

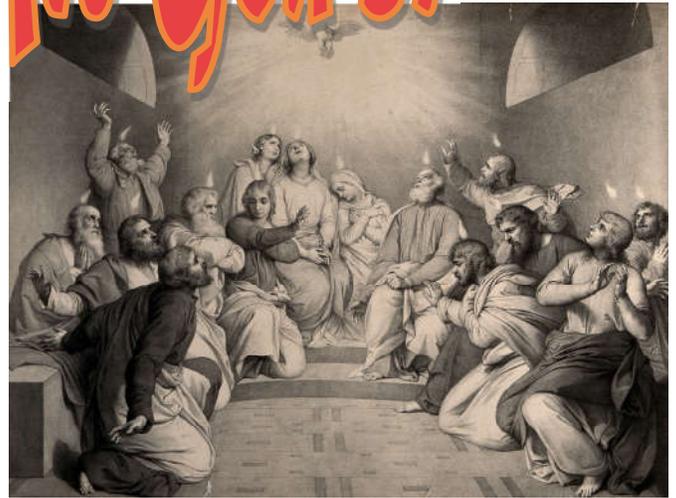
# Which Days Are God's? Editorial

As this edition of TSS is headed to the printers we are approaching God's Holy Day known to most as Pentecost. The name for this day is derived from the commandment to count 50 days ("fiftieth" from the Greek "pentecostes") from the day the wave sheaf was waved on the weekly Sabbath. Tradition has that day as the Sabbath during the Spring Holy Days known as the Days of Unleavened Bread which begin the night after the celebration of the Lord's Supper which some call Passover. There is much controversy surrounding that event which we will ignore because that is not the subject of this Editorial.

Most Church of God groups recognize, if not celebrate, the Feast of Pentecost. This Festival Day is said to be, by God, to be His Day, a Holy Convocation (or commanded assembly) in Leviticus 23: 2, 15-21. This is to say that God expects us to meet on what the Hebrews called a "high day" or high Sabbath and to worship before Him on that day.

In Exodus 34:22 this High Day is called the Feast of Weeks, an obvious reference to counting of 7 weeks of 7 days plus one (the day after the weekly Sabbath). We also see reference to keeping this day for the Hebrews in Duet. 16:10, 16 where reference to freewill offerings and appearing before God are both mentioned. The day, as well as other of the Holy Days, is also mentioned in 2 Chronicles 8:13 and the other aforementioned locations.

I have heard the excuse from some in the Churches of God that the Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23 were symbolic of Jesus Christ and now that He has come we need not keep those days. There is a problem with that logic that I'd like to discuss here. The problem with that logic arises in the Acts of the Apostles, in Chapter 2. There we find all of the Apostles gathered together as ordered by Christ before He returned to the Father in His Ascension (Acts 1:4). On the day of Pentecost we find that the Holy Spirit filled the room



and manifested itself in tongues of fire "sitting" on each of them. If the Holy Days were only until Christ, then why did God confirm them by sending the Holy Spirit on that day? Why did the writer of Acts refer to the Day of Pentecost at all if there was no more need to keep that day holy like the weekly Sabbaths were kept?

Moreover, the same writer references Paul's determination to bypass Ephesus in order to be in Jerusalem by the Day of Pentecost. Why would that writer mention that day if the day was not any longer required to be kept (Acts 20:16)? Even Paul himself, who apparently was unable to bypass Ephesus after all, mentions that he was going to stay in Ephesus until after Pentecost. Why would he do that if there was no longer any reason to be keeping that day (1 Cor. 16:8)?

Even mention of the Days of Unleavened Bread can be found in the books known to us as the New Testament in Acts 20:6. Paul uses obvious references to those days in 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Here's the logical fallacy for consideration. If those days in Leviticus 23 are done away with by the sacrifice of Christ, then why are they used as reference points for the new Christians in the letters sent out, which letters we now call books of the Bible? Moreover, if those days are done away with, why do we

not see any command in the Scriptures showing that we need no longer keep those days? The logical fallacy is that we, as Israelites grafted onto the vine, are ordered to keep those days as God's Holy Days, and we never see any statement from any writer of a letter/book of the New Covenant stating unequivocally that the celebration and keeping of those days should now be abandoned. How then can we claim those days are done away with when the order to keep them stands unrevoked by God or by statement from any of the apostles?

There is another logical problem with the position that those days are done away with. It is found in Zechariah 14:16-19. In those verses we find a future setting, the time after the return of Jesus as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. During that time the nations are commanded to go to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, one of the high days or annual Sabbaths listed in Leviticus 23 like Pentecost, and commanding a penalty for those who do not come up to keep the Feast. In verse 15 it is shown unequivocally that anyone, of all of the families on the Earth, who doesn't come up will suffer a penalty for refusing to come up—a lack of rain. God doesn't just destroy those who refuse to come up but He certainly makes life uncomfortable for them!

Once again, the scriptures fly in the face of the logic that the Holy Days, or High Sabbaths if that is preferred, are not to be kept. One must ask one's self from a logical view point why it is that God commanded Israel to keep those High Sabbaths beginning in the Spring and going to the fall, 7 days in total, and then we don't have to keep them now, but then God has the nations and families keeping them during the Kingdom days under pain of the curse of rainless skies? Doesn't that speak of a God who is all over the map? How can anyone know what it is that God wants people to do when He is changing His mind for no apparent reason?

Well, the fact is that God isn't like that. He did change the covenant from what was offered to Israel to what is offered to us today. Under the terms offered in the Old Covenant times, Israel was given promises of national greatness if they obeyed God. There was no mention of salvation for the people of

Israel. God did fulfill that promise by making Israel a nation above all nations. We find that nations sent representatives to Jerusalem to understand the wisdom of Solomon, who was king in Jerusalem at the height of Israel's power. God did that despite the fact that Israel did not fully meet the expectations He handed out in exchange for receiving His promises. In that way we can see the same God today who blesses and secures to us His blessings despite the fact that we regularly fall short of complete obedience to Him.

That said, in the New Covenant we see the same God with the same commandments that were delivered to Israel. In fact, in Hebrews 8:6 we find that the new covenant was not founded on different requirements from God at all. We find the writer stating without qualification that the new covenant is established on better promises (Heb. 8:6), and there is no statement about any changed law or requirements. In fact, if God were to give us different requirements wouldn't it seem as if God is having respect for those of us under the New Covenant, giving us less requirements to meet in the standard for obedience? We already know that the scripture states that "God is not a respecter of persons," a statement made without qualification by Peter as seen in Acts 10:34.

We, as brethren, are committed to keeping God's Commandments, one of which is His Sabbath Day. The high days are listed with the weekly Sabbath as God's days in Leviticus 23. I judge nobody who has not come to this understanding. We all should be "fully persuaded" in everything we do. We are told that when we know to do a good thing then it is sin to us to not do it. However, we should judge ourselves, not each other.

In this writer's opinion the Churches of God need to be keeping all of the days that are God's because God commanded the keeping of them right there with the weekly Sabbaths in Leviticus 23. However, the door is open for those having a different opinion to submit an article showing the other side of the discussion as we did earlier with the Second Commandment.

—Ed.