

The Incredible PAGAN Origin of a Sunday “Pentecost”!

Did you know that the Roman Catholic Church counts the day of Pentecost as 50 days after the pagan Easter, and observe the SAME DAY as the Worldwide Church of God? 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 some serious new truth Sunday "Pentecost" observers should 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 *New 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. Notice!

"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"!

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"!

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 usually 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. Notice! 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 usually 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: These Samaritans 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, and then combined or amalgamated paganism with the Old Testament, 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?

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!

"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 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).

But there is even further proof.

Rather than just argue over this question endlessly, as some are wont to do, to justify their PAGAN practice of observing a PAGAN SUNDAY "PENTECOST," derived from the festival of the pagan goddess of flowers, FLORA, let us notice a fact which has apparently hitherto gone unnoticed among most of the rhetoric and heat of debate over this issue.

An Insolvable Paradox and Dilemma

Those who count Pentecost from the Sunday which falls within the Feast of Unleavened Bread, put themselves right on the horns of an insolvable dilemma. Notice! According to the commandments of God, we are COMMANDED TO EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD FOR SEVEN DAYS, during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. In Leviticus 23:6, God says,

"And on the fifteen day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: *seven days ye MUST east unleavened bread*" (Lev.23:6).

"And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance FOR EVER. SEVEN DAYS *shall ye EAT unleavened bread*; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses

"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month AT EVEN, ye shall EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD, UNTIL THE ONE AND TWENT-IETH DAY OF THE MONTH AT EVEN" (Exodus 12:14-18).

"SEVEN DAYS THOU SHALT EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD. UNLEAVENED BREAD SHALL BE EATEN SEVEN DAYS; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters" (Exo. 13:6-7).

Isn't this command perfectly clear? We are COMMANDED TO EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD for *all seven days* of the Feast of Unleavened Bread -- that is why it is literally called, "The Feast of Unleavened Bread"! Get the point?

Now, Joseph Tkach of the Worldwide Church of God said we don't have to eat

unleavened bread all seven days. Who is he kidding? Who was he deceiving? Whom will you believe -- him? Or the Word of GOD? If you believe him, and follow him, then HE becomes your "god" -- and you become an IDOLATER!

But now notice something very interesting! God commands us to EAT unleavened bread EVERY DAY OF THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD! Yet, God also commands, with absolute DIVINE AUTHORITY --

"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 is a STATUTE FOR EVER throughout your generations in all your dwellings" (Lev.23:14).

Let's understand this! They could not eat unleavened bread, after the First High Sabbath of the Feast, UNTIL they had offered the wave sheaf offering!

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins with the High Holy Day, Nisan 15, at sunset, and the holy day is observed until the following sunset (compare Lev.23:32). Just after sunset, at the beginning of Nisan 16, according to the Pharisees, the wave sheaf offering was brought and waved before the LORD. Therefore, from that point on, the people were able to EAT bread -- unleavened bread, of course -- for ALL the remaining six days of the Festival!

No problem.

But consider this! IF you claim the wave sheaf offering wasn't offered UNTIL THE DAY AFTER THE WEEKLY SABBATH, you have a serious problem. Why is this? According to the Hebrew sacred calendar, Passover can occur on DIFFERENT DAYS OF THE WEEK! For example, some years Nisan 14 can occur on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, etc. If it occurs on Sunday, then the Holy Day would be Monday, and the wave sheaf offering would be offered Monday night, after sunset (if there were still a tabernacle or Temple). The people of God would continue eating unleavened bread, after the wave sheaf offering on Monday night, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, till the end of the Festival.

No problem!

But IF the wave sheaf offering was offered on the Sunday following the WEEKLY SABBATH, as the Sadducees claimed, then we surely do have a problem! Because since the First Holy Day was a Monday, the weekly Sabbath would actually be the SIXTH DAY of the Feast of Unleavened Bread! Yet, God plainly commanded, saying NO BREAD WAS TO BE EATEN *until the wave sheaf offering!* Therefore, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Sabbath -- FIVE DAYS during the very FEAST of UNLEAVENED BREAD -- BREAD WOULD HAVE BEEN FORBIDDEN TO BE EATEN!!!

God does not contradict Himself! The Sadducean Pentecost leads to a direct and unsolvable CONTRADICTION OF THE SCRIPTURES!

What a paradox! What a *humungous* PROBLEM for a Sunday Pentecost!

Truly, those who profess to follow the Sadducean reckoning are poised on the *sharp horns of an excruciating dilemma!*

If Passover were a Monday, then the First Holy Day would be Tuesday. The days of Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sabbath would come before the "Sunday" the Sadducees said the wave sheaf offering was to be performed. FOUR DAYS of the Feast would pass during which NO unleavened BREAD COULD BE EATEN during the FEAST of Unleavened Bread!

Yet God ALSO commands unleavened bread to be eaten ALL SEVEN DAYS!

Did God contradict Himself? Of course not!

Does the Sadducean Pentecost then make any sense at all? Of course NOT!

Absolutely *NOT!* It forces a direct contradiction in the Scriptures, if we follow it! God plainly commands, in Leviticus 23, "SEVEN DAYS YE *MUST* EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD" (Leviticus 23:6). The only way for this to be possible, is for the wave sheaf offering to be performed IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FIRST HOLY DAY!

To postpone the wave sheaf offering for four or five days, until the WEEKLY SABBATH is past, would *WRECK AND DESTROY* THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD, and would also *BREAK* THE DIRECT COMMANDMENT OF GOD!

God surely does not contradict Himself. "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). "Thy word is truth," Jesus said (John 17:17). Therefore, since bread was plainly forbidden until the wave sheaf offering was performed (Lev.23:14), as a statute forever, the WAVE SHEAF HAD TO BE PERFORMED RIGHT AFTER THE FIRST HOLY DAY -- AND NOT THREE, FOUR, FIVE, OR SIX DAYS LATER!

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 Sivan 5, 6, or 7, according to the Jewish calendar?

Or will you follow modern churches run by men which persist in perverting the truth of God, and follow the erroneous Sadducean Pentecost, the Roman Catholic Sunday Pentecost, patterned after the ancient pagan festival of the Floralia?

Will you persist in observing 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 show-

ing 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 5, 6, or 7 Pentecost, counted from Passover!

Do you see? Do you understand?

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!

What about you?

Will you continue to follow PAGAN WORSHIP, which the devil has palmed off on an unsuspecting Christianity? Will you thereby partake of the table of DEMONS?

Or will you clean up your act, and get right with God, and REPENT of ERROR, and HATE the evil (Proverbs 8:13), and do what God commands?

When Job saw his sin and error, he confessed to God and declared, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I ABHOR MYSELF, and REPENT in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6).

What about you and your family?

Will you also repent? Jesus Christ thunders, to all who hear Him,

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: REPENT YE, and BELIEVE the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

Jesus also said, to the Jews of His day, and to all of us, today:

"Suppose ye that these Galileans [whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices] were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

"I tell you, Nay: but, EXCEPT YE REPENT, ye shall all LIKEWISE PERISH.

"Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

"I tell you, Nay: but **EXCEPT YE REPENT**, ye shall all likewise **PERISH!**" (Luke 13:2-5).

May God help you to "see the light," and to set your heart to follow the truth, and to obey God, and to put His Kingdom FIRST in your life (Matt.6:33). For only those who obey God, and keep His commandments, will have a right to partake of the "tree of life" and to live forever more!

"Blessed are they that *do his commandments*, that they may have the right to the *tree of life*, and may enter in through the gates into the city" -- "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 22:14; 21:2).