

Day 49—The Sabbath Before Pentecost

Fred R. Coulter—May 18, 2013

Greetings, everyone, all the brethren!
Welcome to the Day 49, the Sabbath before Pentecost!

This is a very important Sabbath; it has a lot of meaning and understanding for us. In the past, there have been a lot of discrepancies, misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and unfortunately, people ended up keeping Pentecost on the wrong day.

It's quite interesting when you analyze the situation concerning Judaism and the Holy Days. First of all, people think that the Jews must have it right in the Old Testament. They have it there; there's everything for them to have it right, but the problem is they have superseded the Scriptures with *their own* teachings and traditions. They have rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah. So, it's no strange thing that they have Passover wrong, Unleavened Bread wrong, the Wave Sheaf Offering Day wrong and Pentecost wrong.

You look at it from the other side—from the Christian side—and you find that they have done a very similar thing in replacing *their own* traditions, *their own* days of observance, *their own* holidays, instead of following God's Holy Days.

It seems as though mankind's greatest sin is that he wants to come and add to and improve what God has given. God has given it in such a way that, yes, there are some things that are difficult to understand, especially when you bring your own ideas and interpretations to the Scriptures and try and make those fit with the Truth.

- The Word of God is true!
- The Word of God is perfect!
- The Word of God is Holy!

So, rather than us trying to come and improve on God, *God wants us to follow what He has given so that He can improve upon us!* Of course, that's the whole situation concerning salvation. *Man is incomplete:*

- man *needs* God's Holy Spirit
- man *needs* the Word of God
- man *needs* to live by every Word of God

We've already had the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and we started out in Leviticus 23. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread there was a ceremony to take place and this has been one of the key areas of misunderstanding. One of the things that we have endeavored to do with the

Faithful Version of the Bible is to give the correct translation of Leviticus 23 in accordance with what the Hebrew means.

Leviticus 23:9 has to do with today and tomorrow: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "When you have come into the land which I give to you... [This particular ceremony was not done until they came into the 'promised land.'] ...and shall **reap the harvest of it...**"' (vs 9-10). Notice that it's important to understand "...the harvest of it..."; because one of the misunderstandings that some people have is that they couldn't have offered the *wave sheaf offering* when they first came into the land because that harvest was 'planted by the inhabitants of the land and their Gentile hands defiled it. Therefore, you have to wait until the next year in order to have it.'

Well, that's not true! It says that you harvest "...the harvest of **it**..." When you plant seed, the seed disintegrates as it sprouts and grows, so there is no defilement in a newly grown plant or a plant ready for harvest that was planted by someone.

Here's this special ceremony that they were to do: "...then you shall bring **the premier sheaf** of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest" (v 10). This "...premier sheaf..." is a foretaste of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, because we are likened to a harvest, and tomorrow—Pentecost—is a harvest feast, the 50th day.

It says here what they would do on this day, v 11: "...On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." This becomes very important from this point of view. All Holy Days are Sabbaths, but they are not counted as *the* Sabbath, unless, of course, it happens to fall on *the* Sabbath Day.

This one here is very important in understanding about which day this was. All the Holy Days are called, in the Hebrew: 'Shabbat'—meaning **a** Sabbath. You can read the rest of Lev. 23 and find that all the Holy Days are sure enough called 'Shabbat'—**a** Sabbath.

The weekly Sabbath is called **the** Sabbath, and it has the definite article in the Hebrew 'ha.' So, when you're talking about the regular Sabbath it is 'ha Shabbat.' When you are talking about a Holy Day, it is 'Shabbat.'

This is another area where the Jews have gotten off course, because they count the first holy Day as the Sabbath from which to begin the count,

beginning on the 16th of the 1st month. So therefore, they end up with Pentecost on the 6th of Sivan, and they call it ‘Shabua.’ If that’s the case, there’s no reason to count, because it is already pre-determined. But, as you know, the Holy Days vary in the spring on which days of the week they fall on. That would make a difference in the numbered day in the third month for Pentecost.

Verse 11: “And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after **the** Sabbath...”—the weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Since it had to be waved during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, whenever the first Holy Day is on a first day of the week, or Sunday, that does in fact become the Wave Sheaf Offering Day, because the Passover being the Sabbath, and the Passover also being a day of Unleavened Bread, then it makes it the first day of the week during Unleavened Bread. That’s when it should be counted. Then God tells them what they were to do with it, and all of this has to do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verse 12: “And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering... [a type of Christ] ...to the LORD. And its grain offering *shall be* two tenth parts of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD for a sweet savor. And the drink offering of it *shall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of a hin” (vs 12-13).

Notice what else these instructions gave us, because all during the time that they were in their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness—and God never intended them to be there 40 years wandering—but when it came time for them to go into the ‘promised land’^[transcriber’s correction] they refused to go in, so God said, ‘All right, a day for a year. You were 40 days searching out the land, you’re going to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, **because you have refused My command.**’

So, let’s learn a lesson here: **Never refuse a command of God!** Think about that in relationship to the Protestants who say that it has all been done away. There are various claims on how it was done away, but one of the latest ones is that when the veil in the temple was split in two when Jesus died, that fulfilled everything in the Old Testament and ‘now we don’t have to follow anything from the Old Testament.’ That shows what happens with these things.

Verse 14: “And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched grain, nor green ears until the same day, until you have brought an offering to your God. *It shall be* a statute forever throughout your

generations in all your dwellings.” It couldn’t happen until they got into the land.

Verse 15 becomes a key, and let’s understand that there is a difference between addition and subtraction and counting. When you count, the count is always inclusive.

Verse 15: “And you shall count to you beginning with the next day after the Sabbath... [which then is the first day of the week] ...beginning with the day...”—not the day after. Another mistake made about it was that you started counting on Monday instead of the first day of the week, Sunday. Those who came to that conclusion said that, God would never have a Holy Day on a Sunday, because that’s a pagan day.

- Did God create it a pagan day?
- or
- Did He create it as His day?
 - Which came first, the first day of the week by God’s creation?
- or
- The first day of the week designated by false Christianity as the day to worship on?

Even false reasoning within the ministry of the Church of God caused some problems. For forty years they observed Pentecost on the wrong day; therefore, they did not have a correct understanding of it.

Let’s go forward and see how this count is to be given, how it is to be reckoned so that we come to the right day.

Verse 15: “And you shall count to you beginning with the next day after the Sabbath, beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete.” A complete week from the first day to the seventh day, then you go seven Sabbaths, and today is that seventh Sabbath.

Verse 16: “Even unto the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days...” When it counted properly. See the booklet *How To Count Pentecost*, showing all the variations based upon the differences of the day of the week for the Passover and the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, so you can come to the proper day of which day was Pentecost.

Now let’s see what they were to do on this day: “...And you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall **bring out of your homes** two wave loaves of two tenth parts. They shall be of fine flour...” (vs 16-17). These were to be made at home. These were not to be made at the temple. The other meal offerings were made at the temple. But

this is one that everyone was to make at home and bring to the temple.

Here's another thing that is different: "...They shall be baked with leaven..." (v 17). This sacrifice and the peace offerings are the only meal offerings that are given that are baked with leaven. Here is a good use of leaven, because it's offered unto God. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread leaven is a type of sin because it's vanity and puffed up and all that sort of thing. And 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump.' However, there is a good use of leaven, and we will see that it's even likened unto the Kingdom of God.

"...*They are* the firstfruits to the LORD" (v 17). Isn't it interesting, we start with a *premiere sheaf* of the firstfruits, and we end with a completed *firstfruits harvest* and the baking of the two loaves. We'll come back to what these mean a little later on, but it has an awful lot to do with the resurrection, an awful lot to do with the change of character, with the change of body.

Verse 18: "And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year... [What do those seven lambs represent?] ...and one young bull, and two rams. They shall be *for* a burnt offering to the LORD with their grain offering..." These were to be given at the same time that the grain offering was given. What is the significance of that?

"...and their drink offerings, *even* an offering made by fire, of sweet savor to the LORD. Then you shall sacrifice one male goat for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits, a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be Holy to the LORD for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the same day that it may be a Holy convocation to you..." (vs 18-21). This is the Day of Pentecost.

We're going to look at the things that have taken place on the Day of Pentecost—in the Old Testament and the New Testament—and we will answer the questions:

- Why these two loaves were leavened?
- Why the seven lambs?

I think you'll find it most interesting!

Let's come forward with the children of Israel coming out of the land of Egypt. We covered on the last Holy Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread when they came to Marah where they had the bitter waters, the strife and everything concerning that, and how God made the waters sweet by

showing Moses the tree that he threw into the water so that they could receive fresh water to drink.

They moved on from there, Exodus 15:27: "And they came to Elim, where *there were* twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees. And they camped there by the waters." It doesn't tell us how long they stayed there, but remember there was a tremendous number of people—a million and a half.

You think about all the water you need everyday, and you think about all the food you need everyday, and then you think about the miraculous things that God did to provide for them. What I want you to do is think in your own life:

- What miracles has God done in your own life to bring you to the knowledge of the Truth?
- To help you?
- To intervene in your life?
- To provide for you?

Let's see what the children of Israel did. I feel sorry for Moses and Aaron, they had a tough job trying to keep things going with the people out there.

After that they left Elim, Exodus 16:1: "And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the Wilderness of Sin..." That's not sin as 'transgression of the Law.' It's a shortened part of Sinai on the way to Sinai.

"...which *is* between Elim and Sinai. An on the fifteenth day of the second month *after* their departing out of the land of Egypt... [this happens to be a Sabbath] ... then the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to them, 'O that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger!'" (vs 1-3). That's not true!

God had some other things in mind, but He wanted to test them. So, when a difficulty comes upon you, *don't start accusing God!* God may have something else already worked out. He wants to know:

- What are we going to do?
- How are we going to handle it as individuals?

This also shows another thing, too: that *people would rather have pleasure than hardship.* Same way with Christianity. Most go under the broad gate, but Jesus said, '**Enter into the straight**

gate, for narrow is the way and difficult is the way to life; and few be that find it.'

Satan plays upon this part of human nature all the time. Try taking away things from your children and let them do without, which might not be a bad idea. Turn off all games, turn off all cell phones; only use the cell phones certain times of the day, and don't let them get spoiled with the stupidity of this instant communication and texting. There's a time and place for it, but no one should grow up becoming a 'tweet freak'!

What do I mean by that? *Your soul accomplishment in life is short little sentences and your thinking is all bound up in emotions, and you become a 'tweet freak'!* or a 'tweet face'! You're on Facebook; you're on Twitter. Listen, ***you'd better get right with God***, because being a true Christian takes a whole lot more than 'tweeting' and 'Facebook'; but those are useful tools in their places.

Here is where God then told them that He would give them manna. They also demanded flesh, so God gave them flesh. I'll let you read the rest of Exo. 16. Here God gave them angel's food. I don't know how angels eat, I don't know how food is processed. We don't know anything about that, because they are at a level higher than we are.

God said, 'All right, I'm going to teach you concerning the Sabbath Day. It carried on for 40 years until they got into the 'promised land.' They had manna every single day except one. You know the account. They were to get a certain portion everyday, not keep anything over till the next day because it would breed worms and stink.

On the sixth day God performed a miracle. He sent twice as much, they were to gather twice as much and they were to prepare for the Sabbath Day with manna. They had boiled manna, baked manna, raw manna, deep fried manna I suppose, manna doughnuts, whatever.

But God said to keep it over on the Sabbath and on the Sabbath Day it won't breed worms and stink, and don't go out and look for it. God did not want them working on the Sabbath. What happened? *They went out and looked!* Notice God's reaction. They didn't find any. God told them not to go.

Exodus 16:28: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws?'" Let's understand something for sure: If the laws of God are done away, we don't exist, because you would have to do away with *all* the laws, not just select ones you don't like.

Here's the reason, v 29: "See, because the

LORD has given you the Sabbath..." That's what God has given. In the New Testament we find that Jesus Christ is *Lord of the Sabbath Day*.

God said, "...therefore, He gives you the bread of two days on the sixth day. Let each one stay in his place. Do not let any one go out of his place on the seventh day" (v 29).

Exodus 19 becomes very important, because Day 49 was kept at the base of Mt. Sinai, and on Day 50—the Day of Pentecost—the Ten Commandments of God were given. The days following afterward were the statutes and judgments of God, or you might say the 'lesser' laws, which are subdivisions of the Ten Commandments. A covenant was made and there was shed blood, and that's when the Lord took Israel unto Himself to be their God and they were married to the Lord, and that covenant ceremony in Exo. 24 was the covenant ceremony between God and Israel.

When they got to Mt. Sinai, Exodus 19:1: "In the third month when the children of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt, on the same day..." This Hebrew word is a particular word that doesn't mean on the same of the month, but the same day of the week. If it would have been on the same day of the month, then it would have gone past the day that would have been the Day of Pentecost.

So, it has to be the same day of the week, and they left on a Thursday, so they were there on a Thursday. You have Thursday, Friday, Sabbath and Sunday.

God called Moses and said, "Come up here, I want to talk to you. He gave him the proposition and He said here's what you tell the children of Israel, v 4: "...[I] brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, **if you will obey My voice indeed...**" (vs 4-5). Isn't it interesting how God starts out every covenant with ***obey My voice***. That's the basis of it. That's the basis of what it was with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

"...and keep My covenant... [A covenant means that everything that is included in it] ...then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a Holy nation. These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel" (vs 5-6).

Isn't it interesting? It always starts out with a simple proposition and God wants to see if we're going to respond to Him. Just like in the New Testament, 'repent and be baptized and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' A simple proposition, but there's a whole lot that follows. Exactly the same way here and the giving of the Ten

Commandments.

God said, ‘All right, I have a plan; here’s the first part My plan. The first part of My plan is an overview of it that I want you to be a Holy people and a Holy nation to Me.’ That was for them to bring the way of God to the world. There was only one short time when that was fulfilled, and that was during the days of Solomon. So, the people said, ‘Yes.’ God told them to clean their clothes and get ready for the third day—Friday, Sabbath, Sunday.

Verse 11: “And be ready for the third day; for on the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.” That’s exactly what happened. God got it all ready to go, Moses prepared the people.

Verse 13: “‘There shall not be a hand to touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through *with an arrow*; whether beast or man, it shall not live. When the trumpet sounds long... [and loud] ...they shall come up to the mountain.’ And Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people. And they washed their clothes. And he said to the people, ‘Be ready for the third day. Do not approach a woman.’ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there *were* thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain...” (vs 13-16). This would have been an awesome sight to see.

Have you ever watched the program on the Weather Channel—*Storm Chasers*—those who run out and chase tornados. Well, much like it.

“...And the sound of the trumpet was exceedingly loud so that all the people in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. And they stood at the base of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was smoking, all of it because the LORD came down upon it in fire. And the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the sound of the trumpet sounded long, and became very strong, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up” (vs 16-20).

Then God warned Moses again, ‘Don’t come near. Go on down.’ Moses went down and then God gave the Ten Commandments. We’ll just cover the first one. All of them apply, but many times in getting the shorter version of the Ten Commandments we leave out the most important part.

Here’s the first thing that God told the children of Israel, and this is what we need to realize

with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It is God first, *always!* Exodus 20:2: “‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” God has to call us out of this world! This world today is likened to Sodom and Egypt. God has to miraculously deal in our lives. Let’s always remember that and thank God for it, praise Him for it, worship Him because of it.

Verse 3: “You shall have no other gods before Me.” That’s the complete first commandment. That was the reason why God destroyed the firstborn of Egypt and executed His judgment against all the gods of Egypt.

God has called people out of that system! But Satan comes along and likes to try and bring it together again. Isn’t that what happened to the children of Israel? *Yes, indeed!* So, all of these events lead up here; all of these events lead up to the giving of the Ten Commandments.

Then, of course, the children of Israel could not stand hearing the voice of God, so they said, ‘Lord, let Moses speak to us, but don’t You speak to us!’ God said, ‘All right, I’ll do that.’ But here’s a very interesting thing that happens when you put someone between you and God. That gives you an excuse to look to the man and that’s what they did; they looked to the man Moses and found fault. That’s why we have the whole Old Testament and everything that happened with the children of Israel.

Now let’s come to Joshua 5 and we will see that they did indeed have the *wave sheaf offering* on the proper time. This was after there was second mass circumcision of all of those who had come through the 40 years of wandering.

After that had taken place, Joshua 5:9: “And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’...” That’s important. Just like we need to have the reproach of the world rolled away from us. How is that done? *By*

- repentance
- baptism
- receiving the Holy Spirit
- having the circumcision of the heart and mind

When you go through and read the Old Testament you see there are many, many parallels and all of the things in the Old Testament, as we have already covered, are like little seeds. Then they grow in the New Testament.

So, we have the physical meaning here in the Old Testament. We have the spiritual meaning in the New Testament. The laws and commandments of the Old Testament have been raised to a higher

standard and level for the New Covenant—*not done away!* There are some that have been superseded.

For example, like the blue cloth around the border of a garment. That was done so in order to remember the Ten Commandments. We have them written in our heart and mind. We don't need them to remind us. We have a higher standard. It needs to be in our heart and mind.

Verse 10: “And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho. And they ate of the old grain of the land on the next day after the Passover, unleavened cakes and roasted *new* grain in the same day” (vs 10-11).

So, when they came in conquered the land, east of the Jordan River, they had all the stalks of old grain that were there. They also had the new grain that they could harvest so they could have the *wave sheaf offering*. Then they could start eating the new grain, as well, as it ripened. Remember, there are seven weeks to the harvest.

Verse 12: “And the manna stopped on the next day after they had eaten the grain of the land. And there was no more manna for the children of Israel, but they ate the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.” Then they started conquering the land of Canaan beginning with Jericho. That's another whole story, too.

(go to the next track)

Before we go to the New Testament, let's look at something here in Jeremiah 2, because this lays the groundwork for the prophecies of Jeremiah and his work that he had to do. That's very similar to the situation that we are in today.

Today we are living at the end if the age. We are seeing all these difficulties and all these sins and all the problems in the whole world, and they affect us, as well. Likewise with Jeremiah, he lived through the time of the destruction of Israel and on in to be able to take the daughters of the king over to Ireland so that the ten tribes could continue.

Remember this: ***God always gives a warning before things take place!*** God has given many warnings concerning things happening in the world now through many people, through many different vehicles. More than just those who would be considered 'religious.' Here's what God said after nearly 800 years in dealing with the children of Israel—the house of Israel and the house of Judah. God gave warning!

God said to him, Jeremiah 2:2: “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “I remember you, the kindness of your

youth, the love of your betrothals, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown.... [that's what it started out to be] ...Israel *was* Holiness to the LORD, and the firstfruits of His increase....”” (vs 2-3). They were to be the firstfruit nation to bring the laws and commandments of God to the world. They didn't succeed.

Let's see what they did. The reason I want to cover this is because we're going to see some similar things that have happened to the Church.

Verse 4: “Hear the Word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the LORD, ‘What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me and have walked after vanity, and have become vain? Nor did they say, “Where *is* the LORD Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of dry places, and of deep darkness, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man lived?”’” (vs 4-6).

So, God took him through impossible things. There can be some parallels we can learn with this in our life. God is going to take us through some impossible circumstances, as well.

Verse 7: “‘And I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat its fruit and its goodness; but when you entered, you defiled My land and made My inheritance an abomination. The priests did not say, “Where *is* the LORD?” And they who handle the law did not know Me; the rulers also rebelled against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal and walked after things that do not profit. Therefore, I will contend with you,’ says the LORD, ‘and against your children's children I will contend’” (vs 7-9).

Then He says to look at all the sins you have done and committed.

Verse 21: “Yet, I planted you a noble vine, wholly a true seed. How then have you turned into the degenerate *shoots of* an alien vine to Me? For though you wash yourself with potash, and multiply soap for yourself, *yet* your iniquity is marked before Me,’ declares the Lord GOD. ‘How can you say, “I am not defiled; I have not gone after the Baalim”? See your way in the valley, know what you have done! *You are* a swift camel traversing its ways; a wild donkey used to the wilderness; in the desire of her passion she snuffs at the wind; *in* her time of mating who can turn her away? All those who seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they will find her’” (vs 21-24). Then He says ‘withhold your foot' from sin.

We're going to see a little later that's exactly

the same thing that has happened to the Churches of God.

Let's first of all come to Matthew 13, and here Jesus likens the preaching of the Gospel to seed. We know that it focuses in on there are those who listen and fall away, there are those who give up in times of persecution, and we have seen the whole thing.

He concentrates on this in, Matthew 13:8: "And some fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit—some a hundredfold, and some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear" (vs 8-9). These are the ones who hear the Word of God, repent and are baptized, and act upon it.

Let's look at another parable that has to do with the parable of the tares, v 24: "And He put another parable before them, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. Now when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared. And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?' And he said to them, 'A man *who is* an enemy has done this.' Then the servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go out and gather them?' But he said, 'No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest...'" (vs 24-30)—which for the New Testament Church is pictured by the Day of Pentecost, the end of the harvest. It is a progressive thing down through time; the final harvest takes place at the resurrection when all are raised.

Let's see what happens here: "....I will say to the reapers, 'Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary'" (v 30). From this we understand that this is a process. There is a process whereby the Church grows and wanes, grows and wanes, and it's also a process for the enemy to send in those who try to disrupt it and to disturb it. Those things are there, as well.

This is a process from the time of Jesus speaking about it and the beginning of the Church on Pentecost in 30_{A.D.} down to the resurrection when He returns. The tares are eliminated; God is the One Who takes care of it. We'll see that in just a minute, but let's cover one other thing. After Jesus shows that it's like a mustard seed that is planted and grows into a big plant, etc.

Verse 33: "Another parable He spoke to them: 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven...'" At this time leaven pictures the good thing that we saw back in Lev. 23, that two loaves were to be presented after they had been baked with the leaven in them. (We'll cover more on that tomorrow).

"...which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened'" (v 33). Then it was ready to be baked.

Let's see how the tares are eliminated, 1-John. We have seen down through the book of Acts there were false prophets who came; those who tried to make their way into the Church—especially the one named Simon Magus (Acts 8). Let's see how the tares are removed by God without tearing up those who are converted:

1-John 2:18: "Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming... [that's certainly was true then and magnified today] ...even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time. **They went out from among us...**" (vs 18-19). That's the first way of getting rid of the tares.

"...but they were not of us, because if they were of us they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed to *show* that *they* all were not of us" (v 19). *They left!*

Let's see the second way to get away from the tares. Let's see what Paul wrote concerning it. We will see that if we stay close to the Word of God there are going to be times when we have to make this decision. Most of us have had to make it at this particular time.

1-Timothy 6:3: "If anyone teaches any different doctrine... [there are a lot of that out there today; we will see the prophecy of it (Rev. 2 & 3)] ...and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness." We've been confronted with this—haven't we? *Yes, indeed!*

How did a Church keeping the Holy Days and the Sabbath of God come now to be a Sunday-keeping church? *By the very process of them creeping in and taking over, and getting into positions of power!* Then changing the doctrine! What are we to do when they are in power and we are having our faith invaded by the false doctrines that they present? Notice what it says concerning this kind of person:

Verse 4: "He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy,

arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the Truth—*men* who believe that gain is Godliness. **From such withdraw yourself.**” (vs 4-5). So, we have the two processes:

1. they leave
2. we withdraw

And we’ve seen both of those things take place.

Now let’s come to the book of Revelation and see something very interesting, and we will see that there are some parallels to what we covered in the book of Exodus with the children of Israel. I think this is interesting. Think about when the children of Israel came to Mt. Sinai and the trumpet blew long and loud, then God was there. Look at how similar this is with Jesus Christ and the Apostle John.

Revelation 1:8—here John was on the Lord’s day in vision. Here’s what he heard Jesus say, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* Ending,” says the Lord, ‘Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty.’” Showing the power of God! The power of Christ!

Listen, brethren, we need to understand that God has called us to some of the greatest things that have ever been revealed by God.

- we need to *hold fast* to those things
- we need to *grow in grace and knowledge*
- we need to *change*
- we need to *overcome*
- we need *repentance* everyday

so that we can draw closer to God.

Verse 9: “I John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in *the* Spirit on the day of the Lord...” (vs 9-10). Everything else has to do here with how Jesus is going to return, and that also involves us and the Church and the resurrection, and all of the events at the time of the end.

Verse 10: “I was in *the* Spirit on the day of the Lord; and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me.” Remember the trumpet at Mt. Sinai? *Yes, indeed!* Announcing about God coming. Here’s the trumpet about Christ, and Christ is going to personally speak to John.

Verse 11: “Saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last’; and, ‘What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches...’” The seven churches become a prophetic type of the

Churches of God down through history. They have had their difficulties, their ups and downs; they have had the same kind of problems come into the churches that also afflicted Israel of old.

Verse 12: “And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands... [each of these represent a church] ...and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate” (vs 12-13). Awesome to see, indeed!

Verse 14: “And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire; and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth...” (vs 14-16).

Remember: ***We are to obey the voice of God!*** The Word of God is sharp as a sword, with

- blessings
- cursings
- power
- tenderness
- love

with all the good things!

“...and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power.... [That’s what the Apostle John saw.] (How did he react?): ...And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last’” (vs 16-17). That’s what we need to understand, too, brethren. We’re not to be afraid! Yes, we’re going to see a lot of things transpire, but we’re not to be afraid.

Verse 18: “Even the One Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death.” All judgment has been given to Christ— isn’t that true? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 19: “Write the things that you saw, and the things that are, and the things that shall take place hereafter.” This was the writing of the things beginning with John where he was, the circumstances that were there, and all the way down to the beginning of the completion of the plan of God in Rev. 21 & 22, and the things that shall take place hereafter.

Then He defines the mystery, v 20: “The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, *is this*: the seven stars are *the* angels of the seven churches; and

the seven lampstands that you saw are *the* seven churches.”

Now we’re going to see that every thing that we go through as brethren of Christ, as Churches of God—fellowship groups or larger congregations—experiences as laid out here by Jesus Christ in the prophecy of the Churches of God from the time of this vision to John down to His return.

The harvest is like planting seed, we are in the granary; we have been put into the granary when we die. Right now we are plants growing; we’re to produce fruit. When we produce the fruit and accomplish what God wants us to, and we come to the end of our life, or we come to the return of Jesus Christ—whichever comes first—then we are put into the granary. That granary is a very important thing.

What happens to us when we die? *We die! Our breath ceases! Our spirit goes back to the Lord!* What happens then? Here’s a comparison between the children of Israel coming before God at Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments on the Day of Pentecost and the Church.

Hebrews 12:18: “For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind; and to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them. (For they could not endure what was being commanded: ‘And if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow’; and so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, ‘I am greatly afraid and trembling.’)” (vs 18-21).

Now then, we have a greater. Remember how I said that the New Testament elevates everything to a spiritual level, to spiritual understanding. So, Paul draws the parallel here:

Verse 22: “But you have come to Mount Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering... [which will be tomorrow, the Day of Pentecost picturing the resurrection] ...and to *the* Church of *the* Firstborn, registered *in the book of Life* in heaven... [our names are written there] ...and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected” (vs 22-23).

When we die, just like Jesus said, ‘Into Your hands I commend My spirit.’ And the spirit of man and the Spirit of God goes back to God, united together, and it is stored—that’s the granary—awaiting the resurrection.

We have another glimpse of this in Revelation 6_[corrected]. We have another example of this, a little differently expressed, but when Christ says, ‘Bring the wheat into My granary.’ When we all die—and it’s been so since the beginning of the Church until now—your spirit is put in a special place in heaven where at the resurrection—when you are resurrected—you will be given a new body, a new mind, a new spiritual power that you have never had, and we will enter into the Kingdom of God as the Church of the Firstborn.

We have something similar to this, Revelation 6:9: “And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held.” When we die God has a place right at His altar where He stores that spirit of man and Spirit of God, all of the combined character that we developed during our lifetime, and that is just sitting there waiting for the time of the resurrection.

Then at the resurrection all of those will be reconstituted into spirit being through the resurrection of the dead. Exactly how all of that is going to take place, I don’t know. But we do know this: *It is going to take place!*

Verse 10: “And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time yet... [they were to stay in that state of spiritual sleeping as it were in the granary where the spirits of the just made perfect are stored] (they are to be there): ...until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been” (vs 10-11).

Revelation 2—we’re going to do a little survey of the seven churches. Picture it this way: there are three aspects of the seven churches:

1. The seven churches that existed during the time that John was living and wrote the book of Revelation.
2. The prophetic history of the Churches of God down through time.
3. The Churches of God as God sees them at the end.

One mistake that a lot of people make is that they think that a corporation—called a Church of God—constitutes *the* Church of God. *Not so!* One church they all like to claim that they are is the Church of Philadelphia. But *that is not so!* At the end, we have them all, in type, existing on the earth. Now we need to think of everything in a worldwide sense.

Let's look at the things that they had to fight. Let's look at the promise of reward given to them. These seven churches are also *a prophetic type of the seven weeks of counting to the harvest to Pentecost*. We will see that there is yet a 50th day that God is going to reserve for Himself.

Church of Ephesus—the Ephesian Church

There are things that they went through. They had a lot of things that they went through.

Revelation 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil..." They tried them! They tested them! They were responsible for having those false brethren and false ministers go somewhere else.

"...and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars" (v 2). They worked! They grew! But they had a problem. Go back and look at all the problems that the children of Israel had in the wilderness. Theirs were more compounded and more serious in number, but the stakes for them were not the same as they are for us. Ours is eternal life; theirs was getting to the 'promised land.'

- What happens to the Church?
- What happens to people when they get settled down, have a routine, get comfortable? *They get complacent!*

One area of complacency that the Ephesians had was that they lost their first love! They began substituting physical works toward human beings in place of the *true spiritual works* toward God. So, Christ tells them to repent! He tells them to do the first works! Otherwise, He's going to remove the lampstand. Then He commends them for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

Then He gives a promise. Remember: Wherever there is correction, and we yield to correction, there are blessings for repenting and coming back to God. Keep that in mind with all the seven churches, because this is part of the harvest of God.

So, here is the promise given to the Ephesians, v 7: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the tree of life that is in *the* midst of the paradise of God." Showing that they will be there if they repent.

Church of Smyrna:

Now we have the church that you might say went through hell and tribulation, and the synagogue

of Satan, because all of those who had left were now forming their own groups. It came down in history parallel, as we know, with the Christianity of this world. They had tribulation!

But Jesus said, v 10: "...Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life." No correction for them. They didn't have sins! They didn't have false prophets!

- they fought against them
- they resisted them
- they gave their lives

Verse 11: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.... [This applies to all seven of the churches down through time.] ...The one who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death."

Church of Pergamos:

Verse 12: "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos, write: These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword"—His sword of correction. He commends them for being faithful in the days of Antipas until he was martyred, because they were dwelling right where Satan's seat was located, right there in Pergamos. There was a great temple to Zeus, and of course, that affected the Church. They began adopting the things of the Nicolaitans, which then is over-lording of the brethren and to eat things sacrificed to idols. That meant that they had idolatry.

Go back and look at all the problems the children of Israel have ever had and they're they same identical problems. Satan is there to try and carry it out.

Verse 16—Christ says: "Repent! For if *you* do not *repent*..." Remember, God always gives a space of repentance; then there comes a time when the time of repentance ceases. And if you don't accept the repentance when the time of repentance is given by Christ, then you're going to have difficulties and problems of a greater magnitude.

"...I will come to you quickly... [and if you don't repent] ...and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth" (v 16). Have we lived through a time when Christ did this also? Through His Word He fought against His own Church separating the faithful brethren and ministers from the unfaithful brethren and ministers? *Yes, indeed!* So, they have a promise, too.

Verse 17: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes... [We are to repent! We are to overcome!] ...I will give *the right* to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and

on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives *it*.”

Church of Thyatira:

They really sunk deep! Within the Church of Thyatira there were two layers: the true followers and the ones who followed Satan the devil. The true followers rejected the doctrines of Jezebel, that prophetess, which then is a type of the Catholic Church. They did not get involved in the satanic doctrines of Sunday-keeping and Easter and all of that sort of thing. They remained faithful. But there were those who didn't.

Verse 20: “But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols.” Idolatry again. Remember the last thing that the Apostle John wrote in his first epistle. He said, ‘Flee idolatry!’ That’s exactly what Paul wrote, ‘Flee idolatry!’ (1-Cor. 10).

It’s one thing to have an idol, it’s easy to see what that kind of idolatry does, but there are other idols, too—being people, organizations, etc. We can’t have any of those!

Verse 21: “And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent.” This is really a very important thing for us to understand. When there’s no repentance, God reacts:

Verse 22: “Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death...” (vs 22-23). Showing that some of them are going to go into the Lake of Fire, because if you kill someone, they’re dead. But if you kill them *with death*, that’s got to be the second death.

We’re to learn from this: “...and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works” (v 23). Then He says that as many as have this doctrine, ‘I am not going to lay this burden upon you.’

Verse 26: “And to the one who overcomes, and keeps My works unto *the* end, I will give authority over the nations.” That’s what we’re going to be doing, brethren.

Church of Sardis:

The church that is alive, but dead—a corpse with a pulse. So, all of those people who think that works are not necessary, let’s see what Jesus said.

Revelation 3:2: “Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die. For I have not found your works complete before God.” Isn’t that interesting? We must have all the works of God complete. We can learn a lesson here. We need to stop and ask ourselves: What is it that I have left off doing? And ask God to help you understand it and repent of it.

Verse 3: “Therefore, remember what you have received and heard, and hold on *to this*, and repent. Now then, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you shall by no means know what hour I will come upon you.” Showing how the correction of God is going to come.

This is not speaking about the return of Christ. This is speaking about the correction of God. Then He says that there are a few in Sardis that are ‘worthy to walk with Me.’

Verse 5: “The one who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not blot out his name from the book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

Church of Philadelphia:

We come to the church that everyone wants to be: Philadelphia. Let’s understand something very important. The word ‘Philadelphia’ means *those who love the brethren!* Let’s understand something else also more important: ***You can’t love the brethren the way you ought to unless you first love God!*** Keep that in mind.

- The first commandment is ‘loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being.’
- The second one is ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’
- The third one is to ‘love the brethren as Jesus loved us.’

If we see those things there, and are true and are happening, then perhaps maybe we are Philadelphians. But it’s not restricted to any one organization. We need to understand that! However, Jesus commends them for patiently keeping His Word. Faithful to the words and teachings and doctrines that are contained in the Bible; not slacking off on any, but

- faithfully observing
- faithfully protecting
- faithfully teaching

Here’s a promise, v 10: “Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth.... [*Worldwide temptation and tribulation!*]

(then He says): “Behold, I am coming quickly...” (vs 10-11).

This brings us right up to the time close to the return of Christ. Yet, today—though we see many things taking place—how far down the road is it going to be before the actual return of Jesus Christ? *We don't know!* Even though we can understand about the meaning of the Day of Pentecost and the resurrection, when it comes right down to that time—because of the shaking of the heavens and the earth—no man is going to know the time or the hour. Only God the Father!

Here is the promise, v 12: “The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 12-13).

Church of Laodicea:

I think, brethren, we just need to be honest. We've been all Laodiceans from day one. If we understand that, and we look at what it tells us here, that we're not to be comfortable in what we are doing, we're not say that we're rich and increased with goods just because we have many physical things around us and physical things to use, living in nice physical places and all of that. We are not to be satisfied and say, 'I've got it made,' and then become lukewarm and talkback to God. Notice what Jesus says. There are two points of correction here.

1. Self-correction: you go to God in prayer and repentance and admit your sins, and ask Him to help you see your sins and you repent of those.

That is the easiest correction.

2. Christ will do it Himself.

Verse 18: “I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.” That's the first one. If we do this and become zealous and repent and are serving God, then we will go forward.

Here is the second kind, v 19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.” That's what we need to do. Don't wait until you're spewed out of the mouth of God. Don't wait until you're out there hung high and dry because of your sins and lackadaisicalness. Repent

to God and be earnest in what you are doing and be consistent in what you are doing. Keep at it!

Verse 20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door... [that is the Word of God; that is the leading of the Holy Spirit] ...I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.... [notice, there is hope; not condemnation]: ...To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (vs 20-22).

There is the seven weeks harvest, each unit of time as God has measured it. There is still one more harvest of God, which we will cover tomorrow on Pentecost, the 50th day harvest.

You all come back tomorrow and we will cover the 50th day harvest and see how magnificent that is.

Scriptural References

- 1) Leviticus 23:9-21
- 2) Exodus 15:27
- 3) Exodus 16:1-3, 28-29
- 4) Exodus 19:1, 4-6, 11, 13-20
- 5) Exodus 20:2-3
- 6) Joshua 5:9-12
- 7) Jeremiah 2:2-9, 21-24
- 8) Matthew 13:8-9, 24-30, 33
- 9) 1 John 2:18-19
- 10) 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- 11) Revelation 1:8-20
- 12) Hebrews 12:18-23
- 13) Revelation 6:9-11
- 14) Revelation 2:2, 7, 10-12, 16-23, 26
- 15) Revelation 3:2-3, 5, 10-13, 18-22

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 24
- Acts 8
- Revelation 21; 22
- 1 Corinthians 10

Also referenced: Booklet: *How to Count Pentecost*

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