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HOW SHOULD WE COUNT

# PENTECOST?

*By Jerry Healan*

*Pentecost is one of the most important and significant days of the year to the true believer. It is the anniversary of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the New Testament Assembly. But it is also an annual Holy Day commanded by Yahweh in Lev. 23. We are told to count 50 days. When do we begin that count?*

As with everything else contained within the Scriptures, there is controversy and disagreement concerning when to begin the count down to Pentecost. In certain places the English rendering is ambiguous which adds to the confusion, but when one looks into the Hebrew renderings the picture becomes much clearer.

If we were to simply begin reading at Gen. 1:1 and go straight through the Bible, the first real reference to Pentecost would be found in Ex. 23 which says, “Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed in the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before Me empty:) and **the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field:** and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before The Sovereign Yahweh,” vv. 14-17. Notice that this feast is first called the “feast of harvest” in these verses.

As we proceed farther we find that it is mentioned again in Exodus, “And thou shalt observe **the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest,** and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end,” 34:22.

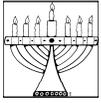
The Hebrew word for “weeks” used here is שבועת (shabuot/shavuot). It is defined in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* as #7620, **prop. pass. part. of 7650 as a denom. of 7651;** lit. *sevened*, i.e. a *week* (spec. of years):—seven, week.

#7650 is the Hebrew word **shaba** (שבע) which is defined as; a prim. root; prop. to *be complete*, but used only as a denom. **from 7651;** to *seven* oneself, i.e. *swear* (as if by repeating a declaration seven times):—adjure, charge (by an oath, with an oath), feed to the full [*by mistake for 7646*], take an oath, X straitly, (cause to, make to) swear.

#7651 is the Hebrew word **sheba** which is defined as; **from 7650;** a prim. cardinal number; *seven* (as the sacred *full* one); also (adv.) *seven times*; by impl. a *week*; by extens. an indefinite number:—(+ by) seven ([-fold], -s, [-teen, -teenth], -th times).

So we find that the feast has to do with the number seven, a week, especially the sacred full one.

The next mention of this period is found in Lev. 23, “And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, ‘Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before Yahweh, to be accepted for you: **on the morrow after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto Yahweh. And the meat offering thereof *shall be* two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto Yahweh *for* a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof *shall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your Elohim: *it shall be* a statute



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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 shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath** shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto Yahweh. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; *they are* the firstfruits unto Yahweh,” vv. 9-17.

Notice carefully that the wave sheaf is offered on the morrow after the Sabbath. Which Sabbath is this speaking of? There is division even in the Jewish world as to when the count begins. There are some who begin counting on the morrow after the first high day in Unleavened Bread. Others count from the morrow after the regular Sabbath day that falls in Unleavened Bread. Which would be correct?

## SABBATH (שַׁבָּת)

Yahweh commanded Moses to instruct the priesthood that they were to wave the sheaf on the morrow after the Sabbath. The Hebrew word used here for Sabbath is #7676 in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*. It is defined as; intens. from 7663; *intermission*, i.e. (spec.) the *Sabbath*:—(+ every) Sabbath.

If you have a *Hebrew Greek Interlinear Bible* as well as a *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*, a careful study concerning this word #7676 - Sabbath (שַׁבָּת) will reveal that, only two specific days are called Sabbath (שַׁבָּת) in the Hebrew. The first one is, of course, the seventh day Sabbath. The second one is the Day of Atonement. All other feast days are called “shabbathons,” a word that is derived from “Sabbath.”

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* defines “shabbathown” as; #7676 שַׁבְּתוֹן **shabbâthôwn** from 7676; a *shabbatism* or special holiday:—rest, sabbath.

How is “shabbathown” different from the

“Sabbath?” The difference is that “shabbathown” is generally translated as “rest.” For instance, when we read, “Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day *is* the **sabbath of rest**, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work *therein*: it *is* the sabbath of Yahweh in all your dwellings,” Lev. 23:3. The Hebrew rendering for “sabbath of rest” is “shabbat shabbathown” (שַׁבְּתוֹן שַׁבָּת).

Therefore, all high days are called “shabbathowns” (rests), but not all high days are called “Sabbaths.” The only ones called Sabbaths (שַׁבָּת) are the weekly Sabbath and the Day of Atonement.

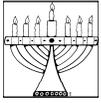
## SHABBATOWN

Yahweh calls the Sabbath, “Shabbat Shabbathown,” but He doesn’t even bother to call the other **Spring** holidays by either term. When commanding the Children of Israel to observe the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, He calls them feasts (moedim and chags) and holy convocations (miqra-qodesh). He commands that no work be done, but He never uses the term “Shabbat” nor “shabbathown” (Lev. 23:4-8 [except for the seventh day Sabbath]).

This applies to Pentecost (one of the spring feasts). It is called a “holy convocation” wherein no servile work is to be performed (Lev. 23:21), but the terms “Shabbat” and “shabbathown” are not employed.

In fact, the term “shabbathown” is not employed for the annual high days until we come to the command for the Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:24). The English version has employed the term “sabbath,” but the literal Hebrew word is “shabbathown” translated as “rest” in vv. 3 and 32).

As pointed out, the Day of Atonement is also called a “Shabbat shabbathown” (Sabbath of rest). Why? Because it is on the Day of Atonement when the land Sabbath was begun. Israel was to farm the land for a period of six years and then was command to allow the land



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to rest in the seventh year. This land Sabbath was begun on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 25).

The Day of Atonement is a Shabbat shabbathown, a Sabbath of rest. It and the weekly Sabbath day are the only two days in the whole of Scripture which carry this distinctive title.

Finally, the fifteenth day and the 22nd day of the seventh month (The Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day) are called “shabbathowns” (Lev. 23:39). Once again the English version has translated the word “shabbathown” as “sabbath” rather than “rest.” The inconsistency of the English certainly leads to confusion.

## THE COUNT

Israel was commanded to count 50 days from the morrow after the Sabbath (הַשַּׁבָּת). According to the terminology used here and intensive Scriptural study, this day had to have been the weekly Sabbath day. How can we say this? Because there is only one day in all of Scripture which is specifically called “the Sabbath” (הַשַּׁבָּת) and that is the seventh day Sabbath.

Furthermore, seven Sabbaths had to be “complete” (Lev. 23:15). This English word “complete” is translated from the Hebrew word “tamiym.” It is #8549 in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* and is defined as; from 8552; *entire* (lit., fig. or mor.); also (as noun) *integrity, truth*:— without blemish, complete, full, perfect, sincerely (-ity), sound, without spot, undefiled, upright (-ly), whole.

The question is, what would be a complete, entire, perfect, undefiled, Sabbath to a Hebrew? What would be a week to a Hebrew that was without blemish, without spot, undefiled, perfect or complete? It would be a week that began with the first day of the week and ended with the seventh day Sabbath’s rest (Shabbat shabbathown).

A week to this working world is a week that begins with Monday and ends with Sunday

even though their own calendars contradict their observance. People in this world may designate a week as being a period of seven days from any day in the week, such as Wednesday through Tuesday. But that was not a perfect, complete, undefiled, complete week to a Hebrew, nor according to Yahweh’s word.

Even though the period of the days of Unleavened Bread is seven days, where is the Scriptural reference that calls that period a week? It is always called the “Days of Unleavened Bread,” “seven days of Unleavened Bread,” etc. It is never called a “week” of time in the Scriptures. If it is, then please show it to me and I will stand corrected.

The actual count was to begin on the morrow (day after) the (weekly) Sabbath (הַשַּׁבָּת). Seven Sabbaths (שַׁבְּתוֹת) were to be complete, full, entire, undefiled, without spot, without blemish, entire, perfect, until the morrow after the seventh Sabbath (הַשַּׁבָּת). The terms used here are Sabbaths (הַשַּׁבָּת) not shabbathowns (שַׁבְּתוֹן).

The lamb that was to be slaughtered on the morrow after the Sabbath (v. 12) was also to be without blemish (tamiym/entire/complete, etc.).

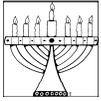
The terminology used for the Sabbath versus the annual High Days gives conclusive proof that the count should begin on the morrow after the regular weekly Sabbath (הַשַּׁבָּת) and not after an annual High Day (יְהוֹמוֹת).

## YAHSHUA’S EXAMPLE

Another important case in point is the very example of the Savior Yahshua. The wave sheaf that was offered was a type of the resurrected Savior (order our free article entitled *The Sheaf of Firstfruits*).

The wave sheaf was termed in the Hebrew as “omer reshuyth.” An omer was simply a measure. When Israel gathered the manna, they were apportioned an omer of manna per day.

The word “reysuiyth” also means beginning, chief, first (-fruits, part, time), principal thing,



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etc. It was the waving of the omer before Yahweh that not only **began** the countdown to Pentecost, but also **began** the grain harvest. The wave offering was an offering of movement. In other words, the priest waved the offering before Yahweh in an undulating manner. To “undulate” means **1.** To cause to move in waves **2.** To give a wavy form, margin, or surface to —*vi.* **1.** To move in or as in waves; **move sinuously.** (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*)

All offerings to Yahweh, especially animal offerings, had to be slain. Death is the cessation of movement, vitality, life. The grain offering became dead when it was cut off from the earth. When the omer was cut from the earth, this typified death. But when it was offered as the wave offering, an offering of movement or undulation it typified life, resurrection, restoration to vitality.

The sheaf of firstfruits typified the resurrected Messiah in His capacity as the firstfruits from the dead.

Yahshua appeared first to Miriam after His resurrection, “But Miriam stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Yahshua had lain. And they say unto her, ‘Woman, why weepest thou?’ She saith unto them, ‘Because they have taken away my Master, and I know not where they have laid Him.’ And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Yahshua standing, and knew not that it was Yahshua. Yahshua saith unto her, ‘Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?’ She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, ‘Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.’ Yahshua saith unto her, ‘Miriam.’ She turned herself, and saith unto Him, ‘Rabboni;’ which is to say, Master,” Jn. 20:11-16.

Yahshua informed her, “Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to

My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My Elohim, and your Elohim,” Jn. 20:17.

Yahshua was to ascend before the throne of the heavenly Father to be accepted as the wave sheaf (omer reyshiyth), the firstfruits from the dead. Paul writes concerning Yahshua, “And He is **before** all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the **Head** of the body, the assembly: Who is the **beginning** (reyshiyth), the **Firstborn** from the dead; that in all things **He might have the pre-eminence,**” Col. 1:17-18.

Yahshua ascended on the first day of the week, the morrow after the Sabbath in order to be accepted as the firstfruits from the dead (the wave sheaf). This began the count-down to Pentecost. Fifty days later the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples which began the spiritual harvest of Yahweh’s people.

One of the number one rules concerning controversy should be to look to Yahshua to see how the Scriptures speak of Him and how He fulfilled them before drawing our conclusions. Yahshua said, “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me...Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?” Jn. 5:39, 45-47.

The Scriptures speak of Him. Once He has fulfilled them, then we have His example to look to, which is more perfect and clearer than the Scriptural model presented.

Yahshua ascended before the Father on the morrow after the regular weekly Sabbath that occurred during the days of Unleavened Bread. Let us follow His example.

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