

WHAT'S A PENTECOST

by

LIFELINE MINISTRIES, INC.

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What is meant by the terms “Pentecost” and “Pentecostal Power”? What is the origin of these terms? Should we, True Believers, be concerned with Pentecost? Just what is Pentecost anyway?

The word “Pentecost” is a transliteration of the Greek word for fifty. This name is derived from the method of counting days to determine which day to observe a feast that was commanded by the Eternal. This feast was given several names in the Old Testament. It was called the Feast of Harvest; the Feast of First Fruits; and the Feast of weeks. This feast day SHOULD have a very great meaning for the Believer, since he is very much a part of the Harvest of First Fruits, as will be explained in detail later.

Pentecost is one of the great festivals of the Master Yahshua. Notice that it is not a feast of the Jews, as is proclaimed by so many that, for some reason, wish to NOT obey their Creator (Yahshua). We find it spelled out quite clearly for us in Exodus 23:14-16, “Three times you shall keep a feast to me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (You shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before me empty); and the Feast of HARVEST, the FIRST FRUITS of your labors, which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering which is at the end of the year, when you have gathered in your labors from the field.”

Notice that it is Yahweh speaking, in verse 14, where He says you shall keep the feasts unto ME. We find in Leviticus 23 whose feasts these are. In verse 2 we read, “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The feasts OF YAHWEH (Yahshua)...”. Those that would have you believe that these feasts are Jewish feasts completely ignore this statement. It was Yahweh speaking to Moses and commanding Moses to instruct all of the children of Israel—not just the Jews.

There are several very important facts about the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and the other FEASTS OF YAHSHUA that we should be aware of. First of all, they are not the feasts of any one certain people or race, but rather they are feasts that are celebrated by ALL people who belong to the Eternal. “And when a stranger sojourns with you and wants to keep the Passover to Yahweh, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For NO uncircumcised person shall eat it. ONE LAW shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you.” Exodus 12:48-49. We see here that any one who wishes to celebrate the feast is welcome to do so as long as he is willing to abide by the SAME set of laws as Israel. This is stated again in Isaiah 56:1, “THUS SAYS YAHWEH (Yahshua) : keep

justice, and do righteousness, for my salvation is about to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.” Here we establish that it is Yahweh—The Eternal: that is speaking. Next we see that the Master was speaking about keeping His Sabbaths (plural). This takes in both the weekly Sabbath—the LAST day, not the first day of the week; and the feast days set aside for the pleasure of Yahweh’s people. Verses 2-7, “Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on it; who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil. Do not let the son of the foreigner, who has joined himself to Yahweh, speak, saying, Yahweh has utterly separated me from His people; nor let the eunuch say, here I am, a dry tree. For thus says Yahweh to the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, and choose what pleases me and hold fast my covenant,... Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to Yahweh, to serve Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and holds fast my covenant, even them I will bring to my set-apart mountain and me them joyful in my house of prayer...” It becomes obvious that these “Jewish” Sabbaths or set-apart days are not “Jewish” days but are Yahshua’s days. These are days that our Creator set aside for us to enjoy while worshipping Him. It should also be understood that Yahweh doesn’t take pleasure in afflicting His people. No, He desires that we have joy in worshipping Him. Yahshua said, “...The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27. So we should not look on the Sabbath—weekly or annual days—as something to be dreaded or detested. Pentecost was instituted before the Levitical Priesthood and before the religious rituals that so many consider punishment for the children of Israel. It is found in Exodus 23:16, which is part of the Old Covenant between Yahweh and a race of people that Yahweh had chosen to be a nation of priests for the rest of the world.

WHO ARE PRIESTS?

What is a priest? What is your idea of a priest of Yahweh? What is his function? Who is he? How did he become a priest?

The Hebrew word for priest “kohen” means: one who undertakes anyone’s cause, his deputy, delegate. He who stands up in anyone’s matter, and labors in his cause. (*Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*).

When Yahweh called Moses to go up into the mountain so that He could tell Moses what He wanted the children of Israel to do, He told Moses that He wanted them to become a nation of priests (kohen)—priests to the rest of the world. “Now therefore, if you will indeed OBEY my voice and KEEP my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people; for ALL the EARTH IS MINE. And you shall be to me a KINGDOM (nation) of PRIESTS, and an set-apart nation...” Exodus 19:5-6a. Yahshua said, “If you love me, KEEP my COMMANDMENTS.” John 14:15. What did Yahweh say about OBEYING? Now notice that Yahweh STILL wants His people to be priests to the world. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Son (Yahshua), teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20. We can gather from this that our Father still wants His plan carried out.

By being disciples and taking the word of Yahweh to the world, we are fulfilling the job that was given to Israel—that of being mediators between Yahweh and mankind. We know that Yahshua became the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, but remember in Israel under Yahweh’s plan, there was only one high priest, but many priests. With Yahshua as our High Priest He mediates between Yahweh and us and then, in turn, we between Yahshua and the world.

Moses returned these words to the people and they said, “Hey, that sounds good, let’s get on with it.” So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which Yahweh commanded him. Then all the people answered together and said, ALL that Yahweh has spoken we will do.” Exodus 19:7-8a. When they said this Yahweh said that He would talk to them and explain the terms of the agreement (covenant). He told Moses to get the people ready for Him to talk to them. This should be great! Just think what it would mean for Yahshua—our Creator—the Almighty of the universe—to come and speak with us.

The great day came and all the people were ready to hear Yahweh and enter a contract with Him. Have you ever wondered why Yahweh doesn’t come down and talk with us? It may very well be that He knows we would be just like the children of Israel. Remember that the Eternal said that He wanted Israel to become a na-

tion of priests. This meant they were to become mediators between Yahweh and man, but when it came time for them to approach Yahweh and hear what He had to say, they chickened out. “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood after off.” Exodus 20:18. It scared the socks off those people. Instead of standing and listening to what Yahweh had to say to them, they took off. Then they rejected the priesthood. “And they said to Moses, you speak with us, and we will hear: but let not Yahweh speak with us lest we die.” Exodus 20:19. They didn’t seem to be too concerned with the life of Moses—it was alright for him to die, if that was what it was to come to. Instead of the people saying that they would listen to what Yahweh had to say and then pass it on to the rest of the world, they asked Moses to be THEIR priest.

By careful reading of the Old Covenant we can see that the children of Israel rejected the priesthood BEFORE Yahweh finished laying out the covenant. The actual covenant begins with verse 1 Exodus 20. By the time He had given them the Ten Commandments, they were already throwing in the towel. Look at that 19th verse again. “They said to Moses, you speak with us, and we will hear; but let not Yahweh speak with us, lest we die.” Moses tried to reassure them and get them to come back, but they just wouldn’t have any part of it. “And Moses said to the people, do not fear; for Yahweh has come to TEST you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin. And the people stood AFAR OFF...” Exodus 20:20-21a.

We should understand that all this happened BEFORE the incident of the Golden Calf, which was before the institution of the Levitical Priesthood. By understanding this point and also that at this time the Old Covenant was delivered to the children of Israel, we can see that this is where the misunderstanding about the Old Covenant comes from. This covenant was entered into by Yahweh and Israel with the idea of Yahweh putting His Set-apart Spirit in them. This had nothing to do with the Levitical Priesthood, washings, burnt offerings, etc. Those things came later as a result of disobedience. This was understood by the prophet. Notice what Samuel said, “...Has Yahweh great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.” I Samuel 15:22. “And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the SPIRIT of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands on him:...” Deuteronomy 34:9a. These men, along with many others like David, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel and others that could be named, did not reject Yahweh and so they were filled with the Set-apart Spirit. But look at what Yahweh had to say about those that rejected Him and turned instead to the Golden Calf, “I will send my angel before you...for I will NOT go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.” Exodus 33:2-3.

The Old covenant, as delivered to the children of Israel, was not bad. It was not a bad set of laws that worked against them. If you will take the time to read and study the covenant which is found in its entirety in Exodus 19-23, you will discover that, in addition to the Ten Commandments, there are laws that act as guidelines on how to make proper judgments. We need to understand that the Old covenant—like most of the Bible—is like an operator’s manual. It does not set out to tell you every move you should make, nor does it give a clear and to the point answer to every question that one might have; rather we are to look at the principles laid out for us and make the proper judgment. For example, in Exodus 21:2-6, we see an instruction that we think of as applying to slavery only, but if we read carefully we can see that the proper principles that govern employee-employer relationships are spelled out. After a predetermined time the employer should offer some type of bonus (freedom, verse 2) for loyal service. Also the employee should show love and loyalty to the employer (verse 5).

LAW NAILED TO THE STAKE??

But what about all the talk in the New Testament about the law being nailed to the stake or done away with? Many preachers make an emphatic statement that the Old Covenant was done away with, to make room for the New. They mistakenly claim that Yahshua did away with the Old Covenant and the law (many include the Ten Commandments) with His statement:” You shall love Yahweh your Almighty with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40. Read that statement by the Messiah again and then ask yourself if it says the laws of the Old

Covenant were done away with, or, if it simply says that the whole idea behind the law and all that the prophets of old said is summed up in two great all encompassing principles, that being, first you must love Yahweh above ALL else and secondly you must love your fellowman as much as you love yourself. This passage cannot be justly used as a proof text that the law is done away with. So let us turn to another passage used by many for the same purpose. “Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us, and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the stake. Having disarmed principalities and power, He made public spectacle of the, triumphing over them in it. Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow things to come, but the substance is of Messiah.” Colossians 2:14-17. Obviously ordinances (handwriting of requirements) that were against us were nailed to the stake of Messiah, BUT the question must be asked and answered: “What ordinances were against us?” Was it the one that says; “You shall have no other mighty ones before me?” It couldn’t be that one because, as we have already seen, that comes under the first of the two great commandment. Perhaps it was the fourth of the Ten Commandments. But that would certainly come under the second of the two great commandments. Not only did Yahweh command that we REMEMBER the Sabbath because He blessed it and set it apart, but we are to give our children, our work animals, our employees and anyone else around us, the day off to rest just as WE want the day off to rest. Actually this command comes under both of the great commands. How can you love Yahweh completely and refuse to do what He commands (REMEMBER the Sabbath).

So, what does this passage really mean? What was Paul talking about? Here again, one of the rules on how to study the Bible comes into play, that is: ALWAYS take a passage in its context. In what context was Paul speaking to the Colossians? Was he really telling them that the Sabbath and Feast Days and all laws are abrogated.

We should understand from the beginning that Paul had several very important reasons for writing his letter to the Colossians. We shall look at one reason which concerns our subject, that is the HERESY that was at Colossae at the time of Paul’s letter. In the context of Paul’s addressing that heresy is where we find some vital clues concerning his statement (2:14-17). Verse 8, “BEWARE lest any MAN SPOIL you through PHILOSOPHY and vain deceit, after the TRADITION OF MEN, after the RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, and NOT AFTER MESSIAH.”

“The false teaching which Paul refutes in Colossians is characterized by a THEOLOGICAL and a PRACTICAL error. Theologically, the Colossian ‘Philosophy’ was competing with Messiah for man’s allegiance. Its source of authority, according to Paul was man-made ‘tradition’ and its object was to impart true ‘wisdom’, ‘knowledge’, and ‘understanding’. To attain such knowledge, Believers were urged to do homage to cosmic principalities, and to ‘the elements of the universe’.

“What precisely Paul meant by the latter phrase is still much debated. Some interpret ‘the elements’ as the ‘elementary teachings about Yahweh belonging to this world’ which were present in rudimentary form both in Judaism and paganism. Other view them as ‘the basic elements of this world’ particularly the earth, water, air and fire, from which it was thought all things derived. Most modern (scholars), however, have adopted a personified interpretation of the (elements) identifying them with angelic mediators of the law (Acts 7:53; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2) and with pagan astral gods who were credited with control of the destiny of mankind. To gain protection from these cosmic powers and principalities, the Colossian ‘philosophers’ were urging Believers to offer cultic adoration to angelic powers (Colossians 2:15, 18,19, 23) and to follow ritualistic and ascetic practices (Colossians 2:11, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22). By that process one was assured of access to and participation in the divine ‘fullness’ (Colossians 2:9, 10, CF. 1:19). The theological error then basically consisted in interposing inferior angelic mediators in place of the Head himself (Colossians 2:9, 1, 18.19).

“The PRACTICAL outcome of these theological speculations was the insistence on strict asceticism (undue self denial like a monk or hermit) and ritualism. These consisted in ‘putting off the body of flesh’ (2:11) (apparently meaning withdrawal from the world); rigorous treatment of the body (2:23); prohibition to either taste or touch certain kinds of foods and beverages (Colossians 2:16, 21), and careful observance of sacred days and seasons—festival, new moon, Sabbath (Colossians 2:16). Believers presumably were led to believe that by submitting to these ascetic practices, they were NOT surrendering their faith in Messiah, but rather they were receiving ADDED protection and were assured of full access to the divine fullness.” *From*

Sabbath to Sunday p. 344-345.

We can see here that the mention of the sacred days, new moon, and Sabbaths, are not in the context of a direct discussion on the obligation of the law, rather of syncretistic (attempt to join different or opposing principles or practices as in philosophy or religion) beliefs and practices. Undoubtedly elements from the Old Testament were incorporated to justify the ritualistic principles advocated by the Colossian philosophers

If Paul did not refute the usual brand of Jewish or Jewish-Christian legalism, but a syncretistic philosophy which had Jewish elements among others, is it correct to use this passage to state Paul's attitude toward the Feast Days and Sabbath? Does Paul's condemnation of a perverted use of a religious observance constitute a valid ground to conclude that he releases all Believers, from its obligation? Does Colossians 2:16-17 actually imply that Paul taught that Believers were no longer under obligation to observe any set-apart day? The answer to these questions hinges on, and understanding of, verse 14, Paul uses in this verse a legal metaphor namely that Yahshua is a judge who removed and nailed to the stake the WRITTEN document. "He has overridden the law, and canceled every record of the debt that we had to pay; He has done away with it by nailing it to the stake." Colossians 2:14, Jerusalem Bible. In a footnote to this verse the Jerusalem Bible states, "Destroying our death warrant." We should be careful to note the wording because it tells us what was nailed to the stake. Was Paul referring to the Mosaic law with its ordinances, thus declaring that Yahshua nailed it to the stake? It hardly seems correct to say that Paul would say here that Yahshua impaled the same Mosaic law that He told the Romans was good (Romans 7:7). "This view would not add to, but detract from, Paul's argument designed to prove the fullness of Yahweh's forgiveness. Would the wiping out of the moral and/or ceremonial law provide to Believers the assurance of divine forgiveness? Hardly so. It would only leave mankind without moral principles. Guilt is NOT removed by destroying law codes." *From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 348.

Again, the question, "What was nailed to the stake?" the "handwriting" (KJV), "record of debt" (Jerusalem Bible) is what was nailed to the stake. "The most plausible conclusion held by most scholars is that the false teachings and practices at Colossae were of a syncretistic nature, containing both pagan and Jewish elements. The Old Testament was apparently invoked to provide a justification for their syncretistic beliefs and practices.

"If this conclusion is correct (which to us seems hardly disputable), then Paul's reference to the Sabbath and festivities must be understood in the context of heretic, ascetic and syncretistic practices which he opposes. In this case, whatever is said about the perverted use of an institution like the Sabbath (Feast Days), cannot be legitimately used to challenge the validity of the commandment per se. A precept is not nullified by the condemnation of its about." *From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 355.

We should be able to see by this study that the Feast Days, including Pentecost, have not been done away with!

SACRIFICING AND FEASTING

If Yahweh doesn't take pleasure in afflicting us, why did He require so many sacrifices? Why burn up so much of their resources?

First and foremost we should take the time and space, before going any further, to state that these burnt offerings are NOT required since our Messiah offered Himself as the one and only sacrifice that could do us any good spiritually. "Then He said, behold I have come to do your will, O Yahweh. HE TAKES AWAY THE FIRST THAT HE MAY ESTABLISH THE SECOND. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Yahshua Messiah once for all." Hebrew 10:9-10.

Can you imagine the cost of an offering like the one Solomon gave at the temple dedication? What kind of place would be required to burn up all that many cattle and sheep?"Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before Yahweh. And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of TWENTY TWO THOUSAND bulls and ONE HUNDRED and TWENTY THOUSAND sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of Yahweh." II Chronicles 7:4-5.

Did you ever wonder why Yahweh would require such large numbers of animals to be sacrificed?

In order to find the answers to these questions we need to turn back to the instructions that Yahweh gave the children of Israel concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. Here we find some key words that should

make plain the reason for the sacrifices, in addition to causing the people to draw closer to their Creator. “There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offering, your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks. And there you shall EAT before Yahweh your Almighty, and YOU SHALL REJOICE in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which Yahweh your Almighty has blessed you.” Deuteronomy 12:6-7.

Notice that they were to eat and rejoice. When we consider those words, then we begin to get an idea of what is meant by the terms: Feast of Weeks (Pentecost),” and “Feast of Tabernacles.” So now we can turn back to II Chronicles 7 and get a good idea of why so many animals were sacrificed. There were people from all over the entire nation of Israel there. Perhaps several million people were there for this great dedication. “At that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt.” (Verse 8)

By looking at the instructions given for the offering and burning of sacrifices, we see that, except for some special cases, only the parts of the animal that were not good for food were burned; the remainder was cooked and eaten there before Yahweh. The priest and his family were given a portion thereby taking care of these people that were in the service of Yahweh.

It becomes obvious that rather than afflicting His people, Yahweh desires that we have great pleasure. We find that we must first be willing to do what He has commanded and then we will find great pleasure, like enjoying a big steak with all the trimmings. “If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my set-apart day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the set-apart day of Yahshua honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words, THEN you shall DELIGHT yourself in Yahshua; and I will cause you to rid on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of Yahweh has spoken it.” Isaiah 58:13-14

There is much symbolism in the ceremonies that were required in the feast days. In some cases the symbols may have changed somewhat, as in the offering of blood, but we find no indication that the celebrations were not to continue down through our day today. It may be good to take a short look at some of the symbols and their meaning as they pertain to Pentecost.

LEAVENING

“You shall bring from your habitations two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to Yahweh.” Leviticus 23:17.

These two loaves of bread were offered to Yahweh by the priest. The priest would wave them—that is, he would move them toward the altar as a gift to Yahweh, he would then move them back toward himself, signifying that Yahweh was returning the gift to the priest for his use while serving Yahweh. This was the shadow of what was to happen after the impalement of our Messiah. Through repentance and baptism we offer our-selves to Yahshua, He then cleanses us and returns our life to us to be used in service to Him.

Note also that this was the only offering to Yahshua that was made WITH leavening.

Leavening normally signifies sin or corruption. With that in mind, why would the wave loaves have leaven in them? We get some idea by referring to several passages in the New Testament. First, Yahshua warned: “...Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Messiah; and shall deceive many.” Matthew 24:4-5. Sin and sinners (leaven) would be mixed in with the true believers. Did this actually happen and is it still occurring today? The Apostle Paul could see this very well in Corinth. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Messiah. An no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into a angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if HIS MINISTERS also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness...” II Corinthians 11:13-15. then again he ran into this problem with the Galatians as we see in chapter one, verse 6 and 7; “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Messiah to a different evangel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to PERVERT the good news of Messiah.” Notice that word “pervert”, this means that there was some (leaven) that had come in among the true believers, whose purpose was to pervert or twist the good news so as to attempt to steal salvation from the believers. This can also be seen as the main problem with the Colossians, as we saw earlier.

The gifts of the Set-apart Spirit are available to all, so even those that deny the law still have blessings. This explains how that the lawless can perform miracles.

What about today? Can we say that there is any leaven among us? To find the answer, all we need do is take a look at what is being taught and how the “Christian churches” of today are conducted. The Colossians had a problem with paganism. They were being taught philosophies and traditions of men. Today MOST church groups are taught and they believe that what Paul said AGAINST the philosophies and traditions give us license to accept the same practices. “Therefore, if you died with Messiah from the basic principles of the world why...do you subject yourselves to regulations...ACCORDING to the COMMANDMENTS of MEN?” Colossians 2:20 and 22 (please read these verses in your Bible to see that what I left out does NOT change the meaning; rather it makes it clearer).

The churches teach that we are under grace and not under the law, so we need not obey the law. If we are not under the law then there is no breaking of the law so there is no sin. “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin IS lawlessness.” (That means breaking the law.) I John 3:4. If there is no sin, where is the need for grace? Clearly there is none. BUT Yahshua said and very clearly so; “...DO NOT think that I came to destroy, but to fulfill.” Matthew 5:17/ “Fulfill” can in NO way be construed to mean abrogate or do away with—no, it means to fill up or bring to the full.”Yahweh is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will MAGNIFY the law, and make it HONORABLE.” Isaiah 42:21.

Speaking of the law, we should look at yet another aspect of Pentecost. “After the destruction of the temple, the tradition was EMPHASIZED that Shavuot (Feast of Weeks—Pentecost) commemorates the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and this aspect permeates the prayers of the festival.” *The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, article “Shavuot”. This is yet another indication that the law and Pentecost go together. Is there any wonder that the “churches” of today almost completely ignore the day of Pentecost?

FIRST FRUITS

Pentecost is the celebrating of the first harvest or spring harvest. That is the reason for calling it the Feast of First Fruits. In symbol, this is showing the first harvest of souls for Yahweh’s kingdom.

“But now Messiah is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep... For as in Adam all die, even so in Messiah all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits, afterward those who are Messiah’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to Yahweh the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and authority and power.” I Corinthians 15:20 and 22-24. Here we see that Yahshua is called the first fruits and those that belong to Him will be raised (harvested) at His second coming. Notice that our Messiah will harvest, or gather His own, when He returns and will leave the harvesting of the wicked to an angel. “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and on the cloud sat one like the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, thrust in your sickle, and reap,, for the time has come for you to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” Revelation 14:14-15. Clearly we are looking at our Messiah harvesting the firstfruits of the world, which is symbolized by Pentecost or Harvest of Firstfruits.

Then we read on to see that an angel is sent to harvest the wicked. Verses 17-19: “Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of Yahweh.”

There is much to be said about the timing, who will be in each harvest and what will be the FINAL outcome, but that is a subject that needs to be considered in its own right and not in the context of this study.

We are now preparing for this great harvest of the first fruits by following the command of Yahshua to go into all the world preaching the good news that He brought, making disciples of all that will repent and turn to Him. While we are preaching the TRUE good news—we are preaching it in the name of our Messiah—there are those that are preaching a counterfeit evangel. They are, for the most part, deceived into believing

that they are preaching the true good news, but if they would only study the good news as it is written and pray to Yahweh for real understanding they would no longer be deceived. Yahshua explained this for us by giving us a parable and then later explaining its meaning. "...The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares? He said to them, an enemy has done this. The servants said to him, do you want us then to go and gather them up? But he said, No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, first gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." Matthew 13:24-30.

Yahshua is saying here that both the good and the bad are to be left together to grow in their respective directions. At the proper time, during the harvest, there will be a separation process. But for now we see that the corrupting agent is left in. This was signified by the offering with leavening. We are now in the time when burnt offerings are no longer made but we are preparing for the actual harvest of the firstfruits of the kingdom, Yahshua explained the meaning of the parable in Matthew 13:37-43.

POWER

What is Pentecostal Power? What does it mean? Is it power that was given only to Yahshua's disciples on the day of Pentecost immediately after His ascension?

What is commonly called Pentecostal Power was available to some in the Old Testament! Just what is this power? Moses had this power and he used it often. We find one case in point in Exodus 17:6. Who would think that anyone would have the power to bring water out of a DRY rock in a desert? "Behold, I (Yahshua) will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." Notice that Elijah also had this power. He prayed that it would not rain and there was no rain for three years and six months. He also did other things through the Word of Yahweh. "For thus says Yahweh Almighty of Israel, the bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day Yahweh sends rain on the earth." "And he said to her, give me your son. So he took him out of her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. Then he cried out to Yahweh and said, O Yahweh my Almighty, have you also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son? And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to Yahweh and said, O Yahweh my Almighty, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him. Then Yahweh heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived." I Kings 17:14 and 19-22.

We could name many others of the Old Testament that had great power.

After Yahshua returned to the Father, He sent His power to the believers on the day of Pentecost of that year. That is why it is called Pentecostal Power.

There are several things we should notice about this power. It was to perform greater or more works in each individual that possessed it. This power was to be for and is available to, all people. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater (or more) works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." John 14:12. Now the question comes; "What works did Yahshua do and command that His followers do?" "And as you go, PREACH, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. HEAL the SICK, CLEANSE the LEPERS, RAISE the DEAD, CAST OUT DEMONS. Freely you have received, freely give." Matthew 10:7-8.

Now notice again, that this power or authority was to be passed on; also notice that it was after the resurrection that this authority was given to Yahshua. "Then Yahshua came and spoke to them, saying, ALL AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of Yahshua, teaching THEM to observe all things that I have COMMANDED YOU; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20.

We hear quite often today about the miracles of healing, casting out demons, and speaking in tongues. How much of this is of Yahshua and how much is of Satan: Or can we say Yahshua is not in it or Satan is not

in it?

What about the 25 dollar prayer line where you pay twenty five dollars and the faith healer will pray for your healing? An then on the other extreme: what about the denominations that teach that you should NOT expect miracles today because that power was given ONLY to the disciples at “Pentecost”?

We see plainly that not all teachers or preachers will be teaching the true and uncompromised Good News as it was delivered by Yahshua. Like the evangelists with the twenty five dollar prayer line (which is rare), there are many that are SELLING a perverted good news and passing it off as the true. To say that we (radio and TV preachers) will send you a tape, book, cross, “holy water”, olive oil, prayer-cloth, or whatever for a gift of so many dollars, is to pervert and sell the Good News. Notice what Yahweh said about offerings: “Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering. From everyone who GIVES it WILLINGLY with his HEART you shall take my offering.” Exodus 25:2. The Apostle Peter spoke of these people. “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there SHALL be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying Yahshua who bought them, (consider Easter and Matthew 12:39-40 and Mark 7:6-17) and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit with deceptive words...” II Peter 2:1-3a.

How many disciples or groups of disciples or churches do you know of today that have the power that Yahshua gave to the early assembly? How many do you know of that have been healing the sick and raising the dead? Probably you wouldn't see it in the paper or on TV because secular media would try to suppress that kind of news, but there is no way it could be kept quiet. People would tell one another and it would spread.

Where is the power—the Pentecostal Power—today? Why don't we see healings, raising the dead and mountainous obstacles moved? It is because the assembly has become friendly with the world. There is no way that we should even expect to have the power that Yahshua promised His disciples, when we are so in love with the world and its ways. Notice that James said in James 4:4, “Adulterers and adulteresses! (Idol worshippers, following pagan traditions), do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with Yahweh? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an ENEMY of Yahweh.” Yahshua does not give the kind of power that we are looking for to His enemies!

While it is obvious from the scriptures that Yahshua gave all this power to those that would believe, we see very little use of that power today. Why? Quite clearly there is not enough teaching and believing going on today. If there were, we would be living in a different kind of world.

MANIFESTATION

When a person receives this power, this baptism of the Set-apart Spirit, how does he manifest or show it? Is the only outward sign the sign of speaking in tongues? Dr. Lawrence Chesnut in his book, *True Bible Tongues*, has this to say about tongues being the only test to determine if one has received the baptism of the Set-apart Spirit. “To say that tongues is the initial evidence of one receiving the Set-apart Spirit, is shamefully wresting the scriptures, and in complete contradiction to all the Word of the Almighty, and given examples contained therein. The supernatural gift of languages is ONE of the nine recorded gifts, therefore, it is not to be stressed anymore than either of the other, and then only in its proper place. Further-more, it is to never take precedence above or over the others, and stand as the evidence of the reception of the Set-apart Spirit.” p. 69.

We can clearly see that the body of Messiah is made up of many DIFFERENT parts. Just like the eye does not need the ability to walk, and the ear does not need the ability to smell, so the various members of the body of Messiah do not need all the gifts of the Spirit. This is NOT to say that it is impossible to receive LL of the gifts of the Spirit. If the ear does not need the ability to smell why should it seek that ability? I know that I have the Set-apart Spirit and my salvation would be no less sure if I have never been given the gift of speaking in tongues. Paul spoke of this quite well in I Corinthians 12. Many seem to read only a part of this chapter with any understanding. Notice how clearly Paul stated that not all have, or can expect, all of the nine gifts that he enumerated earlier in this chapter. “Now you are the body of Messiah, and members of a part, whom also Yahweh, indeed, placed in the ecclesia, FIRST apostles, SECOND prophets, THIRDLY teachers, THEREUPON powers, THEREUPON graces of healings, supports, species of languages NOT ALL apostles.

NOT ALL are prophets. NOT ALL are teachers. NOT ALL HAVE POWERS. Not all HAVE THE GRACES OF HEALING. NOT ALL are speaking languages. NOT ALL are interpreting. Yet be zealous for the greater graces. And I am showing you a path, suited to transcendence.” Verses 27-31, *Concordant Literal*.

THE OUTWARD SIGN OR MANIFESTATION OF THE BAPTISM OF THE Set-apart Spirit is more than just the manifestation of one of the spiritual gifts, it is manifest in a TOTAL change in the nature of the person.

FAULT FINDING

As stated earlier, the Old Covenant was not bad—it was not a bad set of laws designed to make life miserable for the children of Israel. When we closely examine the covenant we find that, contrary to the current teachings, the Old Covenant was a good set of laws and agreements between our Creator and His chosen people. So where does the idea come from that the Covenant was bad and needed to be destroyed? Do we assume that Yahweh made a mistake? Did He establish the Covenant and then say; “I made a mistake; now I have to make a new one and take out the mistakes”?

So often we hear that there were faults found in the Old Covenant and so Yahweh had to send His Son down here to establish a new one. What were the faults with the Old Covenant? Why did Yahweh tell Jeremiah that He was going to make a New Covenant with the house of Israel?

In Jeremiah 31:31-32 we read; “Behold, the days are coming, says Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to (or the way that I made) the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says Yahweh.”

When we start looking closely at what Jeremiah said and then we look at the parallel passage, in Hebrews 8 we begin to see where the fault was. “But now He (Yahshua) has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with THEM, He says: behold the days are coming, says Yahweh, when I will make a new Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Verses 6-8.

Notice that the fault was not with the Covenant but rather with “them”. So who is the “them”? Obviously, from this passage and also Jeremiah 31:3, the fault was with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Verse 6-8.

Still looking at these three verse, as they are translated into English, we tend to be somewhat confused because of the use of the word “covenant” as in verse 7: “For if that first COVENANT has been faultless, etc.” There must be something wrong here. We know that our Creator does not make mistakes and, yes this verse SEEMS to indicate that there was something wrong with the Covenant that Yahweh made with Israel. Perhaps we should look at the Greek word translated here as “covenant” to see if we get any clarification. According to *Young’s Analytical Concordance* this word is “diatheke” which means “arrangement”. Now let’s read the three verses again using the correct translation of the Greek word “diatheke” and see if the confusion isn’t cleared up. “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also the mediator of a better “arrangement”, Which was established upon better promises. For if that first “arrangement” had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them (the children of Israel) He said: Behold, the days are coming, says Yahweh, when I will make a new “arrangement” with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.”

The arrangement was what became bad, not the law. The arrangement was that the children would obey the laws and commands of Yahweh and then Yahweh would bless them and also make them priests and kings over the rest of the world. But, as we saw in Jeremiah 31:31, they broke this arrangement—this agreement—so Yahweh looked for a way to have His people keep the agreement with certainty. He sent His Son to mediate this new agreement. He still had in mind the salvation of the world through the priesthood of His people, just as at the first. But how to do this? “If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another comforter, that he (it) may abide with you forever, event the spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him (it) nor knows him (it); but you know him

(it); for he (it) dwells with you and will be with you.” John 14:15-17. Through the Set-apart Spirit of Yahweh and Messiah which is their mind—their desires, their love—that Yahweh puts into His chosen children. They will be obedient to His law, because they not only have the desire to keep them; they also have the spirit of Messiah INSIDE them to make it possible to keep the law just as Yahshua did. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Messiah Yahshua.” Philippians 2:5. With His spirit inside us, and we being yielded to obedience, it then becomes possible for Yahweh to carry out His plan. “For this is the Covenant (arrangement) that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says Yahweh; I will put my laws in their mind, and write them on their hearts; and I will be their Almighty, and they shall be my people.” Hebrew 8:10.

BAPTISM AT PENTECOST

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41.

Did you ever wonder how in the world they were able to receive the Set-apart spirit, preach a sermon and then baptize three thousand people in one day? Where did the idea of baptism come from anyway? Was it something that John the Baptist invented?

These questions have caused many to doubt and wonder how they could gather three thousand in one house, how they could come up with enough water to baptize all those people. Some have guessed that they sprinkled them and so they now have the doctrine of baptism by sprinkling.

We understand that baptism was not an invention of John the Baptist, but rather it was ordained by Yahweh long before John. “Baptism” Ablutionary rite symbolizing purification or consecration. Such IMMERSION (not sprinkling or pouring) played an important part in Judaism, apart from the frequent ablutions enjoined both on priests and laymen by the Bible, and acquired great significance in the rites of the Essenes and Hemerobaptists. An essential part of the rite of conversion to Judaism in case of either sex is immersion in water to the accompaniment of special prayers. This rite, followed by John the Baptist, was subsequently taken over by the Christian church.” *The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia* p. 227.

It noteworthy here that the disciples were in Jerusalem on THAT day of Pentecost; also note that there were devout men from all over the known world there for the Set-apart Day. (Acts 2:5). Were these devout men Believers? Hardly, they were members of Judaism. Obviously not all of these people could be in a one-family home. It is reasonable to believe that not all that heard Peter’s sermon were converted that day, so we must assume there were OVER three thousand people in that place. In Acts 2:2, we see that when the Set-apart Spirit came upon them the sound as a mighty wind filled the HOUSE. What kind of house was it? Was this a small house? The word translated “house” in this verse is not confined to a dwelling place. It means a family dwelling place but also it means the temple! This, of course depends on how the word is used. Obviously, from this, we gather that they were at the temple, when Peter preached the sermon.

As we saw earlier, both priests and laymen were involved in immersion rites (baptisms). This means that there must have been some provisions for this rite. With thousands upon thousands of Jews coming to the temple to worship, and baptism being a part of that worship, we would assume that there would be many immersion baths (baptisteries) prepared for this purpose.

Recent archaeological digging at the temple site have uncovered a large complex of baths. They have found a very elaborate system for a continuous flow of fresh (living) water in to these baths. This shows, in uncertain terms, they had the ability to baptize many people at one time. The method of baptism or ritual bath was a bit different from the way we do it today. For one thing, this immersion was engaged in more than once in a lifetime. “Jewish law requires ritual immersion of their whole bodies by women, prior to marriage and after menstruation, as well as by new converts to Judaism.” *Micropaedia* vol. 1, p. 27. We see also, as an example in Leviticus 16, that in some ceremonies the priest and others washed (baptized) themselves several times. Notice they washed themselves rather than being washed. The way this was accomplished was the one being baptized would walk into the bath (baptistery) and immerse himself and the priest would watch to make sure that he was completely submerged—completely covered with water.

This gives us the needed information to show how that the baptism of three thousand could be accomplished in one place in one day. It also shows that baptism is not unique to Christianity.

CATHOLIC CHURCH AND BAPTISM

“The Fathers (early Roman Catholic bishops) themselves were the first to RECOGNIZE that ‘the devil too had his sacrament,’ and that the Elusinian, Isiac, Mithraic and other mystae used baptism in their rites of initiation,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition article “Baptism”.

This is yet another indication that baptism was ordained by Yahweh long before the time of Messiah. Apparently it came from before the flood. Many of the religious practices of the world, whether pagan or Christian, can be traced to a common origin. But we MUST make absolutely sure that we are observing the practices or rituals as the Almighty of heaven commanded us to. Notice that Yahweh made it crystal clear. “Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them (pagans), after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, how did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise. YOU SHALL NOT WORSHIP YAHWEH YOUR ALMIGHTY IN THAT WAY: ...Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; (Notice these next two phrases, they are extremely important.) YOU SHALL NOT ADD TO IT NOR TAKE AWAY FROM IT.” Deuteronomy 12:30-32.

After reading the above statement from the encyclopedia, which indicates that the Roman church recognized that the pagans had certain baptismal rituals that, as they said, belongs to the devil himself, and then the passage from devil himself, and then the passage from Deuteronomy 12, isn't it incredible that they could ACCUSE the Apostle Paul of taking a ritual from the pagans? “The idea of adoption in baptism as a son and heir of Yahweh was almost certainly TAKEN BY PAUL FROM ROMAN LAW.” Same encyclopedia, same article.

Notice another shocking statement that tells us how the early Catholic church wove a web of rank paganism into what they passed off for Christianity. Notice how they adulterated the ritual of baptism in order to further their false doctrine (that came from paganism also) of the trinity. Again from *Britannica*, 11th edition article “Baptism”. “Trine (trine=trinity, three times, American College Dictionary) immersion then as to the origin of which Basil confessed his ignorance, must be older than either of the rival explanations. These are clearly a etiological, and invented to explain an existing custom, which the CHURCH had ADOPTED FROM ITS PAGAN MEDIUM. For pagan lustrations were normally threefold (trinity!!). Ovid and Fasti, Persius and Horace similarly speak of trine lustrations; and on the last mentioned passage the scholiast Acro remarks; ‘He uses the words thrice purely, because people in expiating their sins, plunge themselves in thrice.’ Such examples of the ancient usage encounter us everywhere in GREEK and LATIN ANTIQUITY.”

Clearly the foregoing indicates that, at least, the Roman church recognized that baptism, as ordained by Yahweh, entailed immersion rather than sprinkling or pouring water on the converts, so where do they get the command to pour or sprinkle? Again we have to say their only authority comes from paganism and from a total disregard for the commandments of Yahweh. “As soon as Christianity (??) made such progress that baptism became the rule, and as soon as immersion GAVE PLACE to sprinkling, the ancient baptisteries were no longer necessary.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, article “Baptistry”.

Who should be baptized? What is its purpose? Should you be told to wait until Easter to be baptized or that you should wait until you have proved to the church that you have truly repented? Must you be baptized in order to have salvation?

We know from several passages that Yahshua, our Messiah was our example. He showed us how to love and how to be obedient to Yahweh. We see that He was baptized, giving us an example that we should follow. “Then Yahshua, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water.” Matthew 3:16a.

Everyone should follow our Master's example. Notice that Peter didn't leave anyone out. “Then Peter said to them, repent, and let EVERY ONE of you be baptized in the name of Yahshua Messiah for the REMISSION of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart spirit.” Acts 2:38. Then we see that Paul was commanded to follow Yahshua's example, but for what purpose? “And now why are you waiting? Arise, and be baptized, and WASH AWAY YOUR SINS, calling on the name of Yahshua.” Acts 22:16. “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled (with Messiah's blood) from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (immersed-baptized) with pure water.” Hebrew 10:22.

So we have the “who—everyone that has repented; the “when”—why wait; the “why”—to wash away your sins.

Did you know that some denominations put greater requirements on their members than Yahweh does to enter the kingdom? Some REQUIRE “baptism” (whether sprinkled, poured, or dunked) for membership, but notice what Yahshua said to the thief on the stake; “assuredly I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43. Obviously the thief could not be baptized. We should be willing and anxious to obey His every command, but at the same time, remember that He does not put impossible conditions on us.

WE OBSERVE SET-APART DAYS

Is there a valid reason for observing or celebrating the Set-apart Days of Yahweh (Yahshua)? Are we putting ourselves in bondage by celebrating the Set-Apart Days? Worse yet! Are we denying the sacrifice of Messiah as is taught by so many, when we observe these days?

We have already seen that these days were instituted by Yahweh (Yahshua) for OUR pleasure. So we must say the argument that it puts us into bondage is invalid. Yahweh does not put His people into bondage. Look, again, at what our Messiah said about keeping His commandments and doing what He has instructed us to do. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. FOR MY YOKE IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT.” Matthew 11:28-30. Look further, at I John 5:3; “For this is the love of Yahweh (Yahshua), that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are NOT burdensome.

SACRIFICE AND CIRCUMCISION

By observing the “JEWISH” set-apart days are we truly denying the sacrifice of Yahshua Messiah?

We should understand that the Feast Days, including Pentecost, were instituted to give Yahweh’s people pleasure and not sacrifice. As explained earlier in this paper, the sacrificing (killing) of animals on feast days was to have a part—to enjoy a good steak, roast or barbeque. “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the almighty of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and EAT meat. For I DID NOT speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this is what I commanded them, saying, OBEY my voice, and I will be your Almighty, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be WELL with you.” Jeremiah 7:21-23. We understand that the sacrificing of animals for sin offerings, etc. really did no good to begin with, except to show that a sacrifice was needed for sin—that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). After Messiah came and the death of us all was laid on Him, there ceased to be a need to show this requirement anymore—it had been accomplished. “By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Yahshua Messiah ONCE FOR ALL.” Hebrews 10:10.

We should take the space here to remind the reader that the circumcision of the flesh accomplishes nothing as far as serving Yahweh is concerned. We are told by the Apostle Paul: circumcision is nothing and un-circumcision is noting, but keeping the commandments of Yahweh is what matters.” I Corinthians 7:19. And then again in Romans 2:29: “But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the LETTER; whose praise is not from men but from Yahweh.” This should not come as a surprise to us, since we find the same thing stated by the prophets in the Old Testament. Which, again, shows that neither Paul or Yahshua the Messiah changed anything. In Deuteronomy 30:6 we read: “Yahweh your Almighty will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love Yahweh your Almighty with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.” Now look at Jeremiah 4:4: “Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh, and take away the foreskins of your HEARTS...”

What we are saying here is that, just like sacrifices, we are not required to go through the physical act of doing these things. Yahweh is not concerned with the act, as He is with obedience. “Then Samuel said: Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.” I Samuel: 15-22.

When we say that we are to obey the law, we are not talking about washing pots and cups, sacrificing animals, or burning grain in the fire. We are talking about loving Yahweh above all and honoring father and

mother, not killing, not stealing, and honoring Yahweh by observing the traditions that He set up for us, such as keeping the weekly Sabbath by REMEMBERING to keep it set-apart and the annual Sabbaths by REMEMBERING the purpose for which each stands.

Why should we keep the Sabbaths? Why should we want to keep them? Is there a purpose in keeping them? Do we derive any benefit from keeping them? By turning to the scripture we get an idea of the why and wherefore. We see that there is a great reason for keeping the sabbaths. In Exodus 31:13, we read several purposes for keeping them. “Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: Surely my Sabbaths (plural—more than one) you shall keep, for it is a SIGN between Me and you throughout your generations, THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT I AM YAHWEH WHO SANCTIFIES YOU.” First of all, keeping the Sabbaths of Yahweh (Yahshua) identifies us as His children—as His people. That in itself should be reason enough to keep the Sabbaths for all our lives. Few people do not desire to be identified with Yahweh, but fewer still, will prayerfully study the scriptures to find out HOW to be identified with Him. The vast majority of “professing” Christians blindly accept the teachings of someone else rather than going to the source of all knowledge for the truth. We are told in the Scriptures that we are to teach our children these things and that they should be handed down from generation to generation. Sadly that has not been done for several thousand years now. It is apparent that we SHOULD have a burning desire to keep the sign that tells the world we belong to Yahweh (Yahshua). Those who DO keep this sign are certainly considered to be different from the rest of the world—in fact they are generally considered to be a bit strange. But, why not? We belong to the Almighty of the universe and not the god of this world!! Secondly, we keep the sabbaths to better learn and understand the words of our Father. We keep them so that we may KNOW the ONE who sanctifies us—the one who sets us apart from the rest of the world.

SHOULD WE OBSERVE PENTECOST

We know from the scriptures that Yahweh definitely commanded Israel to observe Pentecost, but should His people continue to celebrate it after the impalement of Messiah?

Perhaps we should also ask the question: “How long is forever?” Within His command that Israel should celebrate the Feast of Weeks, Yahweh said, “And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a set-apart convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. IT shall be a stature FOREVER in all your GENERATIONS.” Leviticus 23:21. This word “ever” in “For ever” means without end. We should state again that the sacrifices are no longer required, since the perfect sacrifice was offered. Also, as you will remember, the actual sacrificing of the animals was performed by the priests, so the people never were required to sacrifice an animal, except on the Passover.

We can see plainly that the command to observe Pentecost came with no time limit. The command was to continue as long as, and beyond, all the generation of Israel. Can we say that the generations of Israel have ceased?

Do we ASSUME that Pentecost celebration was for Jews only? Or was it for other people as well?

We cannot say that Pentecost and the other feast Days were for Jews only, because we have several passages stating the same commandments are for the Stranger—Gentile and Israelite alike. Exodus 12:48-49; Isaiah 56:6. Then in Galatians 3:29 we read, “If you are Messiah’s then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to ht promise.” That means that if you truly belong to Messiah you are an Israelite, whether by blood or adoption. So if you are Messiah’s, you are commanded by Yahweh to observe Pentecost.

MAN’S DOMINION

What is man’s rightful place on the earth? Are we to just drift along and let nature take its course, or are we to make things happen? Did Yahweh and Yahshua create man for a special reason, or just to fill up space on the earth?

In Genesis 1:1-2, we get some idea that the earth was created and then something went wrong. The words “without form and void” are translated from the Hebrew words meaning chaotic—confused and empty. We feel that something went wrong because we have Isaiah saying that Yahweh (Yahshua) created the heav-

ens and the earth, but He did not create the earth in vain—again meaning empty or void—rather He created it to be inhabited. Isaiah 45:18. apparently there was a tremendous upset in the order of the earth and so it was destroyed by water. Could this be when Satan rebelled against Yahweh and Satan was thrown down to earth out of heaven? Notice that Yahshua said that He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Luke 10:18. So we have here, a re-creation described in Genesis 1, beginning with verse 2.

At the ending of the days of re-creation we see that Yahweh said: “...Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have DOMINION over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Genesis 1:26. Then in verse 28: “Yahweh (Yahshua) blessed them, and Yahweh said to them, be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over EVERY living thing that MOVES on the earth.”

What does all that mean and what does it have to do with Pentecost? Man is to have dominion over all living things on the earth. This includes all things that creep; wouldn't that include germs? Doesn't that give us healing power? Satan was thrown down to the earth with his demons or angels that followed him. They move, so doesn't that mean that we have dominion over them—can't we cast out demons and bind Satan?

There should be no need to go into details about the fall of man here. Most everyone is familiar with that story, at least to some extent. What is important, though, is that we see that Yahweh made a way for man to regain the dominion that he lost to Satan. Yahweh gave this right to man and man gave it to Satan, by way of a trick of Satan.

DOMINION RETURNS TO MAN

Yahweh of the Old Testament—Yahshua, the I Am—because He had spoken the words at the direction of His Father, and created man and loved Him, came to the earth to regain the dominion for man. The I AM—Yahshua—took on the flesh of man became a man was tempted by Satan and overcame Satan. He then took the death penalty that came upon man because of Satan, upon Himself and nailed that certificate of debt on His stake. By these acts He, as a man, regained the right to have power and dominion over all that is on the earth, that is above the earth (in the air) and beneath the earth. He was, as a man, given power over the Spiritual world as well. In Matthew 28:18-20, we see that Yahshua made a statement and gave orders to His followers: “ALL authority (power) has been give to Me in HEAVEN (the spiritual) and on EARTH (physical). Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of (the Father and of the Son and of the Set-apart Spirit, not part of the original, ADDED) Yahshua, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

When were they and we to receive this power and authority that Yahshua had, so we could do what He commanded? We find part of the answer in Luke 24:49: “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but TARRY in the city Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Here we have the promise of a transfer of this power BACK to mankind. Now, turn to Acts 2, beginning at verse 1 and going through verse 4 see one of the greatest events to ever take place in the history of man. “Now when the DAY OF PENTECOST had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound FROM HEAVEN, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Set-apart Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Why were they to wait to receive the power until Pentecost? Why not some other day? Why not Tuesday, February 3, or Easter Sunday, or Christmas day or some other pagan holiday.

Why does Churchanity not observe the Feast of Pentecost today? It seems that of all the Feast Days that Yahweh gave to His people, if no other, Christians would be zealous to observe this day. Could it be because they have been deceived by the god of this world—Satan who is trying to continue to have dominion over this world?

If it were in the plans of Yahweh that the Feast Days of old were not to be observed after the impalement, don't you think He missed a golden opportunity to tell us of that plan, in Matthew 28?

The Feast of Pentecost should be celebrated with GREAT REJOICING, because it was on this date that

mankind was restored to his rightful place as a creator with DOMINION over all things of this world both physical and spiritual. REJOICE! REJOICE! In PENTECOST!!

ADDENDUM OUR SAVIOUR OUR WAVE-SHEAF

“But now Messiah is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep...Messiah the firstfruits, afterward those who are Messiah’s at His coming.” I Corinthians 15:20; 23 (NKJV).

Paul explains to the Corinthian assembly that Yahshua was the first of the firstfruits. In order to get a clearer understanding of this message, we must go back to the time of the Israelites in the wilderness. *“And Yahweh spoke to Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before Yahweh, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it...You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your Almighty: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath: then you shall offer a new grain offering to Yahweh.”* Leviticus 23:9-11, 14-16. *“You shall count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. Then you shall keep the feast of Weeks to Yahweh your almighty...”* Deuteronomy 18:6-10.

Why was it important for the Israelites to not eat any of the new grain until after the handful or sheaf of grain was offered to the Father? It was the first of the firstfruits, a very important symbol or type of our Messiah who presented (offered) Himself to the Father on the day after the Sabbath on which He was resurrected. *“Yahshua said to her, Woman why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him. Sir if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away. Yahshua said to her, Mary! She turned and said to Him, Rabboni (which is to say Teacher.) Yahshua said to her, do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My Almighty and your Almighty.”* John 20:15-17. *“Now as they said these things, Yahshua Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, peace be to you. But they were terrified and frightened and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”* Luke 24:36-39.

In the morning, Yahshua had told Mary not to cling to Him because He had not yet ascended to the Father. In the evening, He told the disciples to touch His hands and feet. Just like the sheaf of the wave offering, Yahshua went to His Father and was returned to the earth for the good of man. He walked, talked, and ate with the disciples for 40 days after He was sent back. This 40 days was part of the 50 day count to the Feast of Weeks, which is referred to as Pentecost (Greek/count-fifty in the book of Acts. *“Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath, then you shall offer a new grain offering to Yahweh.”* Leviticus 23:16. *“Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to Yahweh at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a set-apart convocation...”* Numbers 28:26.

COUNTING OF THE OMER FIFTY DAYS TO SHAVUOT

BY Pinehas ben Zadok

TODAY, according to tradition, the Synagogue teaches, that the Omer was waved on the sixteenth of Nisan. On that date the “Counting of the Omer”, the fifty days till Pentecost begins (Leviticus 23:16), thus taking the first of the three Sabbaths in the week of Unleavened Bread as its starting point. The Boethusians, a sect of the Sadducees disagree with this. We read in the Mishna, Menahoth, 10, 3, “The Boethusians say: the cutting of the sheaf does not take place at the end of the day of the feast, but only at the end of the next regular

Sabbath.” And Chagigah 2, 4 days, “The Boethusians say Pentecost always falls on the day after the Sabbath. The Boethusians took the morrow after Sabbath” that falls within the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

For two reasons this must be correct. The first one is, that Yahweh gave all the Feasts, that were to be proclaimed Set-apart Convocations, a calendar DATE, the exception being: Pentecost. Therefore Pentecost has to be dated by a different method. That method is to COUNT TO FIFTY (=Pente-cost) from an event that occurs fifty days previous to it. If that event had a fixed date, such as the sixteen of Nisan, there would be no point in counting fifty to Pentecost, for Pentecost would then simply fall on another fixed date fifty days later. Since there is a weekly Sabbath available, which is, naturally, not a fixed date, this obviously the correct point to start the count; or rather on the morrow AFTER the Sabbath, as specified. Since the morrow after a Sabbath is a Sunday, the count starts and finishes on Sunday (7X7+1). Pentecost always falls on Sunday. The second reason is, that the biblical instruction for the count is: “Seven Sabbaths shall be complete.” Here the word “Sabbaths” cannot mean anything else but weeks. The rest of the instruction is: “Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days.” Now, counting COMPLETE weeks, one naturally has to start with the first day of the week, as otherwise one will end up with a part of a week at the end, which is therefore not complete. Therefore the first day of the Omer must be on a Sunday and cannot always be on the sixteenth of Nisan, which falls on a different day of the week each year.

An interesting question is: What was the method actually followed in the year of the Resurrection? Act 2:1 says: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come...” This sounds like a protest against a celebration two days too early by the Pharisees. Yahshua’s first ascension took place on the eighteenth of Nisan, a date kept by the Sadducees. The Pharisees, after they outvoted the Sadducees, declared the sixteenth of Nisan, the day after the ANNUAL Sabbath, which they championed, a half holiday to commemorate their victory. Thus one can find the time when this dispute was settled. It must have been after the events of Acts 2. For at the very time the Wave-Sheaf was offered, Yahshua became its anti-type by the resurrection. Thus, when the sixteenth of Nisan was fixed, both the TIMES of the beginning and of the end of “The Sign of Jonah” had been shifted, concealing from later generations the fact, that Yahshua WAS the Messiah, and not the counterfeit Jesus, who lay in the grave one and half days and night.

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