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IN THIS LETTER:

Pentecost The Meaning of the Two Loaves

Dear Friends and Fellow Laborers,

Beginning the day after the weekly Sabbath between the two high holy days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a special ceremony was conducted by the high priest according to the rules given to the Old Covenant church of God². It was called the **wave sheaf offering**.



Preparing to harvest the grain.¹

“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 the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it” (Leviticus 23:10-11).

As with all the old covenant rituals, this also represents something that happened, or will happen, in the physical life and resurrected life of Jesus our Savior.

This ceremony represented the resurrected and risen Christ ascending to heaven to be accepted by our Father God as the **First of the firstfruits of the harvest of the world**.

No harvesting could begin in Israel until the high priest performed this ceremony. It represented the very first of the harvest.

¹ Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons

² Acts 7:38

Jesus was the very first man to be resurrected to eternal life. Jesus' resurrection was not just to a physical life again. There were some saints who were resurrected to physical life again at the moment of Jesus' resurrection³. These people then lived longer and finally died a physical death at the end of their lives. They did not receive an eternal life resurrection like Jesus.

Then the count toward Pentecost begins. The Bible tells us we are to count seven Sabbaths—and then one more day. That equals fifty days. The Greek word *Pentecost* means “fifty.” This means that the fiftieth day, known as the holy Sabbath day of Pentecost, always comes on a Sunday.

PENTECOST CEREMONY

What is the meaning of the Pentecost ceremony and why is it important for a Christian?

Fifty days after the count begins we have the holy day of Pentecost. It is called a Sabbath, even though it always falls on Sunday.

In the Old Covenant church dispensation, the high priest performed an important ceremony on the day of Pentecost. We will review that ceremony because the symbolism of the ceremony tells us more about the plan of salvation that God carries out through Jesus.

“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 the LORD. 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 the LORD” (Leviticus 23:15-17).

The instructions were to bake two loaves of bread of fine wheat flour **with** leaven. Then present these two loaves to God. They represent the firstfruits to God of the harvest.

The resurrected Jesus was represented by the first of the firstfruits offering (called the wave sheaf offering) during the days of unleavened bread. Jesus is the **FIRST** of the first fruits of God's spiritual harvest. The wave sheaf offered during the days of unleavened bread was **NOT** baked and also **no** leavening was added.

The next harvest is of the saints, called the first fruits harvest, and is represented by the two loaves at Pentecost.

So at Pentecost, the Priest waved two loaves of baked, **leavened** bread before God.

What does it mean?

The Bible clearly shows that, in the Old Testament, some were converted and given the Holy Spirit. These will rise in the first resurrection at the return of Jesus and will be a part of Jesus' millennial kingdom.

³ Matthew 27:52-53

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 8:11).

Some people like David, Moses, and the other prophets recognized and accepted Jesus as the Christ long before He came the first time to die for our sins. Some—such as Joshua, Caleb, Rahab, Ruth, and others—were converted under the Old Covenant.

“And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!” (Num.11:25-29)

The Old Testament books are filled with prophecies about Jesus. The Bible even shows us that the Gospel of Salvation was preached to Old Covenant Israel:

“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham” (Galatians 3:6-10).

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. **For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:** but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Hebrews 4:1-2).

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13).

Israel had the Gospel preached to them just like people today have the Gospel preached to them. Most of Israel did not have the faith to believe.

Sometime near the end of the age, the Gospel will go out again to the Jewish people. They will listen and be converted. What does Paul say?

“I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 11:1-5).

So there are **two leavened loaves** presented to God at Pentecost. One loaf represents the Old Covenant church and the other represents the New Covenant church. Both groups have repentant, converted people to whom God has given His Spirit.

Both will be resurrected at the coming of the Lord Jesus. Both churches will be given Eternal Life.

Both loaves offered at Pentecost are exactly the same. Both are of wheat flour and both are baked with leaven.



TWO LOAVES⁴ = TWO COVENANT CHURCHES – SHARING SALVATION

Does what I am saying mean that there are those out there somewhere that have been given the Holy Spirit and are not counted among our own particular fellowship? Yes, that is what I am saying! Even Elijah himself was unaware of 7000 still faithful to God⁵. If not even Elijah knew who they were, how can any of us expect to know? We all must beware of exclusivism. It is dangerous and does not recognize the **power** and **sovereignty** of God Almighty, who chooses His own according to His own will.

The scripture in Numbers 11, which I mentioned earlier, where Moses rebukes Joshua is a good example of this. The story of Paul and Apollos is another. Apollos was a Jew from Alexandria, Egypt, and came to Ephesus preaching the Gospel. He is described as “ferve in spirit” and his preaching is described as accurate⁶. Yet his baptism was only the baptism of John! He was never part of Paul’s ministry, nor was he baptized by Paul or any of the other Apostles or their assistants. Yet Apollos was filled with the Spirit of God. What did Paul and his team do? Did they reject Apollos—or did they, instead, recognize the **power** of the Holy Spirit actively working within him? They did the latter. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him in and educated him more fully in the Gospel message of Jesus. The disciples then wrote a letter of introduction for him to the congregations in Achaia.

⁴ [http://www.free-online-pictures.com/search-pictures/loaf %20of%20bread/ShowPhoto/38185010/search-pictures-results-for-loaf-of-bread/freshly-baked-traditional-bread/](http://www.free-online-pictures.com/search-pictures/loaf%20of%20bread/ShowPhoto/38185010/search-pictures-results-for-loaf-of-bread/freshly-baked-traditional-bread/)

⁵ 1 Kings 19:18

⁶ Acts 18:24-25

Apollos was able to encourage and exhort those congregations very much. It says that he “*mightily convinced the Jews that Jesus was the Christ*”⁷. At the beginning of his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul mentions Apollos with himself and Peter, showing that they all were united in the Spirit of God. He admonished the Corinthians not to allow any so-called following of this preacher or that evangelist to divide them. As he said: “*is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were any of you baptized in the name of Paul*”⁸?”

Clearly, Paul and those he had disciplined recognized Apollos as a fellow gospel worker chosen by Jesus Christ and empowered with the Holy Spirit of God.

How many in the Old Covenant church were called and given the Holy Spirit that are not recorded in the Bible? We don’t know. How many of the Jews today have been given the Holy Spirit based on their belief in a coming redeemer? We don’t know. Because the Jewish leadership of the day rejected Christ does not mean all Jews rejected Him before or after His crucifixion.

How many others are in the process of coming to Jesus today? Exactly how many will be given the Holy Spirit, and converted between now and His second Coming? We just don’t know!

Because someone is NOT of our particular fellowship, does that mean that they have rejected Christ and, therefore, could not possibly be converted? How many “Apollos” are out there? We just cannot know, because God just does not tell us.

Believe me, Jesus does not call me up every morning and tell me His plans! In fact, I have NEVER received a phone call or an e-mail from Jesus! We must all be very careful how we judge the workings of the Holy Spirit. I believe God was working with me through His Holy Spirit when I was a young teenager, long before I was baptized. None of my family were in the Church of God. I was actually the first one in my family to be baptized and come into the (then) Worldwide Church of God; and that happened to me while I was still a sailor in the U.S. Navy!

It is odd that there should be TWO loaves waved before the Lord on Pentecost. I would have thought only one! But God’s mind and power is greater than our own insignificant ideas about how the Church and salvation should operate.

Let’s all be very, very careful how we think things are going to work out and WHO was converted, is converted, or will be converted at the End of the Age.

PENTECOST TRIP TO MYANMAR

Please pray for Gloria and me. In a few short days we will be heading back to Burma (Myanmar) for Pentecost. This is the first time we have made back-to-back holy day trips to Burma. But it is necessary. More are coming to repentance among the ethnic tribal groups in central and northern Burma. More need the Gospel preached to them. They need to be fed.

⁷ Acts 18:28

⁸ I Corinthians 1:13

Paul said: “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Romans 10:14-15)

Burma has no trained Church of God shepherds. The congregations that have sprung up due to the evangelistic groundwork I laid over 12 years ago are not being spiritually fed regularly. We must go because we are compelled to go. The need is very great.

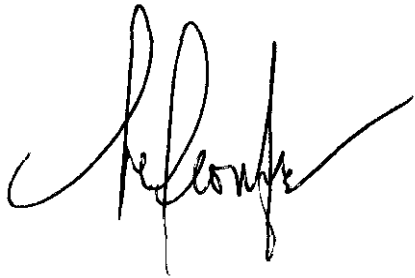
We will be taking along two of our young Legacy men who have already given sermonettes in church services in Chiang Mai. They will act as translators for me and each give a sermonette on the weekly Sabbath and on Pentecost. This will be an important part of their training. They will give their sermonettes in the Burmese language and translate into English themselves. They have already researched their presentations and each one has been reviewed and approved by me. Each sermonette is biblically sound and doctrinally sure. Each will edify. It is time for them to take a break from their studies and go back and teach those at home.

Please pray that God will inspire us all and grant us the chance to exhort and encourage all we can. Pray that the Great God of Heaven will bless this trip in every way possible. And please pray that all of us will stay healthy throughout the trip.

We will also be praying for you. We are in this together and must continue to hold fast and be ready to walk through any open doors that God presents to us. To God be the Glory!

All of us at Legacy Institute wish all of you and your families a joyous and spiritually profitable Pentecost.

In Jesus’ service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

T. Leon Sexton

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