

The Priceless 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 have held the belief that Pentecost was fulfilled thousands of years ago when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles in flames of fire. As a result, few have fully understood the profound and magnificent meaning of this day. The marvelous truth is that, not only is Pentecost more meaningful than many have understood, its final fulfillment is yet to occur.

What the celebration of this day ultimately foreshadows still awaits the true Christian. Moreover, what this day portrays is an absolute glorious event that many have not yet fully understood! Continue reading this book to discover the fascinating truth about the priceless meaning of this profound Holy Day.

From the Beginning

The Feast of Pentecost occupies an enormously vital role in the Creator's plan for man—one that few have understood. In fact, God literally formed this day before creating humanity. Pursue the quest to fully understand this inspiring truth where it begins to be revealed in the book of Genesis. There the Creator stated:

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).

In this creation account, God speaks of “signs” and seasons.” The word for signs is “oth” in Hebrew, and means a sign or mark. It is the same word God used when

speaking to Israel of His Sabbath, saying “It is a **sign**” between me and you” (Exo. 31:13).

The other word is the term “seasons.” It is “mô’âdâh” in Hebrew and means “...an appointment, a fixed time or season, or specifically a festival. It can mean year; or by implication, an assembly convened for a definite purpose...” (Strong’s H3259; Lev. 23:2).

Thus, this 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 His weekly Sabbath and annual Feasts.

He then revealed His Holy Days to the first humans. And—later, He would reveal them to Abraham, and eventually-establish these unique days when making His covenant with Israel atop Mount Sinai. Christ kept these Holy Days as an example when He walked the earth, and the Savior promises to restore them again at His glorious return (Exo. 23:10-19; Isa. 66:23; Zech. 14:16-19).

This truth should leave readers with no doubt that The Eternal intended His appointed feast days to be celebrated continually. Thus, the feast of Pentecost is to be observed until the earth no longer exists (Mat. 5:18).

Pentecost and Cain and Able

The earliest recorded observance of God’s annual festivals is found in the observance of the brothers Cain and Able—the first children of Adam and Eve. As different as the Bible describes these two brothers, they came together on the same day to give God this obligatory offering of their firstfruits.

The fact that Pentecost was observed from the very beginning of creation is often overlooked. This is a common occurrence because during the course of translating the King James Version, scholars wrongly interpreted a vital verse in the account in Genesis. And, by doing so, they obscured God’s intended meaning. For

example, the King James Version states that the brothers, Cain and Able, brought their offerings “in the process of time” (Gen. 4:3).

If readers take note of the marginal reference, providing the more literal translation, or if they search biblical commentaries, they will discover that the verse should actually read, “At the end of days.” Thus, these two brothers came together at the *end of days* to give an offering of their first fruits.

The only possible time that “the end of days” could refer to is the feast of Pentecost which requires seven weeks, or 49 days be counted. Only at the end of these 49 days was an individual permitted to present God an offering of the firstfruits of their crop (Exo. 13:1-2, 12-16).

The Holy Days and Abraham

God later called Abram to the faith. The Almighty worked with this famous Patriarch many years, testing him on numerous occasions. Finally, after Abram proved his absolute loyalty, the Eternal changed his name to Abraham, making him a profound and unalterable promise.

The Eternal swore to multiply Abraham’s children until their number was like the stars of heaven. Further, He granted the father of the faithful an astounding pledge. The Messiah would be born of his progeny (Gen. 26:3-4). In doing so, God also explained the reason He gave this man an absolute guarantee of enormous and wonderful blessings. The Creator explained:

Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my **statutes**, and my laws (Genesis 26:5).

Within this statement, the word “statutes” carries enormous importance. The reason is that this same term is frequently used when referring to God’s Holy Days. The

Hebrew word is “chûqqâh.” It is number (H2708), in *Strong’s Dictionary*, and its meaning is “**appointed**, custom, manner, ordinance, **site**, (or) **statute**.” Notice an example of God’s use of this word in which He refers directly to the feast of Pentecost:

And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the **firstfruits** *for* a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, *that* it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work *therein*: *it shall be* a **statute** for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations (Leviticus 23:20-21).

This word, “statute” is the same term God used when describing Abraham’s faithful obedience. Therefore, the Scriptures describe Abraham as keeping God’s festivals. This truth is invaluable for Christians today. It illustrates that God’s Holy Days were known and kept from righteous Able to the father of the faithful—Abraham.

Lost and Found

Centuries later, the knowledge of God’s weekly and annual Holy Days became lost to Israel during their slavery in Egypt. Therefore, after freeing Israel at the end of four centuries, God stated His Holy Commandments to His people from atop Mount Sinai (Exo. 24:14-17).

As Israel witnessed the great mountain quaking, and the powerful voice of God thundering the Ten Commandments, they literally shook in abject fear. Terrified, they asked Moses to speak to them instead of God. The Almighty’s servant then proclaimed the Eternal’s profound words—saying:

Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) **And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours**, which thou hast sown in the field: and the **feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year** all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk (Exodus 23:14-19).

In the verse above, the terms “feast of harvest” refers to the feast of “Pentecost.” Other times this Holy Day is called the “feast of Weeks,” an expression that developed based on God’s command to count seven Sabbaths beginning the day following the Sabbath that fell during the first of the three pilgrimage feasts. For more information regarding the number of required offerings on these festivals, read the booklet titled, *Three Times in a Year*.

The Name Pentecost

After counting seven Sabbaths, the day following the final Sabbath was celebrated as the feast called Firstfruits. However, due to the New Testament either being written, or translated, in Greek, the name of the feast naturally underwent a change. Thus, the Greek term for firstfruits was derived from “penta” meaning fifty, and

“cost,” meaning to count. As a result, the celebration today is more frequently called “Pentecost” and much meaning is lost.

The Wave Sheaf—an Essential Part of Pentecost

While Pentecost is of enormous importance, there exists a prior and even more vital ceremony inextricably connected to the feast of firstfruits that is now called Pentecost. That observance is the Wave Sheaf offering, and the meaning of its observance must be understood before the full significance of Pentecost can be grasped.

Originally Each Land Owner Brought a Sheaf

The offering of the Wave Sheaf has profound meaning for Christians. Prior to the Israelites traveling to Jerusalem to keep the Days of Unleavened Bread, the people were to harvest their first crop of barley.

However, prior to reaping the barley, each Israelite searched the crop to find the first and best barley to ripen. They would mark off this selection, often tying a string around the grain to identify it from the remainder of the crop.

After the harvest was complete, they would take this special sheaf of the first ripened grain to Jerusalem. There each head of household would present it to the priest who would prepare the grain and offer it the day after the weekly Sabbath falling during God’s Feast of Unleavened bread.

After God commanded this Wave Sheaf offering, He told Moses to explain to the children of Israel how this was to be done. As Moses explained to the priests and people:

...When ye be come into the land which I give unto **you**, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then **ye** shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of **your harvest** unto the priest: And he shall wave the

sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for **you**: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it (Leviticus. 23:10-11).

Some time after the second temple, the High Priest began to consolidate power. He required the priests to sacrifice the Passover lamb rather than the domestic ceremony God commanded. The priests also began sighting the new moon which God had never commanded to be done. Further, the priests grew, cut, and prepared this first fruit and the High Priest alone began to offer the sheaf for the entire nation.

The biblical verses are certain evidence that, God's original instructions referred specifically to the harvest of done by the common people, and not the High Priest alone. God commanded each land owner to take the first fruit of their harvest to the priest after they had settled in the Promised Land and reaped their first crop of barely.

Another piece of evidence is the fact that God stated that, when the people came into the land, they were to set aside this sheaf from the rest of their harvest and bring it to the Temple Priest during the days of unleavened bread. In that context, it should be remembered that God did not give the priests an inheritance in the land. They had no possession as did the other tribes (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. They were not dependent on what they raised for their needs. God had given them the tithe for their support (Lev 23:10).

Finally, when God addressed the part the priest was to play, the phrase that the priest was to wave the offering to be "accepted for you" becomes deeply meaningful.

Accepted For You

The first fruit of barley offered in the wave-sheaf pictured Christ as the first fruit. This indicates that His sacrifice specifically applied to each person individually.

The Sheaf Was an Omer?

The term sheaf simply means a heap, sheaf, dry measure, or omer (Strong's H6016). In other words, the grain was first cut and piled in sheaves. The single sheaf of the firstfruit was kept separate, and during the feast of Unleavened Bread, each head of household presented this first fruit to the Priest who prepared it before offering it on the contributor's behalf. As the Jewish Encyclopedia writes:

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 ... (the amount of grain)... therefore they hold that the wave-offering did not consist of a sheaf, but was an 'omer of grain (Rashi to Lev. xxiii. 10).

Because the term sheaf is also translated as "omer," some still will argue whether the wave sheaf was an entire sheaf, including the stalks and all, or simply an omer of barely grain derived from the sheaf of first fruits. In answer, consider first 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 of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest (Leviticus 23:10).

The Scriptures require the entire harvest be complete before offering the first fruit. Thus, the harvest would include cutting the bundle for the wave sheaf and all the other sheaves. 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 or sheaves to prevent rot from moisture. Next, the sheaves were taken to a cleared area where they would be threshed—or beaten to remove the corn from the stalks.

The remaining barely would be winnowed to further remove the chaff. Finally the barley would be put through a sieve to remove pebbles, chaff, tares—anything that was not grain.

The complete harvest could take from a week to a month depending on the size of the crop. It would then take several days to transport it to Jerusalem. More time would elapse while waiting during the feast until the actual offering day arrived. Consider that, if the offering was an entire sheaf, it would likely have dried out and crumbled in the hands of the one offering it, or in those of the priest.

In addition, 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 used for making bricks. Finally, receiving the offering, the priest was required to winnow and sift the offering to comply with the Scriptural requirement.

The biblical example of the grain offering is found in the book of Leviticus. There the Scriptures reveal the nature of the three kinds of grain offerings that were to be presented to the Almighty.

These three were the free will offering, the wave sheaf, and that of Pentecost which occurred 50 days later. While the chapter does not go into great detail, it does answer the question regarding how any grain offering was to be presented to God. Note the following:

And when **any will offer a meat 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, *to be* an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD (Leviticus 2:1-2).

Thus, any grain offering was to be fine flour. It was a measure of grain and not the sheaf, consisting of the entire stalk.

The Wave Sheaf Portrayed Christ

The wave sheaf offering reflected Christ in a number of ways. For example, in one instance, God commanded that, although the barley harvest was entirely complete, none could be eaten until the wave sheaf was offered. As the Scriptures relate:

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 for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings (Leviticus 23:14).

The fact that none of the harvest could be eaten until the wave sheaf was offered portrays part of God's plan. Christ was to be the first to be harvested from the

earth. He was the first to be resurrected, and the first to ascend to the Father before any of His believers could be lifted from the earth and offered to God at their resurrection.

Christ was resurrected—born born into the spirit world from which He came. He ascended to the Father where He was accepted as God’s sacrifice for mankind. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in 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 important to consider the statement that Christ was the first because it reassures all believers that others will follow later. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, Christ is the first born among many brethren (Rom. 8:29).

Christ is the Omer

Historically, God took His people into the land of Egypt where they would become slaves. His plan was to later free them by His mighty, and miraculous, power. After bringing them out from Pharaoh’s tyranny by miraculous and devastating plagues, Israel had little to eat during their journey to the Promised Land. As a result, God provided manna for the Israelites to sustain them. The amount each person was to collect was the same amount as that of 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).

In another case, Christ made an interesting correlation between Himself and this omer. At one point in His ministry, the Savior performed a miracle to provide food for a large group of people. The Jews understood that the Messiah was to be like Moses (Exo. 18:18). As a result, they desired that He produce manna as Moses had done.

At this point, the Savior explained that the manna did not come from Moses, but from the Father. Moreover, the manna prefigured something of far greater importance. It portrayed the Father sending Christ, whom the people were to feed upon! Later the Apostle John would record an incident in which Christ explained this truth after being challenged by the Jews, saying:

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).

This revelation provides an insightful parallel. As the Israelites journeyed to the Promised Land, Christ gave an omer of manna to each person daily. This omer

portrayed Christ who fed each Israelite during the Old Covenant, who feeds those called in the New Covenant, and who will feed those who are raised in the second resurrection. As each person's time takes place, they must be nourished by Christ daily on their journey to God's Kingdom.

In addition, Christ's miraculous provision of the omer of manna came to an end when the people entered the Promised Land. In like manner, once born into the Kingdom of God, Christians will no longer need to be fed through Christ's Spirit. They will become Spirit (1Cor.15:42-44).

A Barley Cake and War with the Midianites

Another fascinating example of this truth took place during the time of the judges. Gideon was told to lead an army against the Midianites. Naturally, he was fearful because of the size of the enemy's army. However, God promised to give him courage by the interpretation of a dream. As the author of Judges recorded:

And it came to pass the same night that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that *were* in the host. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream,

and, **lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it**, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host. And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian (Judges 7:9-15).

Christ was foreshadowed by the omer of manna which God provided for the Israelites while on their journey to the Promised Land. He was portrayed by the barely cake that came from heaven destroying the Midianites. Similarly, He was pictured by the unleavened omer of the first fruits of the barley harvest offered in the Wave Sheaf Ceremony.

More Evidence from the High Priest's Offering

God commanded every male in Israel to attend the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem. By Christ's time, the Wave Sheaf was presented by the High Priest on behalf of the entire nation. His offering still portrayed all that the earlier offerings by each individual did. It foreshadowed Christ's sacrifice from its beginning through to His final ascension.

The High Priest's offering began at the end of the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. As the Sabbath ended, delegates from the Sanhedrin would set out for their barley field used for only this purpose. After arriving, but before cutting, the Priests would have marked and tied the first, and best, grain stalks into a sheaf. The stalks measured what would amount to an omer of grain.

Then, the High Priest would surround himself with his delegates who were to observe the ceremony and insure that all was done correctly. As the Sabbath sun was setting, the High Priest then took the sickle to the chosen sheaf.

Just as the sun passed the horizon, the priest would ask the accompanying witnesses, “Has the sun set?” They would answer, “Yes!” Next, he would say, “Shall I reap?” They would answer, “Reap!” Only then would the ceremonial grain be cut and lifted from the earth. Moreover, it was the exact moment Christ was lifted up from the grave.

It is important to understand that the Priest severed the chosen sheaf at the end of the Sabbath, and that it was at this precise moment that Christ was resurrected. At this very instant, the Savior was cut free from the physical world, lifted up, and changed to spirit.

The sheaf was parched with fire—a type of trial. The grain would then undergo the grist mill where it was sifted thirteen times. The grinding and sifting aptly pictured the grueling ordeal Christ endured during His excruciating sacrifice. During the ceremony, the Priests would then add oil and frankincense to the grain. This represented the Holy Spirit and prayers of our Savior—an essential part of His monumental sacrifice for mankind.

Finally, the next day, Sunday, at approximately 9:00 A.M., the high priest would lift and wave the grain as an offering to God. As the *Wyycliffie Bible Commentary* explains:

The offering was to be lifted by the priest and moved toward the altar and then moved away from the altar. This constituted waving it. It denoted dedicating it to the Lord and receiving it again (Charles F. Pfeiffer, P. 103).

This unique ceremony portrayed Christ being raised exactly at the end of the third day at Sunset. It reflected

Him ascending to the Father the following day exactly when the first fruits were offered. In heaven, He was presented to the Father as the firstfruits of mankind, and then returned to the earth (John 17:5; Dan. 7:13-14; Joh 20:17).

Christ returned to the earth that same day to teach His followers over a forty day period, preparing them for Pentecost and the receiving of His Spirit (*The Temple and its Service*, Edersheim, Ch. 13, p 204-205; Barkley, *Matthew*, Vol. 2, Ch. 25, p. 319—Appendix p. 58).

After the person gave the priest his first fruits, the priest offered it on the individual's behalf. The priest was to also sacrifice a male lamb without blemish (Lev. 23:12). It was a burnt offering, one totally consumed by fire. As such, it was the perfect representation of our Savior who gave Himself completely to fulfill God's will and pay the penalty for our sins. It was He who John the Baptist proclaimed the Lamb of God (John 1:29).

Wine and unleavened bread were also offered on the Wave Sheaf day. These familiar Passover symbols portrayed the blood and body of Christ which was sacrificed for mankind. These many and varied aspects of the Wave Sheaf offering all portrayed Christ who became the first raised from the dead—the beginning of God's spiritual creation. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

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

Christ was perfectly portrayed by each facet of the Wave Sheaf offering. However, one aspect of this offering stands out that few reflect upon. This is found in the Priest's offering of the omer the following morning.

While the Priest's wave sheaf offering began by cutting the sheaf at the end of the Sabbath, that offering

could not be complete until the next day. In perfect harmony, the Savior was resurrected Saturday night, however, He waited until the next morning to make His appearance to the women and ascend to the Father.

What Was *Christ Waiting For*?

The Savior was buried in the earth as the annual Sabbath Day of Unleavened Bread drew on (John 19:42). He rose at the end of the weekly Sabbath at Sunset. It was exactly three days and nights after being sealed in the tomb. Yet, He remained on earth until the following morning when the women arrived to find His tomb empty.

This often generates a question. If the Savior was crucified and resurrected Saturday evening, why didn't He ascend to the father that night? The answer is found in the fact that God's Holy days foreshadow future epic events in God's plan (Col. 2:16). The Savior was waiting to fulfill the next step in God's grand design—the Wave Sheaf offering.

Sunday morning, the High Priest lifted the omer and presented it to God. Christ waited for this exact time to fulfill what the wave sheaf had foreshadowed for centuries. At this precise moment He ascended to the Father, was glorified, given power over the nations, and then returned to the earth.

The Wave Sheaf and Christ's Ascension

That Sunday morning, the same time the offering was waved, Christ ascended to God as the first fruit of God's Harvest. Respected Bible commentator, E. Bullinger explains:

The first day of the week—on the first (day) is rightly supplied, as *mia* is feminine, and so much agree with a feminine noun understood, while Sabbath is neuter. Luke24:1 has the same.

Mathew reads” towards dawn on the first (day) of the Sabbaths”, and Mark 16:2, “very early on the first (day) of the Sabbaths”. The expression is not a Hebraism and “Sabbaths’ should not be rendered “week”, as in the A.V. and R.V.A reference to Lev. 23:14-17 shows that this “first day” is the first day of the days for reckoning the seven Sabbaths to Pentecost. On this day therefore, the Lord became the first fruits of God’s resurrection harvest (I Cor. 15:23) (Companion Bible, p.1571).

Christ was presented to the Father; and accepted that day. As a result of the Father’s acceptance, He became the firstfruit of mankind—the first to be resurrected from the dead, changed to spirit, and accepted by the Father. As such, Christ became the High Priest for all who would worship the true God.

The Timing of the Wave Sheaf Offering

It is vital to understand that God’s Holy Days are prophetic. They are a road map in which each observance foreshadows a pivotal event in time that is destined to take place in God’s plan (Col. 2:16-17). For example, Christ died on the Passover, ascended on the Wave Sheaf day, and the Holy Spirit was bestowed to the Church on Pentecost. These events occurred on the very days that God’s feasts occurred, and by this, they fulfilled their intended meanings.

Christ Ascended On the Wave Sheaf Day

After His crucifixion and resurrection, Christ ascended to the father to be accepted and given a kingdom. As King David prophesied:

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

After receiving His throne, in verse one, Christ is no longer referred to as Adonai, instead in verse 5 He called is LORD—YHVH. This event and change in status could only take place when the Father welcomed Christ back to sit with Him in His throne after His resurrection, ascension, and acceptance on the day of the Wave Sheaf.

The events of this moment are further described just prior to Christ being asked to sit at the Father's right hand. The Savior ascends to heaven and is escorted to and presented to the Father. In this case, Daniel reports these events as he witnessed them in a dream from God:

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 this prophetic vision, readers are given insight into Christ as portrayed by the Wave Sheaf. Sunday morning, when the High Priest waved the sheaf toward heaven and then back, Christ ascended to heaven and was presented to the Father. There He was accepted and glorified with the glory He had before His human existence (Joh. 17:5). He then returned to the earth, and taught His disciples for forty days.

This perfectly reflects the Savior's words spoken to Martha the day of His resurrection in which:

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 (John 20:17).

After ascending and returning, Christ made an enormously profound statement:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Mathew 28:18; Traver Golden Sheaves).

Understanding Seven Days

When considering the prophetic nature of the Holy Days, it is also of value to note that, it was once thought that the seven days of Tabernacles represented a thousand years. It was also believed that the seven days of Unleavened Bread could mean a person's complete life. However, the Scriptures NEVER state that seven days is a symbol of either a person's life or the Millennium. On the other hand, God's Word provides two Scriptures as His witness that clearly state that a day is a symbol representing a thousand years (2 Pet.3:8; Psa. 90:4).

By using the Biblical definition alone, the seven day week represents God's seven thousand year plan in which the seventh day, the Sabbath, is a day of rest. Therefore, the Sabbath portrays the thousand year Kingdom that will give rest, refreshment, and restoration to all the earth (Acts 3:19-21; Heb. 4:4-11).

Consider also that, in like manner, the seven days of unleavened bread would also portray God's seven thousand year plan. No matter when an individual might be called during the 7,000 years of man, each person must put sin out of his or her life, while taking in, and internalizing Christ

by His Spirit. During each person's life, occurring within God's seven thousand years, each individual must strive to overcome just as is required of Christians in this—our time.

In the Fullness of Time

Understanding the truth regarding the number of seven days observed in God's Holy Days leads to another fascinating truth. During humanity's seven thousand years on earth, Christ was born at a predetermined day in history.

This occurrence itself is a key to understand, not only the power of God but also the exact timing of the Wave Sheaf offering. As the Scriptures state:

But when **the fulness of the time was come**,
God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made
under the law (Galatians 4:4).

Christ came at exactly the right time in history. He was born when Judah was still in existence and God's laws were known and kept. The Savior's birth also required that the timing be absolutely perfect so that He would be crucified on the very day of Passover which prefigured that ungodly horrific event. After His death, Christ laid in His grave, lifeless for three days and nights. He then rose and waited through the night to ascend that Sunday morning—the day portrayed by the Wave Sheaf.

Consider another fascinating point. Sunday, the day Christ ascended, was the first day of the new week. However, Sunday is sometimes referred to as the eighth day. It is significant that, both the count to Pentecost and the celebration of Pentecost begin on this same eighth day of the week.

This fact is of great importance. God created numbers to have their own prophetic meaning, and the fact that Sunday is considered the eighth day makes a vital

point. As Bullinger explains in his scholarly book, *Number in Scripture*:

As seven was so called because the seventh day was the day of completion and rest, so eight, as the eighth day, was over and above this perfect completion, and was indeed the first of a new series, as well as being the eighth (p. 196).

Christ was resurrected in the evening, at the end of the weekly Sabbath. This was the beginning of Sunday—a day frequently referred to as the eighth day.

This monumental day of Christ's resurrection, was a new beginning for the Savior of mankind. He was resurrected as a Spirit being. The Messiah was no longer human. Three days and nights after having completed His enormous sacrifice for man, He would rise from the grave, ascend to heaven, be accepted and, glorified by the Father. From this very moment, He would also begin His new role as the Almighty's High Priest for humanity.

This unique number, eight, also plays a significant role in observing Pentecost. This annual Holy Day takes place on the morrow after counting seven Sabbaths. It is observed the next day—a Sunday. It too is an eighth day, and it portrays a time in which a new creation will appear as the called and chosen from both the Old and New Covenants are also resurrected and ascend to God to be glorified (2 Cor. 10:5). For more on this subject, read the booklet, *Beyond the Clouds*.

A Continuing Controversy Regarding Timing

Even in the face of the exact timing expressed in Christ's appearance, His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, there continues to remain considerable controversy among the religious community regarding the time the wave sheaf was offered. Moreover, the truth

regarding this timing is essential to fully understand God's plan.

Contrary to what many have been taught, Christ was not killed on Friday, the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath. He was actually crucified on the Passover, the preparation day for the **first annual Sabbath**—the First Day of Unleavened Bread. As the Apostle John stated:

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (**for that sabbath day was an high day.**) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away (John 19:31).

Understanding this fact, it is clear that the number of days the Savior was in the tomb corresponded exactly to His promised time. As Christ had stated to the religious leaders who questioned Him, He would be in the grave precisely three days and three nights—72 hours (Mat. 12:40). For a complete explanation, read *The Resurrection Was Not On Sunday*.

Therefore, it is clear that Christ was buried at the end of the Passover as the sun was setting. Exactly three days later He was resurrected at sunset—not morning. The woman came to the tomb in the dark of early morning and He was already gone.

His resurrection took place as the Hebrews counted time, on Saturday at sunset. It was the end of Saturday, and beginning of Sunday, the day the Wave Sheaf was offered. This offering occurring during the feast of Unleavened Bread is directly connected to the feast of Pentecost.

For example, it was offered on the very day the count to Pentecost began. In addition, the Wave Sheaf and Pentecost offerings were both lifted and waved by the High Priest for acceptance by God. Next, this observance

perfectly portrayed Christ's experience of being resurrected and ascending to the Father. Finally, as will be demonstrated later, the meaning of the Wave Sheaf and the Pentecost offerings clearly portray the God's calling of Christians, their journey through this life, and their ultimate and magnificent destiny.

Plain, Simple, Evidence

The Savior was resurrected Saturday evening at the end of the Sabbath. He ascended to the Father that Sunday morning, and returned the same day (Luke 24:13-32). He then taught His followers for forty days. As Luke recorded:

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).

Prior to leaving His followers on earth, and permanently ascending to the Father, Christ commanded that they wait in Jerusalem. As Luke also wrote:

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).

As Christ said, He had to leave in order to send the Spirit (John 16:7). How many days were they to wait? If Christ ascended to the Father Sunday, returned that day, and taught His followers for forty days. It would be only ten more days until the day of Pentecost arrived.

There can be no mistaking this scenario in which the Savior ascended to the Father Sunday. He fulfilled the

wave sheaf that morning, ascending and returned the very day beginning the count to Pentecost. Christ taught the apostles for forty days, and then as a spirit being, rose past the clouds, through space, to the heaven of God's throne. There He was crowned as our King and High Priest before sending God's Spirit to His faithful followers.

Sending the Spirit would occur later in the year. This would take place at a celebration that mirrored the Wave Sheaf offering—the Feast of Pentecost.

Ironically, for thousands of years, believers presented this offering, not realizing its profound meaning. The people would bring the first fruits of their later fall harvest and present them to the priest as a tribute to the Almighty King. These would be sacrificed by the priest and enjoyed by all those who came to the festival including the Levites and poor (Deut. 16:9-12). All without understanding what readers can now comprehend.

As an aside, if Pentecost was celebrated the 50th day, counting from the day after the weekly Sabbath, the numbers would be spiritually significant—forty (referring to a period of trial) plus ten (a symbol of righteous judgment based on God's law)—fifty days until Christ's followers received the Holy Spirit.

Any other count to which men may subscribe omits the Wave Sheaf as having spiritual significance. However, the truth is that every one of God's commanded Days always has enormous symbolic meaning and a direct application to God's plan!

Why Would Luke State that Pentecost Had Fully Come?

With the Messiah as our example, we should begin our count when He began His—the day after the weekly Sabbath. Thus, Christ's followers were in the right place. They were assembled together at the right time, were in one accord, and kept the day of 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).

Christ told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until Pentecost when they would be endued with the power of the Holy Spirit. On that first New Testament Pentecost, God sent His Spirit to those faithful Christians. It was at that moment a major step toward the first harvest of mankind took place (Luke 24:49; Acts 2:1-4).

However, before any human could become part of God's first harvest of mankind at the first resurrection, Christ had to be the first of those who would resurrected to ascend to the Father in heaven, and He did so that Sunday!

From that point, after counting seven Sabbaths, on the next day—the fiftieth day, the Spirit was given to the Church, and Luke wrote that Pentecost had “fully come.” Is it possible that these two words tell us a great deal? Why would Christ cause these words to be recorded in the context of the count to Pentecost?

The answer is that in the Hebrew calendar, months alternate between 30 and 29 days. Thus, Sivan always has 30 days (www.hebrew4christians.com/ret 3/15/2015). Therefore, at the time of Christ's death and resurrection, the Pharisees would have observed Pentecost on the 6th day of that month. However, for those who counted from the day after the weekly Sabbath, the celebration of Pentecost generally occurred one or two days later and always on Sunday.

The Pharisees observed Pentecost earlier than the Sadducees. Those who faithfully waited for Christ's promise, Pentecost fully came two days later—on Sunday.

As explained further in the appendix, the Pharisaic count Pentecost was unscriptural. They began their count from the day after the first Day of Unleavened Bread—not the weekly Sabbath. Therefore, if the Savior would have

simply said “wait until Pentecost,” it may have misled some of His followers. They may have come together and celebrated the same day the Pharisees did—two days earlier.

Secondly, it is possible that this was God’s reminder to people of all ages to follow His Word and not that of men. By this, we function together with one accord; and are filled with the Spirit. Therefore, we are to keep Pentecost when it has fully come—not another time.

Tragically, the question of the timing in the count to Pentecost rages among the Churches of God. As a result, not all believers keep this Holy Day at the same time. Therefore, we are not in one accord. Such a circumstance should never exist! For a much more complete explanation of this topic, please review the subject of the timing fully in the appendix.

The Wave Sheaf—Pentecost Connection

A vital truth of God is revealed in the Wave Sheaf and its fundamental relationship to Pentecost. These two offerings are interrelated in a way that is inseparable. Further, once understood, this connection will inspire true Christians to have an enormous reason to rejoice.

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

Pentecost portrays a time when God’s faithful will also ascend to be accepted and glorified. After this, they will marry their Savior (2 Cor. 5:10).

The Priceless Meaning of Pentecost

Based on the evidence presented here, and much more in the appendix, the count to Pentecost is to begin on the day after the weekly Sabbath that falls during the days of Unleavened Bread. Rich as it is with symbolism, the imagery of the Wave Sheaf celebration is not complete by itself.

The Wave Sheaf is the beginning of something of enormous importance—something that applies directly to God’s faithful believers throughout all human history. The Almighty also commanded a vital second offering that was to take place after counting fifty days, beginning the day the Wave Sheaf was presented.

The fact that Christ was the first to be raised, and presented before the Father, gives Him enormous preeminence. However, this fact also speaks volumes regarding something else of vast importance—something that should motivate readers to take special note.

If Christ is the first to be raised that fact means others are destined to follow later. Thus, the Wave Sheaf is intimately tied to the next Holy Day—Pentecost. In other words, the first offering of the Wave Sheaf foreshadowed the harvest of the Son of God—the Savior. This offering begins a forty nine day countdown to the time that the first harvest of those in God’s Church will be harvested. Notice the Eternal’s instructions for this feast, saying:

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 fiftieth day, was Pentecost.

Pentecost occurred on the (morrow), the day following the seventh Sabbath. It was the second pilgrimage feast in which its unique offerings were also to be lifted, waved, and accepted by God.

The Importance of the Number Seven

Scripture states that we are to count seven Sabbaths from the Wave Sheaf ceremony. In doing so, we should NOT disregard the importance of the number seven. Throughout the Scriptures, seven is used to indicate completion.

The number seven is used to keep God's weekly Sabbath, picturing the thousand year rest of God's millennial kingdom. There is also the count of seven days during the feast of unleavened bread. These seven days depict Christians putting sin out of their lives while imbibing Christ, the bread of life. Further, this occurs for each believer during their life time that takes place during the seven thousand years God allotted for man's rule on

earth. Only at the end of this time will God's incredible plan for His firstfruits be complete.

In addition, there are seven sets of seven years until the Jubilee is observed. Further, there are seven lamp stands representing seven New Testament Church eras that exactly mirror seven strikingly similar eras found in the Old Covenant. For more information you can read the book *Evidence for Eras*.

This fact leads to an interesting question. Is it possible that there is a connection between these seven church eras leading to Christ's return and the seven Sabbaths that occur from Christ's ascension on the day of the wave sheaf to Pentecost and the first resurrection? This connection is further strengthened by the fact that the feast of Pentecost is called the **feast of first fruits** and was comprised of an offering **two loaves** containing **leaven**.

As the unleavened barely of the Wave Sheaf was lifted and waved to represent Christ's ascension and acceptance by the Father, the Pentecost offering is also lifted and waved, portraying the ascension of God's faithful people also being raised and accepted by God the Father.

This fact should help make this amazing comparison clear. Pentecost portrays Christ's Church, comprised of human beings throughout seven eras of both the Old and the New Covenants. These are individuals who have leaven—the law of sin and death in them. Yes, they are forgiven through Christ's sacrifice, and they will ascend having overcome sin and been made perfect. Still they will do so possessing a history of sin that is pictured by the leavened loaves.

Two Wave Loaves

In preparation for Pentecost, the two loaves were baked with leaven—a symbol of sin. They, along with two lambs, were waved and eaten by the priests. The offering

of these leavened loaves continues to point to the fact that the Pentecost offering refers to God's people.

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

This truth reflects the fact that no one except Christ will enter the Kingdom of God having been without experiencing the leaven of sin. As Paul reminds us:

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).

Leaven is a symbol of pride and sin. This presents 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 the Old and New Covenants. It is also interesting to note that they are identified as first fruits. As James writes:

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).

At the resurrection, on the fiftieth day, a Sunday, true Christians will experience their new beginning being changed and made perfect. They will be Christ's first fruits and be like Him. 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).

Another valuable piece of evidence is found in the Apostle John's vision in the Book of Revelation. There he sees 144,000 resurrected saints in heaven. When told their identity, the angel unmistakably states they are the first fruits. As the Apostle John writes:

...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 are they who were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being the first-fruits* to God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:1-4).

These statements alone should provide evidence enough to convince readers that the first resurrection is comprised of exactly 144,000 saints, and that they are God's first fruits. For those who seek more information, please read our book, *The 144,000*.

On Pentecost, there were two lambs representing Christ as the sacrifice covering those of the Old Covenant and New Covenant. There were also two loaves baked with leaven within portraying God's people from the Old and New Covenants. Seven lambs were also offered. Interestingly, the number seven comes up again, and leads one to wonder, it possible these represent Christ's sacrifice for each of seven eras?

The primary, glorious, and mind enlightening truth is that Christ is the first of the firstfruits. He is portrayed by the single wave sheaf. Later, those who will become His firstfruits are portrayed by the two leavened loaves. They will follow the pattern He already set. They will be raised

from the dead, or changed if alive at the time. At that point, they will ascend to heaven, be accepted by the Father, and return to earth with the Savior. As Paul stated:

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

Two Harvests

These offerings portray God's transcendent plan. His holy days reflect epic historical points in the Creator's time line for man's salvation, and these two Holy Days reflect the two major harvests of man. The first is the early, smaller, spring barley harvest, and then later, the much larger fall wheat harvest. Spiritually speaking, the first harvest is comprised of Christ and the later one, His first fruits—those who attain the first resurrection.

The second Harvest is the great multitude, comprised of all the rest of mankind found in the book of life at the time of final judgment (Rev. 20:4, 12-15). For more information, read the booklet, *The Truth about the Resurrections*

Of these two harvests, Pentecost portrays the first of God's harvest. They are those who lived faithfully being led by God's Spirit during the first 6,000 years of mankind's history. They will be raised, made immortal, and appear as Christ does (1Joh. 3:2; Rev. 20:6; Php. 3:21).

True Christians Are Christ's First Harvest

Thus, it is understood that by Christ's resurrection, He became the first born from the dead. Again, the fact that He is the first born indicates that others will also be born from the dead. They will rise from the grave in what the Bible calls the first resurrection. They are those who will be the rest of God's firstfruits (Rev. 20:5-6; Jam. 1:18). Their rebirth will be comprised of the faithful saints at the

blowing of the last of seven trumpets (1 Cor. 15:52; Rev.11:15-18. They are Christ's first harvest of humankind. As Paul clearly 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).

The Apostle John also makes clear that, those who follow Christ, will ultimately be born of spirit just as He was. At that point they will be like He now is. As John states:

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, and 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 wrote that the saints will be like Him, God's apostle did not mean they would be similar. No! He was declaring that they will be composed of the same Spirit, and would 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 verifies this. He records the undeniable fact that those Christians who will be resurrected at the last trump will be raised as spirit beings just as was 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 true Christians are a kind of first fruits. Thus, He and the resurrected saints are a part of the same assembly. Faithful Christians are also first. They were first to trust Christ, and the first to have been sealed by His spirit. Paul explains this stating:

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 the first. As 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 first resurrection. They will be a part of God's initial first harvest of mankind. They 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 ascension, Pentecost pictures the saint's resurrection and change to glorious spirit. They will be part of the first harvest of Christ. They will be like the Savior and therefore literally qualified to marry Him (Rev. 19:9).

This truth is also reflected in the one who made a path that we can follow (1Joh. 2:6). As Hebrews states:

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" can also be translated as "forerunner" in the Greek. This word refers to an individual who blazes a trail, enabling others to follow. Christ was the first to be harvested. He was the first of the first fruits—and His Church will be comprised of those who genuinely follow Him and, as such, will ultimately be harvested. As He was the firstfruit, we are His first fruits.

Pentecost 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 and develop throughout all eternity.

From this evidence, it should be clear that the feast of Pentecost portrays the magnificent resurrection of the faithful saints. However, most members of the Church of God have erroneously been taught that the resurrection of the saints, and the return of Christ, occur on the feast of Trumpets. The following amazing truth proves that this is not true!

Understanding the Feast of Trumpets

For many years, the Church of God has continued to rightly understand that God's wrath was to be a year long. We quoted the following verses make this truth clear:

(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**; to comfort all that mourn (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)

By the verses above, it is clear that the day of 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. Then realizing that God's Feasts mark specific events, it becomes self evident that the time the trumpet plagues will begin on the feast of Trumpets.

While all this is correct, we falsely concluded something else. That is that, at the sound of the seventh trump, God's wrath also ended. While it is certain that the 7th trump and the resurrection end of the great tribulation, somehow, we forgot to include the seven viol plagues, and the place they occur in our previous scenario.

The Mystery is Finished

By thinking, all was complete at the sound of the seventh trumpet; we had focused on ourselves alone. To us, it all ended with the true Christians being resurrected. However, God's plan for the end, and His ultimate return, is not complete with the saints being resurrected. We misunderstood a vital statement made by the Apostle John:

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 year of wrath apply? God's mystery has eluded the great minds of science, religion, and philosophy for millennia. However, it is no less than God's plan for mankind. It is that God is reproducing Himself through man!

At the resurrection of the saints, they will be changed to spirit and be glorified. They will be like Christ and live on the same plane of existence as He does. Notice how this is reaffirmed by the Apostle Paul as he explains that the mystery is the ultimate purpose of mankind, and the glory true Christians will ultimately inherit. As Paul writes:

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 this same momentous gift of His Spirit. However, we have not

received the Spirit simply to provide us a connection with God.

Similar to 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 hope of glory. As Paul wrote:

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 Him to us (Luke 10:22). Thus, those who repent and receive His Spirit are now able to pray to God using this unique term.

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

Prior to Christ's profound statement, there never existed an endearing term for God. Instead there were only expressions of formality, power, and majesty, but the term Abba also reflects "dear Father." It retains the sense of respect and admiration a father deserves, but it does much more. It reflects a familiarity born of intimacy, love, and unity, and we have been given the Father's Spirit. We are His children, and as a physical father passes his D.N.A to his child, God passes His nature to us. His Spirit merges with ours, and a new life is begotten. As 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 (2Peter 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. We are learning selfless service toward others and growing to reflect the character of God until we are finally born again in the image of the Almighty God.

Every faithful Christian's journey of spiritual development will, eventually and ultimately, lead 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, we carry within us this hope of eternal life of glory with God the Father and Christ.

By this spirit we possess the opportunity to be among the first harvest of mankind, and therefore, to be like Christ. 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 be His literal Son or Daughter—and an integral part of God's royal family. For more information, read our booklet, *Born Again*.

Readers need to understand this marvelous reality. Later, the Apostle Paul would explain that the mystery included being changed to incorruptible and immortal Spirit. As Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren:

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)

God's mystery is no less than His ultimate purpose for mankind. The Almighty will eventually gather all things together in heaven and earth. Man will become one with Him. As the Apostle Paul 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 fulness 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. It includes marriage to our Savior, becoming His intimate bride, and part of His leadership team in the glorious Kingdom of God. In the words of the Apostle Paul:

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 fully know 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 enjoying the marvelous wonders of Spirit life that the Eternal does.

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

This is a magnificent truth of God. However, the fulfillment of the mystery of God at the last trumpet is not the end of God's wrath.

Notice that the seventh trumpet is actually the third woe to mankind—a profound signal of far worse, and devastating, plagues yet to come. As the Apostle John explained, after the sixth trumpet is blown, the last trump signals three terrible, and terrifying woes:

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 for ever and ever (Revelation 11:14-15).

Notice God's pattering in the book of Revelation. The tribulation begins with the seven seals. However the seventh seal **IS** the seven trumpet plagues. Next, the seven trumpets sound, and the seventh trumpet **IS** the resurrection of the saints, but it **IS** primarily the signal for humanity's third Woe! It is no less than the clarion call for the seven viols that are the most terrifying and unimaginably destructive plagues in the history of the world

The Vials Plagues Occur after three and one Half Years

It is clear that the beginning of the trumpet plagues initiate the year of God's wrath, and that the saints are resurrected at the seventh of these trumps. The Scriptures also reveal that their resurrection takes place at the end of the 3 ½ year tribulation:

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 (Matthew 24:29-31).

The verses above make this truth certain. The saints are resurrected after 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 they explain that this tribulation takes place over a 3 1/2 year period. Both the prophet Daniel and the Apostle John state that the beast will persecute the saints for this exact amount of time while others are protected during this same time period:

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 the timing using different words. John writes of time, saying:

And 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 (Revelation 12:14).

Using God's 360 day calendar, this period of time is also the length of the ministry of the two witnesses. Notice John's account in Revelation:

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 (Revelation 11:2-3).

The ministry of these two witnesses also takes place over 1260 days. This is the same length of time as the great tribulation. These men are finally killed and then resurrected and called up to be with Christ. This is immediately followed by the resurrection of God's Saints. As 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 6th 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 for ever and ever (Revelation 11:11-15).

After 3 ½ days the two witnesses are raised to life. As an aside, it is interesting to consider that God often uses a day symbolically to represent a year (Num. 14:34; Eze.4:6).

In that context, is it possible that if the two witnesses are raised after 3 ½ days that those days are symbolic of the 3 ½ years? This may well indicate that the witnesses are also resurrected when the seventh trump sounds—the same time the dead in Christ are raised.

God's chosen are resurrected after 3 ½ years of tribulation at the seventh trump. Only then do the vial plagues begin. The saints will view these final plagues from 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 is 3 ½ years in length, and is complete at the seventh trump. This, the final trump reveals the mystery of God—the resurrection of the saints who will stand on a sea of glass in heaven with the harps of God. From here they will meet the Father, personally become closer to Christ, and ultimately marry their Savior and High Priest.

It must be understood that the 3 ½ year tribulation on the church is overlapped by the year of God’s wrath. The trumpet plagues begin at the end of the third year. Half way through that year, the 7th trump is blown, and the resurrection takes place.

At that time, from the vantage point in heaven, the resurrected saints will witness God initiate the last part of the year of his wrath—the pouring out of His vial plagues.

These will destroy the armies that have accumulated in Jerusalem. They will destroy much of the nations, and all of Christ’s enemies. They will effectively remove any possible resistance to the Kingdom Christ is going to bring (Rev. 14-16). This will include the supper of the Great God followed by Christ’s return to earth (Rev. 19:17). For more information regarding where the saints are during the vial plagues please read the booklet, titled, *Beyond the Clouds*

A Pre—End-Time Scenario

The prophet Daniel spoke clearly and specifically regarding both the last days and the beginning of the great tribulation. In his volume, he stated:

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 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 waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (Daniel 12:11-12).

Many have interpreted these time periods; however, most have not considered the actual context of Daniel's words. As a result, most interpretations have simply been the fanciful ideas of men.

On the other hand, when the context is considered, the meaning becomes clear. For example, in this scenario, there are three events mentioned. Within the same context there are three time periods that are involved.

The 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 holy land, and order the sacrifices to be stopped. #3, He will actually sit in the temple of God claiming the title of God, (Rev. 13:8). As Paul wrote:

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 act that prompts the tribulation, requiring armies to surround Jerusalem to protect the beast in this religiously charged area (Luke 21:20). As Matthew explains:

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 any thing 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 Scriptures reveal that the beast actually sits in the Holy place in a temple that the Jews plan to build. It is the act that initiates the tribulation, and thus, believers in Jerusalem need not take anything when they flee. That very night they will be taken to safety and provided for miraculously by God.

In Summary

Thus, there are three events mentioned. And, there are three time periods involved. When put together there is a perfect fit.

The beast takes over Middle East in 45 days
He takes up residence in Jerusalem's temple between the Mediterranean and dead seas.
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 will come down and take over the Middle East. He will set up his headquarters in Jerusalem, put a stop to the sacrifices. Ultimately, he will sit in the temple claiming that he is God.

This final event is the abomination. It is also the catalyst that sets off the spark igniting the tribulation that will last three and one half years—or 1260 days.

At the end of three years of that tribulation, God will begin His final year of wrath by initiating the first trumpet plague (Rev. 8:1). Because His wrath starts with the trumpet plagues, it is highly likely that they would begin on the feast of trumpets.

Because God's holy days represent events that take place during His plan of salvation, it is also likely that each trumpet would announce the next plague on the appointed feast days. As the Scriptures state:

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

Thus, the first trumpet plague would begin on the Feast of Trumpets. Then, there would follow six more trumpets each blown on a Holy day. The seventh one would fall six months later on the Feast of Pentecost. Therefore, God's wrath would not be complete until the end of a full year—once again on the Feast of Trumpets.

An End Time Scenario

Feast

Plague

Trumpets	Trumpet 1—Hail and Fire
Atonement	Trumpet 2—Babylon tossed into the sea
Tabernacles	Trumpet 3—Waters made bitter
Last Great Day	Trumpet 4—Heaven's light darkened
1st Day of DUB	Trumpet 5—Demon Locust let out
Last Day of DUB	Trumpet 6—1/3 of Mankind Dies
Pentecost	Trumpet 7—The Saints are Resurrected and the Vial Plagues Begin After 3 ½ years
Trumpets	The Conclusion of God's Vial Plagues

The seventh trumpet signals seven more additional vial plagues. These take place after the Saints have been raised at the 7th trump. John sees them after they followed Christ to God's throne where they witness the final vial plagues taking place from God's sea of glass in heaven. These plagues complete the final year of God's wrath:

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, 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).

The Seven Viol Plagues

<i>(1). The first vial gives those who have the mark of the beast a terrible and painful sore (Revelation 16:1-2).</i>
<i>(2). The second vial causes the sea to become blood, killing all living things in it (Revelation 16:3).</i>
<i>(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).</i>
<i>(4). The fourth vial is poured out on the sun, causing it to scorch mankind (Revelation 16:8).</i>
<i>(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).</i>
<i>(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).</i>
<i>(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).</i>

Finally, Christ will return with His saints and an enormous angelic army that will destroy the military forces of the nations that have assembled at Megiddo. There Christ and His supernatural armies will destroy any possibility of resistance to the Kingdom of God.

Also consider that it would take significant time for these final vial plagues to occur. Since it is certain there will be 3 ½ years of tribulation on the Church. Is it likely that the rest of that final half year consists of God's vial

plagues which finally conclude at the next feast of Trumpets—thus completing the entire year of God’s wrath!

If this is so, then it is possible that ten days later, Satan would be put away on the Day of Atonement. Christ’s feet would touch down on earth on the Feast of Tabernacles, and He would once again tabernacle with mankind (1Joh. 1:14). His Kingdom would begin on the Feast of Tabernacles.

During the seven days of the feast, those Israelites still alive would likely experience a second exodus as they were miraculously rescued from around the world and returned to the holy land. Finally on the Last Day, the eighth day, there would be a new beginning for humanity in God’s reestablished Kingdom on the earth!

This is the priceless meaning of Pentecost. It is intimately tied to the Wave Sheaf Offering which portrays Christ’s suffering, resurrection, and ascension to heaven to be accepted by the Father. The Wave Sheaf then begins the count of seven Sabbaths, portraying seven church eras until Christ’s first fruits are finally resurrected, and welcomed before the Father’s throne. There, they will be glorified, (2 Cor. 5:10), and then married to Christ. It is during this time that the angels will pour out the final vial plagues prior to Christ, the King of Kings, returning with the resurrected saints who will assist Him in restoring God’s right way of life to a world gone so terribly wrong.

Pentecost portrays the magnificent hope of the true Christian, but it also portrays much more. It is the beginning of God’s Family, their unification, their empowerment under Christ, and ultimately the work of a people who will become the hope of all mankind as, one by one; under Christ’s leadership they will assist Christ in spreading the Kingdom of God around the world!