

Hi Craig!

My first Pentecost service was in 1954. It was at A.C. in Pasadena, California. At that time the Radio Church of God observed Pentecost on a Monday. The Greek word *pentekosta* means "count fifty." Mr. Armstrong was firmly convinced that the Bible said to begin counting with a Monday as day 1 and therefore the 50th day would also be on Monday.

Others began to do some research into the subject. One faculty member in A.C. wrote a 93-page paper in 1961 and submitted it to Mr. Armstrong. The paper tried to prove that Pentecost should be observed on a Sunday. Mr. Armstrong was not convinced and would not consider changing the day Pentecost should be observed.

In 1974, a study paper was produced by such people as Raymond McNair. When a translation error was pointed out in this paper to Mr. Armstrong, he accepted the fact that the Church needed to change the day for observing Pentecost. Ever since, the Worldwide Church of God and other Church of God groups have observed Pentecost on a Sunday.

But in recent years, others have written papers to prove that Pentecost should be observed on the 6 Sivan. That is when the Jews observe it. There are also some people who believe that Pentecost should be observed on a Monday. So the Doctrine Committee for the Council of Elders (UCG) produced a study paper about when Pentecost should be observed. What is the correct way to calculate the day of Pentecost? When do we begin counting the 50 days that end with the day of Pentecost?

Lev. 23:1-3 -- "Sabbath" is from the Hebrew word *shabbath* which means to "rest" or "cease" or to cease from work. Keep this in mind.

Lev. 23:4, 9-11 -- A sheaf or bundle of barley grain was taken from the harvest and given to the priest (verse 10). It doesn't say when the harvest actually began. Jewish tradition records a ceremony at the end of the Sabbath day. It is also possible that the sheaf of grain was cut early on the first day of the week (Sunday morning), normally a working day.

What is clear is that the sheaf of grain was waved by the priest on the "day after the Sabbath." The Hebrew word for Sabbath is again *shabbath*. It is used 108 times in the OT and is always translated "Sabbath" in the KJV. The word "morrow" means the following day. The priest therefore waved the sheaf of grain before God on Sunday morning. We call it "Wave Sheaf Sunday."

Lev. 23:15-16 -- We are to count "from the day after the Sabbath." The Jews and others who believe that Pentecost should be observed on the 6 Sivan say that this "Sabbath" refers to the Holy Day, the first DUB. Some of the Holy Days are called a "Sabbath" later in this chapter, but the context up to this point has only mentioned the weekly Sabbath.

Pentecost is to be counted from the day after the Sabbath, not the first DUB on the 15 Nisan. Nowhere in the OT is the first or seventh DUB called a Sabbath. The Jews and others count from the first DUB (15 Nisan) and the fiftieth day always falls on 6 Sivan which can be any week day. Last year 6 Sivan fell on a Wednesday. This year it falls on a Sunday, today in fact. If Pentecost is always on a set day of the month, there is no need to count the days and weeks.

When we begin counting, what is day 1? Verse 15 says count "*from* the day after the Sabbath." We are to count *from* Sunday. Mr. Armstrong emphasized that the word "from" meant "out of" or "away from." He therefore concluded that day 1 in our count would be Monday. The 50th day would then also be a Monday.

But the study paper produced in 1974 pointed out that the Hebrew word for "from" was different from English usage. The Hebrew word is *mi* or *min* and can be translated as "from,

of, by, at, in and ON.” “From the morrow” in Hebrew is *min mohorat*. It is used 28 times in OT and 26 times translated as “ON the morrow.”

When *mi* or *min* is translated as “from” it always means inclusively.

I hope that is helpful.

-- Robert Boraker
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