

Is Pentecost Always On a Sunday?

A Scriptural Study



Ray Foucher

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By Ray Foucher (2015)

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Introduction

Pentecost is the second of the three pilgrimage times on the Hebrew calendar. It was celebrated in the late spring and, like the other major festivals, marked important points in the annual agricultural cycle. Its name, in the New Testament, is derived from the Greek word "pentekoste" meaning "fiftieth" in reference to the fact that it came on the fiftieth day of the grain harvest. In Hebrew, it was called "Shavuot" and is sometimes referred to as "the Time of the Giving of Our Torah." It celebrated the wheat harvest just as on the first day of the fifty the wave sheaf offering marked the beginning of the barley harvest. Pentecost was also called the Feast of Weeks, implying not just 50 days but a number of weeks:

"And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end." (Exo 34:22)

When Jesus left to return to His Father after the 40-day, post-resurrection period He gave these instructions:

"... that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:4-5)

It was 10 days later that the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the believers. Among those who are interested in the feasts, there are always questions about the timing. This ebook looks at the factors involved in the timing of Pentecost. The timing is connected, of course, to the timing of the earlier spring feast of Unleavened Bread, which was looked at in an earlier ebook - [Is Nisan 14 the Feast of Passover?](#)

The date of the start of the spring feasts and of Pentecost each year is determined by several factors including:

- Which new moon is used to start the month of Nisan
- Which method is used to determine the day of the new moon, astronomical (calculated) or the visible crescent?
- The maturity of the barley crop in Israel

These first three factors are discussed only briefly at www.jesus-resurrection.info/when-is-pentecost.html. They have more to do with which month will be used to determine the observance of Passover in a particular year. This study will be more concerned with the day of the week on which it should be observed. It has long been assumed by many that it is always on a Sunday. Some others believe that it can be on any day of the week. We want to establish, by careful Bible study, the correct timing.

Since the week is seven days long, anything that happens on the eighth day of a period of time will happen on the same day of the week as the first day. Similarly, an event on the fiftieth day will be on the same day of the week as the first day of the period. And so we need to determine which day of the week should start the count to Pentecost. The day that starts the count is understood to be the day on which the Wave Sheaf Offering was made. We need to establish that Biblically and determine which day of the week that was and if it was always fixed to one particular day of the week.

Pentecost Timing is Related to the Earlier Spring Feasts

In Exodus, it is clear that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to start on the day after the Passover sacrifice was offered. This would be Nisan 15 and could therefore be on any day of the week. They were to eat unleavened bread for seven days from Nisan 15 to Nisan 21.

However, there is another day involved in determining the timing of Pentecost. That is the day on which the wave sheaf was offered; it is referred to in these two verses:

"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." (Lev 23:11)

"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:" (Lev 23:15)

These verses indicate that the count was to start from the day that they performed the wave sheaf offering which was to be "on the morrow after the Sabbath."

Note that in this study I will be using terms such as "wave sheaf" and "day of the wave sheaf offering" rather than Feast of First Fruits as is sometimes used for this day as that term is also applied to Pentecost (Exodus 23:16, 34:22, Leviticus 23:17) and because it is not actually a feast day as they were defined in Leviticus 23.

So, the day on which the wave sheaf was offered was the first day of the fifty days of which Pentecost was the last. It was all about harvest. There was a harvest taken to heaven on the day of the wave sheaf (Jesus Himself and those that were raised just after His resurrection) and there was a "harvest" on the day of Pentecost. In fact, 3,000 souls were added to the church on that day. The day of the wave sheaf marked the beginning of the harvest of barley and the Feast of Pentecost marked the beginning of harvest of the later wheat crop.

"And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end." (Exo 34:22)

"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 labours out of the field." (Exo 23:16)

Clearly, what we have is this:

Day 1	the day the wave sheaf of barley was offered
Day 50	the Feast of Pentecost

This would also mean that the two special days would occur on the same day of the week. So what we need to determine is on which day of the week the wave sheaf was to occur and then we can easily determine the day the week for Pentecost. Going back to Leviticus, take note that it says:

"... on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." (Lev 23:11)

The Morrow After Which Sabbath?

The next question is what Sabbath is being referred to? We will see that there are two ways to determine which Sabbath is being referred to. Let's look at them.

1. The Sabbath is the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

There is a problem with that understanding. Let's say that in a particular year, Nisan 14, the day on which the Passover was sacrificed (Exo 12:6), fell on a Monday. Then the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Nisan 15, a ceremonial Sabbath would be on Tuesday and, in this theory, the wave sheaf would be offered on the following day, Wednesday. That would be day 1 of the count and then day 50 would be Pentecost, also on a Wednesday. However, there is another factor that needs to be included in determining the count to Pentecost. Further instructions for determining Pentecost say:

"Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD." (Lev 23:16)

If Pentecost is the morrow after the seventh Sabbath as the verse above specifies, then the day before Pentecost, day 49, would be the seventh Sabbath. Yet, in our scenario, the day before Pentecost is a Tuesday and Tuesday is certainly not a Sabbath. Nor is the 49th day ever called a Sabbath in scripture. It seems that the start of the count must be connected to a seventh-day Sabbath not one of the annual feast sabbaths.

You can see from the chart below of the example just discussed that if we count the 49th day as a sabbath then it will actually be the 8th Sabbath.

Day of count	Day of week	No. of sabbaths	
1	Wed		day of the wave sheaf
4	Sab	1	
11	Sab	2	
18	Sab	3	
25	Sab	4	
32	Sab	5	
39	Sab	6	
46	Sab	7	
49	Tue	8	day before Pentecost
50	Wed		Pentecost

Surely if the 49th day was counted as a Sabbath when it is never even called that in scripture, then Pentecost itself ("... an holy convocation ... no servile work ..." - Lev 23:21) and perhaps even the day of the wave sheaf offering could also be regarded as sabbaths increasing the number of Sabbaths during the 50-day period to as many as 10. That doesn't seem to work.

This method has another problem. Deuteronomy 16:9 specifies that there be seven weeks in the count (the feast is sometimes called the feast of weeks).

"Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn." (Deut 16:9)

With starting and ending the count in the midst of a week, there would be six complete seven-day weeks and a part week at either end.

Days of count	Days of the week	Number of weeks
1-4	Wednesday to Sabbath	Part week
5-11	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 1
12-18	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 2
19-25	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 3
26-32	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 4
33-39	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 5
40-46	Sunday to Sabbath	Full week 6
47-50	Sunday to Wednesday	Part week

It seems that "seven weeks" must mean seven complete (Sunday to Sabbath weeks). I think we can safely reject option 1. It seems that the Sabbaths being counted to determine Pentecost must be seventh-day Sabbaths and the start of the count must be determined by a seventh-day Sabbath. This shows that the fixed-date (Sivan-6), variable-day-of-the-week method used by some cannot be correct.

2. The Sabbath is the Seventh-day Sabbath Occurring Within the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Because we tend to think of the timing in the year of the crucifixion, it is normally thought of like this:

Fri	Sab	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab
N14	N15	N16	N17	N18	N19	N20	N21	N22
Pass.	FUB-1	2/ WS	3	4	5	6	FUB-7	

That has the Wave Sheaf offering on a Sunday which would put Pentecost on a Sunday. But, consider the following diagram:

Sab	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab	Sun
N14	N15	N16	N17	N18	N19	N20	N21	N22
Pass.	FUB-1	2	3	4	5	6	FUB-7	WS

What if, in a particular year, the seventh-day Sabbath within the Feast of Unleavened Bread falls on Nisan 21, the last day of the FUB? In that case, the wave-sheaf offering doesn't even fall within the days of unleavened bread. Also, there would be seven complete weeks with a single day tacked on the end. While this method seems to have fewer problems than the first one we looked at, something still does not seem entirely right. Perhaps we should consider all the options and investigate more closely.

In my book, ***In the Heart of the Earth: The Secret Code That Reveals What Is In the Heart of God***, a different scenario is presented. It gives solid Biblical evidence that the resurrection was on the seventh-day Sabbath just after a Friday crucifixion. See [that book](#) where original words are examined and it is clearly demonstrated that "the heart of the earth" is not a reference to the grave and that "first day of the week" is a mistranslation. The Bible never uses "kardia," the original Greek word translated as "heart" to mean the middle or center (as we sometimes use "heart") of anything. "Earth" is translated from the Greek word "ge" and can mean the earth (world) or the occupants of the earth as in "all the world ('ge') wondered ..." (Rev 13:3). The phrase "first day of the week" is a very poor translation. "First" is from the Greek word "mia" which is better translated as "one," the word "day" is not even in the original text and week is translated from "sabbaton" which means the seventh-day sabbath when there is a perfectly good Greek word - "hebdomad," - meaning "week" that could have been used.

Other translation issues directly related to the determination of the timing of Pentecost will be examined here but first I'll present some background information to show the importance of the whole subject of Pentecost timing.

Background of Pentecost Timing

We need to be aware that there has been an effort in history to change the law of God. This was prophesied by the prophet Daniel:

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." (Dan 7:25)

One change that involved a change in both time and law was made in early church history (notably, in the time of the Roman emperor Constantine, early in the fourth century) when the sanctity of the seventh-day Sabbath was "transferred" to the first day of the week. This change is readily admitted:

"It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord." (Msgr, Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today* p213)

The law was (thought to be) changed in transferring the sanctity of the Sabbath day as originally proclaimed by the fourth commandment of the law of God to the first day of the week.

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."
(Exo 20:8-11)

Of course, this change, as prophesied by Daniel, involved a change to both time and law. The reason given for the change was to honor the resurrection understood, by the time the change was officially made early in the fourth century AD, to have occurred on a Sunday. But careful research of the Biblical record has shown that the resurrection actually occurred on the seventh-day Sabbath.

In order to move the common understanding of the timing of the resurrection from Sabbath to Sunday the wave sheaf (also called first fruits) offering had to be moved from Sabbath to Sunday as it would not look good for the type or shadow of the resurrection to be on the Sabbath and then attempt to say that its fulfillment took place on a Sunday. To do that a few (very minor) changes (but changes nonetheless) were made in (at least the understanding of) God's word. We will examine those now.

The Word "After"

Evidence that something is not quite right can be seen in interlinear versions of the Bible in verses that describe the wave sheaf offering. The On-line Bible (KJV) shows:

"And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the **morrow (4283) after the sabbath (7676)** the priest shall wave it." (Lev 23:11)

"And ye shall count unto you from the **morrow (4283) after the sabbath (7676)**, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:" (Lev 23:15)

"Even unto the **morrow (04283) after the seventh (7637) sabbath (7676)** shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD." (Lev 23:16)

Note that, in each verse, a Strong's number (4283) is given for the word "morrow" and a number is given for "sabbath" (7676) as well as, in verse 16, for "seventh" (7637) but no number is given for the word "after." There is no number given because there is no word in the original that might be translated as "after." It is not there. "After" is a supplied word without being so indicated (as is commonly done) by italics in editions of the King James Bible.

The Hebrew word, "shab-bawth" (7676), means only the "Sabbath" and **not "after the Sabbath."** The meaning of "after the sabbath" cannot be coming from the word for sabbath. There is a good reason for there not being a Strong's reference number given for the word "after" in these verses as we shall soon see.

Others have realized these problems in the past. Here is how the Young's Literal Translation renders these verses:

"then he hath waved the sheaf before Jehovah for your acceptance; on **the morrow of the sabbath** doth the priest wave it." (Lev 23:11, Young's Literal Translation)

"And ye have numbered to you from **the morrow of the sabbath**, from the day of your bringing in the sheaf of the wave-offering: they are **seven perfect sabbaths**;" (Lev 23:15, Young's Literal Translation)

"unto **the morrow of the seventh sabbath** ye do number fifty days, and ye have brought near a new present to Jehovah;" (Lev 23:16, Young's Literal Translation)

Note that, in this version, the word "after" is omitted because it is not in the original. There is no word with the meaning of "after" and it is not included in the meaning of the words for "morrow" or for "sabbath." The original word "shabbath" is never translated "after the sabbath" in the King James Version except in these verses. The literal translation translates it literally disregarding tradition.

In researching for my book about the resurrection (***In the Heart of the Earth: The Secret Code That Reveals What Is In the Heart of God***), I would often refer to the concordance to find the original words, look at their meanings and where and how they were used in the Bible. I would try to let the Bible, as far as possible, define its own terms by examining how the same original words were translated in other passages. When I found that, in the three verses above, there was no Strong's number listed for the word "after," I became suspicious.

I soon found evidence that the word "after" (in Lev 23: 11, 15 and 16) is a supplied word found in most translations of the Bible but not in the original manuscripts. ***The Interlinear Bible*** (Jay P. Green, Sr. General Editor and Translator) shows the Hebrew (based on the Masoretic Text) and the Greek (based on the Received Text) with Strong's numbers and the word-for-word equivalent in English. The word "after" does not appear.

The Hebrew word for "after," achar (Strong's H310), appears 709 times in the Old Testament, and over 186 times in the first five books which Moses wrote. If Moses had meant "**after** the Sabbath" surely he would have used the word for "after" which he had used many other times. An example would be:

"And the LORD spake unto Moses after (310) the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;" (Lev 16:1)

Here is an example from Nehemiah where "achar" is used in the phrase "after the sabbath:"

"And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after (310) the sabbath (7676): and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day." (Neh 13:19)

If "sabbath" in this verse, included the meaning of "after" then it would be saying "after after the sabbath." Also, considering the phrase "before the sabbath" earlier in the verse (with "before" being in the original text), if "sabbath," in that phrase (it is exactly the same original word as in the latter phrase) included the meaning of "after," it would be saying "before after the sabbath" which is clearly nonsensical.

The arbitrary addition of the word "after" in Leviticus 23, verses 11, 15 and 16 obviously changes the meaning as it is not in the original, and is not consistent with any of the other 100 plus translations of "sabbath (7676)."

Clearly, "after" is supplied and the meaning in Leviticus 23:11, 15 and 16 should be "the morrow of the ("seventh" for verse 16) Sabbath." Perhaps it was inserted in order to make it appear that the Wave Sheaf offering and Pentecost were on a Sunday.

The Word "Morrow"

Let's also look at the word translated as "morrow." "Morrow" is translated from the Hebrew "mochorath" (Strong's H4283). The Hebrew meaning of the word is: "it followed

that," "the following," "the next" or simply "next." It does not include the meaning of "after" or "the next day."

In English, we understand the word morrow as in "tomorrow" to mean "the next morning," the next period of light or wakefulness. If I wake up at three am and say "good morning" to my wife she will say "it's not morning yet - go back to sleep." We do not regard sunset as the morrow. It does not correspond to the point where the next day begins, Biblically, at sunset.

So how do we explain the translation of "mochorath" in the phrase "morrow after the sabbath" and how should it be translated?

Compare the following:

"And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness. And it came to pass, that on the morrow (mochorath, 4283) Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." (Num 17:6-8)

Verse eight should be translated as:

"And it followed, that (4283) Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." (Num 17:8)

It could have been a few minutes later or a month later. The idea that it happened the next day is not implied by the word "mochorath" or the context. It may very well have been the next day but that is an assumption; the words used do not indicate that.

Here is an example of "mochorath" **correctly** translated:

"And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, **and all the next (4283) day (3117)**, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp." (Num 11:32)

In the verse above, the word "**next**" (4283) still does not have the meaning, on its own, of "the next day" and therefore the word, "**day**" is included (in the original) to give it that meaning. If "mochorath did have the meaning of "**on the morrow**" then it should have read; "and all that night and **on the morrow day** and they gathered the quails ..." which does not make sense.

Here is another example from the story of **Lot and his daughters**:

"And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father." (Gen 19:31-34)

In this verse, the phrase "on the morrow" is from the Hebrew "mochorath" and it is a reasonable translation (even "on the next day" would be, not word-for-word literal, but valid) because it is obvious from the context that it was the following morning. However, mochorath on its own does indicate that it was the next morning.

Here is another example from the story of **Gideon**:

"Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; *and* if the dew be on the fleece only, and *it be* dry upon all the earth *beside*, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water." (Jud 6:37-38)

Again, in this passage it is obvious, from the context, that it is the next morning but that meaning does not come from the word mochorath.

If every use of "mochorath" is considered (and I have done this) it can be seen that it can be understood to mean essentially "the next period of wakefulness." There have been suggestions that it designates a time period starting at sunset but there are examples that show this cannot be. Consider the story of the **quail**:

"And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next (mochorath, 4283) day (3117), and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp." (Num 11:32)

The verse says the people stood up:

- all that day
- and all that night (beginning at sunset)
- and all the next (mochorath) day.

The two uses of "day" in Num 11:32 cannot be referring to 24-hour days as there is a night specified between them. If mochorath meant the next day, it would be saying "and all the next day day."

So the true meaning of the verses in Leviticus (23:11, 15 and 16) is a reference to the Sabbath and not to some time past it. While the word for "after" does not appear in the original manuscripts, the meaning had crept into the minds of the translators of, for instance, the King James Version (1600 years after the events and on the other side of the Dark Ages) and they probably assumed that the word "mochorath" must include the idea of "after" at least in those verses. This, of course, would have been greatly influenced by their understanding of the timing of Jesus' resurrection which had been passed down to them by tradition.

The verses in question could have been translated:

"And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted, for you: **and on the following (or next) Sabbath** the priest shall wave it." (Lev 23: 11)

"And ye shall count unto you from the **next sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering seven sabbaths shall be complete." (Lev 23:15)

"Even unto the **following seventh sabbath** shall you number fifty days and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD." (Lev 23:16)

The Young's Literal Translation of these verses (see earlier section: "The Word "After") comes close to this. Another example is the KJ3 Literal Translation, much closer to a word-for-word translation used within The Interlinear Bible:

"then he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah for your acceptance; on the morrow of the sabbath the priest shall wave it." (Lev 23:11, *KJ3 Literal Translation*)

With this understanding, we can see that the Wave Sheaf was offered (waved) on the morrow of the seventh-day Sabbath not on the morrow after the Sabbath. This is consistent with the correct timing of Jesus' resurrection. He was presented as the Wave Sheaf offering on Sabbath morning, after His resurrection earlier on Sabbath evening – what we would call Friday evening. This is also consistent with the procedure for collecting and offering the wave sheaf of first fruits.

Recall that, earlier in this study, we looked at the two options for which Sabbath to use to determine the start of the count to Pentecost. It has to be the seventh-day Sabbath within the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the count starts with that day (inclusive reckoning) not the following day.

Depending on which day the seventh-day Sabbath falls within the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the timing of the Wave Sheaf could be anywhere from the first day of the feast:

Fri	Sab	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab
N14	N15	N16	N17	N18	N19	N20	N21	N22
Pass-over prep.	FUB-1 Wave Sheaf	2	3	4	5	6	FUB-7	

to the last:

Sab	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab	Sun
N14	N15	N16	N17	N18	N19	N20	N21	N22
Pass-over prep.	FUB-1	2	3	4	5	6	FUB-7 Wave Sheaf	

With this understanding, the Wave Sheaf would always be offered during the feast and always on a seventh-day Sabbath. Pentecost would also always land on a seventh-day Sabbath. Pentecost would then mark the completion of seven complete weeks of harvest with no part week at the end. There would also be the correct number of Sabbaths during the count.

Of course, the major challenge most people would have with this is that it has the offering of the Wave Sheaf occurring on a seventh-day Sabbath rather than the first day of the week. That has been addressed above in the discussion of the words "after" and "morrow."

I believe the Bible indicates that, in the year of the crucifixion, the arrangement of days was like this:

Thu	Fri	Sab	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
N14	N15	N16	N17	N18	N19	N20	N21	N22
Pass-over prep.	FUB-1	2 Wave Sheaf	3	4	5	6	FUB-7	

Here are the major points around the idea that Jesus died on Friday afternoon and was presented as the Wave Sheaf offering (in heaven) the following morning:

- Jesus clearly observed the Passover (ate the meal) the evening before He died. That would have been in the early hours of Nisan 15 what we would call Thursday evening. There are at least eight verses that refer to that meal as a Passover meal - see Appendix.
- That He rose just after sunset at the beginning of the seventh-day Sabbath within the Feast of Unleavened Bread fits perfectly with the cutting of the Wave Sheaf.
- It fulfills the prophecy of David: "... neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (Psa 16:10) as He was dead for possibly just about 4 hours and in the grave for probably less than an hour.
- Jesus did not want Mary Magdalene to hold Him prior to the heavenly Wave Sheaf offering but was fine with being touched and worshipped a short time later after that event.

The major remaining difficulty with this scenario, of course, is that it has Jesus, the Lamb of God, being sacrificed on Nisan 15 rather than Nisan 14. This apparent problem is addressed in detail in the book *In the Heart of the Earth: The Secret Code That Reveals What Is In the Heart of God*. A couple of thoughts related to this are that no sacrificial lamb ever determined the timing of its own death. Also, at that time, there were differences in belief leading to Passover being celebrated on two successive days. The most important point is related to this verse:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Jesus was given to the world. It was not a loan. It was not with strings attached. No; God gave His Son to the human race to do with Him as they pleased and look at what they (collectively, we) did to Him!

Should He have been sacrificed on Nisan 14? Absolutely. That the crucifixion was the next day was not His fault. Think of it - He also died:

- in the wrong place - He should have died on the altar of sacrifice in the temple
- by the wrong method - what sacrificial lamb was ever crucified? His death did not fit the types
- for the wrong reason (from the people's perspective) as they saw Him as a criminal worthy of death not as a sacrifice made for them

It all had to do with His being given to mankind. The "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt 12:39) was not His time in the grave. It was the time when He was within the hearts, the thoughts and minds of the people to whom He was given. He was examined and questioned as the lambs were to be until minds were made up and He was rejected. Being rejected as the Lamb of God, He was not sacrificed as, where and when He should have been but, rather, He was murdered on the wrong day, in the wrong place and by the wrong method.

The Wave Sheaf Procedure

Again, note that I am using the terms wave sheaf, wave sheaf offering etc where Feast of First Fruits is sometimes - but incorrectly - used. Technically, wave sheaf is not even correct but it is generally recognized. The Bible does not actually refer to this ceremony as "the Wave Sheaf offering." There are three references in Leviticus 23 (verses 11, 12 and 15) to bringing the sheaf and waving it, so it can be easily seen how the name came about but that specific term is not used in the Bible.

The word "sheaf" used in connection with the wave sheaf is translated from the Hebrew word "omer" (Strong's H6016). An omer is a unit of dry measure equivalent to about two liters or two quarts; it is not a word for a stalk or stalks of grain. What was actually presented was not a sheaf (although that is what was originally cut) but something more like a bowl of grain.

Also, the Hebrew word translated "wave" - "nuwph" (Strong's H5130) is sometimes translated as "lift up" as in to lift up a tool upon an altar. So a better understanding than to wave a sheaf would be to wave or elevate or lift up an omer. The point is that it is presented before God.

Let's look more closely at the Wave Sheaf offering and the procedure of collecting the sheaf and we will see that it typifies the timing of Jesus' resurrection. Moses was told:

“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.” (Lev 23:10-11)

This offering was “to be accepted “for you” or “so it will be accepted on your behalf” (*New International Version*), or “for your acceptance” (*KJ3 Literal Translation*). Was this an offering so that He would be accepted or so that we (His followers) would be accepted? Bible translations are divided over variations of "so it will be accepted" and "so that you will be accepted."

Perhaps it is both. The Wave Sheaf offering could be seen as presenting the offering of the Lamb of God so that His acceptance would make the way for us to be accepted. The grain offered at the feast represented the Messiah, whose acceptance made the way for our acceptance at the Feast of Pentecost fifty days later as symbolized by the offering of two loaves baked with leaven (Lev 23:17).

When was the Lamb of God presented before God to be accepted? Revelation chapter 5 (www.jesus-resurrection.info/revelation-chapter-5.html) describes a scene where the Lamb that was slain appears before the heavenly host and is declared to be worthy. This may well correspond to the time, shortly after His resurrection, that He ascended to His Father.

The procedure for the Wave Sheaf is described thus:

“The Mishnah, written a few centuries after the time of the first century church, describes how a messenger would go out and bind the standing stalks of grain into sheaves so that it would be easy to cut. The priest, followed by his entourage, would come to the field, sickle in hand, and ask, ‘Is the sun set?’ to which the people would answer, ‘Yes!!’ ‘Shall I reap?’ ‘Reap!!’ The priest then cut off a standing stalk of grain, then took it to be prepared for the offering the next morning.” (Jack M. Lane, *The Wave Sheaf Offering -- The Forgotten Holy Day?*)

Of course, it would have been more than a single stalk, more correctly a sheaf. Here is another description:

The wave sheaf had been chosen in advance, as Christ was. It was tied in a bundle, symbolizing His captivity. It was cut loose from the ground just at sunset – just the time at which Christ rose from the dead after three days and three nights in the tomb. **The cutting of the grain symbolized Christ's actual resurrection.**" (Lawson C. Briggs, "The Wavesheaf Ritual – Proof of Christ and the Bible," in June 1975 Good News)

The reference, in this quote, to Christ rising "after three days and three nights in the tomb" is not in agreement with the scenario referred to in this study but the quotation is helpful in understanding the wave sheaf procedure. The morning after it was cut it was presented in the temple.

Here is another quote:

"We might as well face it – that the resurrection occurred minutes following the close of the Sabbath – Saturday night, when the wave sheaf was cut. What we have is not the old saying that I used to have to use, that the wave sheaf represents the resurrected Christ – but it represents the resurrection!

"This is the prophesied resurrection that we have never seen in the ceremonies of the law, and was properly done in Jewish tradition (page 506-7 of the Mishnah). It was a rule that it should be reaped by night, at the very beginning minutes, so there would be no delay in preparing it, and then the next morning it was to be waved.

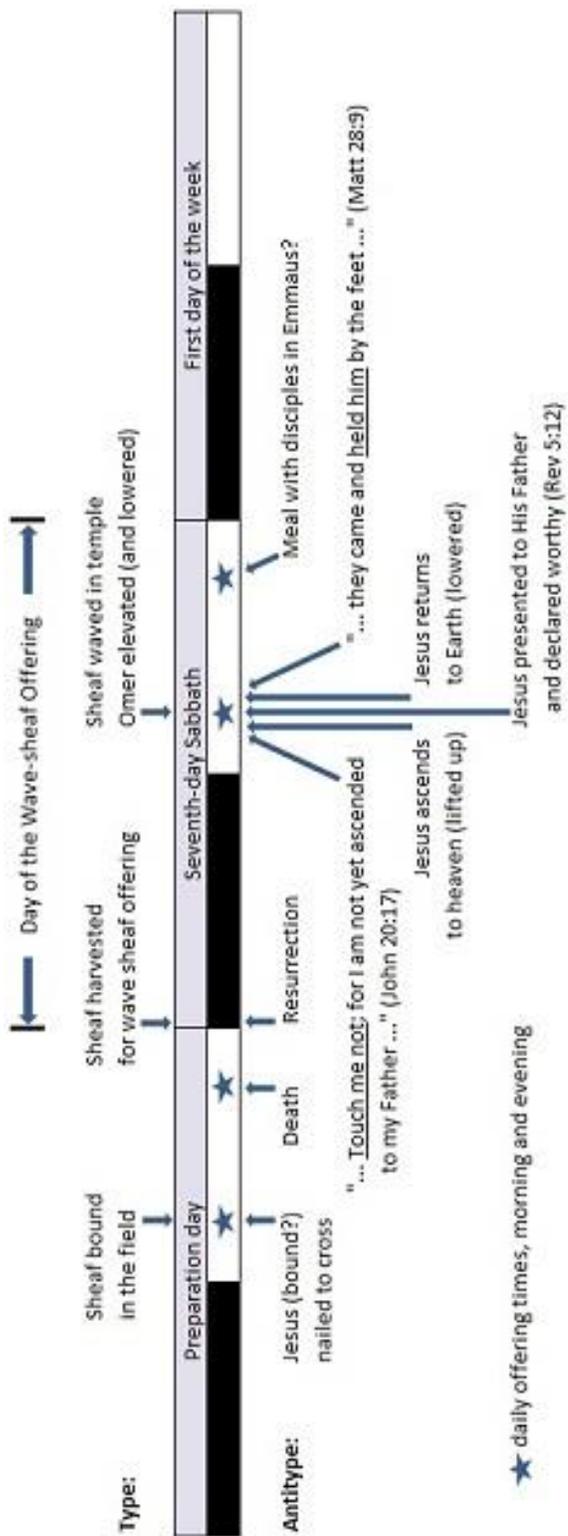
"The resurrection occurred when the wave sheaf was cut, [and the] ascension occurred when it was waved before the altar..." (Herman Hoeh, Pasadena Bible Study, June 9, 1978).

That quote has the resurrection occurring just after the close of the Sabbath. With the correct understanding of the word "after" as described earlier in this study, so that the resurrection is placed at the start of the Sabbath, that quote would be correct.

People will often mention the idea that Jesus rested in the tomb over Sabbath and even say that resting was an example to us. That idea really makes no sense. To rest is to recover from labour; it is certainly not to lie motionless and senseless. The Sabbath was made for relationships, as a time for fellowship. When you think about it, there isn't much about lying dead in a grave that fits with the intent of the Sabbath.

We could summarize the wave sheaf procedure and preparation for it like this:

Here is a diagram showing the events around the wave-sheaf offering.



The omer was elevated and then lowered as Christ, on the day of His resurrection, briefly ascended to His Father and returned within a short time.

Here is a description from a well-respected authority on the life of Christ of the wave-sheaf procedure:

"This Passover-sheaf was reaped in public the evening before it was offered, and it was to witness this ceremony that the crowd had gathered around the elders. Already on the 14th Nisan the spot whence the first sheaf was to be reaped had been marked out, by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down, according to custom, in the sheltered Ashes-Valley across Kidron. When the time for cutting the sheaf had arrived - that is, on the evening of the 15th Nisan, even though it were a Sabbath, just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, set to work. Clearly to bring out what was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked of the bystanders three times each of these questions: "Has the sun gone down?" "With this sickle?" "Into this basket?" "On this Sabbath? (or first Passover-day)" - and, lastly, "shall I reap?" Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or about three pecks and three pints of our English measure." (Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Edersheim, p1420)

According to Edersheim, it was to be presented on the morning of the Sabbath. The Jews therefore cut the sheaf at sundown, right at the start of the ceremonial Sabbath, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Sadducees took this to mean the weekly Sabbath and the Pharisees the annual Sabbath. Still, the concern was that they not reap until the sun was down because they recognized that sunset marked the end of the day.

Clearly, there is considerable variation in accounts in how this was done which just reinforces the likelihood of different understandings arising over the timing. Of course, there was no harvesting for personal use on the day the wave sheaf was harvested because that was a seventh-day Sabbath. So the agricultural harvest would begin the next day and there would then be seven full weeks of harvest ending at Pentecost.

The Harvested Wave Sheaf Represents Not Death but Resurrection

One important thing to note about the wave sheaf was that it was not cut or cut off (as in death) but that it was harvested (as in resurrection). The ultimate harvest is the end of the world when the ripe fruit (Christians with fully-matured, Christ-like characters) will be harvested:

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thess 4:16-17)

Jesus was “harvested” at His resurrection on the Sabbath, likely just after sunset in accordance with the type of the offering of the wave sheaf, and returned to heaven the next morning with those that were raised with Him as the first fruits, to be presented before the Father. This is a further clue that His actual resurrection may have happened at, or just after sunset. Those that were raised with Him also were "harvested" just "after his resurrection" (Matt 27:53). They were obviously not harvested by being killed; their death had happened previously; for some of them perhaps even years earlier and they were now coming to life. The interval of several hours between their resurrection and when they went to heaven with Jesus as the first fruits would be the time they "went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt 27:53)

As the wave sheaf was raised and then lowered that Sabbath morning, so the Messiah ascended to heaven that same Sabbath morning as the Wave Sheaf Offering for us, and returned to earth that same day:

"Jesus saith unto 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 God, and your God." (John 20:17)

A short time later it says:

"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." (Matt 28:9-10).

This was after, as I believe Revelation 5 is presenting it, His acceptance by the court of heaven.

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev 5:11-12)

With His worthiness now affirmed in heaven, Jesus returned to earth at this critical time and accepted the worship of His earthly followers.

Wave Sheaf Not a Feast Day or Holy Convocation

Understanding how Leviticus 23 specifies which days are holy convocations or feasts helps to see that, in fact, the day the wave sheaf is offered is not among the seven annual feasts. The feasts are holy convocations:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts." (Lev 23:2)

A convocation involves an assembly or gathering of the people. Verse two is saying that the feasts are holy convocations, days for assembly of the congregation. Verse three then mentions the seventh-day Sabbaths:

"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 the LORD in all your dwellings." (Lev 23:3)

These are also described as days of holy convocation. The difference between the seventh-day Sabbaths and the other days it goes on to describe is that they are weekly events whereas all the other days described in the chapter are annual events. First the weekly sabbath is covered, then it goes on to describe the annual feasts:

"These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." (Lev 23:4)

So, this verse is defining feasts as holy convocations. The table below lists all of the annual days and identifies which ones are designated as holy convocations and are therefore feasts as defined in verse 4.

Verse(s) in Lev 23	Timing of day	Feast/day	Described as a Holy convocation?
5	14 th day, 1 st month	Lord's passover	no
6-7	15 th day, 1 st month	Feast of Unleavened Bread, day 1	yes
8	21 st day, 1 st month	Feast of Unleavened Bread, day 7	yes
10-11	morrow after (of) the sabbath	day of the Wave Sheaf	no
15,16,21	morrow after (of) the 7th sabbath	Feast of Pentecost	yes
24	1 st day, 7 th month	Feast of Trumpets	yes
27	10 th day, 7 th month	Feast of Atonement	yes
34-35	15 th day, 7 th month	Feast of Tabernacles, day 1	yes
36	22 nd day, 7 th month	Feast of Tabernacles, day 8	yes

Notes:

Passover - Nisan 14, that is commonly thought of as the Feast of Passover, is really the day of preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is also (somewhat confusingly) called Passover.

Wave Sheaf - The day the wave sheaf is offered is not one of the annual feast days, nor is it a holy convocation (although it may, in some years, coincide with the first or last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread).

God gave specific dates for Unleavened Bread, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles; if He wanted the day of the Wave Sheaf to always be on Nisan 16 or Pentecost to always be on Sivan 6, as some believe, why wouldn't that be stated along with the specific dates given for the other annual feasts?

That the wave sheaf is not a holy convocation can be seen in the procedure used and what it is commemorating. The other days involve the whole congregation who were commanded to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. These feasts were times (along with the weekly Sabbath) when all of God's people came together for worship and fellowship and to recognize what each feast symbolized.

In the case of the Wave Sheaf (although it happened on a seventh-day Sabbath), it was the priest (by most accounts) who harvested the designated sheaf and it was the priest who presented the prepared offering in the temple. There were not multitudes of sacrifices involved or many people involved. In fact, in Numbers 28 where the special sacrifices connected to the spring feasts are mentioned, there is nothing said about any animal to be sacrificed in connection with the Wave Sheaf. It was, it seems, a relatively quiet ceremony. The Messiah's actual resurrection (commemorated by the Wave Sheaf and happening at the very time) was not observed by people. His presentation before the Father and those in heaven happened - well, in heaven - unobserved by humanity.

From the Wave Sheaf to Pentecost

The first sheaf was cut just after the start of the seventh-day Sabbath for use as the wave sheaf of first fruits. So they would start counting weeks and count seven full weeks which would bring them to the fiftieth day, another seventh-day Sabbath and the Feast of Pentecost. This would result in a count of seven full seven-day weeks, and not parts of a week at the beginning and ending of the fifty days, which would happen if the count started midweek.

They were also told to count Sabbaths:

"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:" (Lev 23:15)

The following verse gives evidence of this counting process:

"And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them in their hands*." (Luke 6:1)

What is "the second sabbath after the first?" This is explained in Johnston Cheney's discussion of this verse:

"Seven sabbaths were to be counted from the Feast of First-fruits or Passover. Consequently, these came to be known as 'First Sabbath,' 'Second Sabbath' etc., down to the seventh. And according to Julian Morgenstern, former President of Hebrew University, this practice continued in Galilee till the time of Christ or the Common Era. It is still observed by some groups in Palestine today. Thus, there was an annual date known as 'First Sabbath,' just after Passover." (Johnston Cheney, *The Life of Christ in Stereo: The Four Gospels Speak in Harmony*, p. 230)

Again, this is logical considering that they were told to count Sabbaths. The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Nisan 15, is linked unquestionably to Passover, Nisan 14, as the following day. Just as certainly, Pentecost is linked to the day of the offering of the wave sheaf being the 50th day from (and including) the day of that offering. Thus, whatever day of the week the wave sheaf occurred on, Pentecost would be on the same day of the week. We have established above, that the day of the offering of the wave sheaf is always on the seventh-day Sabbath falling within the Feast of Unleavened Bread and so Pentecost also always falls on a seventh-day Sabbath.

In the following diagram, the day of the Wave Sheaf offering, which is also the first of the 50 days leading up to Pentecost, could shift back and forth from year to year and land on any of the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (FUB), whichever one of those was the seventh-day Sabbath.



Counting fifty days inclusive from the day of the Wave Sheaf offering brings us to the Feast of Pentecost, which would be on another seventh-day Sabbath. Now everything in the timing fits according to scripture. There are fifty days inclusive from the day of the Wave Sheaf offering to Pentecost and there are seven complete weeks with the last week ending on a seventh-day Sabbath.

The Seventh-day Sabbath - God's Day to Meet With Us

With the resurrection and the day of wave sheaf offering determined to be on seventh-day Sabbaths, we might ask if there were other days when God met with His people. Of course, on Pentecost, a very special day and a seventh-day Sabbath, the Spirit of God filled His followers but, it seems, there was yet another day. Consider another post-resurrection appearance of Christ:

"And after <3326>eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." (John 20:26)

The word "after" (Greek "meta") is much more commonly translated as "with" as in two verses in the same chapter of John:

"And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying **with** the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." (John 20:7)

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not **with** them when Jesus came." (John 20:24)

Translating the word as "after" in the two verses above would not make sense. Not that it couldn't be correct but it is quite possible that John 20:26 means eight days inclusive which would make it again on a seventh-day Sabbath. The Sabbath is God's special day for fellowship with us; it is more logical that He would be meeting with His people on that day rather than on Sundays.

Significant Pentecosts in the Bible

In addition to the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, there is evidence of other significant events that also happened on or very close to Pentecost from which we can learn more about the Feast and its timing. All of the incidents can be seen to be related to entering into or speaking of entering into a covenant or special relationship, a betrothal or marriage. These include:

- The betrothal of the nation of Israel at Sinai.
- Entering the Promised Land in Joshua
- The betrothal of Ruth to Boaz
- The Sermon on the Mount
- The betrothal of the Church in Acts 2

A Sabbath Pentecost and the Sanctity of Sunday

Those who understand the importance of the seventh-day Sabbath as originally given in the Ten Commandments will understand the significance of the fact that Pentecost was actually on a seventh-day Sabbath. This will also have an impact as the controversy over the sanctity of Sunday increases in the future as the Bible indicates it will.

Appendix 1. - Verses Indicating that the Last Supper was a Passover Observance

All of the following verses support the fact that what is commonly called the Last Supper was an actual observance by Jesus of the Passover. They need to be examined in context so that it is understood, for instance, that the meal the disciples prepared was eaten that evening; the evening before the crucifixion.

"And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples." (Matt 26:18)

"And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover." (Matt 26:19)

"And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?" (Mark 14:12)

The day when the Passover was to be killed according to scripture was Nisan 14. The narrative in Mark shows that Jesus ate the meal that evening which would then be Nisan 15.

"And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover." (Mark 14:16)

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed." (Luke 22:7)

The same reasoning applies to the verse above as did for Mark 14:12.

"And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?" (Luke 22:11)

"And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover." (Luke 22:13)

"And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:" (Luke 22:15)

There are a few other verses that might be included but these are the most obvious ones. So there are several verses indicating that the meal that was prepared for on the day specified in scripture for the sacrifice (Nisan 14) and that Jesus ate the meal that evening (so early on Nisan 15) as the Israelites did before leaving Egypt. One could argue that Jesus should have died on Nisan 14 as The Passover Lamb. I would agree but there are no verses saying that He did and we need to go by scripture first and, if needed as in this case, examine our reasoning and understanding and look for other evidence as was done in the book ***In the Heart of the Earth: The Secret Code That Reveals What Is In the Heart of God.***

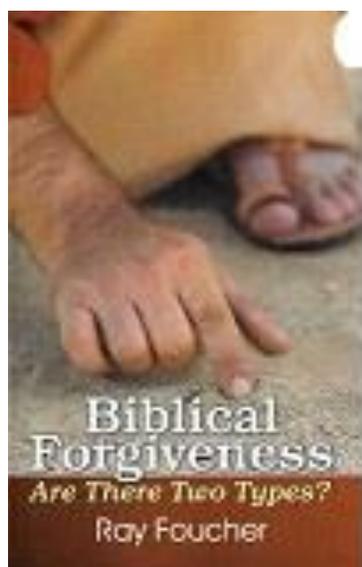
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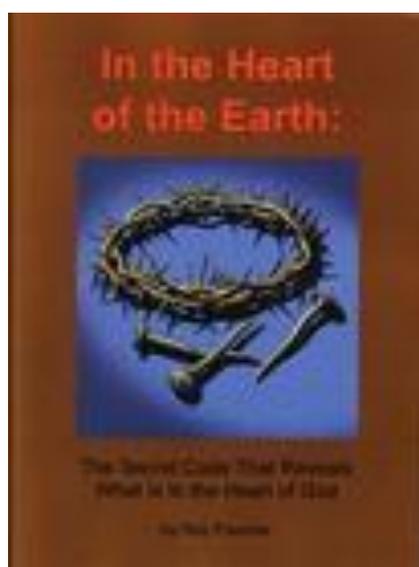
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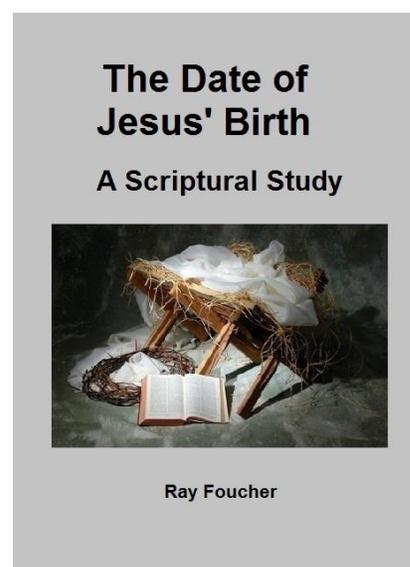
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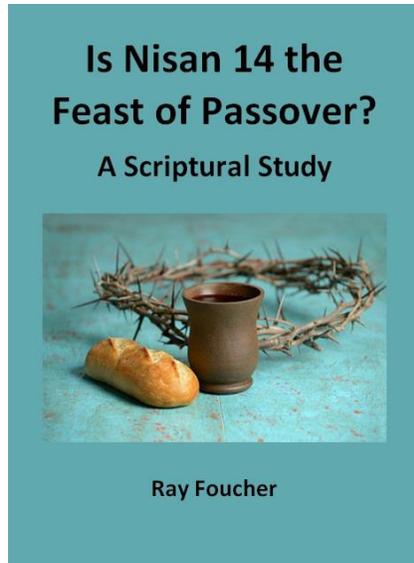
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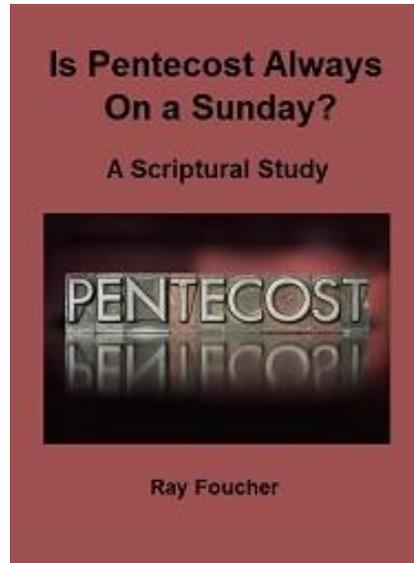
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