, because Passover was a home-observed ritual anyway. You can see that in Exodus 12. There is no evidence, ... absolutely none whatever, that God performed miraculous healings of those circumcised here since He clearly says that they remained in camp until they were healed. The reason I mention this is that some in their write-ups are saying that God miraculously healed them. They're adding to it. It doesn't say that.

There is nothing specifically stated for either Abib 12 or 13, but they were undoubtedly used to settle in more thoroughly in Gilgal, do the harvesting of local crops and the raiding of local

stores of produce in the area, and any preparations needed for keeping the Passover.

Remember, manna was still falling. Then we have Joshua 5:10-12 where it says that they kept the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

Joshua 5:10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

Remember the instructions in Exodus 12. They killed the lambs at twilight just after the sun went down. Where are we time-wise in the day? We are at the very beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, but light remained. Remember this, that all of those Israelites age 40 through 59, plus Joshua and Caleb and their families had experienced keeping Passover while they were still in Egypt. They knew what to do by experience. Besides that, they had the writings of Moses to fall back on as well. Therefore, after the sun went down, they followed through by burning any of the lambs that remained after the Passover, and as it instructs there, they stayed in their homes until morning.

We're now getting to the morning part of the 14<sup>th</sup>. What did they do then during the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>? Well, they did what we do on the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>. What did *you* do? You prepared for the 15<sup>th</sup>. You prepared for the Night To Be Much Observed and the keeping of the First Day of Unleavened Bread. The Israelites undoubtedly did that. They made final preparations for observing it. But again, remember that Passover, the 14<sup>th</sup>, is a preparation day, and therefore manna fell on that day as well.

We need to make a check with Exodus 16:25-30, because here are instructions regarding manna.

Exodus 16:25-30 And Moses said, Eat that to day: for today is a Sabbath unto the LORD: today you shall not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it: but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse you to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the LORD has given you the Sabbath, therefore he gives you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide you every man in his place, let no man go out of his place [for manna] on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.

Now we're face with a choice here regarding what happened there in Joshua 5. Did manna fall on an annual festival—the 15<sup>th</sup>? The annual festivals are Sabbaths. It's not specifically mentioned here in Exodus 16, but they are after all Sabbaths, and they are therefore holy convocations. I believe that we have a principle in Exodus 16 by which we can understand that manna was not provided for *o*any Sabbath. Double portions were provided on the preparation day, and the manna did not spoil on any Sabbath day, whether weekly or annual.

I believe that God would be just as concerned about witnessing to His people about *a*ll holy convocations in the same manner so that there would be no excuse for them not knowing that it was a Sabbath. Therefore, a double portion of manna was provided on the 14<sup>th</sup>. That day

ended, and the 15<sup>th</sup>, the First day of Unleavened Bread begins. When does the 15<sup>th</sup> begin? It begins at sunset. Sunset between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> begins *The Night To Be Much Observed*. Time-wise this brings us to Genesis 15: 17 and Exodus 12: 40-42. Those two, separated exactly right to the day by 430 years, and now *exactly* 40 years after coming out of Egypt, *right to the day*, Abraham's descendants in Joshua 5 are in the land and keeping *The Night To Be Much Observed*.

Joshua 5:11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened cakes, . . . [Why did they eat unleavened cakes? Because they were *commanded* to. "Seven days shall you *eat* unleavened bread."] . . . and parched corn *in the selfsame day*.

This was 40 years to *the selfsame day*! Why is that used? "Selfsame day" is used to draw attention in Exodus 12: 40-42 to *The Night To Be Much Observed*—the night that memorializes God's faithfulness to His covenant with Abraham, and Christ's sacrifice and entombment for our sins, and thus Israel's release from their physical bondage, and *our* release from our spiritual bondage to this world.

Understand the word "morrow" here in Joshua 5: 10-12 simply refers to the next day. The next day began with sunset, and that is when *The Night To Be Much Observed* is observed. The observance of *The Night To Be Much Observed* begins the observance of the Days of Unleavened Bread. It is clearly commanded in Exodus 12: 40-42 that the children of Israel—the children of Abraham—are commanded to observe *The Night To Be Much Observed*. For this group in Joshua 5, that was only 40 years before. That's what they were observing—*The Night To Be Much Observed*, and that's what we are going to observe this evening.

Is not the ratification of the covenant with Abraham and the children of Israel leaving Egypt exactly 40 years to the day further confirmation of God's faithfulness?

These things that I have said to you are true, and up to this time, in Joshua 5: 10-12, these events are the most important things that ever happened on Abib 15. They took place *at night*, and they are to be observed at night as the 15<sup>th</sup> begins. That is 24 hours following the beginning of Passover observance the evening before, and less than 24 hours following the conclusion of the observance of Passover at morning on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Now they would already be eating unleavened bread at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>. Where did it come from? It came from the grain of the land. They didn't have any farms. The unleavened bread came from the Promised Land.

Now we're getting right to the crux of things here. This is a sermon I'm sure you're going to have to look at more closely and figure out the times for yourself. You maybe even have to draw a graph to help you along.

If Israel made a Wavesheaf offering brethren, pray tell when did they do it? Joshua 5: 11 states that the children of Israel ate the produce of the land on the day after Passover. I have shown you by the time-line they would be eating it right as the day began, because they and we are commanded to keep *The Night To Be Much Observed*, and that is when the eating of *unleavened bread* is also to begin.

According to the Worldwide Church of God and several of the spin-offs, they say that the Wavesheaf offering occurred during the daylight of the 15<sup>th</sup>. Now wait a minute! I'm proposing to you that they were eating unleavened bread as *The Night To Be Much Observed* began. They were commanded to observe the *night* portion of the 15<sup>th</sup>. That's *before* the daylight portion of the 15<sup>th</sup>, and they DID, because *it was a memorial of their leaving Egypt exactly 40 years to the day before*, and because *The Night To Be Much Observed* is the anniversary of God's ratification of the covenant! It's *The Night To Be Much Observed* that the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib focuses on, not the daylight portion; the *NIGHT!*

If Israel had waved the sheaf during the daylight of the 15<sup>th</sup> which is the First Day of Unleavened Bread, and an annual Sabbath (according to the Worldwide Church of God scenario), why isn't it mentioned in Joshua 5? *It would have been the very first Wavesheaf ever offered*. But it is NOT mentioned, because they didn't do it. They didn't have to do it. They could not legally do it. Joshua could read, and he understood what God said through Moses about the requirement for the Wavesheaf.

Now here is why:

The 15<sup>th</sup> is a Sabbath, and Leviticus 23:11 clearly forbids making the Wavesheaf offering on a Sabbath. It says to wave it on the day *after* a Sabbath.

It is not mentioned because this particular Sabbath, according to the Worldwide Church of God scenario, would have been Passover, and Passover, even though it is called *the first of the unleaveneds* in the book of Luke, is not scripturally a part of the Days of Unleavened Bread, and it does not qualify to be the day preceding the day to begin the count for Pentecost. (Leviticus 23:4-8)

It is not mentioned because they absolutely could not wave the sheaf because they had no grain that qualified as a lawful offering. The grain had to be from seed *they* had planted. Also the requirement for the offering specifically states that no offering could be from the stranger's hand. It had to come from a circumcised person—one who had made the covenant with God. (Leviticus 22:24-25)

I want to make this ridiculously clear. Suppose you had a sheep that you wanted to offer as a burnt offering that was good in every way you could see, except for one thing. It only had three legs.

Now according to the requirement laid down in Exodus and Leviticus, was that an acceptable offering? Absolutely not! Why? Because it was imperfect. Why did those offerings and the Wavesheaf have to be without blemish? Because they symbolized the sinless Christ who was descended from Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David—ALL who made the covenant with God. The stranger had not entered into the covenant with God, and the True Wavesheaf, Christ, could not be represented by anything except what came from the covenant people Israel.

The Israelites in Joshua could not meet three of the requirements for the Wavesheaf offering.

It is not mentioned because Deuteronomy 12 specifically forbids making the required *animal* sacrifice that was to accompany the Wavesheaf offering until Israel had peace throughout the land and the Tabernacle and the brazen altar were in place at the location where God had

placed His name. That condition could not be met until seven years had passed. (Deuteronomy 12:1-28) (See Joshua 21:43-45)

The Wavesheaf offering is not a Days of Unleavened Bread offering anyway. It is a *Pentecost* offering. Both the Wavesheaf offering and Pentecost itself symbolize a harvest. The Days of Unleavened Bread begin by symbolizing God's faithfulness to His promise, but as one moves through the Days of Unleavened Bread the symbolism rapidly changes to *coming out of sin* in order to meet our part of the covenant. The Days of Unleavened Bread merely provide the anchor to begin the count.

There are those who claim that the Wavesheaf offering must be made during the Days of Unleavened Bread in order to conform to God's 7,000-year plan which *they* claim the Days of Unleavened Bread picture. But there is a flaw, ...a *serious* flaw in that reasoning.

I want you to turn to Revelation 20:5. Isn't Jesus supposed to return at the end of the 6,000 years, and then there is a Millennium—the final one thousand years of God's plan that begins in Revelation 20:5?

Revelation 20:5 (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.) This is the first resurrection

Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.

The thousand years are finished. Then what happened? The Second Resurrection! And how long does the judgment take place *after* the Second Resurrection? As best we can tell, somewhere near to 100 years. That already brings us to God's plan taking place in 7,100 years, not 7,000. And it is *after* the 7,000 years have passed that the great bulk of mankind will be offered salvation and judged according to their works. So much for God's plan being restricted to 7,000 years and symbolically contained within one calendar week, according to their theory that the Wavesheaf offering must be within that particular week.

On the contrary, having the Wavesheaf day occur occasionally *outside* the Days of Unleavened Bread allows God to show more correctly His plan to harvest mankind exceeds 7,000 years, and offers hope to all of mankind for salvation.

There are those who say that we must follow what occurred to Christ in His crucifixion week exactly in order to conform. There are flaws in that thinking too.

What if what happened to Jesus occurred only one time? Now consider this. In John 7 it clearly states that Jesus went to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem in the midst of the Feast. Does this mean that we too should wait to go to the Feast of Tabernacles each and every year when it's half over? That's ridiculous!

Now back in thought to the Wavesheaf. What symbolism is shown in Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and the Sunday acceptance of the Wavesheaf?

His acceptance as the Wavesheaf offering occurred on a Sunday.

The Sabbath preceding it was within the Days of Unleavened Bread.

That Sunday was *not* a high holy day Sabbath.

He was in the grave three full days and three nights.

It was into the fourth day that He was waved before God.

Can we throw out any part of the symbolism that doesn't apply? Think about this. In light of the calendar, and the fact that Passover can fall on a Monday, a Wednesday, a Friday, or a Sabbath, can we say that there is going to be consistency every single year so that every symbolic qualification can be met every year? Impossible!

I did a little research. Between 1901 and 2000, only 30% of the time has Passover fallen on a Wednesday. What this means in practical application is that 70% of the time the exact arrangement that took place in the week that Christ died, was buried, and was resurrected, and presented before God cannot be met. Attempting to reconcile symbolism in order to force a Wavesheaf during the Days of Unleavened Bread is a fool's errand. It cannot be done! It is impossible! Symbolism is not law. Symbolism is an interpretation, and it is highly variable, whereas law is a constant, and that is why Leviticus 23:11 is a law.

Brethren, the current position of those who believe that the Wavesheaf must always be made during the Days of Unleavened Bread is wrong. Their entire scenario is based on assumptions that are proved wrong by scripture. There is absolutely nothing in Genesis 14 and 15, Exodus 12, Leviticus 23, or Joshua 5, or the Gospels' account of Christ's crucifixion and burial that indicates a Passover on a Sabbath. That is a basic assumption of those supporting the WCG's scenario. It has no scriptural validity.

Joshua strictly followed the law as God strongly admonished him to do. Joshua 5 absolutely cannot be used to establish a Saturday Passover calendar arrangement of days, which is what the WCG and those spin-offs are saying. Therefore a first day of Unleavened Bread waving of the sheaf argument falls flat on its face, because it cannot be supported. It is merely an assumption.

If I would guess, I would suggest—and this is a suggestion only—that all four of those occasions fell on exactly the same sequence of days that occurred during Christ's crucifixion, with Passover occurring on a Wednesday each and every time.

Regardless of whether that is correct, the Church of the Great God is counting correctly to Pentecost. Pentecost is *not* on May 27 this year. It is on June 3. So keep it in confidence when it rolls around.