

PROPHECY FLASH!

A magazine of insight and understanding of Biblical truth and prophecy for our time.

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The Mystery of **PENTECOST!**

**When Should It Be Observed?
Sunday? Or 50 Days after
Passover?**

New Testament **PROOF** on
When to Celebrate Pentecost!

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William F. Dankenbring

A Voice in the Wilderness

God tells His servants in His Word, “Cry aloud, spare not. Lift up your voice like a trumpet and declare to My people their transgression and to the house of Jacob their sins!” (Isa.58:1, Parallel Amplified Bible).

God also declares: “Comfort, comfort My people, says your God. Speak tenderly to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry to her that her time of service and her warfare are ended, that [her punishment is accepted and] her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received [punishment] from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”

We are living in a world gone berserk with anger and rage. “Why do the nations rage?” (Psalm 2:1). Answer – because they don’t know the true God, and are in rebellion against His laws and teachings and the true way of life and peace!

Isaiah wrote: “A voice of one who cries: *Prepare in the wilderness the way of the Lord* [clear away the obstacles]; make straight and smooth a highway for our God. . . . And the glory (majesty and splendor) of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it” (Isaiah 40:3-5).

The Messiah is coming very SOON! Its time to prepare to MEET Him! “Surely the Lord will do nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). The purpose of this magazine is to warn the world of what lies ahead, and to help prepare people to get ready to meet the Messiah, when He returns to restore all things (Acts 3:19-21), put an end to wars, and usher in the Kingdom of God! The prophet Amos declared, “*Prepare to meet your God, O Israel*” (Amos 4:12). No matter is more urgent, today!

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Why is there so much controversy over Pentecost?

Can you believe it? God instituted the Feast of Shavuot or Pentecost to be observed “FOR EVER” – and yet churches and even Jewish people are of many different opinions as to when to observe this Biblical festival and holy day!

Some say it should be calculated by counting from the Sunday that falls within the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Orthodox Jews say it must be counted from the first Holy Day of Unleavened Bread, or the Passover. Some say you count beginning with the first Sunday after the Feast.

Who is right? What is the truth? What does Almighty GOD say? Can we KNOW the true answer? Does it make any difference what day we observe?

God says, “Prove all things” (I Thess.5:21). He warns us, “There is a way that *seems right* to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of *death* (Prov.14:12). What is the PLAIN TRUTH about calculating the day of Pentecost? Here is the real proof!

-- William F. Dankenbring

Is a Sunday “Pentecost” PAGAN in Origin?

Did you know that the Roman Catholic Church counts the day of Pentecost as 50 days after the pagan Easter Sunday?
Did you know that the Sunday Pentecost of the Catholic Church Is derived from the sacred festival of the ancient pagan goddess Flora?

Furthermore, did you know that a clear but obscure command given in the book of Leviticus, concerning the counting of Pentecost, PROVES beyond the shadow of a doubt that the counting MUST begin the day after PASSOVER? Here is serious new truth about the observance of a Sunday “Pentecost” to carefully consider!

William F. Dankenbring

God Almighty commands in His Word, “Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen” (Jer.10:2). God says, further, “After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye NOT do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye NOT do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do MY judgments, and keep MINE ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God” (Lev.18:3-4).

Among those things condemned by God was the worship of all pagan gods and goddesses. God warned His people, as they were about to enter the Promised Land, “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. Your eyes have seen that which the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did CLEAVE unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day” (Deut.4:2-4).

Baalpeor was the “god of the opening,” a Moabite deity worshiped on the summit of Mount Peor with immoral, licentious rites. Many of the Israelites were seduced into the sensuous rites of his worship in the plains of Moab (Num.25:1-9; Psa.106:28; Hos.9:10). Baal was a common Canaanite word meaning “lord, master.” The chief male deity of the Canaanite pantheon, he was associated with agriculture, and was worshipped as the god who gave increase to family, fields, herds and flocks. He was also identified with Hadad the storm god,

whose voice thundered with the advent of rain, so necessary for good crops. The inhabitants of Canaan were addicted to Baal worship. The cult included animal sacrifices, ritual meals, and licentious dances. Near the altar was a sacred pillar or massebah, and close by the symbol of the ashera, both of which symbolized human fertility -- the male and female sex organs. The temples and high places of Baal had chambers for sacred prostitution where both male and female prostitutes plied their religious trade in behalf of the god.

Baal's consort was Ashtoreth, also called Ishtar, or "Easter," the goddess of sex, sensual love, maternity and fertility. Solomon himself succumbed to her voluptuous worship (I Kings 11:5; II Kings 23:13).

This pagan worship was abhorrent to the God of Israel, who condemned it wholly and utterly. The Pharisees called "Baalzebub" -- the form of Baal worshipped at Ekron by the Philistines, who was viewed as the producer of flies and hence a god of medicine -- the "prince of demons" (Matt.12:24) -- that is, Satan the devil himself! Thus "Baal," in the pagan worship, was actually Satan the devil, the "god of this world" (II Cor.4:4; Eph.2:2).

Worshipping According to Pagan Customs Is DEMONISM!

Worshipping pagan idols is nothing less than demonism -- the worship of demons. As the apostle Paul wrote, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to DEMONS, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of demons" (I Cor.10:20-21). The Jews of the time of Christ knew that the heathen deities were actually nothing less than demon worship. Their gods were fallen angels, or demons, the chief one being Azazel, or Satan, the prince of darkness.

That same pagan worship has continued down to our day, today -- only today, it is commonly called "Christian" -- but it observes and worships on the SAME OLD PAGAN FESTIVAL DAYS THAT THE PAGANS DID!

The first Sunday of the spring of the year after the new moon following the vernal equinox, the pagans celebrated by worshipping "Ishtar" or "Easter." Admits Alexander Hislop's *The Two Babylons*:

"Then look at Easter. What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears the CHALDEAN ORIGIN on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than ASTARTE, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name, as found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar" (*The Two Babylons*, p.103).

The pagan origin of Easter is well known. Writes Ralph Woodrow in *Babylon Mystery Religion*:

"The word itself, as the dictionaries and encyclopedias explain, comes from the name of a Pagan Goddess -- the goddess of Spring. Easter is but a more

modern form of Ishtar, Eostre, Oстера, or Astarte. Ishtar, another name for Semiramis of Babylon, was pronounced as we pronounce 'Easter' today! And so the name of the Spring Festival, 'Easter,' is definitely paganistic, the name being taken from the name of the Goddess" (p.152).

How did this pagan festival creep into the professing Christian Church? Says Hislop:

"To conciliate the Pagans to nominal Christianity, Rome, pursuing its usual policy, took measures to get the Christian and Pagan festivals amalgamated, and, by a complicated but skillful adjustment of the calendar, it was found no difficult matter, in general, to get Paganism and Christianity – now far sunk in IDOLATRY – in this as in so many other things, to shake hands" (*The Two Babylons*, p.104-105).

In the spring, about a month after the festival of Easter, the pagans celebrated another festival, called the festival of Floralia, in honor of Flora, the goddess of spring and flowers!

Writes Will Durant in *The Story of Civilization*, Volume 3, "Caesar and Christ":

"April alone had six festivals, culminating in the Floralia; the Feast of Flora, goddess of flowers and springs, continued for six days of bibulous and promiscuous revelry" (p.65).

Says the *Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses, Devils and Demons*:

"Flora – Roman goddess of growing corn and blossoming flowers, originally worshiped by the Oscans and Sabines. In Rome, her feast (Floralia) was celebrated from 28 April to the beginning of May. It was an uninhibited and somewhat immoral popular revel; Flora herself was known as *meretrix* = WHORE, but the lasciviousness was probably intended to promote fecundity . . ." (p.119, Manfred Lurker, 1987).

The cult of Flora was introduced in ancient Rome during the age of Romulus. She was also worshiped as a goddess of love, like Venus. The name "Flora" means "The Flourishing One," and is merely another form of that ancient deity Semiramis, who herself was the goddess of love, fecundity, and spring. Writes Barbara G. Walker in *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*:

"Annually honored at the May Day festival called Floralia. Lactantius noted with distaste that Flora was 'a Lady of Pleasure,' but she was prominent and important in Roman religion. Some said her name was the SECRET-SOUL NAME OF ROME ITSELF. Her festival was 'a licentious orgy of NUDE DANCING and promiscuous behavior" (p.316).

The fact that she was "a Lady of Pleasure" and extremely licentious also identifies her with that ancient prostitute and "lady of pleasure," Semiramis, wife and consort of Nimrod, shortly after the Flood. Hislop tells us of Semiramis:

"The Chaldean Mysteries can be traced up to the days of Semiramis, who lived

only a few centuries after the flood, and who is known to have impressed upon them the image of her own depraved and polluted mind. That beautiful but abandoned queen of Babylon was not only herself a paragon of unbridled lust and licentiousness, but in the Mysteries which she had a chief hand in forming, she was worshiped as Rhea, the great 'MOTHER' of the gods, with such atrocious rites as identified her with VENUS, the mother of all impurity, and raised the very city where she had reigned to a bad eminence among the nations, as the grand seat at once of idolatry and consecrated PROSTITUTION" (*The Two Babylons*, p.5).

Flora, "the Flourishing One," the "WHORE," can be none other than a Roman version of Semiramis, the Babylonian queen and goddess of fecundity! Says the *News Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*:

"In primitive central Italy, Flora was the goddess of budding springtime, of cereals, fruit trees, the vine and flowers . . . Her festivals, the *Floralia*, lasted from the twenty-eighth of April to the third of May and were rather licentious. ON THE TWENTY-THIRD OF MAY there was ANOTHER FESTIVAL IN HER HONOR, a rose festival" (p.210).

Notice carefully, now. The festival of this ancient ROMAN GODDESS, widely worshiped in ROME during the time of the early Church, fell before and at the very time of PENTECOST! The Biblical feast of Pentecost occurs 50 days after Passover, and varies in date from about the middle of May till early June. In 1977, Pentecost fell exactly on MAY 23, the date of the rose festival of Flora! Thus the festival honoring Flora, the heathen goddess of licentious behavior – the WHORE – of springtime and flowers, fertility and whose rites included nude dancing and promiscuous behavior, fell RIGHT AT THE TIME SURROUNDING PENTECOST!

So what does this mean?

In volume 4 of his epic work, "The Age of Faith," Will Durant explains what happened to the Festival of Flora, as with so many other pagan festivals.

"Paganism survived in the moral sense, as a joyous indulgence of natural appetites; as a religion it remained only in the FORM OF ANCIENT RITES AND CUSTOMS CONDONED, OR ACCEPTED AND TRANSFORMED, BY AN OFTEN INDULGENT CHURCH. An intimate and trustful worship of saints replaced the cult of the pagan gods, and satisfied the congenial polytheism of simple but poetic minds. Statues of Isis and Horus were RENAMED MARY AND JESUS; the Roman Lupercalia and the feast of the purification of Isis became the Feast of the Nativity; the Saturnalia were replaced by CHRISTMAS celebrations, **THE FLORALIA BY PENTECOST**, an ancient festival of the dead by All Souls' Day, the resurrection of Attis by the resurrection of Christ. PAGAN ALTARS were dedicated to Christian heroes; incense, lights, flowers, processions, vestments, hymns, which had pleased the people in older cults, were domesticated and cleansed in the ritual of the Church . . ." (p.75).

The Roman Catholic Church thus “baptized” the pagan Floralia, called it “Pentecost,” a Biblical-sounding name, and observed it *seven weeks after Easter Sunday!*

God condemns pagan worship and idolatry. But the Roman Catholic Church substituted PAGAN holidays and festivals for the Feasts of God as outlined in the Bible! And notice! They converted the spring festival of Flora into a *Sunday* “Pentecost” which was calculated to fall on a Sunday seven weeks after EASTER itself, another pagan day!

How did pagan festivals become engrafted into the Church, and how were the true days of God eliminated? This is one of the most shocking, incredible stories of all history. To understand exactly what happened, and how a PAGAN day replaced God's true Holy Day of Pentecost, let us notice, now, the TRUE origin and commandment of God concerning “Pentecost”!

It is a COUNTERFEIT of the true Biblical feast of Pentecost, also called “Shavuot” or the “Feast of Weeks.”

The Feast of “Weeks”

The Hebrew calendar tells us that Passover is celebrated at the full moon, with the sacrifice on Nisan 14 and the meal on Nisan 15, after the new moon nearest the vernal equinox – and that fifty days later the festival of “weeks” or Shavuot (Deut.16:9-10) – called Pentecost in the New Testament, meaning in Greek “The Fiftieth Day” (Acts 2:1) – is to be observed. God said:

“In the fourteenth day of the first month AT EVEN [meaning, afternoon, toward the END of the day] is the LORD's passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the FEAST of unleavened bread unto the LORD: SEVEN DAYS YE MUST EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. . . .

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I gave 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 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.

“And YE SHALL COUNT unto you FROM THE MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH, from the day that ye brought the SHEAF of the wave offering; seven sabbaths [weeks] shall be COMPLETE: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath [week] shall ye number FIFTY DAYS . . .” (Lev.23:5-16).

Many translations show that the word for “Sabbaths” in verse 15 and “Sabbath” in verse 16 can be rendered “weeks” and “week.” In fact, the Jewish translation, the Tanakh, says:

“And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering -- the day after the sabbath – you shall COUNT OFF SEVEN WEEKS. They must be COMPLETE: you must count until the day after the SEVENTH WEEK -- fifty days . . .”

This is obviously talking about “weeks,” not sabbath days. We often use the expression, “a complete week,” meaning a week of seven days, as opposed to a “partial week.” However, to use this expression to refer to “complete sabbath days” doesn't make any sense. This is referring to complete WEEKS, not “sabbaths.” *A Dictionary of the Bible* by James Hastings makes this truth obvious. He wrote:

“. . . the use of the [shabat] in the general sense of WEEKS may be justified by the analogy of the Aramaic and Syriac, the interpretation of the LXX [Septuagint], and the use of [sabbaton an sabbata] in NT, eg. Matt.28:1, Lk.18:12 . . . It is at any rate certain that the Jews celebrated the sheaf-waving on Nisan 16, and Pentecost on the fiftieth day after (usually Sivan 6), without regard in either case to the day of the week” (“Pentecost,” vol.3, p.741).

The Aramaic language is closely related to Hebrew, and is the language commonly spoken in the days of Jesus. “Sabbath,” in that language, can mean “week.” The same is true in Syriac and in Greek. Obviously, it must be true in the Hebrew language as well.

Further proof of this fact is in the Bible itself. Whereas in Leviticus 23:15-16, the word “Sabbath” is used in regard to counting “seven Sabbaths” to the “seventh sabbath,” Deuteronomy 16:9 plainly says, “Seven WEEKS shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the SEVEN WEEKS . . . And thou shalt keep the FEAST OF WEEKS.”

Here the word is *shabua* and means “seven,” “week.” Thus the Bible itself interprets the meaning of “Sabbaths” as used in Leviticus 23 as “weeks”! How PLAIN! That's why this festival is called “the feast of WEEKS.”

Origin of a Sunday Pentecost

The Jews since time immemorial have celebrated Pentecost, by counting seven weeks from the first High Holy Day of Passover. But the pagan Samaritans, and the hellenizing Sadducees, a quasi-religious-political sect among the Jews, counted their “Pentecost” differently. According to them, the wave sheaf offering was to be done on the day following – not the High Day Sabbath of Passover – but the WEEKLY sabbath day that occurs DURING the feast of unleavened bread.

By so reckoning, they automatically place the day of the wave sheaf offering on none other than EASTER SUNDAY – because that is the Sunday which occurs the day after the weekly Sabbath during unleavened bread! By so reckoning, therefore, they have adopted EASTER SUNDAY AS THE DAY OF THE WAVE SHEAF OFFERING!

How insidiously clever! How ingeniously diabolical! Thus the Catholic “Pentecost”

corresponds to the Sadducean and Samaritan “Pentecost” in ancient times!

This brings up the question: Who were these Samaritans? Answer: They were PAGANS from Babylon (II Kings 17:23-24).

From where did they get their “Sunday” Pentecost? Since they were originally worshipers of the pagan deities, they combined or amalgamated paganism with the Old Testament, and undoubtedly their interpretation was influenced by their original PAGAN practice and observance of the Festival of Flora!

The Sadducees, in following the teaching of the Samaritans in this regard, were actually also influenced by HELLENISTIC PAGANISM! In the light of these facts, do you really believe that God Almighty commanded His people Israel to count off seven weeks from the WEEKLY Sabbath day which falls during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, to determine the date for Pentecost?

The Official Jewish Teaching

The official Jewish practice has always been to count the fifty days beginning with the day after the FIRST HIGH HOLY DAY of Unleavened Bread. The Pharisees, who were the religious leaders of the Jews during the time of Christ, endorsed this practice. Josephus the Jewish historian of the first century attests that this was the Pharisaical practice. He wrote:

“But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that they do not touch them. . . They also at this participation of the first fruits of the earth, sacrifice a lamb, as a burnt-offering to God.

“When a WEEK OF WEEKS has passed over after this sacrifice (which week contains forty and nine days), ON THE FIFTIETH DAY, WHICH IS PENTECOST . . . they bring to God a loaf, made of wheat flour . . .” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk.III, X, 5-6).

Josephus himself was a Pharisee all his life, and this is the way the Pharisees counted Pentecost. Was it the correct way? Were the Pharisees right in how they reckoned Pentecost, by counting from the day after the First High Holy Day, or from Nisan 16?

Louis Finkelstein in his book *The Pharisees – The Sociological Background of Their Faith*, writes of them:

“Despite this variability in the monthly date of Shabuot (Pentecost), the Pharisees considered the festival the anniversary of the Revelation on Mt. Sinai. The festival, they held, always occurred 'in the season' of the Revelation, and was intended to celebrate that most important event in human history. There was some disagreement, even among the later Rabbis, regarding the precise date of the Revelation. But this disagreement did not involve any question regarding the nature of Shavuot. ACCORDING TO ALL PHARISEES, THE REVELATION OCCURRED ON THE FIFTY-FIRST DAY AFTER THE EXODUS; AND THAT ANNIVERSARY WAS MARKED BY SHAVUOT (PENTECOST)” (p.642, emphasis mine).

Jesus Christ Himself also endorsed this method. It is clear, from the gospel of Matthew, that He recognized the authority of the Pharisees in matters of the Law. Even though the Pharisees were wrong in many of their customs and teachings, concerning washings of hands, and the like, yet they were the custodians of God's Law, and Jesus said that they sat in "Moses' seat." Notice!

Yeshua declared: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in MOSES' SEAT: ALL THEREFORE WHATSOEVER THEY BID YOU OBSERVE, THAT OBSERVE AND DO" (Matt.23:2-3).

Clearly, Jesus here admitted that the Pharisees calculated the holy days of God, including Pentecost, CORRECTLY! He ENDORSED their commandments concerning God's LAW. He nowhere in the gospels EVER disagreed with or contradicted the Pharisees in the way they calculated and reckoned Pentecost! Surely, if they had been in error on such a vital point, Christ would have clearly pointed it out and the apostles would have recorded it! But the silence of the Messiah on this point proves that the Pharisees did indeed figure Pentecost correctly!

The Apostle Paul's Example

Furthermore, the apostle Paul, who had been a Pharisee, taught at the feet of Gamaliel, says that he was "taught according to the PERFECT MANNER OF THE LAW of the fathers" (Acts 22:3). This would have been impossible, if Paul had been taught incorrectly by Gamaliel, one of the chief rabbis of the Pharisees!

In A.D. 60 Paul addressed the Jewish Sanhedrin, saying, "I am a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6). The Pharisees would have disowned him, and pounced on him, for saying this, if he had been teaching a contrary method of calculating Pentecost! But instead, they were the ones who interceded for him at this point, and defended him, from the wrath of the Hellenizing Sadducees, who calculated their version of Pentecost from the weekly Sabbath that fell during the Feast of Unleavened Bread – just like the PAGANS calculated their festival of Flora!

If Paul had kept Pentecost like the Sadducees did, they would have not been so angry with him, and the Pharisees would have disowned him. But Paul was as he claimed, a devout Pharisee. Therefore he observed Pentecost just like they did, and on the same day!

As a final proof of this fact, notice that in his letter to the Philippians, Paul said that he was

"Circumcized the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law [which included Pentecost], A PHARISEE; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the RIGHT-EOUSNESS WHICH IS IN THE LAW, BLAMELESS" (Phil.3:5-6).

If Paul, as a Pharisee, had been observing Pentecost on the wrong day, he could never

have made this statement! It would have been a LIE! But, as a true apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul did not lie – he bore witness and testified that as a Pharisee he observed God's LAW – including the right day for Pentecost, counting from the First High Holy Day – 'BLAMELESSLY'!!! And, according to most historians, Paul made this statement in 64 A.D. – not many years before his final martyrdom

Should we not therefore follow his example, which he set, for the whole Church? Paul commanded the Corinthian Church, “Be ye FOLLOWERS OF ME, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor.11:1). If we follow Paul, then we, too, will observe Pentecost on Sivan 6 -- not like the Sadducees did, on the seventh Sunday following Easter Sunday!

The Words That Will JUDGE Us!

Paul and Jesus Christ, the Messiah, both upheld the teaching of the Pharisees on this issue. To reject their teaching is tantamount to rejecting the gospel and words of Jesus Christ – to reject Him as Saviour and Redeemer! And to reject Christ's teaching, and example, is to mean that you could LOSE YOUR SALVATION! Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). If you reject His words, you quench the Spirit, and reject LIFE!

Jesus further said, “My doctrine [teaching] is not mine, but HIS THAT SENT ME” (John 7:16). To reject Jesus' plain words about Pentecost, then, is to reject the FATHER Himself! Jesus declared,

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not MY WORDS, hath one that judgeth him: the WORD that I have spoken, the SAME SHALL JUDGE HIM in the last day. For I HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF MYSELF; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak” (John 12:48-50).

These are surely serious matters, not mere curiosities to be taken lightly. Salvation itself is at stake! To hide one's eyes from the truth, to cower in sheer cowardice and refuse to face the facts, the truth, is tantamount to REJECTING truth and incurring the penalty for breaking the LAWS of God – the reward for disobedience – DEATH (Romans 6:23).

God surely does not contradict Himself. “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). “Thy word is truth,” Jesus said (John 17:17).

WHOM WILL YOU BELIEVE AND OBEY?

How about it? Whom will you believe? Will you now follow the Word of God, and the example of Jesus Christ, and the apostle Paul, and the early Church, and observe Pentecost on the fiftieth day after the First High Holy Day of Unleavened Bread – which happens to be the same day the Orthodox Jews keep it, which normally falls on Sivan 6, according to the Jewish calendar?

Or will you follow the erroneous Sadducean Pentecost, the Roman Catholic Sunday Pentecost, patterned after the ancient pagan festival of the Floralia?

Will you observe a PAGAN counterfeit Pentecost, which really celebrates the festival of the pagan goddess Flora, the day adopted by the Roman Catholic Church as their "Whitsunday"?

Or will you obey the Word of GOD?

A Pagan Roman Emperor

The substitution of pagan holidays for God's holy days began after the death of the original apostles, and was codified and enforced by the Roman Emperor Constantine, at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

At the behest of Constantine, who sought to enforce "unity" upon the different factions of the Christian Church, the Biblical Passover was rejected in favor of Easter Sunday. In fixing the date for Easter, the Pagan Church also fixed the date for Pentecost 50 days after Easter Sunday, in place of the pagan Floralia festival!

In Constantine's immortal words:

"It appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul . . . Let us then have NOTHING IN COMMON WITH THE DETESTABLE JEWISH CROWD . . . Strive and pray continually that the purity of your souls may not seem in anything to be sullied by fellowship with the customs of these most wicked men . . . All should unite in desiring that which sound reason appear to demand, and in AVOIDING ALL PARTICIPATION IN THE PERJURED CONDUCT OF THE JEWS" (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 3:18-19, NPNF, 2nd, I, pp.524-525).

The renowned scholar J. B. Lightfoot asserts that Rome and Alexandria adopted Easter-Sunday to avoid "EVEN THE SEMBLANCE OF JUDAISM" (J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 1885, II, part I, p.88). The same would apply, of course, to the pagan Pentecost, counted fifty days from Easter Sunday! When Constantine convened the Council of Nicea, it was not to return to the faith of the Bible, the "faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) – it was to COMPEL THE WORLD TO ADOPT CHRISTIANIZED PAGANISM!

Thus the Roman Catholic Church and all western professing Christendom departed from the true festivals of God as set forth in the Scriptures, and embraced pagan days and celebrations, now calling them "Christian." Says Samuel Bacchiocchi, in *From Sabbath to Sunday*:

“In a document attributed to Irenaeus it is specifically enjoined not to kneel down on Sunday nor on Pentecost, that is, THE SEVEN WEEKS OF THE EASTER PERIOD, 'because it is of equal significance with the Lord's day.' The reason given is that both feasts are 'a symbol of the resurrection.' Tertullian confirms that custom but adds the prohibition of fasting as well: 'On Sunday it is unlawful to fast or to kneel while worshipping. We enjoy the same liberty from Easter to Pentecost.' F.A. Regan comments on the text, saying: 'In the season extending from EASTER TO PENTECOST, the same custom was followed, thus showing the RELATION between the ANNUAL and WEEKLY FEASTS'"
(From Sabbath to Sunday, p.204-205).

The pagan Easter Sunday-pagan Pentecost Sunday tradition is tied together, and goes together like ham and eggs, or vodka and caviar. The Sunday Easter replaces the Passover, and the Sunday Pentecost, counted from Easter Sunday, replaces the true Sivan 6 Pentecost, counted from Passover!

Satan the devil has very cleverly, adroitly, substituted the days that WORSHIP HIM and his demonic empire of fallen spirits, for the worship of the True God of the Bible!

It is not just Easter itself which is pagan to the core, but the whole pagan complex of holidays – the Pagan Easter AND the Pagan Pentecost! They are tied together. If you observe either one, you are following a PAGAN custom which Almighty God condemns!

In other words, **NOT JUST EASTER ITSELF, BUT THE WHOLE EASTER SUNDAY-PENTECOST SUNDAY TRADITION IS UTTERLY PAGAN – A RELIGIOUS FRAUD PERPETRATED UPON THE NAIVE, GULLIBLE, AND UNSUSPECTING CHRISTIAN WORLD IN THE DAYS OF THE PAGAN ROMAN EMPEROR CONSTANTINE!**

Truly, the devil has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9).

Obviously, therefore, a TRUE Christian, who seeks to obey GOD in all things, and to live by "every word that proceeds from the mouth of GOD" (Matt.4:4; Luke 4:4), will follow Christ and Paul and the TRUTH of the Bible, and will avoid at all costs any compromise with paganism, and any festivals adulterated with pagan DEMON WORSHIP DISGUISED AS CHRISTIANITY!

Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, article “Pentecost,” says, “Pentecost is *traditionally* represented as Sunday . . . Wieseler plausibly suggests that the festival was fixed on Sunday by the *later* Western Church to correspond with Easter. Among the Jewish Christians observance of the Hebrew feasts continued doubtless with fresh significance derived from the new revelation.”

The apostate Roman Catholic Church changed the celebration of the Passover, replacing it with Easter Sunday, thus celebrating the ancient pagan festival of the sex goddess Ishtar, or “Easter.” They then corrupted Pentecost, and put it on a Sunday, 50 days following Easter.

Notice the following table of dates:

PENTECOST OBSERVANCE

Year	Jews	Worldwide Church of God	Roman Catholicism
1975	May 27	May 18	May 18
1976	June 4	June 6	June 6
1979	June 1	June 3	June 3
1980	May 21	May 25	May 25
1981	June 8	June 7	June 7
1982	May 28	May 30	May 30
1983	May 18	May 22	May 22
1984	June 6	June 10	June 10

It would appear that the old Worldwide Church of God followed the Roman Catholic Church in its determination of Pentecost, even though it did not endorse Easter Sunday. The same statement would apply to all those churches which descended from or came out of the old Worldwide Church of God after the death of its founder.

But what does the Word of God say?

Almighty God thunders to His people: "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? for YE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD; as God hath said, I will dwell with them, and walk with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

"WHEREFORE COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, AND BE YE SEPARATE, SAITH THE LORD, AND TOUCH NOT THE UNCLEAN THING; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Cor.6:14-18).

God says further, of this Satanic system, which observes Pentecost on the wrong day: "COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, THAT YE BE NOT PARTAKERS OF HER SINS, AND THAT YE RECEIVE NOT OF HER PLAGUES" (Rev.18:4).

Do you want to be partaker of the sins of this Babylonish system? Do you want to receive of her plagues?

If you follow the Sunday Pentecost reckoning, then you are laying yourself open for all the plagues of Almighty God, and will be judged right along with modern "Babylon" for her detestable, filthy, abominable sins!

It's time to *WAKE UP!*

Notice what God Almighty says about those who observe His festivals on the wrong day, and incorrectly -- "Your new moons, and YOUR appointed feasts *MY SOUL HATETH*: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them" (Isaiah 1:14).

It is not the prerogative of any human being to change, alter, diminish, cancel out, abolish, or move, any holy day ordained by Almighty God! God Himself set them and established them in their seasons. He Himself ordained them, and He set the Jewish people, with the Levitical priesthood, as their divinely appointed guardians (Rom.3:1-2). No man and no "Church" has the right or the authority to change or alter that which God Himself has established!

God warns us against those who would rise up, and who would *"think to change times and laws"* (Daniel 7:25).

Those who observe Pentecost the same day, many years, as the Roman Catholic Church does, have been duped by Satan the devil into embracing one of the "holy days" of Rome!

God says for His people to COME OUT of the Roman system and partake not of her sins! To observe Pentecost on a wrong day is a SIN in the sight of Almighty God! It is plain and absolute disobedience to His divinely ordained commandment!

The Jewish Example

Devout Jews, today, observe Pentecost on Sivan 6. They have no question about it. It is a very meaningful day to them. They keep it on the very same day the ancient Pharisees kept it. This was the commonly observed day in the time of Jesus Christ, when the Pharisees were in charge of the religious affairs of the people of Judea, most of whom highly respected and looked up to the Pharisees. The Essenes, on the other hand, were a small sect dwelling in the desert and remote regions and never attracted much attention.

The Sadducees, meanwhile, were primarily a political-religious "modernist" party which traced back to the secular priests who bought and bribed their way into the job of "high priest" during the days of the Maccabees. They later were cohorts of Herod and allies of Rome, and did not believe in an after-life or resurrection. They had few followers among the mainstream of the Jewish nation.

Jesus Christ and His disciples observed Pentecost on the same day as the great majority of Jews of that time. If they had observed a different day, it would certainly have been so indicated in the Gospels and book of Acts, and Paul, himself a former Pharisee, would certainly have mentioned this change in his epistles. But the New Testament is totally silent about any such thing, although it mentions the Feast days many times.

In Acts, chapter 2, we read: "And when the DAY OF PENTECOST WAS FULLY COME, they (the apostles) were all of one accord (they all had the right day!) in one place" (Acts 2:1). Notice! The New Testament Church of God knew which was the right day of

Pentecost. They were all together on that day!

The Jews in Jerusalem also knew – for they also were celebrating Pentecost on the same day. “And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” (verse 5). Why were these devout Jews from every nation gathered in Jerusalem at that time? Obviously, they were celebrating Pentecost on the same day as the apostles and early Church!

Here, then, is further proof that Pentecost is the same day which the Jews have always customarily observed – the preponderance of the Jews – the date of Sivan 6. If this were not the case, and if they were celebrating Pentecost 50 days after the weekly Sabbath which falls during the Festival of Unleavened Bread, then they would not in most cases have even arrived in Jerusalem for Pentecost yet since they would have been celebrating it later! And even if they had arrived, they would have no business being at the Temple that day, which was a Friday, if they didn't observe Pentecost until the following Sunday!

But no, we read that devout Jews were gathered in Jerusalem from every nation, on the very day the apostles celebrated Pentecost. This is strong evidence that they, too, were celebrating it the very same day!

In Acts 20:16, we read: “For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at JERUSALEM THE DAY OF PENTECOST.” Again, there is no hint that Pentecost was any other day than the one commonly observed by the Jewish people!

So the question is – what day will you observe? Whose example will you follow? Does it matter to you?

Should we not follow the example set by Jesus Christ, all the apostles, and the apostle Paul, who all observed the same day as the Jews and the Pharisees of ancient times?

The prophet Elijah thundered 2,700 years ago to the people of Israel, "HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS? IF THE LORD BE GOD, FOLLOW HIM; but if BAAL, then follow him" (I Kings 18:21).

Choose you this day whom you will follow – men, or the Word of God. Christ Jesus, or Baal-Nimrod. The Word of God and the Biblical Pentecost, or the pagan feast of Floralia, dressed up and disguised to appear “Christian.”

You choose.

New Testament Proof on How to Count Pentecost!

The controversy still rages on how to count Pentecost! Is it counted from a weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread? Or should it be counted from the day after the Passover Holy Day, the First Day of Unleavened Bread? Here is amazing *New Testament evidence* on this continuing dispute!

William F. Dankenbring

For over twenty years, I have been trying to show the churches that came out of Worldwide Church of God, Messianic groups, and others, the plain truth on the matter of how to “count Pentecost.” For some reason, many people just don’t want to seriously check into this matter, or they simply accept the word of their minister or some self-anointed “scholar” on the subject. Opinions sometimes get heated, there has been much name-calling, and yet the battle for the truth rages on.

What is the truth? If I could show you plain evidence in the *New Testament* that has been overlooked for the last fifty years, would you believe?

Well, here it is!

We read a very mysterious passage in the gospel of Luke which has confounded ministers and laymen alike. Various opinions have been offered to explain this passage. But let’s just take a careful look ourselves, and see if we can understand it!

Luke writes, “Now it happened on the *second Sabbath after the first* that He went through the grain fields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands. And some of the Pharisees said to them, ‘Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?’” (Luke 6:1-2, NKJV).

Believe it or not, hidden in this passage is the KEY that unlocks the truth about from what day to count to Pentecost! What is this mysterious expression, “the second Sabbath after the first”? It has perplexed scholars for generations.

Notice first of all that this event occurred at the time of the harvest of grain. This would place the time as early to late spring. In Israel, the two major grain harvests are at the beginning of spring, or Passover, and the festival of “first fruits” – that is, Pentecost. Passover occurs March-April, and Pentecost falls in May or June. Passover begins the barley harvest, and Pentecost begins the wheat harvest.

Which harvest is this? Matthew records this same event in chapter 12. In Matthew's account, we simply read, "At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat" (Matt.12:1). In this passage, the simple word "Sabbath" is used, showing that this would be a normal weekly Sabbath day – not an annual holy day. That same day, He entered their local synagogue (Matt.12:9), and healed a man on the Sabbath (verses 10-11). He thus showed it is all right to heal and do good on the Sabbath, thus showing that some of the Jewish Sabbath traditions and rules were in grievous error. The whole emphasis here was that it was the *weekly Sabbath day* that was involved!

Yet Luke adds that this particular weekly Sabbath day was also "the second Sabbath after the first." How are we to understand that significant statement? What could he mean by such an expression?

Deuteroproton

The Greek-English Interlinear has it this way: "And it happened on the second chief Sabbath." Literally, "And it was on a Sabbath, the second chief." The Greek expression here is *sabbaton dueteroproton* and means, literally, "Sabbath, the second chief," or "sabbath the second first," that is, "the second first (or chief) Sabbath."

Now notice two vital elements to this puzzle. First, it was during the grain harvest. Secondly, this was a weekly Sabbath, and yet it was unique – a "second" "chief" Sabbath. This could not be during the fall Feast of Tabernacles – that festival occurs AFTER the harvest has been completed! There is only one "chief Sabbath" at Pentecost, since it is a one-day festival. The only other time when there would be two "chief Sabbaths" in a row would be during the spring Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread.

During the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, we actually have THREE CHIEF SABBATHS. That is, the first day of Unleavened Bread, the weekly Sabbath which occurs DURING the Festival of Unleavened Bread, and the FINAL day of Unleavened Bread. Both the first and last days of Unleavened Bread are "annual festivals" or "Sabbaths." God says: "On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight [evening] is the LORD's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the *first day* you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it" (Leviticus 23:5-8). Between these first and last annual Sabbaths is the weekly Sabbath during the Festival (Lev.23:3) – sanctified by being the seventh day of the week, and also because it occurs during the seven-day festival, it is very special.

When we look at this passage in Luke closely, therefore, we see that we have *three unique Sabbaths during the days of Unleavened Bread*, in all years except where the first or last day of the Feast falls on the weekly Sabbath.

It is clear that the Sabbath in Luke 6 must have been a Sabbath during the week of Passover. At no other festival are there two chief Sabbaths, or three. And at no other festival is the harvest of grain occurring, except Pentecost, which is a one day festival.

Therefore this passage must be discussing the Sabbath which occurred during PASSOVER and the Feast of Unleavened Bread! The passage says this was the “second chief Sabbath,” not the third – therefore it was the second Sabbath of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The account in Matthew simply refers to it as a weekly Sabbath, giving no indication it was an annual holy day. Therefore, this Sabbath must have been the WEEKLY SABBATH!

What, you may ask, does this have to do with determining from what day we are to count the days (counting the “omer”) until Pentecost?

The Leviticus Legislation

Let’s notice how this would relate to the counting of the omer until Pentecost. Again, we read in Leviticus 23:

“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 the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; *on the day AFTER THE SABBATH the priest shall wave it*” (vs.10-11).

Notice! This is the famous “wave sheaf offering.” It was commanded to be waved on the first day AFTER “the Sabbath.” But which Sabbath? Was it the weekly Sabbath which occurred during the days of Unleavened Bread, as the Sadducees taught, and as many end-time remnant churches teach, which came out from the Worldwide Church of God, as well as some Messianic groups? Or is this Sabbath the Passover Sabbath, Abib 15, the First Day of Unleavened Bread?

Orthodox Jews and mainstream Judaism teaches that this refers to the First Day of Unleavened Bread. That is also what the ancient Pharisees taught. The ancient Sadducees claimed it refers to the weekly Sabbath. Which is correct?

Before showing you how the New Testament passage in Luke is involved in this great controversy, let’s notice three very important things:

1. As to the beliefs and teachings of the Sadducees, Jesus Christ declared in no uncertain words, “You are mistaken, *not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God*” (Matt.22:29). These people did not even believe in a spirit world, the existence of angels, or the resurrection from the dead! (see also Acts 23:6-8). They were teaching error and were in great ignorance of the Scriptures. Should we base our beliefs on their vain and foolish teachings?

2. As to the practice of the apostle Paul, he said, “I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee” (Acts 23:6). He declared, further, before king Agrippa: “According to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee” (Acts 26:5). Paul also declared, “I am indeed a Jew . . . brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law*” (Acts 22:3). Paul clearly told the Philippians that he was “concerning the law, a Pharisee” – not a Sadducee (Phil.3:5). In so saying, he added, “concerning the righteousness which is in the law, *blameless*” (verse 6). What do all these candid admissions prove? Simply this: As a Pharisee, Paul must have observed Pentecost on the day observed by the Pharisees – *and that day was arrived at by counting from the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread!*

3. Jesus Christ Himself declared that it was not the Sadducees but the Pharisees who sat in Moses’ seat. That is, they had authority to teach the people, as the representatives of Moses, as it were. He said, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. *Therefore whatsoever they tell you to observe, that observe and do*, but do not according to their works; for they say, and do not” (Matt.23:2-3). In other words, we are to follow their teachings so long as they are in accord with the Word of God, and the teachings of Moses. *Jesus never once found fault or criticized the Pharisees on how they counted Pentecost, or regarding what day on which they observed it!*

How then does this relate to the point at issue here?

When Was the Wave Sheaf Offering?

Back in Leviticus we read the following key piece of divine legislation relating to the wave sheaf offering, which was offered on the day after a “Sabbath”:

“You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain *nor fresh grain UNTIL THE SAME DAY* that you have brought an offering to your God. 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 that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering . . .*” (Lev.23:14-15).

Now let’s get this straight. The people of Israel were not to partake of ANY grain from the new grain harvest in Israel *until after the omer was offered*. And the omer was to be waved before the LORD on the day following the “Sabbath.” It had to be either the Sabbath known as the First Day of Unleavened Bread, or the weekly Sabbath during the Feast. Which was it?

Luke 6:1 provides the clear, unambiguous answer! Notice clearly! It was the second Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread – “the second chief Sabbath.” It was a weekly Sabbath (Matt.12:1-2; Mark 2:23-24). And here we find the very disciples of Christ **PLUCKING HEADS OF GRAIN AND EATING THEM!** *Obviously, the “wave*

sheaf offering” had to have already been offered! Here it was the weekly Sabbath, and THEY WERE ALREADY “HARVESTING THE GRAIN”! But such an act was strictly FORBIDDEN until AFTER the Wave Sheaf Offering!

This is PROOF POSITIVE that the Omer had already been offered – on the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

According to the Sadducees, and those churches which follow them, the “wave sheaf” would not be offered until the day FOLLOWING this weekly Sabbath. Therefore, according to their reasoning, the apostles were SINNING AGAINST GOD’S LAW – in violation of a strict commandment in the Torah!

Now I ask you – candidly. If this had been the case, why did the Pharisees not jump all over the disciples of Christ, and find fault with them for violating this strict injunction of God’s Law? Why did they ignore such a gross offence, for which one could be cut off from Israel, and not mention it at all – and simply regard their offence as being one of plucking grain on a weekly Sabbath, violating their tradition?

The situation we find in Luke 6 plainly shows us that on this “second Sabbath” during the Feast of Unleavened Bread the wave sheaf offering had already been performed by the High Priest, on the day of Abib 16, the second day of the Festival, and therefore the disciples were free to eat the “new grain” from the harvest!

What Do You Mean, “Sabbath”?

Some, however, insist that since the Biblical command is that we are to “count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath” (Lev.23:16), that these must be seven regular weeks, each one ending with a weekly Sabbath. But this is simply not correct, as every Jew knows. The term “Sabbath” can also refer to a “week.” It is interpreted thus by Deuteronomy 16:9. There we read, “You shall count seven *weeks* for yourself; begin to count the seven *weeks* from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God.”

Here there is no argument – the word “WEEKS” is clearly used, showing we are to count periods of seven days each. Why then is “Sabbath” used in Leviticus 23:16? There is a vital spiritual lesson God is imparting here. The word for “Sabbath” is *shabat*. Most people assume it simply means the “Sabbath day,” and let it go at that. But that is not the case at all! The Day derives its name from the meaning of the word – not vice versa. “Sabbath” in Hebrew simply means “intermission” (Strong’s #7676), from the word *shebeth*, meaning “*rest, interruption, cessation.*” The reference is not to the weekly Sabbath at all, but to the counting off of seven periods of seven days each, each of the periods ending with an “intermission,” “rest,” “interruption.”

Adds *Commentary on the Old Testament*, by C. F. Keil and F Delitzsch, “*Hashabaat maacharat* (the morrow after the Sabbath) signifies the next day after the

first day of the feast of Mazzoth, i.e., the 16th Abib (Nisan), not the day of the Sabbath which fell in the seven days' feast of Mazzoth, as the Baethoseans supposed

“The ‘Sabbath’ does not mean the seventh day of the week, but the day of rest, although the weekly Sabbath was always the seventh or last day of the week; hence not only the seventh day of the week (Exodus 31:15, etc.), but the day of atonement (the tenth of the seventh month) is called ‘Sabbath’ and ‘Shabbat shabbathon’ (verse 32, Lev.16:31). As a day of rest, on which no laborious work was to be performed (v.8), the first day of the feast of Mazzoth is called ‘Sabbath,’ irrespectively of the day of the week upon which it fell; and ‘the morrow after the Sabbath’ is equivalent to ‘the morrow after the Passover’ mentioned in Joshua 5:11, where ‘Passover’ signifies the day at the beginning of which the paschal meal was held, i.e., the first day of unleavened bread, which commenced on the evening of the 14th, in other words, the 15th Abib. By offering the sheaf of firstfruits of the harvest, the Israelites were to consecrate their daily bread to the Lord their God, and practically to acknowledge that they owed the blessing of the harvest to the grace of God. They were not to eat any bread or roasted grains of the new corn till they had presented the offering to their God (v.14).

“This offering was fixed for the second day of the feast of the Passover, that the connection between the harvest and the Passover might be kept in subordination to the leading idea of the Passover itself (see at Exodus 12:15ff.)” (p.891).

Amen to that! The theme of the Passover is intimately tied in to the theme of the harvests – but the Passover is the principle – the beginning point – and the harvest follows after!

Says *Barnes Notes on the Bible*, volume 1, regarding Leviticus 23:15 – “seven Sabbaths,” “More properly seven weeks (compare Deuteronomy 16:9). The word Sabbath in the language of the New Testament as well as the Old, is used for ‘week’ (Lev.25:8; Matthew 28:1; Luke 18:12, etc.)” (page 223).

Barnes Notes continues regarding Leviticus 23:16 – “The morrow after the seventh week was the 50th day after the conclusion of a week of weeks. The day is called in the Old Testament, ‘the feast of harvest’ (Exodus 23:16), ‘the feast of weeks,’ ‘the feast of the firstfruits of wheat harvest’ (Exo.34:22; Deuteronomy 16:10), and ‘the day of the firstfruits’ (Numbers 28:26)” (p.223).

A Careful Exegesis of Luke 6

What do Commentaries have to say about the account in Luke 6, and the expression used only there regarding the Sabbath day?

The *Matthew Henry Commentary* says regarding the account in Luke, chapter 6: “This story here has a date, which we had not in the other evangelists; it was *on the second Sabbath after the first* (v.1), that is, as Dr. Whitby thinks is pretty clear, the *first Sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread*, from which day they reckoned the

seven weeks to the feast of Pentecost; the first of which they called *Sabbaton deuteroproton*, the second *deuterodeuteron*, and so on” (p.1418).

Dake’s Annotated Bible explains this passage as follows: “These six words (the second Sabbath after the first) are from only one Greek word *deuteroprotos*, the second-first Sabbath, the ordinary weekly Sabbath following the special Sabbath that began the feast regardless of what day of the week it fell on. That is the feast of unleavened bread of 7 days always started on the 15th day of Nisan or April, regardless of what day of the week it was (Lev.23:6-8). If it happened to be on Wednesday the regular weekly Sabbath or the second Sabbath of the feast would be 3 days later. The last day of the feast, being also a Sabbath, or the third Sabbath of the feast, would be on Tuesday or three days after the weekly Sabbath. The 1st and 7th days of the seven-day feast were special Sabbaths and the regular weekly Sabbath was between the two, being the second Sabbath of the feast. That this was a weekly Sabbath is clear from Matthew 12:1-8.”

The *Adam Clarke Commentary* declares as to this passage: “The Vulgate Latin renders *deuteroproton*, *secundo-primum*, which is literal and right. We [in English] translate it the *second Sabbath after the first*, which is directly wrong; for it should have been the *first Sabbath after the second* day of Passover. On the 14th of *Nisan*, the Passover was killed; the next day (the 15th) was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread; the day following (the 16th) the *wave sheaf* was offered, pursuant to the law, *on the morrow after the Sabbath: Lev.23:11*. The *Sabbath*, here, is not the seventh day of the week, but the *first day of the feast of unleavened bread*, let it fall on what day of the week it would. . . .

“This *Sabbath*, then, on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, was the *first Sabbath* after that *second day*. Dr. Lightfoot has demonstrably proved this to be the meaning of this *sabbaton deuteroproton*, and from him F. Lamy and Dr. Whitby have so explained it. *This Sabbath could not fall BEFORE the Passover because, till the second day of that feast, no Jew might eat either bread or parched corn, or green ears (Lev.23:14).*”

Now let’s really understand this point! Notice very carefully! Adam Clarke goes on to explain the problem many expositors have completely overlooked:

“Had the disciples then gathered these ears of corn on any Sabbath before the Passover [or, before the wave sheaf offering!!!], *they would have broken TWO LAWS INSTEAD OF ONE: and for the breach of these TWO LAWS they would infallibly have been accused; whereas now they broke only one . . . which was that of the Sabbath*” (volume 3, page 404).

How plain it is! Here it has been, lying right beneath our feet, as it were, all these years. The mystery of counting Pentecost has been completely solved, if we accept the New Testament evidence!

But that is not all!

Evidence from 250 B.C.

The dispute over Pentecost and the date of the wave sheaf offering was between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Both of these religious parties sprang up out of the strife in Judea which arose during the time of the Maccabees and the Syrian conquest of Judea by Antiochus Epiphanes, from 167-164 B.C. The Jews who followed the Torah strictly became known as “separatists,” or “separated ones,” from whence we obtain the term “Pharisee.” The priestly group, who entertained the ideas of Hellenism, and compromised the religious teachings of Torah to ingratiate themselves with Antiochus Ephiphanes, became known as “Sadducees.”

In the struggle to dominate the religious life of the Jews, following the Maccabean wars, the Sadducees sometimes acceded to office, as priestly kings; but as time went by, the Pharisees became more and more powerful, until about 100 B.C. they became the dominant religious party. Josephus tells us that the Sadducees could do nothing without the approval and agreement of the Pharisees. He wrote in *Antiquities of the Jews*, “the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude on their side” (Bk.12,10,6). Josephus says further, “Moreover the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord and regard for the public. But the behavior of the Sadducees one towards another is in some degree wild; and their conversations with those that are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them” (*Wars of the Jews*, Bk.2,10,14).

The Pharisees were dominant during the time of Christ. Therefore it was with them that most of His disputes occurred, and they were among His chief critics. Nevertheless, He never rebuked or took them to task for changing the method of counting to Pentecost!

Yet, interestingly, some 250 years before the time of Christ, before the sects of the Pharisees or Sadducees were even formed, in the wake of the Maccabean wars, we discover that king Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt desired the Jewish nation to provide him a translation of the Scriptures into the Greek language for his world renowned library in Alexandria, Egypt. The Jewish nation, about 250 years before Christ, acceded to his wishes – the whole account is given in the letter of one Aristeas. Suffice it to say, the result was the Septuagint Version of the Scriptures, the first authorized translation of the Holy Scriptures into a foreign language. For more information about this amazing translation, read my articles “A New Look at the Septuagint” and “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint.”

What does this authorized translation, used in all the synagogues throughout the Roman Empire, tell us about the counting of Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks?

We read: “These are the festivals for the Lord – holy, set days, which you shall proclaim in their set times. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings, is the Passover for the Lord. And on the fifteenth day of this month beginneth the festival of unleavened bread for the Lord. Seven days you shall eat

unleavened bread. Now the FIRST DAY shall be a holy, set day for you. You shall do no sacrificial service, but offer whole burnt offerings to the Lord seven days, and the SEVENTH DAY shall be a holy set day for you. You shall do no sacrificial service.

“Moreover the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say unto them, When you are come into the land which I give you, and are about to reap the harvest thereof, you shall bring a sheaf, as the first fruits of your harvest, to the priest, and he shall offer up the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you ON THE MORROW AFTER THE FIRST DAY, the priest shall offer this up” (Lev. 23:4-11).

How interesting and plain this makes this controversial verse of Leviticus 23:11, which some claim tells us to offer the wave sheaf on the day after the *weekly* Sabbath. *NOT SO!*

The Septuagint very plainly says, “on the morrow after the FIRST DAY,” and there is no way you can interpret the “first day” to ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE FIRST DAY OF THE FEAST! It clearly does not refer to the weekly Sabbath – the weekly Sabbath is the “SEVENTH DAY,” *by its own definition!*

To be sure you understand this point clearly, notice that verse 7 of this chapter identifies the “first day” for us and plainly tells us “THE FIRST DAY” IS THE FIRST DAY OF UNLEAVENED BREAD!!!

This passage in the LXX, therefore, makes the truth incredibly plain and clear as crystal. It ought to END the controversy over Pentecost, and PUT TO SILENCE the obstinate voices of shrill critics. But will it? Let each individual look deep down into his or her own heart, and examine their own personal motives. Will we recognize and admit the truth? What does it take? How much “PROOF” is required?

Was This “Honest”?

In his 1974 booklet entitled “God’s Festivals and Holy Days,” Herbert Armstrong attempted to “prove” that the count to Pentecost should begin from the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread. A subsequent edition published in 1986 (the year of his death) used the same language. Prior to that time, he taught the count should begin from *Monday*, the day following the day after the weekly Sabbath!

In his booklet, Armstrong quoted from the Mishnah, saying, “The Boethusians say: ‘The cutting of the sheaf does not take place at the end of the day of the feast [Passover day, Abib 15] but only at the end of the next regular Sabbath” (Menahoth 10,3).

But wait a minute! Who were the Boethusians? Is the Mishnah citing them as an authority we should follow? Not at all! Let’s read this in its actual context! Talking about the waving of the Omer, the passage says:

“How was it made ready? The messengers of the court used to go out on the eve of the Festival-day [just after sunset, following the Passover celebration on the First Day of Unleavened Bread] and tie the corn in bunches while it was yet unreaped to make it easier to reap; and the town nearby all assembled there together that it might be reaped with much pomp. When it grew dark, he called out, ‘Is the sun set?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Is the sun set?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Is this a sickle?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Is this a sickle?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Is this a basket?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Is this a basket?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ On the Sabbath [if this was on a weekly Sabbath] he called out, ‘On this Sabbath?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘On this Sabbath?’ and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Shall I reap?’ and they answered, ‘Reap!’ ‘Shall I reap?’ and they answered, ‘Reap!’ He used to call out three times for every matter, and they answered, ‘Yea!’ ‘Yea!’ ‘Yea!’ *Wherefor was all this? Because of the Boethusians who used to say: The Omer may not be reaped at the close of a Festival day.*”

In other words, the Boethusians, who were a family of Sadducees, taught that the Omer should be reaped after the weekly Sabbath, not the day after the Passover Sabbath, which was the Festival-day of the First Day of Unleavened Bread! They were considered as heretics! The Mishnah was certainly *not endorsing their point of view!* Rather, in this passage the Mishnah explains why the Jews went to these elaborate steps to show the people that the Omer should be reaped according to the teaching of the Pharisees. Says a footnote in my copy of the Mishnah regarding the “Boethusians,” it declares, “In rabbinical terminology synonymous with Sadducees.”

Says Alfred Edersheim in *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, on this matter:

“The expression, ‘the morrow after the Sabbath’ (Lev.23:11), has sometimes been misunderstood as implying that the presentation of the so-called ‘first sheaf’ was to always be made on the day following the weekly Sabbath of the Passover-week. This view, adopted by the ‘Boethusians’ and the Sadducees in the time of Christ, and by the Karaites Jews and certain modern interpreters, rests on a misinterpretation of the word ‘Sabbath’ (Lev.23:24,32, 39). As in analogous allusions to other feasts in the same chapter, it means not the weekly Sabbath, but the day of the festival. The testimony of Josephus (*Antiq.* 3.248-249), Philo (*Op.* ii, 294), and Jewish tradition leaves no room to doubt that in this instance we are to understand by the ‘Sabbath’ the 15th of Nisan, on whatever day of the week it may fall” (page 204).

Why Herbert Armstrong lifted a short passage out of the Mishnah, which referred to the doctrine of Boethusian heretics, and quoted it *as if* the Mishnah itself was endorsing the teaching, is a question he will have to answer for in the resurrection when

he will have to appear before the Messiah to be judged. Many thousands have looked to him as their teacher and spiritual leader and followed him, trusting him to get it right. But he failed to do so.

In his booklet, Herbert Armstrong, using the Boethusians as his authority, goes on to say: “Starting then to count from the offering of the wave sheaf, with that Sunday as day number one, we will always come out on another Sunday – but not on the same day of the month. It is something that must be counted each and every year. Quoting again from the Mishnah, and speaking about the traditional practice that had been followed in Jerusalem before the Pharisees took complete control, [The Boethusians say:] Pentecost always falls on the day after the Sabbath” (Chagigah, 2,4).”

Is that right?

Once again, let’s explore this section of the Mishnah, and prove this matter for ourselves – lest we be misled on a very important point of Biblical truth and obedience to the laws of God! The Mishnah actually says:

“If the Feast of Pentecost fell on the eve of a Sabbath, the School of Shammai say: ‘the day for slaughtering’ is after the Sabbath. And the School of Hillel say: It needs no other day for slaughtering. But they agree that if [the Feast] fell on a Sabbath, then the day of slaughtering is after the Sabbath. The High Priest may not put on his high-priestly vestments, and mourning and fasting are permitted, *To lend NO SUPPORT TO THOSE THAT SAY, ‘PENTECOST FALLS ON THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH’*” (Mishnah, Chagigah 2:4).

Again, I must wonder why Herbert Armstrong took this passage out of the Mishnah and quoted it totally out of context! Such carelessness is so dangerous and leads to many serious, egregious mistakes and false conclusions!

I suggest that those who believe the teachings of Herbert Armstrong, particularly on his doctrine regarding the counting of Pentecost, ought to reconsider the evidence with an open, objective mind. Whom do you trust? God, and His plain word? Or a mere man, who apparently was either very confused, or too hasty, or careless in his research – too ready to jump to conclusions and then overly authoritative while lacking in true, diligent and honest scholarship!

“Touch Me Not”

Many believe that a Sunday Pentecost and Sunday waving of the wave sheaf offering are supported by Jesus’ statement to Mary Magdalene, after His resurrection, when He said to her, “Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father” (John 20:17). They claim that Jesus was the “wave sheaf” offering, and He had not yet been accepted by the Father, and therefore this supports the Sunday wave sheaf theory.

But wait a minute or two or three! What was really going on here? The New

King James Version has this verse: “Do not CLING to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father.”

The *Phillips Translation* has Jesus saying, “No! do not *hold* me now.” According to Moffatt, “Jesus said, Cease CLINGING to me.” “Do not hold on to me,” says the *Good News Bible*. Obviously, there was more involved here than mere “touching.” The *Amplified Bible* says, “Do not CLING to me [do not hold me].”

The Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary points out, “Not knowing the change which had passed upon Him, she hastens to express by her actions what words failed to clothe: but she is checked. . . Old familiarities must now give place to new and more awful, yet sweeter approaches; but for these the time has not come yet. This seems the spirit, at least, of these mysterious words, on which much difference of opinion has obtained, and not much that is satisfactory been said.”

Adam Clarke's Commentary explains: “Verse 17. Touch me not. Cling not to me. *Apramai* has this sense in Job 31:7, where the Septuagint use it for the Hebrew *dabak*, which signifies to CLEAVE, CLING, STICK, OR BE GLUED TO. From Matthew 28:9, it appears that some of the women held him by the feet and worshipped him. This probably Mary did; and our Lord seems to have spoken to her to this effect: ‘Spend no longer time with me now: I am not going immediately to heaven -- you will have several opportunities of seeing me again: but go and tell my disciples, that I am, by and by, to ascend to my Father and God, who is your Father and God also. Therefore, let them take courage.’”

The Greek word for “touch” in this passage is *haptomai*, and literally means “to cling, or attach oneself to.” Says *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, the definition is “to fasten to, make adhere to, spec. to fasten fire to a thing, to kindle, set on fire.” Thayer says of the passage in John 20:17, the meaning is, “Do not handle me to see if I am still clothed with a body; there is no need of such an examination.”

Jesus did not want to be hugged, groped, or clung to, in this manner. It was enough! He had things to do, work to perform, and could not be delayed. So He said to her, “But go to My brethren, and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God” (John 20:17, last part).

The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* explains: “In reply to her action, Jesus said, ‘Do not hold me.’ He was not refusing to be touched, but was making it clear that she did not need to detain Him, for He had not yet ascended to the Father. He planned to remain with the disciples for a little while [forty days!], she need not fear that He would vanish immediately. Ultimately He would return to God, and He urged her to tell the disciples that He would do so.”

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words tells us about this word “touch”:

“1. *hapto* (681), primarily ‘to fasten to,’ hence of fire, ‘to kindle’ . . . ‘to cling to, lay hold of,’ John 20:17; here the Lord’s prohibition as to clinging to Him was indicative of the fact that communication with Him would, after His ascension, be by faith, through the Spirit” (p.638).

The True Ascension of Christ

Did Jesus “ascend” to God the Father in heaven, THAT VERY DAY, SECRETLY, and then RETURN? There is no evidence anywhere in the Bible that such is the case. Rather, Luke informs us, “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, UNTIL THE DAY IN WHICH HE WAS TAKEN UP, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being SEEN BY THEM during FORTY DAYS and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And, being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ He said, ‘you have heard from Me” (Acts 1:1-4).

Luke continues, “And when He had spoken these things, while they watched, HE WAS TAKEN UP, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven AS HE WENT UP, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was TAKEN UP FROM YOU INTO HEAVEN, WILL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER as you SAW HIM GO INTO HEAVEN”” (Acts 1:9-11, NKJV).

This was the ascension of Jesus into heaven! From the point of His resurrection early Sunday morning till forty days later, He had NOT ascended to heaven and returned. Rather, He stayed on earth, and continued to show Himself alive from the dead, for a period of FORTY DAYS, with numerous “infallible proofs.” THEN He ascended into heaven, in the sight of all His disciples! There was nothing secretive about it.

Therefore, the apostle Paul could write with great plainness of speech, “So Christ was ONCE OFFERED to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall HE APPEAR THE SECOND TIME without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28). The next coming of Christ will be HIS SECOND COMING -- not His “third” coming, which it would be if He had gone to Heaven and returned to earth that “Sunday morning”!

Jesus was OFFERED ONCE, not on the Sunday morning following His resurrection, but when He “Himself BORE OUR SINS in His own body on the tree” (I Pet.2:24), New King James Version). While on the cross, He was “offered.” His sacrifice for our sins was accepted by God the Father *when it was completed*. Not three days later, after His resurrection when He supposedly zipped up to heaven for a brief encounter with the Father.

The “wave sheaf” offering had nothing directly to do with Christ’s sacrifice. It

was accepted immediately, when He died on the stake. Rather, the wave sheaf offering, was symbolical of the entire barley harvest, sanctifying the whole of the harvest to follow. It was not a “first fruit” – singular. It consisted, as Edersheim points out, of MANY grains of barley – not just one!

Says Edersheim on this point: “Though one ephah, or ten omers, of barley was cut down, only one omer of flour, or about 5.1 pints of our measure, was offered in the Temple on the second Paschal, or 16th day of Nisan” (*The Temple*, p. 205). Edersheim goes on, “The ears were brought into the Court of the Temple, and thrashed out with canes or stalks, so as not to injure the corn; then ‘parched’ on a pan perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. The corn thus prepared was ground in a barley-mill, which left the hulls whole. According to some, the flour was always successfully passed through thirteen sieves, each closer than the other” (p.204-205).

What does this represent? The omer was the “FIRSTFRUITS” of the harvest! It represents TRUE BELIEVERS in Christ – TRUE CHRISTIANS who follow Him – the “firstfruits” of God’s spiritual harvest! We are “a kind of firstfruits,” James writes (James 1:18). As Paul wrote, we are those who “have the firstfruits of the Spirit” (Rom.8:23). I Corinthians 15:23 does not say, in the original Greek, that Christ is the “firstfruits,” but rather, “firstfruit” – singular!

John, in the book of Revelation, clearly explains who the “firstfruits” are. He says, “Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. . . . These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were REDEEMED from among men, *BEING FIRSTFRUITS to God and to the Lamb*” (Rev.14:1-4).

As Christians, we are undergoing our “test” and qualifying period for “salvation” NOW! We are undergoing trials and tests, and being prepared to be the TRUE “FIRSTFRUITS” of God’s harvest! We are being “parched,” touched by the fire of testing and tribulation, we are being winnowed, sifted, corrected by being “thrashed” on occasion, yet not so as to be injured spiritually, but for our own good; we are also being exposed to the “wind” of false teachings, heresies, and doctrines, that we might be proved to be faithful to the end (Eph.4:14). Read my article entitled, “The Amazing Truth about the Wave Sheaf Offering!”

Even as ten Omers are reaped from the harvest, but only ONE Omer (5.1 pints of grain) is used, even so, Jesus Christ tells us, “For many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt.22:14).

The End of the Matter

When all is said and done, it becomes perfectly clear that Pentecost should be observed fifty days after the First day of Unleavened Bread. It is directly tied to the Passover. The count begins the second day of the Passover festival. The disciples of

Christ ate of the new grain harvest on the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread because it was perfectly all right to do so as the Omer offering sanctifying the new crop had already been waved before the Lord and accepted.

On this subject of counting Pentecost, Herbert Armstrong seemed to have a blind spot. But in general, he taught that we should all “prove all things,” and have an “open mind” to new truth. He declared in an article in the *Good News* magazine, “We are all human. We are all fallible. I have been wrong. I have made mistakes. The same is true of all those God is using in HIS WORK.” He goes on,

“God says, ‘PROVE all things.’ That means *you* are fallible. This means all the ‘great’ men are fallible! ALL are human. ALL can be wrong – and nearly all are. The *whole world* is DECEIVED (Rev.12:9). . . .

“The very recognition of that fact is the *beginning of* right knowledge. We do recognize it – that we ourselves could be wrong. That is the *first step* toward coming out of the fog of error and deception, starting toward truth.”

Wouldn’t it have been wonderful if he had applied this principle to his study of Pentecost? Herbert Armstrong went on,

“The second step, if you would know TRUTH, is to be ready to admit being deceived or in error, and to reject it and accept truth new to me – when proved even though unpopular . . . To find and live the TRUTH requires a HUMBLED mind”

He added candidly, “I had to be willing, *continuously*, to confess being wrong, and to embrace truths constantly NEW to me” (January 1985, *Good News*).

In another article, Herbert Armstrong wrote 39 years ago in the December 1976 *Good News* magazine, another salient truth. He declared, “Wouldn’t it be all right to compromise, ‘just a little,’ on some ‘unimportant minor point’”? He continued,

“Nevertheless, if we begin to compromise with God’s TRUTH, even in the smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) AND TAKE OVER THE WHOLE CHURCH.”

Herbert Armstrong added,

“A little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP! I have been charged with the commission of KEEPING GOD’S WORD. Keeping it inviolate – NO COMPROMISE! I have never

compromised with God's TRUTH – regardless of the cost or the circumstances. *I never shall!*”

Whether he lived up to these principles is for God to judge. But his errors in counting Pentecost are no excuse for us, today. God has now revealed His truth in spades – with incontrovertible evidence.

What will you do about it? Will YOU compromise, even a “little bit,” with the truth of Almighty God? A little leaven – SIN – soon leavens the whole lump of dough.

Herbert Armstrong said, adamantly, when he saw new truth or correction, from God:

“I will CHANGE whenever proved wrong. I will accept NEW TRUTH as often as PROVED to be new truth to me or to the Church.

“But I will not compromise with the truth! I never have! I won't compromise – not even ‘just a little.’”

Herbert Armstrong asked the question, many years ago –

“[Am I] willing to admit being deceived or in error, and to reject it and accept truth new to me – when proved even though unpopular – even though it cuts me off from my family, friends, associates or club members – even though everything in my selfish and vain nature rebels against it? Am I willing to ACT *ON IT* – *OBEY the truth* no matter what the cost?”

What about YOU?

The apostle Paul told the Athenians, in Greece, “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but *now* commands all men everywhere to *repent*” – to stop sinning and to confess the truth! (Acts 17:30).

Will you “CHANGE WHEN PROVED WRONG”? Will you ACCEPT NEW PROVEN TRUTH, even if others refuse to agree with it? Will you boldly go counter to the opinions of others, including old friends, ministers, and brethren who are still unwilling to change and have been blinded to the truth and continue to dwell in deception?

God really wants to know the answer! “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (II Chron.16:9).

What Does *Counting of the Omer* Have to Do with Pentecost?

How many have ever heard a sermon on “counting the omer”? How many even know what an “omer” is? How many realize that the way their church counts to Pentecost was established by the Sadducees, the apostatized priestly class of the time of Christ which Christ Himself said was “mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God” (Matt.22:29)? They denied the existence of angels, denied the resurrection, but counted Pentecost from the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, in total defiance of the Scriptures and the Pharisees, who counted from the day after the first Passover holy day each year! Christ said the Sadducees were IGNORANT of the Scriptures! So why do the churches follow them?

It’s high time people take charge of their own lives, and STUDY THE SCRIPTURES, and QUIT following mere MEN who establish themselves as “leaders,” “ministers,” and who are really misguided and misinformed.

What about YOU? Are you willing to take charge of your life, and not just believe any man or so-called minister, and CHECK UP AND PROVE the doctrine – the truth? Paul exhorts us all, “PROVE ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good” (I Thess.5;21). Are you willing to take the time to open your Bible, to STUDY to show yourself “approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of God” (II Tim.2:15)?

Yes, by all means, send me the following articles checked off below. I want to “prove all things” and KNOW the truth of God. I don’t want to be deceived by the end-time false shepherds, foolish ministers, and blind guides who twist and pervert the truth of God!

- The Mystery of Omer Counting Revealed!
- Sefirat Ha Omer – the Key to Overcoming
- The Mystery of the Wave Sheaf Offering
- How to Count Pentecost!
- The Amazing Truth about Pentecost!
- Pentecost – the Final Answer!
- Astonishing New Insight on the Significance of Pentecost!

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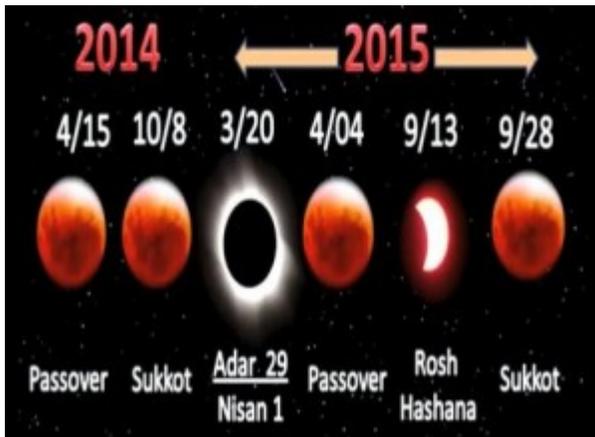
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Prophecy Briefs

Signs in the Heavens 2014-2015



The total solar eclipse on March 20th falls on Nisan 1, which is the first day of the first month of the Biblical calendar. According to Jewish tradition, a solar eclipse on Nisan 1 is a sign of judgment. And this has certainly been true in the past. For example, there was a solar eclipse on Nisan 1 in 70 AD. Later that year, the Romans attacked Jerusalem and completely destroyed the Temple.

What makes all of this even more interesting is the fact that the solar eclipse on March 20th falls right in the middle of the blood moon tetrad, and it also happens to fall during the Shemitah year. If you are not a believer, you may be tempted to dismiss all of this as some sort of extremely bizarre coincidence. If you are a believer, you also might be skeptical. But by the end of this article, at least you will understand what so many people are talking about right now.

In the Scriptures, we are told that God created the sun and the moon, and that he intended for them to act as “signs”. The following comes from Genesis chapter one...

14 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:

15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of

the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

So specifically how can the sun and moon be “signs” as God originally intended?

Well, one minister has discovered that eclipses on important Biblical dates have been associated with key world events throughout history. His name is Pastor Mark Biltz of El Shaddai Ministries, and he has pointed out that total eclipses do not take place on any other planet in our solar system...

Total eclipses don’t take place on any other known planet, point out intelligent-design scientists. They only take place on Earth, the finely tuned planet where life exists that can actually view them. Biltz points out that the Bible says in Genesis that the sun, moon and stars were created specifically as signs for mankind, so His creation would know about the feasts (or appointed times) to have relationship with their Creator.

A number of years ago, Pastor Biltz discovered that a series of four blood moon eclipses would occur on important Biblical dates during 2014 and 2015. This kind of “blood moon tetrad” is very rare. It fact, it has only happened seven times before since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This current blood moon tetrad is the eighth occurrence.

And according to Jewish tradition, blood red moons are an omen of war for Israel. The following comes from my previous article on the blood red moons...

Is Israel going to be involved in a war during the blood red moons of 2014 and 2015? According to ancient Jewish tradition, a lunar eclipse is a harbinger of bad things for Israel. If that eclipse is blood red, that is a sign that war is coming. And blood red moons that happen during Biblical festivals seem to be particularly significant.

There was a “tetrad” of blood red moons that fell during Passover 1967, the Feast of Tabernacles

1967, Passover 1968 and the Feast of Tabernacles 1968. And of course the 1967 war during which Israel took full control of Jerusalem took place during that time period. There was also a “tetrad” of blood red moons that fell during Passover 1949, the Feast of Tabernacles 1949, Passover 1950 and the Feast of Tabernacles 1950. If you know your history, you already are aware that the Israeli War of Independence ended on July 20th, 1949. So does the blood red moon tetrad of 2014 and 2015 signal that another season of war is now upon us?

We already witnessed a war between Israel and Hamas in 2014, but personally I am convinced that more war could soon come to the Middle East. For much, much more on this, please see this article.

But what I want to talk about now is the total solar eclipse that is coming up on March 20th. The chart below comes from propheciesoftheendtimes.com, and it shows that it falls right in the middle of this series of blood red moons...

Blood Red Moons

As I mentioned above, when a solar eclipse falls on Nisan 1 it is traditionally considered to be a sign that judgment is coming to the world...

“Our Rabbis taught, when the sun is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for the whole world. This may be illustrated by a parable. To what can this be compared? To a human being who made a banquet for his servants and put up for them a lamp. When he became wroth with them he said to his servant, ‘Take away the lamp from them, and let them sit in the dark’.

It was taught: R. Meir said, whenever the luminaries [moon] are in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel since they are inured to blows. This may be compared to a school teacher who comes to school with a strap in his hand. Who becomes apprehensive? He who is accustomed to be daily punished. Our Rabbis taught, When the sun is in eclipse it is a bad omen for idolaters; when the moon is in eclipse, it is a bad omen for Israel, since Israel reckons by the moon and idolaters by the sun...”—Succah 29a

Of course Jewish tradition is not Scripture, but it is very interesting to note.

And what we do know is that we have seen this kind of pattern before.

On Nisan 1 in 70 AD, there was a total solar eclipse. But that was not the only eclipse during that time period. In fact, there were a whole series of eclipses that took place on key Biblical dates before and after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The following information comes from a book authored by Pastor Mark Biltz entitled “Blood Moons:

October 18, 69 AD (Sukkot): partial solar eclipse
 March 30, 70 AD (Nisan 1): total solar eclipse
 April 14, 70 AD (Passover): penumbral lunar eclipse
 Temple destroyed 9th of Av, 70 AD
 September 21, 70 AD (Rosh Hashanah): annual solar eclipse
 October 8, 70 AD (Sukkot): penumbral lunar eclipse
 March 4, 71 AD (Purim): partial lunar eclipse
 March 20, 71 AD (Nisan 1): hybrid solar eclipse
 September 12, 71 AD (Rosh Hashanah): hybrid solar eclipse

Now we find ourselves in the middle of a similar series of eclipses. So could it be possible that this total eclipse on March 20th is a sign of judgment? (“Sign Of Judgment? Total Solar Eclipse On March 20th Falls In The Middle Of The Four Blood Red Moons,” by Michael Snyder, February 26, 2015, “End of the American Dream”).

America -- No Longer Israel’s Shield?

In the wake of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s decisive reelection, the Obama administration is revisiting longtime assumptions about America’s role as a shield for Israel against international pressure.

Angered by Netanyahu’s hard-line platform toward the Palestinians, top Obama officials would not rule out the possibility of a change in American posture at the United Nations, where the U.S. has historically fended off resolutions hostile to Israel.

And despite signals from Israel suggesting that Netanyahu might walk back his rejection, late in the campaign, of a Palestinian state under his watch, Obama officials say they are taking him at his word.

“The positions taken by the prime minister in the last days of the campaign have raised very significant substantive questions that go far beyond just optics,” said a senior administration official,

adding that recent Israeli government actions were in keeping with Netanyahu's rhetoric.

While saying it was "premature" to discuss Washington's policy response, the official wouldn't rule out a modified American posture at the United Nations, where the U.S. has long fended off resolutions criticizing Israeli settlement activity and demanding its withdrawal from Palestinian territories.

"We are signaling that if the Israeli government's position is no longer to pursue a Palestinian state, we're going to have to broaden the spectrum of options we pursue going forward," the official said. There is no virtually no chance that the U.S. will trim its financial or military support for Israel. But some analysts believe that going forward, Netanyahu may be vulnerable in international forums where the U.S. has long been a bulwark against criticism of Israel and its presence in Palestinian territories.

"I do think the administration is going to look very closely at the possibility of either joining, or at least not blocking an internationally backed move at the U.N. to restate the parameters for ending the conflict," said Jeremy Ben-Ami, president of the left-leaning pro-Israel group J Street.

Netanyahu's campaign statements "make it a lot easier for the administration to justify going down a more international route," Ben-Ami added.

The chief Palestinian negotiator with Israel, Saeb Erakat, told Agence France-Press that the Palestinians will "accelerate, continue and intensify" their diplomatic efforts to pressure Israel. The U.S. has run critical interference for Israel on such measures in the past. Last November, the U.N. Security Council considered a draft resolution, pushed by the Palestinians and Arab countries, demanding an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank within three years. The U.S. quietly quashed the effort.

In February 2011, Obama exercised his first Security Council veto to strike down a resolution condemning Israeli settlement activity in Palestinian territory. Every other one of the Security Council's 15 members supported the resolution.

Obama officials must now decide whether more international pressure on Israel can help bring a conservative Netanyahu-led government back to

the negotiating table with the Palestinians — or whether such pressure would simply provoke a defiant reaction, as some fear.

Obama has other diplomatic options. He could expend less political capital to oppose growing momentum within the European Union to impose sanctions on Israel for its settlement activity.

More provocative to Israel would be any softening of Obama's opposition to Palestinian efforts to join the International Criminal Court, which the Palestinian Authority will formally join on April 1. Under a law passed by Congress, any Palestinian bid to bring war crimes charges against Israel at the court will automatically sever America's \$400 million in annual aid to the Palestinian Authority, although some experts suggested Obama could find indirect ways to continue some funding — even if only to prevent a dangerous collapse of the Palestinian governing body.

On Monday, Danny Ayalon, a former Israeli ambassador to the U.S., said he expected Netanyahu to "retract" a campaign statement he made ruling out the possibility of a Palestinian state during his tenure as prime minister. But the senior Obama official said that the administration believes the prime minister meant what he said because Netanyahu made multiple comments during the closing days of his campaign as he appealed to conservative voters.

The official noted that Netanyahu also admitted that, during his first term as prime minister in the mid-1990s, he had approved construction at the Israeli settlement of Har Homa to cut off any possible linkage between Palestinian-majority areas. "It was a way of stopping Bethlehem from moving toward Jerusalem," Netanyahu said.

"To actually come out and say that this construction is actually driven by efforts to undermine a future Palestinian state is fairly dramatic," said the official. He added that the Obama administration is focused not just on Netanyahu's comments but on his "several-year record of action on this issue" casting doubt on his desire for a peace agreement.

A former senior Obama official was more direct, saying of the Israeli leader: "He's shown his true colors."

For months, Israeli officials have insisted that the real problem lies not with their policies but with the Palestinians. They cite Palestinian Authority

President Mahmoud Abbas's formation of a unity government with the Gaza-based militant group Hamas last June, and his December move to have the Palestinian Authority join the criminal court — actions that Israel vehemently opposed.

Even before the events of recent days, pro-Israel conservatives were alarmed about the possibility of a toughened policy from the Obama White House in the wake of Secretary of State's John Kerry's failed push for an Israeli-Arab peace agreement. That effort collapsed last spring, and some key Obama officials primarily blamed Israel.

Since then, the Obama administration has criticized Israel's settlement building with increasingly blunt language.

In November, after Israel's government announced plans to build 2,500 new homes in East Jerusalem, for instance, White House spokesman Josh Earnest warned that the news would draw international scorn — pointedly adding that it would “distance Israel from even its closest allies.”

Another concern for Netanyahu allies is a recent White House staff shuffle, in which the national security director's point man on Israel, Phil Gordon, departed and was replaced by Rob Malley, a former adviser to Bill Clinton.

Malley's ascension to the post of White House coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf Region drew outrage from some Israeli-American groups, who pointed to his past contacts, while a staffer at the nonprofit International Crisis Group, with Hamas. While the U.S. considers Hamas a terrorist organization, Malley has argued that any Israeli-Arab peace deal will require dealing with the Gaza-based group.

As a candidate in 2008, Obama ousted Malley from his campaign advisory team after critics attacked his Hamas contacts. Malley has also publicly blamed Israel for the failure of peace talks with the Palestinians.

Soon after Malley's March 6 promotion from a more junior White House post, the Zionist Organization of America lashed out with a statement calling him “an Israel-basher, an advocate of U.S. recognition of major, unreconstructed terrorist groups Hamas and Hezbollah, and a proponent of the containment of Iran.” (Michael Crowley, Politico, March 18, 2015).

Netanyahu's Enormous Win Part of Divine Plan?

Benjamin Netanyahu's stunning victory in the Israeli elections has led to an eruption of media criticism against the Jewish state and its newly re-elected leader.

But amidst growing concern that Israel will be diplomatically isolated, religious experts warn that such international opposition is not only inevitable, it is necessary to fulfill God's plan in what many believe are the coming end times.

One of the leading voices warning of the growing hostility to the Jewish people is bestselling author Joel Richardson, whose shocking new blockbuster “When a Jew Rules the World: What the Bible Really Says About Israel in the Plan of God” was released on the very same day as the Israeli elections.

In an exclusive interview with WND, Richardson called the timing “providential” but cautioned the results of “one of Israel's most important critical elections in its lifetime” do not spell an end to trouble for the Jewish people.

“Although President Obama is no doubt not happy with the results of the election, those who support Israel and her security are breathing a sigh of relief that Netanyahu was re-elected. But as Christians, we also know that regardless as to who is the prime minister of that nation, Israel's only real security can come from trusting in the Lord.

“In the days ahead, as we draw closer to the fulfillment of the covenant promises of God to the sons of Israel, the rage of Satan and the nations will only increase. What we are seeing now with ISIS and Iran is nothing compared to where it will go.”

Pastor Carl Gallups sounded a similar theme. In an interview with WND, Gallups, author of the best-selling “Final Warning: Understanding the Trumpet Days of Revelation,” suggested the Israeli people understood the threat posed by nations like Iran, even if the mainstream media and the Obama administration do not.

“The people of Israel have spoken. It seems that the majority of Israelis do not want Iran to have nukes, do not support the Obama administration negotiating with Iran regarding the procurement of nuclear weapons, do not want the Arab Palestinians

to have a separate state (especially if it involves a land give-away on the part of Israel), do not want militant Islam to dominate the Middle East, and do want more Jewish settlements to be built.

“These were some of Netanyahu’s major planks and, in his words, he won hands down ‘against all odds.’”

Gallups believes the media’s opposition to Israel partially explained the misleading coverage during the campaign suggesting Netanyahu faced certain defeat.

“Prior to, and even during, the election process it seemed the vast majority of what I was reading predicted Netanyahu’s defeat and was proclaiming how this defeat was going to be a ‘good thing’ for the prospects of ‘world peace.’ Either the media’s pre-election analytics were astoundingly poor, or ... could it have been that they were actually attempting to convince the Israeli electorate (or themselves) that Netanyahu needed to be unseated?”

However, Gallups says ultimately what is happening in the Middle East is part of a divine plan and subject to the will of God, not the vicissitudes of power politics.

“World events continue to unfold – all centered around Israel and its right to exist and defend itself – just as the Bible foretold thousands of years ago.”

Pastor Mark Biltz agrees that current events in Israel are the fulfillment of a divine plan. The pastor of El Shaddai Ministries and the original discoverer of the four Blood Moons teaching declared, “I believe God was in total control of the elections regardless of the outcome.”

Biltz, author of “Blood Moons: Decoding the Imminent Heavenly Signs” and host of the “Blood Moons” DVD says that signs sent by God warn Christians that the world is about to enter a whole new age.

Specifically, Biltz points to a solar eclipse that will take place on Friday as an indication that “time goes back to the beginning as everything is coming into alignment.”

Biltz explained, “This solar eclipse is also a super dark moon and it is over the North Pole. The last total solar eclipse on the March equinox occurred back in 1662 on March 20. It was in the southern

hemisphere.”

“What is happening this week will be a first time ever in human history event.”

Biltz believes the timing of the eclipse followed by the appearance of the next Blood Moon signifies that momentous events are soon to follow.

“Having this once in a lifetime solar eclipse aligned with the spring equinox as well as the beginning of the religious calendar all on Nisan 1, just after Israel’s elections, is definitely a sign from the heavens. This is followed two weeks later by a Blood Moon, a total lunar eclipse on Passover, the very day all the firstborn of Egypt died about 3,500 years ago.”

According to Biltz, Netanyahu’s victory is a sign that he has been chosen to lead Israel at this critical juncture. As he put it, “God was putting the one He wanted at the helm of Israel for the perilous times they are entering.”

Laurie Cardoza-Moore, who was named special envoy for Middle Eastern affairs to the World Council of Independent Christian Churches for her expertise on Middle East affairs and Jewish-Christian relations, agrees that Netanyahu has been “raised up for a time such as this.”

In an exclusive interview with WND, Cardoza-Moore stated, “What is happening right now, what is unfolding, is bigger than any world leader is able to understand. All the strategies of man will not work against the nation of Israel.”

Cardoza-Moore specifically identified Obama’s attempt to manipulate the Israeli elections as an example of this failure.

“Obama puts all these millions of dollars and use the same kind of campaign that got him elected to try to unseat Prime Minister Netanyahu. It didn’t work. And he will pay a price.”

Cardoza-Moore called Netanyahu “the key statesman of our world and the Churchill of our age” who is the “only one who understands what is happening in the Middle East and around the world.”

But the U.N. special envoy warned that Scripture states that Israel is likely to face greater threats in the immediate future.

“We know that we are living in the last days. If we look at the policies of the United States government and the United Nations, we can see that they are dividing up the land of Israel. And Obama tried to bring down the King David of our time, for it’s God who raises up kings and brings them down.

“We must remember the final battle takes place against the enemies of Israel. And though Israel must face the wrath of nations around the world for prophecy to be fulfilled, military history doesn’t apply to Israel. God says, ‘I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you.’” (Genesis 12:3)

Also drawing on Scripture, Joel Richardson says understanding the role of Israel and the Jewish people is critically important for Christians to comprehend the end times and how God expects them to act.

“I’m happy to see Islamic Antichrist, a book that is now several years old, once again a No. 1 bestseller, but I truly believe that ‘When a Jew Rules the World’ is my most important book to date.

“Christians need to equip themselves to understand what the Bible says regarding Israel and how it is that we are to stand with her in these last days.”

And Biltz judges the real tests for Christians and everyone else are just about to begin.

“I say fasten your seat belts as this world is about to go on the ride of its life. We are back to square one and a new era begins.” (WorldNet Daily, March 20, 2015).

Holy Altar Constructed for Third Jewish Temple



End-times prophecy watchers are marveling over a news report out of Jerusalem this week that the Altar of the Lord has been reconstructed by the Temple Institute.

The Institute, based in the Old City of Jerusalem, announced it has finished building an altar that is essentially "ready for use" in sacrificial services.

The altar is the most ambitious project to date toward the goal of rebuilding the Jewish Temple. The massive outdoor altar, which took several years to build, can be operational at little more than a moment's notice, reported the Israeli magazine Matzav Haruach.

The altar is the last major component needed for the long-obstructed sacrifices to resume in a future Jewish temple.

Ultra-Orthodox Jews pray daily for its reconstruction atop the holy hill known as Mount Moriah or the Temple Mount.

Bible scholars say the rebuilding of the ancient temple is predicted throughout scripture, starting with Daniel's vision in Daniel 9:27. Jesus echoed Daniel's warning about an abomination standing in "the holy place" in the last days in Matthew 24:15, followed by the Apostle John's vision of the Temple in Revelation 11:1-2. Paul mentioned it in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

Most people don't realize the temple had two altars -- the altar of burnt offering and the altar of incense. The largest was the altar of burnt offering, placed in the outer court of the priests. Designing and building it to exact biblical specifications required quite an undertaking.

It was approximately 5 meters (16 feet) tall and 16 meters (52.5 feet) wide, with four "horns" or raised corners, and a ramp.

The altar is the central focus of the sacrificial services that were halted with the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 A.D.

The Temple Institute has prepared all the priestly garments and sacred vessels for the rebuilt temple, which can be viewed on its website. It even trains members of the priestly family to be ready to serve as soon as the Temple is constructed.

Carl Gallups, a Baptist pastor in Florida, Bible prophecy expert and author of "Final Warning: Understanding the Trumpet Days of Revelation," told WND the announcement about the altar will be seen by many Christians as a huge step toward fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

"This announcement will surely excite prophecy watchers around the world," he said. "Regardless of one's eschatological leanings, every sincere student of the Word of God knows there are at least hints, if not clear declarations, of something happening just before the return of the Lord that involves altar sacrifices and the distinct possibility of a rebuilt temple on the Temple Mount."

Jonathan Cahn, author of "The Harbinger" and "The Mystery of the Shemitah" also sees the announcement as significant.

"We know that end-time prophecy cannot be fulfilled without the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem," Cahn, a Messianic Jewish rabbi in New Jersey, told WND. "The abomination of desolation prophesied in Daniel and in the Gospels, must take place within the Temple precincts. So, too, the apostle Paul speaks of the 'man of sin,' or the Antichrist, sitting in the Temple of God. What many people don't realize is that along with the Holy of Holies, the altar of the Temple is the most central and critical part of the Temple."

Cahn said it is the altar that is the center of the abomination causing desolation.

"It was specifically the altar of the Temple that was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes in the days of the Maccabees that comprised the first abomination desolation and the foreshadowing of what will take place in the end-times," he said. "So any progress made toward the rebuilding of the altar is worthy of our attention."

Mark Biltz, author of "Blood Moons: Decoding the Imminent Heavenly Signs" and pastor of El Shaddai Ministries, says prophecy watchers should not forget, however, that the Temple Mount is under the control of the Muslims for a reason.

"Religiously, you have the Temple Institute and they are ready to rebuild it," he said.

In previous years, there have been attempts to sacrifice a goat on the Temple Mount at Passover, something that enrages Muslims who consider the hilltop the third most sacred spot in Islam.

"They could actually do sacrifices without a temple, some sacrifices. And Passover is one of them. There's always been a drive to sacrifice a lamb on the Temple Mount," Biltz said. "They would do it in a heartbeat. But it's just like here in America where the ACLU wants nothing to do with religion

or religious groups. So it's the same there. The Israeli government doesn't want to cause any uproar among the various religious factions, especially with elections coming up."

The Temple Institute represents the views of the Ultra-Orthodox community, which makes up a small percentage of Israel's population, about 4 percent.

"They would love a temple but the broader population wants to keep church and state separate, and there is a lot of animosity toward the Ultra Orthodox," Biltz said. "But they don't need some big elaborate temple, they could start to do the sacrifices with a tent or some sort of makeshift tabernacle. It's all very interesting and it's all coming to a head. I believe you're going to see a major war first, which would redraw alignments and allegiances." (WND, March 19, 2015).

Is Obama Really the Antichrist ? Amazing New Evidence

Is Obama Really the Antichrist? All my research leads me to believe that the identity of the Antichrist will be fully revealed to the world in June 2016. The Bible refers to him as "The King of Babylon" and the leader of "Mystery: Babylon." This article gives evidence pointing to America as Mystery Babylon and its leader, Barack Obama, as the likely Antichrist.

The Bible does not mention the richest, most powerful nation in the modern world by name. But wouldn't it be strange if there are no references to America in the Bible? The New World is home to most of the world's Christians, its current pope, and the most powerful nation in the world – one that has dominated the planet financially, militarily, and culturally. America has given more financial aid and sent out more missionaries than any other nation. America has been the closest ally of Israel, has been home to more Jews than Israel, and the nation was founded on values like "In God we Trust." Yet this nation allegedly isn't mentioned in the Bible. Of course, as 1 Corinthians 2:7-8 hints: "we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood."

Jeremiah 6:22 also tells us "A great nation will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth." I suggest that America is REPEATEDLY and PROMINENTLY mentioned in the Bible, but its

description is wrapped in a mystery; especially that of “Mystery Babylon.”

Looking at this mystery backwards, if we were expecting an end times version of Babylon, we should look for signs that the new city is like the Babylon of old. The new daughter Babylon should be like the original. It should be the clearly dominant city of the dominant world empire. It should have a tower symbolizing many nations and languages and government power over them; but any such tower should be brought down. Mystery Babylon is clearly described as the great center of buying and selling. Revelation 18:3 says “the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her.” Her highest towers might even be associated with global commerce or “World Trade.” The modern Babylon should have a huge concentration of Jews, since the Bible repeatedly warns them to leave the city and return to Israel before the eventual destruction of Mystery Babylon. Jeremiah 51:13 also refers to “Babylon” as “you who dwell by many waters, abundant in treasures.”

In Zechariah chapter 5 we have a strange story about an “ephah.” It would help to know that an ephah was the largest unit of measure for dry goods like grain in ancient Israel. Like the bushel in the 19th century or the barrel (of oil) in the 20th century, commerce has depended on such units of measure. So while an American story’s reference to trade and commerce might be symbolized by the movement of bushels and barrels, in the ancient Middle East, Jews knew the ephah.

In a vision in Zechariah 5:7-11, an angel clarifies for him: “‘This is the ephah going forth.’ Again he said, ‘This is their appearance in all the land (and behold, a lead cover was lifted up); and this is a woman sitting inside the ephah.’ Then he said, ‘This is Wickedness!’ And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening. Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two women were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. I said to the angel who was speaking with me, ‘Where are they taking the ephah?’ Then he said to me, ‘To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.’” This is a most interesting set of verses regarding the Whore of Babylon.

The ephah symbolizes commerce (especially to the Hebrews.) A wicked woman at the center of this

commerce is set on a pedestal in the land of Shinar, yet another nickname for Babylon. Zechariah wrote well after the Jews had returned to Israel from exile in Babylon. So to suggest that Jewish commerce would be re-established in ancient Babylon seems unlikely. Ancient Babylon had already passed its prime.

There is, however, a great statue of a woman, symbolic of its city and its nation, (and the Babylonian goddess Ishtar) sitting on a pedestal at the entrance to a great modern city which is the center of global commerce and finance, and is also still the city with the most Jews – and those Jews have a disproportionate amount of financial control centered in New York. America is the only nation that has been imposing its will on the world recently, and its largest city – New York – is the seat of Wall Street stock exchanges, the Federal Reserve, and the gold supplies of most nations. This verse (and dozens of others) support the idea that New York is the city of Mystery Babylon and that America is the new daughter of Babylonia.

Since it is fairly obvious from biblical descriptions that the end times city and empire of “Mystery: Babylon” are New York and America then it makes sense that when the time is right, whoever is in charge of America is the Antichrist. There are many clues pointing to June 6, 2016 as the exact date when the Antichrist will be unquestionably revealed to the entire world (which I have partially covered in a previous article here, and more thoroughly in Antichrist 2016-2019.)

Only a small minority of people who are “awake” and “have eyes to see and ears to hear” will realize the truth ahead of time. As Dr. Bob Thiel noted in his book on these subjects: “simply by the virtue of his timing as the 44th U.S. President, Barack Obama was destined to aid in the fulfillment of end-time biblical prophecies.... There are reasons to believe that the rising of the final ten-horned beast power and the destruction of the United States will take place under the Obama administration.” Televangelist Jack van Impe suggests Obama is being groomed for this role, and author John Shorey agrees that “the President of the United States... could become the antichrist.” A survey in 2013 showed that 13 per cent of Americans already thought Obama might be the Antichrist and another 13 percent believed that he is definitely the Antichrist. (That puts roughly 40 million Americans in each group.)

But is there anything specific that describes Barack

Obama?

Absolutely. Many clues are biblical. Some come from Islamic prophecies. Many come from Obama's own books and speeches. I have to leave some of the most impressive clues out of this article both to keep things short and because I want readers to know there is even more in my new book: *Antichrist 2016-2019: Mystery Babylon, Barack Obama & the Islamic Caliphate* on the subject. But Obama himself supplies us with so many suggestive comments that I can put a few good quotes here:

In September 2011, Obama said on the campaign trail: "Don't compare me to the almighty, compare me to the alternative." Challenge accepted. Perhaps Obama meant his potential Republican opponents, and not Satan or the Antichrist, but why phrase it that way? Was it really just a poor choice of words?

I don't think even Joe Biden could make so many poor choices unintentionally. Here is another zinger, first noted in the April 2007 edition of Men's Vogue Magazine:

as Morgan Freeman approached Obama at a fundraiser, Obama said: "This guy was president before I was" – referring to Freeman's role as President Tom Beck in *Deep Impact*. Obama may have been jumping the gun – as the 2008 election was still a year away.... But it was the next comment that I find most shocking, when Obama followed up with: "*This guy was God before I was,*" referring to Freeman's role in *Bruce Almighty*. How modest – no hint at all there that he might one day stand in the Temple and claim to be God.

In October 2012 (always in jest, of course) Obama told us "Contrary to the rumors you have heard, I was not born in a manger, I was actually born on Krypton and sent here by my father Jor-El to save the planet Earth." Has any other president, joking or otherwise, ever claimed to be a savior for the planet? Watch the original Superman movie or look up an image of Marlon Brando (the God-father) as Jor-El, in front of the three criminals in the rotating rings. Jor-El wears a black suit with a pentagram emblem on the chest with a serpent inside the pentagram. Obama is the one who said it: "my father Jor-El." Just what is he claiming to be the son of?

Anyone with an internet connection has probably already seen videos pointing out that Obama's

rallying cry of "Yes We Can!" – when played backwards – clearly sounds like "Thank you Satan." Everyone who cares to listen has already seen the videos on Luke 10:18, in which Jesus said: "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning" or "I perceived Satan as lightning from the heights." Lightning in Hebrew is pronounced "Bah-Rock." Some Hebrew conjunctions are reduced down to an "O" sound just like we replaced the fifteenth century "of the clock" down to "o'clock." Heights in Hebrew is pronounced "Bah-Mah." Jesus may have left us a clue when he said he perceived Satan as "Bah-Rock" "O" "Bah-Mah."

Daniel 9:27 tells us there will be a seven year covenant of peace made between the Jews and their enemies: "he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice." This is believed to mean that the Antichrist will break whatever covenant he initiates, renews, or strengthens halfway through the final seven years – and end TEMPLE sacrifice, meaning a Temple was rebuilt by the middle of the seven years. I believe there are already ongoing negotiations with unpopular concessions that will be kept secret in the early stages but will soon allow for an independent Palestinian nation and a new Jewish Temple.

My timeline of events starts the final seven years on 12/21/2012 and raises the question: where's the peace covenant for Israel? You know, the peace treaty mentioned in Daniel 9:27 where the Antichrist renews or strengthens a seven year covenant with Israel – which he breaks halfway through after 42 months. Wouldn't that peace-renewal covenant have to have started on 12/21/2012, if it ends seven years later on December 21, 2019? There is already a peace covenant for Israel – and it began on 12/21/2012 when John Kerry was nominated as Secretary of State to handle the "peace process" and the plans for Obama's "Covenant of Peoples" tour began.

Even Islamic prophecies warn us about a man that sounds like Obama: Mullah Majlisi wrote that, Imam Ali Ibn Abi-Talib (Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law) prophesied that just prior to the return of the Twelfth Imam – the Mahdi – the Ultimate end times Savior of Islam – a "tall black man will assume the reins of government in the West." Leading "the strongest army on earth," the new western ruler in the West will carry "a clear sign" from the third imam, (whose name was Hussein Ibn Ali.) Obama's middle name, Hussein, is believed

to be that sign. The Hadith also says that “Shiites should have no doubt that he is with us.” The name Barack, in both Arabic and Farsi (Persian) means blessing; Barack Hussein means “the blessing of Hussein” in both languages. Even the surname Obama, written in the Persian alphabet as O-Ba-Ma, means “he is with us,” another key point of Majlisi’s tradition. This may sound like a made-up anti-Obama propaganda piece, but it is a legitimate Islamic prophecy from centuries ago (first found on an Iranian web site.).

There is also a Muslim “End Times Research Center” online which suggests that the crucial window for the fulfillment of end times prophecy in the Qu’ran runs from 2014-2022. They expect their savior, the Imam Mahdi, to appear with the return of Jesus Son of Mary and defeat their false messiah, the Dajjal – who is what the Antichrist is for Christians – within this crucial time frame. The writers at this site suggest “numerical analysis indicates that Barack Obama is likely to be the” Dajjal (Antichrist.)

Speaking of numbers: the winning “PICK 3” lottery number in Obama’s home state of Illinois the day after he won the 2008 presidential election (11/5/2008) was 666. Everyone knows what 666 stands for. What are the odds? Only one in a thousand – not that impressive – it should happen every so many years. But the “PICK 4” lottery numbers in Illinois the same day were also symbolic – 7779.

The number 6 stands for humanity, imperfection, and incompleteness. Multiplied, 666 symbolizes human failings at their most extreme. The number seven stands for the opposite: divinity, perfection, and completion. Multiplied for emphasis, the number 777 represents the completeness of God’s perfect plans, such as when the world was completed within a seven day week, or the final seven years of Daniel’s 70th week. Even the number 9, as the last of the single digits, represents the end, finality, a conclusion. The Temple was destroyed, first by Babylonians and again by Romans, on the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av. In Jewish thinking, our sins for the year no longer matter after we atone for them on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement for sins) which starts at the end of the 9th day of the 7th month. So while the PICK 3 lottery number (666) after Obama’s election is the most impressive, perhaps the combination with the PICK 4 number (7779) is also meaningful – the final completion of God’s plans through the Antichrist. If I were personally

hand-picking the lottery drawing numbers to comment on Obama’s election, I could not come up with anything better. If I were making a sign with lottery numbers, I would do so right after the election results were in (11/05/2008) in the winner’s home state (Illinois) with 666 as the PICK 3 number, and 7779 as the PICK 4 number. The odds of those two sets of numbers being drawn in the right state on the right date are 1 in 500,000,000. Despite such odds, it isn’t necessarily a sign – it could just be a coincidence. You decide.

I realize there are a few major developments that would have to take place in the Middle East, and in America, for the scenario in my recent book to play out as described. If I am wrong, America will continue on about the same as it is today, and President Obama will leave office uneventfully in January 2017. But as he said at the White House Correspondents’ Dinner in May 2014: “Everywhere I look there are reminders that I only hold this job temporarily. [Laughter] But, it is a long time between now and 2016. And anything can happen.” (*Before It’s News*, David Montaigne, Dec.10, 2014).



Whenever I criticize President Obama, I am

attacked by folks who accuse me of being an anti-black racist. So here is a piece by Mychal Massie, a black American who ALSO gets attacked for not "liking" the Obamas. PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS. Massie writes:

“The other evening on my twitter, a person asked me why I didn't like the Obamas. Specifically I was asked: ‘I have to ask, why do you hate the Obamas? It seems personal, not policy related. You even dissed (disrespect) their Christmas family picture.’

“The truth is I do not like the Obamas, what they represent, their ideology, and I certainly do not like his policies and legislation. I've made no secret of my contempt for the Obamas. As I responded to the person who asked me the aforementioned question, I don't like them because they are committed to the fundamental change of my/our country into what can only be regarded as a Communist state.

“I don't hate them per definition, but I condemn them because they are the worst kind of racialists, they are elitist Leninists with contempt for traditional America . They display disrespect for the sanctity of the office he holds, and for those who are willing to admit same, Michelle Obama's raw contempt for white America is transpicuous. I don't like them because they comport themselves as emperor and empress. I expect, no I demand respect, for the Office of President, and a love of our country and her citizens, from the leader entrusted with the governance of same. President and Mrs. Reagan displayed an unparalleled love for the country and her people. The Reagans made Americans feel good about themselves and about what we could accomplish.

“His arrogance by appointing 32 leftist czars and constantly bypassing Congress is impeachable. Eric Holder is probably the MOST incompetent and arrogant DOJ head to ever hold the job. Could you envision President Reagan instructing his Justice Department to act like jack-booted thugs? Presidents are politicians, and all politicians are known and pretty much expected to manipulate the truth, if not outright lie. But even using that low standard, the Obamas have taken lies, dishonesty, deceit, mendacity, subterfuge and obfuscation to new depths. They are verbally abusive to the citizenry, and they display an animus for civility. I do not like them because they both display bigotry overtly, as in the case of Harvard Professor Louis Gates when he accused the Cambridge Police of

acting stupidly, and her code speak pursuant to now being able to be proud of America. I view that statement and that mind set as an insult to those who died to provide a country where a Kenyan, his illegal alien relatives, and his alleged progeny could come and not only live freely, but rise to the highest, most powerful, position in the world. Michelle Obama is free to hate and disparage whites because Americans of every description paid with their blood to ensure her right to do that. I have a saying, that "the only reason a person hides things is because they have something to hide." No President in history has spent over a million dollars to keep his records and his past sealed. And what the two of them have shared has been proven to be lies. He lied about when and how they met, he lied about his mother's death and problems with insurance, Michelle lied to a crowd pursuant to nearly \$500,000 bank stocks they inherited from his family. He has lied about his father's military service, about the civil rights movement, ad nauseam.

“He berated and publicly insulted a sitting Congressman. He has surrounded himself with the most rabidly, radical, socialist academicians today. He opposed rulings that protected women and children that even Planned Parenthood did not seek to support. He is openly hostile to business and aggressively hostile to Israel. His wife treats being the First Lady as her personal American Express Black Card (arguably the most prestigious credit card in the world). I condemn them because, as people are suffering, losing their homes, their jobs, their retirements, he and his family are arrogantly showing off their life of entitlement – as he goes about creating and fomenting class warfare. . . .

“I could go on, but let me conclude with this. I condemn in the strongest possible terms the media for refusing to investigate them, as they did President Bush and President Clinton, and for refusing to label them for what they truly are. There is no scenario known to man, whereby a white President and his wife could ignore laws, flaunt their position, and lord over the people, as these two are permitted out of fear for their color.

“As I wrote in a syndicated column titled, ‘Nero In The White House’ – ‘Never in my life, inside or outside of politics, have I witnessed such dishonesty in a political leader. He is the most mendacious political figure I have ever witnessed. Even by the low standards of his Presidential predecessors, his narcissistic, contumacious arrogance is unequalled. Using Obama as the bar, Nero would have to be elevated to sainthood.’”

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- Apostasy in the End of Days
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- __ God’s Holy Days or Pagan Holidays – Which?

Letters from Our Readers

"I heard your sermon on the net last Sabbath and it was great – very great. If only the people could see where Pinnocioobama is headed for.

"Really good articles in the last Prophecy Flash. Yes, your voice is sounding a lot better.

"You must have changed brands of whiskey (ha ha)."

-- South Dakota

"I cannot thank you enough for offering these teaching guides free of charge, for I am indigent and unable to pay for all this most valuable information, but I am sure willing to pass it forward.

"Our Heavenly Father is raising up an army of prayer warriors within these prisons and praise God for His promise of watching over His Word to perform it. Amen!

"May God's Amazing Grace continue to bring you revelation, truth and wisdom in all the ways to share it. Amen!"

-- Texas

"What is a Traitor?"

"A nation can survive its fools and even the ambitious. But it can't survive treason from within.

"An enemy at the gate is less formidable, for he is known and carries his banners openly against the city.

"But the traitor moves among those within the gates freely, his sly whispers rustling through the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself.

"For the traitor appears not as traitor; he speaks in the accents of his victims, and he wears their face and their garments and he appeals to

the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men.

"He rots the soul of a nation. He works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of a city. He infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to be feared."

-- Cicero, 45 B.G.C.

"Note: If only our people would read history they would never have voted for our Traitor in the White House. Our countrymen need to pray for our Judeo/Christian brothers and sisters in the Middle East. The beheading of 21 Coptic Christians is our call to wake up. We have to all repent and ask our Lord to save our Nation."

-- Texas

"I had been reading Jonathan Cahn's new book on the Shemitah (which you wrote about in the Nov-Dec. issue) and I noticed how he suggested that 7i0 A.D. was likely the Jubilee year since the Temple fell to the Romans that year. He discusses the past two Jubilee years of 1917 and 1967 bur makes no mention of Rabbi Judah ben Samuel's 10 Jubilee prophecy – which lends great support to the timing of the Jubilee cycle, considering that he wrote in 1217 A.D. Counting Jubilees backwards, the 23rd Jubilee from 1217 will land on 67 A.D. If you consider fall i66i A.D. to fall 67 A.D. to fall i6i7 A.D. (Jubilee year), this is both the beginning of the Jewish revolt that temporarily kicked out the Romans and it triggered Rome's response of sending Vespasian to put down the revolt. This did not conclude with 70 A.D. but it did begin in the Jubilee year of 66-67 A.D.. So what was lost because of 66-67 A.D was not returned until 1966-67 A.D. = 1900 years or 38 Jubilees. 7i0 A.D. was indeed appointed as the end because of our Messiah's prophetic word and 40 years being the set time for a trial or change in Scripture. Even the unbelieving Jews testified of the ominous signs thatd troubled them fdoor these 40 years in the Talmud!"

-- North Carolina

“Greetings in the blessed name of our wonderful LORD and Savior Jesus Christ!

“I GREATLY appreciate the articles you sent, especially the ones regarding ‘The Philadelphia Church of GOD’, and Gerald Flurry, you see I used to receive the Plain Truth magazine for several years, then I sort of drifted off, then when I came to prison I got into the Bible and I remembered Mr. Armstrong and a lot of his teachings, so I asked around for the address but someone gave me the address to ‘The Philadelphia Church of God’, and I got mixed up with them, but some how I felt there was something missing about their teachings. Something did not ring true.

“Then I got your address and started receiving and studying the ‘PHOPHECY FLASH!’ And all these GREAT articles you sent me and I can tell you now, IT’S LIKE A COOL DRINK OF WATER!

“I am requesting some more material if its alright. I received the other articles from you last night in the mail and I stayed up all night reading!

“I do have a question however. How can I become a member of your fellowship??? I am a sincere born-again Christian who has sincerely accepted and received Jesus Christ as my LORD and Savior.

“I was once a member of the Seventh-Day Adventists, are they part of the True Church?”
-- Texas

COMMENT: We have a representative in Texas who may be able to contact you and counsel with you. A person becomes a member of our Church through personal counseling, repentance of sin, accepting Christ as personal Saviour, and willingness to obey God and live by His Word. Then God will give them His Holy Spirit so they can grow spiritually (John 1i6:13, Acts 5:32). Read our articles on “What is a True Christian?”, “All about Water Baptism,” and “The Secret of Real Repentance.” Also, read our article on “The Seventh Day Adventists in Prophecy.” They do constitute one of the end-time branches of God’s Church, although they also have certain doctrinal short-comings and errors (such as the Investigative Judgment, and the belief that the earth will be desolate for 1,000 years, and not understanding that the Holy Days of God are to

be obeyed by all men). They themselves, since the days of Ellen G. White, one of their founders, admit and see themselves to be the “Laodicean church.”

* * *

“They were stoned, They were sawn asunder, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and dens and caves of the earth.”

-- Heb 11:37-38

“It began with Stephen, saints dying for Jesus: stretched on the rack, boiled in oil, cast in among serpents, thrown to lions. Four to twenty million killed by the Roman Empire, and thirty million since: skind alive, burned at the stake, babies dashed against walls, pregnant women ripped open. Millions murdered by Nazis, a million Sudanese butchered by Moslems--many by crucifixion. In Cambodia, a million more Christians, and Christians in Nigeria, too. Those brethren, gone to the lord before us, stand beneath the altar and never cease to cry: ‘How long a lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’ (Rev 6:10).

“Out of the deserts of the Middle East came, a false prophet, and out of the same Euphrates Valley came his followers, the final foes of the Church and Israel. ‘Three unclean spirits like frogs’ is what the Bible calls them. They are the international Islamic terrorist organizations and militant states of Iraq, Iran and Syria who fund and protect them. These three Middle Eastern countries and their associates are the leopard-Bear-lion Beast of Revelation, and the malevolent influence of that devilish trident can be felt over the whole world as ‘they gather kings of the earth together for the battle of the great day of God almighty.’” (Taken from ‘The False Prophe’ by Ellis H. Skolfield).

“If you are interested, there is a book written by Chuck Morse; ‘The Nazi Connection to Islamic Terrorism, Adolf Hitler and Haj Amin al-Husseini.’

“There were at least 100,000 Muslims that fought on the Nazi side in World War II.

“There is an article written by Samuel Blumenfeld for *News With Views* called ‘The Nazi Connection to Islamic Terrorism’. Dated

April 15, 2004. I believe that Samuel Blumenfeld has since passed away.

"I don't understand why the church does not see that Islam, the False Prophet and Allah are mentioned in Bible Prophecy. Search and you shall find. 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.' Is the Church afraid they may be found wrong on some of their teachings?"

"To further your knowledge of the truth in Prophecy and the truth's that are found to be in the Bible. The Church needs to take a good look at some of the writings of Ellis H. Skolfield. Such as the following.

Islam In The last Days
Plus
The False Prophet

"They are free downloads off of the Internet and they would be worth while for you to read and see the truth about Islam in the end times.

"With all that is going on in this world concerning Islam and all of the Muslims that are now living here in America and The influence the Muslim Brotherhood has on our Government and around the world. With Christians being slaughtered around the world by ISIS. Will we here in America experience the same in the near future? It is past time for the Church to wake up and see what is going on. Will the Church stand up for Jesus if the church is threatened with beheading? Is the Christian Era over and are we now living in the time of the END?"

-- Arkansas

"I am a practicing Christian and active Bible student. I enjoy studying and 'rightly dividing' words of Truth. I keep up with current events as they relate to Bible prophecy. I can surely see more pieces of the puzzle coming together at an alarming, accelerated rate in these End Times. I just completed reading the Nov-Dec. 2014 issue of Prophecy Flash. WOW! Awesome.

"Yes, please sign me up to receive this magazine so I can toss out the Philadelphia Trumpet and other garbage akin to it. I am exposed to all sorts of literature in this environment but I yearn most for Truth and Sound Doctrine which line up with the Bible. . . . Please know that I will share any literature you may send with other Truth-Seekers when I am through reading. I hope and pray that Jesus comes soon (maranatha). Hold

fast! Isaiah 25:9!!!"

-- Georgia

"First of all, let me say how much I enjoy my Bible Correspondence Course lessons, all of them. I continue to study them all the time. Every Sabbath day I study my Sabbath lessons, read my Bible, pray, and thank God for His Day, the seventh day, the day that Jesus Christ said was made for man. Thank you for your wonderful lessons."

-- Ohio

"Thanks again for all the articles that you have provided me with. It has been a great and wonderful experience reading them and going through my Bible and proving to me that all this teaching through volunteers and pastors who come through here are wrong! And you are right, just by reading the Bible and following the simple steps. People don't even bother reading the Old Testament, they carry their little New Testament Bibles to classes and church. We even have some volunteers teaching us with it. I love the Old Testament.

"Good teaching, knowledge, wisdom, easy to understand, you are very blessed, William F. Dankenbring, and all the personnel that work with you. Wonderful job!"

-- Texas

"I am contacting you Sir, because I think it's important you know that God has used you as a prophetic instrument in my life in recent days. I read a piece that you wrote on Prophecy Flash, Volume 28, No 3, July-August 2014, that was titled Are These REALLY the Last Days?"

"Mr. Dankenbring, God inspired me this past September to research and publish either a web page or brochures to warn people that significant events are about to start occurring in the next several months. In doing my research God was quick to make me study and focus on the following areas; Financial Markets, Daniel's 9: 24- 27 Prophecy, Isaac Newton's Interpretation of Daniel's Prophecy, God's Feast Day Celebrations and the Blood Moons.

"With each of these items of research fresh on my mind, God directed me to an article on the 10 Days of Awe that mention Revelation 2:10 that actually states that there would be 10-years of Tribulation. This article suggested that the 10 days between Feast of Trumpets and Day of

Atonement, were symbolic of an actual 10 years of Tribulation, excluding the two days from Feast of Trumpets and a day from Yom Kippur, leaves 7 days remaining that are the 7-years of tribulation. This article also stated scripture that said there would be 6 working days that the East Gates in heaven would be closed.

“Well as soon as I read this God placed into my mind, if the gates are closed for six working days than they must be open for the other four. As you can see by this time I had a great deal of interest in the concept of a 10 year tribulation.

“It wasn't until the Lord directed me to your article, Sign #12-the Ten ‘Sefirot’ of God and the Ten “Days of Awe” that the light bulb turned on which prompted me to do some quick calculations on this 10-year tribulation concept. I'm sure by now, you are aware that our country is going to have a collapse of the US Dollar by September 2015. I also hope that you are aware that there will be a Great Jubilee event that will occur on September 23, 2015.

“Using the exact time frame that you put in your article, 2012 through 2022 I was able to validate that your assumption is correct. In addition, the part you mentioned ‘the first three years would be invisible’ also gave me greater insight on the 10-year concept. God has now validated that this 10 year period that you mentioned in your article is correct and He has provided me with the circumstantial evidence to prove it!”

-- Email

“I cannot tell you all how many times The Prophecy Flash has opened my eyes to so many things.

“Being an inmate here with a life sentence your writings give me and others great comfort. I read each one from cover to cover a couple times and then so it doesn't just sit and get wasted, I pass it on to others in our Messianic Community. Each one gets read many times over. Please keep up the great work you are doing for our Lord.”

-- Colorado

“Many thanks for the recent Prophecy Flash which is another incredible ‘stir to action’ for the Church of God to take the challenge and prove the Passover, Ephraim and the Calendar !

“This being in due season especially with the Passover approaching and being in a soul

searching and humbling frame of mind to be convicted of the truth of the word of God.

“Can you please send me -(1) A new look at God's true calendar and (2) Mystery of the Nephilim and Angels.

“ust to let you know that the Living Church of God have re-issued the book you published in 1984, The Incredible Story of God's True Church by Ivor C Fletcher which they gave out to members at the Feast of Tabernacles 2014. There have been two additional chapters added along with photographs to cover from 1987 to date. There is no mention of the work you have been doing since 1987 which incidentally was a Shemitah year and we know the work of TPM being four Shemitah years old this year in 2015! The Temple Institute is also 28 years old this year and Jonathan Cahn in his most recent book does emphasize the significance of the 28 year period of 4 consecutive Shemitahs in a row and the effect that they can have in history .

“I must hasten to add that in the new book there is a picture of Mr. H.W. and Mrs. L.D. Armstrong at Bricket Wood 1966 and from her expression and countenance she appears ‘none too pleased’. From what I have read from the Ambassador Reports by John Trechak and the book by David Robinson *Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web*, I can see why the expression appeared none too pleasing! She did know of the skeletons then that were in her husband's wardrobe.

“Keep strong in the work of our Lord and Master.”

-- Nick Pull, Great Britain

COMMENT: Until I received your letter, I had not thought about the Shemitah years in regard to my own ministry that God placed me in. How interesting.

1. I first attended Ambassador College in 1959-1960, a Shemitah year, to learn God's truth and serve Him.

2. I was married in the Shemitah year of 1967, the year Loma D. Armstrong died, and the year of the Six Day War in Israel. That year also I first served in the ministry in the San Francisco area.

3. 1972-73, I completed my first book *The Keys to Radiant Health* and *The First Genesis: A New Case for Creation*. The Yom Kippur war broke out on the Day of Atonement, and Israel survived by direct divine intervention. Another Shemitah year.

4. 1979-80, Ronald Reagan elected president, and nearly assassinated – a Shemitah year.

5. 1986-87, Stock Market crash; Halley's Comet made its appearance; Herbert Armstrong died; I began Triumph Prophetic Ministries, as an independent ministry, serving God and answering only to Him, not man. A key Shemitah year.

6. 1993-94 – Oslo Peace Accords began, at White House lawn; Muslim's attacked World Trade Center.

7. 2000-2001 – the infamous day of the 9-11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Towers – another Shemitah year – and resultant stock market crash.

8. 2007-2008 – Wall Street collapse, stocks crashe 777 points in one day – a sign from God n this Shemitah year. Obama the decimator and wicked one elected president of United States, and America begins its descent into depravity and judgment.

9. 2014-2015 – We are now in the midst of another Shemitah year. This time it is accompanied y the four blood red moon tetrad of lunar eclipses on God's annual holy days. This year 2015, the new Hebrew year began March 20-21 with a solar eclipse, and the civil year, this fall, also will witness a solar eclipse. Another sign from heaven that God's judgment is about to fall, because of man's rebellion.

This is the 28th year of Triumph Prophetic ministries (4 x 7 = 28). 4 7s are the number of God's judgment (Lev.26:18, 21, 24, 28). "9" Shemitahs all together – and "9" is the number of judgment and finality (3 x 3 =9). You decide.

This is astonishing to me. God's hand and fingerprints are certainly upon this ministry. Bless His Holy Name!

* * *

"Every time that you speak and write about something that you thought was right and it turn out that it wasn't right, don't feel bad, we all try

to think outside of the box, there's nothing wrong with trying to discover the truth.

"However means. there's a change coming and I have a new date for you to chew on and if you like it, you may claim it as your own thought, I am very happy to be able to offer this new date and I am sure none of the other churches of God has ever mention it, to the best of my knowledge. So this is it.

" 'I {the Lord God of Israel} will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face; in affliction they will seek me early and earnestly.' Hosea 5:15.

" 'After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight.' Hosea 6:2.

"The question is, what's the reference point for the two days? Well, if Jesus started his ministry in the year of 27 A D and after two days or two thousand years later the date would be in the year of 2027 and the year of 2027 agrees with Ezekiel 1:1 which is a Jubilee year and that proof was given to you about two or three years ago from the JOURNAL.org. [the Journal is not correct. See comment below – Ed.].

"Now if we count back seven years, perhaps we can determine when Daniel's 70th week begins – maybe. So therefore, a safe bet would be about the year of 2020 and in the third day, I believe that refers to the millennium.

"Today is 03-15-15 and as you know 03-17-15 is the day that those despicable liberal Israelis will begin to vote to give the Prime Minister Benjamin Natanyahu the boot out of office [he was reelected by a landslide – Ed.] and the liberal has promised to give to the Palestinians anything they want for a piece of paper that says peace on it. 1 Thes 5:3, Isa 33:7-8, 59:8, Dan 11 :39, Hos 5:10, Mic 2:4, Joe 3:2 and Zec 14:2.

"There will be a heavy price to pay for that tragic mistake by dividing God's land. Ps.83 was written by Asaph during the days of King David when all thirteen tribes were just one nation. Most of the dead brain Sunday keepers apply Ps .83 to the people in the land of Israel, when in fact, all of the tribes of Israel have invited the Muslims into their nations, so Ps 83 applies to all of the Israelites.

“As you know Obamanation is posses by Satan the devil – that must be the reason why Obamanation get away with all that he does that's beyond stupid. Well, I love Obama. I hope when the day Obama is forced to retire from all his crimes that he will get to retire at the lake, that is, IN THE-LAKE-OF-FIRE.”

-- Israel

“COMMENT: I am not convinced that Ezekiel 1:1 refers to a Jubilee year. Ussher's chronology places it in 595 B.C., and the Jubilee year was 586 B.C. See my article “Will Messiah Return in a Jubilee Year?” for further proof when the Jubilee years began and how they were reckoned.

* * *

“I've been reading in the book of Lamentations. The fifth chapter ties in with what's happening in the world today and the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy are the curses that are happening today, because we've failed to keep and obey God's commandments. Seems the whole world is falling apart with the corrupt leaders of our nation, I really think our Lord is very angry with the 4 majority of His people. I don't see how He will continue to accept things as they are much longer. I pray, we, that put our faith and trust in Him, can and will endure whatever trial we face, until His return.”

-- Tennessee

“If there's one word that comes to mind that describes the state of the country, it's fatigue. How much longer can we survive as a nation at the rate we are declining? Everything that could go wrong, is going wrong, and America is guilty as charged for its immoral nakedness under the banner of hypocrisy. Due to complacency, the American people are blind to Obama's tragic inability to lead. Far too many members of the Congress and Senate are in agreement with his demonic and delusional actions, or lack the courage to stand up to the treason he's committing. We are being led by a president who is a disgrace before our enemies and allies.

“Because we are spiritually bankrupt, we've become numb to warnings as a people. God is duly noting our blind state and unwillingness to see our national and individual sins. Anyone who is willing o speak out about our condition is a right wing extremist. The cancerous rot eating

away at our national and individual souls is a stench in the nostrils of God and Christ.

“I've yet to hear anyone interviewed by the mainstream media peel away the layers of homosexuality and reveal it for what it is. The word 'gay' is constantly sugar-coated and is always discussed in the context of how we must not, and can not, discriminate against those who are considered 'different.' The actual perversion of the sex act itself is never presented in the national conversation. Before God and Christ, homosexuality is a blatant act of disobedience, and an abomination. The churches in this country who openly accept homosexuals as members are equally guilty of the perversion, and stand condemned for condoning such behavior.

“Because people have allowed themselves to be manipulated and conditioned, we have resigned ourselves as a people to blatant immorality. We aren't embarrassed, but flaunt our complete disregard for moral boundaries. Isaiah 3:9 – ‘The show of their countenance does witness against them; they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto themselves.’

“America was established as a Republic, but quickly turned into a Democracy. It has paved the way for Socialism, which is transforming itself into Communism. We are now oppressed by a president who is guilty of treason and trashing the Constitution. As has been pointed out in your recent Bible Study transcript, Obama would love nothing more than to be the Secretary General of the UN. If this happens, it would only be a matter of time until America would cease to exist as a nation. The days of the UN as an inept and ineffective colossal failure are numbered. The world body will be radicalized with laws forced upon this country and the west, if Obama has the power he craves.

“The beast system of Revelation 13 and 17 will be beyond anything in the history of the world. Leaders who are in positions of absolute power and authority will be possessed and influenced by Satan and his foot soldiers (demons). Rule and dominance by an iron fist will reach the ultimate height of physical achievement and impossible to challenge. Revelation 13:4 – ‘. . . who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make

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war with him?' The words 'who is like' means there's nothing to compare it with. The words 'the beast' is an exclusive established system, or a government without equal. Laws will be enforced by leaders with minds equivalent to out of control animals. It will be a system in which people will be considered property of the state without regard for anyone. People will either try to challenge the system and fail, or they will be afraid to challenge it because people will be completely dependent upon it for survival. In all likelihood it will be a combination of both a failed attempt to rise up against it, and a deeply rooted fear to speak out against what's happening. People will be left with no conclusion other than, 'who is able to make war with him?'

"We are entering a period far worse than the Dark Ages, and it will be as black as the color itself. Every action taken by people will have to be in lockstep with the beast system's established laws. Millions who will be considered enemies of the state will be arrested and either killed or placed in government controlled concentration camps as the first stage of our national enslavement, only to be transported and used as slave labor in countries around the world in the second and final stage of our prophesied captivity when invaded by our enemies (Leviticus 26:41, 44, and Deuteronomy 28:63-68).

"How can the Jews of WW2 be condemned by people in this country for not recognizing the danger of Hitler and the Nazi party, when we are just as oblivious to the dangers we are facing under Obama and leaders in Washington? Just as the Jews carried out daily routines and refused to listen to the warnings from those who could see what was coming, Americans are also shutting their eyes, and covering their ears, as warnings are given of our imminent collapse, and coming invasion by our enemies from beyond our borders.

"Boldness on your part is deeply appreciated, and know that I am praying for you, Cappy, and everyone involved in the work you are doing."

-- Richard Markland, Ohio

"I want to thank you and your staff for publishing the Prophecy Flash, giving people who are interested the opportunity to know the 'truth' about our world as it stands today.

"I have studied Bible prophecy for years, and the issues you print I have totally agreed to. I know that other publishers and media are limited as to what they can present to the public. The federal government scrutinizes, and censors, edits, deletes, fully controls what the public can become knowledgeable of, while the truth of the matter is deleted. We the public are being given a watered down version or half truth of state, federal and local events. Your publication is not governed by the federal department – it comes under the religious freedom act. And by that you can publish the facts without censorship.

"I must believe you in stating 'facts' as truth. I totally enjoy the insight of your staff writers – Obama along with Pope Francis reminds me of Hitler and Mussolini, totalitarians. I know nothing good of either of them, one an Antichrist and the other one a hypocrite. Keep up the good work in the truth."

-- California

Holy Days 2015

<i>Passover</i>	April 5 (Saturday evening)
<i>Pentecost</i>	May 25 (Monday)
<i>Trumpets</i>	Sept. 15 (Tuesday) or 16 (Wednesday) due to borderline sighting conditions
<i>Atonement</i>	Sept.24 (Thursday) or 25 (Friday)
<i>1st Day of Tabernacles</i>	Sept.30 (Wednesday) or Oct.1 (Thursday)
<i>Shemini Atzeret (8th Day)</i>	Oct.6 (Tuesday) or 7 (Wednesday)