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Frank W. Nelte

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TIMING FOR THE FEASTS AND THE HOLY DAYS

There are many things that God has placed at very specific times. The selection for such timing is not arbitrary, but should convey specific meaning to us. Thus the point is: WHY did God place the Passover on the 14th day of the first month; WHY is Pentecost on a Sunday 7 weeks after the Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread; WHY is the Day of Atonement on the 10th day of the seventh month, etc.? In short, what is the significance of the timing God has selected for all of the things He instructed Israel to observe?

In this article we will examine the following 12 things:

- the weekly Sabbath day
- the land Sabbath year
- the jubilee year
- the 10th day of the first month
- the Passover
- the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- the Sunday during Unleavened Bread
- the counting of Pentecost
- the Day of Trumpets
- the Day of Atonement
- the Feast of Tabernacles
- the Last Great Day

UNDERSTANDING THE SYMBOLISM USED BY GOD

A common mistake that many people have at times made is to read God's instructions in their own Bibles and then apply those instructions based on how THEY understand the text as it appears in their own Bibles. They base their practice on how THEY understand the words that are used in their particular English translation of the Bible. That may very often be quite acceptable, but that can sometimes also cause problems.

Without meaning this to be a criticism of Mr. Armstrong, let's look at something we taught during his time. The Church of God observed Pentecost on a Monday for many years for the simple reason that Mr. Herbert Armstrong applied HIS OWN UNDERSTANDING of the English word "from" ("... you shall count FROM the morrow after the Sabbath ...") to the counting process. This is not to question Mr. Armstrong's

sincerity in this matter; he simply lacked understanding, and then he rectified the problem in 1974. But the problem arose because he applied his own understanding of the English word "from" to the Scriptures. This type of thing can also happen when we, for example, apply our understanding of the English word "forever" to certain verses in the Bible. In some cases the original Hebrew or Greek doesn't really intend what we understand by "forever". Don't assume that every translation into English correctly captures the intended meaning of the text.

At other times people may look for a key to the symbolism that is used in the Bible. They then find a key and try to apply it to what they are studying. Even though to them it seems logical, that may NOT be the symbolism GOD has attached to that particular passage. Therefore we have an obligation to first of all do our best to understand WHY God instructed certain things to be done at certain times.

For example, supposing I ask the question: what does "leaven" represent in the Bible? Many of us would immediately respond with: leaven is used by God to represent sin. While that is correct, God does however ALSO use leaven to represent "the kingdom of heaven" (see Matthew 13:33). So BEFORE we attempt to understand the symbolism God has used, we should ask ourselves: what is the general context here; exactly what is God trying to tell us?

For example, for those people who today believe they should observe Pentecost on a Monday, the question is: WHY would God want us to observe a Monday exactly 7 weeks after the Monday during Unleavened Bread? What would prompt God to select that particular Monday?

So if we want to gain a clear understanding of what certain things may mean, we should do the following:

Even BEFORE we apply the symbolism we have found, we should ask ourselves: WHY has God given this instruction? WHY has God selected this particular timing?

GOD HAS NEVER DONE ANYTHING WITHOUT A SPECIFIC REASON OR PURPOSE!

Everything God does has a purpose! Often looking FIRST at the purpose will enable us to correctly identify the symbolism that is used. And in cases where we are unsure, or where there is the potential for ambiguity (e.g. having Pentecost on a Sunday or on a Monday?), when we seek to understand the WHY of God's instructions, that will very often open up to us new avenues of understanding and clarify the matter.

THE SYMBOLISM FOR VARIOUS TIME PERIODS

Now let's look at the timing of various days and periods God has commanded us (or at least Old Testament Israel) to observe.

Apart from the land sabbath and the jubilee year, all of the days or time periods are within the context of a single year ... the weekly Sabbath day and the days we are to observe from the Passover to the Last Great Day.

Now consider this:

If God were to uniformly and consistently always apply THE SAME meaning to "a day" and "a week" and "a month", then that would severely limit the information God could build into the timing of these various days and periods of days. After all, there are only so many days and months in a year.

So the point we need to understand is that God CHANGES the meaning of what "a day" may represent.

This gives God a great deal more flexibility in building far more information into the context of the times He instructs us to observe.

Thus, for example, "a day" may represent 1000 years; but "a week" may also represent 1000 years; and "a month" may also represent 1000 years. When we focus on the WHY of God's instructions, then God expects us to discern which particular interpretation to apply: e.g. does "one week" represent 1000 years or does "one week" represent 7000 years? Rigidly applying only one of these options will limit our ability to understand what God is revealing to us.

We've already looked at the switching of the meaning of "leaven". Similarly, God changes the meaning He applies to "a beast with 7 heads and 10 horns" ... it depends on whether you are reading Revelation chapter 13 or whether you are reading Revelation chapter 17, because those two "beasts" are not the same. So likewise, God sometimes changes the symbolism He attaches to symbolical time periods.

A FOUNDATIONAL PREMISE

From everything we can see in the Scriptures, it seems fairly clear to me that God has basically allotted 7000 years for creating His Family through human beings. That overall framework of 7000 years becomes the key to understanding everything else that refers to periods of time. All of the Holy Days and the annual Feasts will tie into that context of basically 7000 years (I say "basically" because the period of the second resurrection is really attached to the end of the 7000 year period).

So with the understanding that we are working in the context of a 7000 year plan, we are ready to examine all of the various days and years God instructed Israel to observe. We will see that God has not selected any days arbitrarily, that all the time periods God has selected convey some information to us.

THE WEEKLY SABBATH DAY

This is the very first day that God instructed us to observe. The symbolism is generally well-known to us.

The week consists of six days for man to work, followed by "the rest day" (i.e. the Sabbath) devoted to God. The weekly cycle was set in motion by God even before man sinned. Even before Adam and Eve sinned, God had determined that six days would be available for man to do his work before God would claim the seventh day for His work.

The 7-day week represents 7000 years. So back at the creation of Adam and Eve, even before they sinned, God was already revealing that He would work with human beings for 7000 years.

While the likelihood of man succumbing to Satan's temptations was very great, I believe that God nevertheless gave Adam and Eve a REAL choice. The outcome was NOT a foregone conclusion ... they COULD perhaps have resisted Satan's temptations FOR THE LIMITED TIME PERIOD for which God was going to test them. God was PREPARED for them resisting Satan's temptations ... thus the 7000 year plan. It was after Adam and Eve had made the other choice that God MODIFIED His plan by attaching the 100-year Last Great Day period to that 7000 year plan ... to take into account the consequences of Adam's wrong choice. If Adam and Eve had not sinned in the limited time-context of their test, then God would have worked out His plan WITHOUT adding the 100-year period to the end of the millennium. The 100-year period tells us that it is a modification of the original plan.

It seems fairly obvious to me that God was NOT testing Adam and Eve for a period of 100 years or so! It was NOT a matter of God saying: "Okay, Satan, let's see if you can tempt these human beings to sin any time during the next 100 years". The test for Adam and Eve was NOT: would they "EVER" disobey God and sin? It was inevitable that sooner or later they would indeed sin. And that was not the issue. The

question was: Were they going to be faithful to God and RESIST Satan's temptations FOR A VERY LIMITED PERIOD OF TIME? I suspect that this "test" was limited to ONE DAY, though Adam and Eve would not have known that. God seldom lets us know "how long" the tests we face are going to last.

Recall the sequence of events in Genesis chapters 2-3. God created man (Genesis 2:7) and put him in the garden He had created. God then commanded the man not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Next God brought all the animals to Adam for Adam to give them names (Genesis 2:19). God then put Adam to sleep and created Eve (Genesis 2:21-22) and brought Eve to Adam. Very likely God spent the next day, the Sabbath, with them, instructing them in various things. Then God went out of their presence, very likely Saturday evening, and allowed Satan access to them. Satan very likely approached Eve sometime on Sunday morning (Genesis 3:1), and tempted her and Adam to disobey God. That late afternoon or early evening (i.e. "in the cool of the day") God returned to Adam and Eve, to see how they had responded to the test (Genesis 3:8). That's when the test was over.

The test lasted from the time God left Adam and Eve alone until the time when God returned to them shortly before or after sunset. It was at the most 24 hours (from Saturday evening until Sunday evening), and Satan didn't start his temptations before sometime on Sunday morning, when they were ready to eat again. So Adam and Eve were tested on whether they could resist Satan's temptations for a period of about 12 hours.

People who attempt to focus on how many of the ten commandments Adam and Eve broke are simply missing the real point of the exercise. God was NOT testing them regarding obedience to the ten commandments! God KNEW that sooner or later they were indeed going to break the ten commandments, even as you and I still at various times break the ten commandments ... 1 John 1:8 is after all still true for people who have received God's Spirit, right? God was testing Adam and Eve on one issue, and one only ... it was a very clearly defined test.

God had never created human beings before. And God wanted to know whether they could at least resist Satan's temptations for a short period of time. If they COULD do that, THEN God could have worked out a plan which would NOT have required a 100-year period at the end. Yes, it STILL would have required the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as a Saviour, because it was INEVITABLE that all human beings would sooner or later sin. But IF Adam and Eve had rejected Satan's temptations on this ONE issue (to not eat the forbidden fruit), THEN they would have taken of the tree of life, and ALL their descendants would also have been granted access to the Holy Spirit, and then there would be no place for a 100-year period after the millennial rule of Christ. That "access" to the Holy Spirit would have meant that all of humanity since the time of Adam would have lived under the same terms as the terms that apply to the "called-out ones" (i.e. members of God's Church) today. All humanity would still have required forgiveness and a Saviour, but judgment would have been on all mankind and not only on "the house of God" (see 1 Peter 4:17) as it is today.

Furthermore, if God had made the Holy Spirit "available" to all human beings since the time of Adam, that would NOT have guaranteed that all of them would have availed themselves of that opportunity. Simply because God makes something "available", that does not mean that all people will take it! God made "the tree of life" AVAILABLE to Adam and Eve in the garden ... but they never did take of it. Similarly, when during the millennium the Holy Spirit will be "available" to all human beings, that does not mean that all people then will repent and submit to God and therefore actually receive the Holy Spirit. Those that rebel during the millennium (pictured by Gog and Magog in Ezekiel chapters 38-39) and those that rebel at the end of the millennium, when Satan is briefly set loose (Revelation 20:7-9), are people who had "access" to the Holy Spirit, but never took up that opportunity.

[COMMENT: When Adam and Eve sinned, that obviously required God to set in motion a different plan

from the one that God would have followed, had they resisted Satan for that short period of time. A world in which human beings could still sin, but where ALL had access to the Holy Spirit upon genuine repentance would not have required God to specifically "call" people. Whether there would have been such a nation as "Israel" and whether there would have been a Feast of Firstfruits and a Day of Trumpets is open to debate? I obviously don't have the answer. But the Holy Days would in some ways surely have looked different from what we have today?

Consider also one other thing: God told Adam that "in the day you eat thereof you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17) ... and Adam died just short of 1000 years old (930 years to be exact). And while a number of people approached the age of 1000 years, none reached it. Is it possible that IF Adam and Eve had not sinned, that their physical lifespan would have exceeded 1000 years? From the ages of people before the flood I get the impression that it was initially God's intention to give people a LONG lifespan. It seems that once God saw how evil and how perverse and how depraved we human beings tended to become, that God then brought on the flood and ALSO decided to shorten man's lifespan. If God views 1000 years like a day, then perhaps "death" for physical people who lived on this earth was NOT a part of God's initial intention? Perhaps death (even the first death) was a penalty for Adam and Eve having sinned? The "second death" (eternal death) was surely a part of God's initial plan, since it was pretty well a certainty that not every human being would be of a mind to see things God's way. But the first death may not have featured in God's initial intentions?

Anyway, creating the 7-day week even before Adam and Eve sinned, indicates that God intended to work with human beings for 7000 years. And while speculating about what "might have been" can be very interesting, it doesn't really achieve anything. It doesn't matter what the Holy Days and feasts "might" have looked like. So please view my comments as pure speculation.]

Understand that what God is interested in with us human beings is OUR CHARACTER! It is NOT a case of some people having a "bad" character during this present dispensation, while Satan is around to influence us ... that IF ONLY Satan was removed that then they would somehow have a "good" character. Our character is tested by the temptations Satan confronts us with; but the removal of all the temptations Satan confronts us with does NOT automatically give us "good" character. Character development will still always take work ... but without Satan around there should be less obstacles in the path of character development. So people during the millennium will not automatically all have "good" character simply because Jesus Christ will be ruling.

There is no "second resurrection" for members of God's Church. And there would not have been a second resurrection for anyone, if the Holy Spirit had become available to all people from Adam's creation onwards.

The establishment of the weekly cycle at the creation of Adam and Eve tells me that ORIGINALLY God had not planned in "the Last Great Day" ... that originally God had planned for exactly 7000 years.

It seems that when Adam and Eve sinned, then God modified His plan to accommodate this situation and added a 100-year period to the end of His plan, but without allowing for more human beings to come into existence during that added 100-year period. An interesting possibility: if "the test" God gave Adam and Eve was limited to "one 24-hour day", then a part of the penalty for failing the test was to limit Adam's lifespan to "one 1000-year day". Numbers 14:33-34 indicated that at least sometimes God links the duration of a penalty to the duration of the test (40 days ... 40 years). Did God already used a similar pattern with Adam back in Genesis, where failing a "one day" test would reap a penalty that would limit the physical lifespan to never exceed a "1000-year day"?

Anyway, later, in the days of Moses, God then laid out all the Feasts and the Holy Days in such a way that the Last Great Day LOOKS LIKE an attachment to the Feast of Tabernacles ... to indicate a

modification from the original intentions.

So the weekly Sabbath day reveals the overall time-frame for God's plan of salvation, that being 7000 years.

Let's now move on to the next item.

THE LAND SABBATH

In Leviticus 25:1-7 God instructed Israel to observe a sabbath for the land. Six years they were to utilize the land for the production of crops and fruits, and then in the 7th year the land was to have a rest from producing crops. The fruits that would grow during that 7th year they were not to reap or gather.

The cycle of 7 years here again parallels the 7000 year plan. We human beings have basically destroyed the land ever since the time of Adam. This has escalated very dramatically during this present century and we are poisoning our land at a staggering rate.

It seems that the 6 years during which we may utilize the land represent the 6000 years God has given us "to do our own thing". When Jesus Christ returns, the land will be in desperate need to recover from the abuse it has received at our hands over the past 6000 years. So the 1-year land sabbath represents the 1000-year rule of Jesus Christ during the millennium ... when the land and the rivers and the seas will be "healed". During that 1000-year period we are NOT to reap "anything" that was started during the previous 6000 years.

So here we see "a year" being used by God to represent 1000 years, and 7 years to represent 7000 years.

The next point is closely tied to this matter of land sabbaths.

THE JUBILEE YEAR:

Leviticus 25:8-17 continues by next discussing the jubilee year. There is no indication in the Bible that Israel ever observed even one jubilee year, which is not really surprising, since they were constantly descending into paganism. Observing a jubilee year is also contingent on having the right starting year. The years spent in the wilderness were not to be counted. God told them:

"When you come into the land which I give you, THEN shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD." Leviticus 25:2

After they crossed the Jordan it was another 6 years before they actually inherited the land, discussed in Joshua chapter 14. So should they have started counting the year they crossed the Jordan as year #1 of the first 7-year cycle ... or should they have counted the year they inherited the land as year #1 of the first 7-year cycle?

The question is basically academic, since it seems very likely that they did neither! Joshua lived to be 110 years old and he died approximately 30 years or so after they had crossed the Jordan. Thus Joshua would not have been around to ensure that the first ever "jubilee year" would have been observed at the correct time.

After his death it didn't take too long for the religious zeal to wane. And if the cycle of land sabbaths and of jubilee years was not started right at the beginning, it would be extremely difficult for subsequent

generations to figure out when a jubilee year should be kept.

Anyway, the instructions for the jubilee year stated that they were to count 7 full cycles of 7 years each, completing 49 years. Then the 50th year was to be the jubilee year, a year of release, when all debts were to be cancelled, all slaves to be set free, and original inheritances to be restored to the people who may have sold their land during financially difficult times.

The jubilee year itself was to be announced on the Day of Atonement of the 49th year. This is a clue. The Day of Atonement pictures the removal of Satan. So the jubilee year has something to do with the removal of Satan. And the removal of Satan (Day of Atonement, 49th year) precedes the start of the jubilee year.

Now the removal of the Azazel goat in Leviticus chapter 16 pictures the permanent removal of Satan. But when we go to the Book of Revelation, we see that Satan is first bound for 1000 years (Revelation 20:2), after which he is very briefly released, and then he is removed permanently (Revelation 20:10).

It seems to me that in this matter of the jubilee year God has appointed each 7-year cycle to represent 1000 years of human history. So 7 complete cycles of 7 years each picture the time when the 7000 years have been completed.

Thus the jubilee year pictures the time when God's plan of salvation for mankind has been completed, when Jesus Christ hands the whole Family over to God the Father, when Jesus Christ "shall also Himself be subject unto Him (the Father) that put all things under Him" (see 1 Corinthians 15:28). When the whole Family of God will be complete, it will truly be a time of release ... release from the bondage of this flesh. Then we will have "returned" to the inheritance God had originally mapped out for ALL of us human beings ... an inheritance within His Family.

The fact that the jubilee was announced on the Day of Atonement of the 7th year of the 7th 7-year cycle shows that this is announced towards the end of the 7th 1000-year period of human existence. I expect that this "jubilee" will be announced when Satan is bound for the second time, at the end of the millennium. I can't see it being "announced" at any time before a vast number of human beings, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea" (Revelation 20:8-9) will be destroyed by fire ... and who will have been in tune with Satan's thinking.

So even as there still is a short time period between when the jubilee was announced (Day of Atonement, 49th year) and when the jubilee actually started (1st day of the 1st month, 50th year), so likewise there is the period of 100 years between when Satan is bound for good and the time when God the Father brings into being the new earth and brings the New Jerusalem out of heaven. Then the jubilee will truly start.

So in this context God has used 7 years to represent 1000 years of human existence, and 49 years to represent 7000 years. The jubilee year then represents all future eternity in the presence of God the Father.

Now let's look at all of the significant days in the year.

THE 10TH DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH

We understand that the Passover lamb represented Jesus Christ. In Exodus 12:3 God instructed Israel TO SELECT the lamb that they would use for the Passover sacrifice on the 10th day of the 1st month. This was exactly 4 days before the Passover actually took place.

A question that arises is: WHY did God not start His instructions with the 1st day of the 1st month ... WHY wait until the 10th day? After all, the 1st day of the 1st month very clearly represents a new start. But that day does not feature in any major way. The 10th day is the FIRST day of the year to feature in any way.

What I suspect God is telling us by selecting this day to START the process of the feasts and the Holy Days is that SOMETHING PRECEDED THE EVENT ON THE 10TH DAY! Perhaps that has something to do with Satan's rebellion prior to the creation of Adam? If so, we will probably only find this out after the return of Jesus Christ.

At any rate:

The 10th day of the 1st month may represent the time of Adam's creation, the START of the 7000-year plan.

Let's examine Revelation 13:8, which states:

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life OF THE LAMB SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. Rev. 13:8

Here we have an example of a verse where people will argue their point based on the English translation they have access to. But if the English translation does not accurately reflect what was originally written in Greek, then there is the potential for misunderstanding the verse.

For example, you know what the word "FROM" means. In the context of Revelation 13:8 we would expect the word "from" to mean something like "beginning with". But that isn't really what the Greek preposition "apo", here translated as "from", is intended to convey.

The Apostle John was NOT trying to say that Jesus Christ has been slain FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD! He was trying to convey a different thought to us. John was trying to convey to us A CAUSE for the death of Jesus Christ and NOT THE TIMING OF IT!

Unless otherwise stated, the Greek explanations I may present in this article are based on Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.

Thayer's describes the preposition "apo" as follows:

"... 2. of CAUSAL ORIGIN, or THE CAUSE; and of the material cause, so called, or of that which supplies the material for the maintenance of the action expressed by the verb."

In other words, God the Father and Jesus Christ DETERMINED that Jesus Christ would give His life as a sacrifice for humanity BEFORE they even set about creating Adam and Eve! They did not come up with this course of action the moment that Adam and Eve sinned. And it was not the Apostle John's intention to tell us exactly when God the Father and Jesus Christ first thought of this potential course of action.

No, John was focusing on THE CAUSE that necessitated this course of action. THE CAUSE for why Jesus Christ had to give His life as a sacrifice started with "the foundation of the world", i.e. it started the moment when God created Adam. From that moment onwards sinful human beings existed, and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was needed to enable us human beings to still have the opportunity for

salvation. The timing of when the first sin would actually take place was really immaterial ... it was inevitable that sooner or later all human beings would sin, and therefore God had made the provision for a Saviour.

And THE CAUSE for why Jesus Christ had to die has been maintained ever since Adam was created. That cause has also been maintained even throughout the entire period of time when God's Spirit HAS been available to a few select "called-out ones". All human beings since then, including those that have possessed God's Spirit and who will be in the first resurrection, HAVE sinned.

Even if Adam and Eve had NOT eaten the forbidden fruit in that limited time allowed for this particular test, but had instead taken of the tree of life, there STILL would have been the need for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ "from the foundation of the world"! We today who have God's Spirit still sin, even after we have received God's Spirit ... and therefore we STILL need the sacrifice of a Saviour, even after our initial repentance and becoming true Christians. If Adam and Eve had withstood Satan's temptation and instead taken of the tree of life ... they too would have sinned at some point subsequently. That was a foregone conclusion.

The word translated as "foundation" is "katabole" in Greek. It is a compound word which literally means "a throwing down", which is what a foundation is ... something that has been "laid down to build upon". It does NOT mean "to OVERTHROW". It is correct to translate it into English as "foundation".

I now believe Mr. Armstrong was wrong in wanting to apply Revelation 13:8 to the time when Adam and Eve sinned. I suspect that this verse really refers to two days before they sinned, the day when they were created. When God created Adam and Eve, that was OBVIOUSLY the foundation of humanity; the foundation was not two days later when they sinned.

It is not my intention to split hairs over "one or two days". I only mention this because I believe that applying this expression "from the foundation of the world" to the time when they sinned creates A WRONG FOCUS.

Back to the 10th day of the 1st month.

The 10th day of the 1st month represents the time of Adam's creation. At that point in time the cause was created for why Jesus Christ would later have to die. So from then onwards "the lamb" had been set aside, to be kept over until the 14th day of the month (see Exodus 12:6).

Let's move on.

THE PASSOVER

The Passover was to be killed "between the evenings" at the start of the 14th day of the 1st month. That is exactly 4 days after the lamb had been selected at the start of the 10th day.

I think that this represents Jesus Christ being killed for our sins 4000 years after the creation of Adam and Eve.

God works precisely and exactly. I suspect that Jesus Christ was killed in exactly the 4000th year after Adam had been created. However, I have no way of proving this. All of the chronological data that is available to me seems to indicate His death at some point AFTER the 4000th year had passed. I suspect that there are some errors in the dating that is available to us, though I at this stage certainly cannot prove this. Where those possible errors might be I also don't know. So my thoughts here are only speculations.

So please understand that what I am stating here is nothing more than my opinion that Jesus Christ died in the 4000th year after the creation of Adam, 4 "days" after the creation of humanity had necessitated the sacrifice of a Saviour. I have no way of proving it to be correct.

It is interesting that in the 1st month God selected the period of the 14th to the 21st (Passover plus 7 days of U.B.); but in the 7th month God selected the period of the 15th to the 22nd (7 days of FoT plus the Last Great Day). Why didn't God select either the 14th - 21st or the 15th - 22nd in both cases? Perhaps the Passover having to be exactly 4 days after the lamb had been selected has something to do with this? More on these time periods later.

Let's move on to the next event.

THE 7 DAYS OF THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

The 7 Days of Unleavened Bread are from the 15th to the 21st of the first month. But why did God choose 7 days? Why not 6 or 8 or 10?

You may reply: because 7 is the number that pictures completion or perfection. Agreed, but WHY does 7 picture completion or perfection? Is it not because God DECIDED that 7000 years would COMPLETE His perfect plan of salvation for mankind? What came first ... is it because 7 pictures perfection that God therefore decided to use 7000 years for His plan, OR is it because God decided to use 7000 years for His plan that THEREFORE 7 came to picture perfection and completion? It is the latter that is correct.

So yes, 7 Days of Unleavened Bread picture us putting sins out completely. But they picture much more than that.

The 7 Days of Unleavened Bread also picture that we human beings are required by God to put sins out of our lives for all of the 7000 years of His plan. Again God has used 1 day to represent 1000 years. And throughout every age during the 7000 years, including during the millennial rule of Jesus Christ, God requires people to put sins out of their lives, if they intend to have a part in an eternal future with God.

The THREE "Feasts" in the year picture the THREE steps, by which God builds His Family. The seven annual Holy Days fill in additional details within that overall plan for building the Family of God, details which refer to events other than those three specific steps listed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:23-24.

So back to the FEAST of Unleavened Bread. WHY did God designate this period as "a Feast"?

It is NOT "our putting sin out of our lives" that makes these 7 Days of U.B. into "A FEAST"! What makes it "A FEAST" is that on ALL of these 7 days (and it must be on every one of those 7 days over a period of years!) God the Father accepted the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ ... and God the Father REJOICED because the first of three steps in creating His Family had been accomplished!

IF there were only "6" Days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it would signify that God the Father only accepts the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ for humanity during a period of 6000 years. Similarly, IF there were "8" Days of Unleavened Bread (e.g. some people wish to make the 14th day into the First Day of U.B.), this would signify that God accepts the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ for a period of 8000 years. By instituting "7" Days of Unleavened Bread, God is showing that He has a 7000-year plan for mankind; and that the people during the 1000-year millennial rule of Jesus Christ must ALSO have access to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Now understand this!

IT IS ABSOLUTELY VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST WAS GOING TO BE ACCEPTED BY GOD THE FATHER ON EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THOSE SEVEN DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD!

The reason is that human beings from every one of the 7 "1000 year periods" God has allotted to His plan must have access to Christ's sacrifice!

And that is the reason WHY God the Father designed it in such a way that THE WAVE OFFERING was to be accepted by Him "ON THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH"! Had you or I been responsible for setting up the timing for the wave offering, WE might have reasoned: since Christ was to die on the 14th, be dead for 3 full days (15th - 17th) and then be accepted by the Father on the 18th, THEREFORE we might have decided to institute the wave offering as a permanent fixture for the 18th of Nisan ... to maintain the strict time-lapse between the Passover and the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice by the Father. But that is not what God the Father chose to do.

This may be a bit technical; so let me spell it out in plain terms:

When the Passover day, Nisan 14th, falls on the following days of the week, THEN the day after the Sabbath, A SUNDAY, when God the Father formally accepted the sacrifice of Christ, will be as follows in the context of the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread:

PASSOVER = Sunday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 7th Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Monday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 6th Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Tuesday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 5th Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Wednesday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 4th Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Thursday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 3rd Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Friday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 2nd Day of U.B.

PASSOVER = Saturday, then THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH = 1st Day of U.B.

The "FEAST" character is given to these 7 Days NOT by us putting sins out of our lives, but by God the Father ACCEPTING ON OUR BEHALF the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ on each and every one of those 7 Days (i.e. during the entire 7000 years)! All 7 Days together therefore constitute "THE FEAST"!

The wave sheaf offered on the Sunday DURING the Days of Unleavened Bread pictures God the Father accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf. And while God always accepts that wave sheaf on the first day of a literal week, that first day of the week MUST CYCLE THROUGH ALL 7 DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD! Each of those 7 days pictures a thousand years of human existence in God's plan, and therefore God the Father must accept Jesus Christ's sacrifice for us human beings on every single one of those 7 days!

THE REASON WHY we must put leaven (i.e. sins) out of our lives for all of those 7 Days is because the sacrifice of Jesus Christ will be accepted by the Father ONLY FOR THOSE who are in the process of cleaning up their lives and putting sins out! This applies to people from all of the 7000 years of God's plan.

It should be quite clear that IT IS UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to be accepted by God the Father outside of the context of the 7 Days of U.B.! That would on the one hand picture God accepting Christ's sacrifice also for people who were born after the 7000 years allotted to human reproduction ... and that is simply not possible. On the other hand it would picture God accepting Christ's sacrifice for people who make no attempt to put sins out of their lives (i.e. they are not in the process of de-leavening or the state of being de-leavened) ... and that is also contrary to the facts revealed in the Bible. So "the morrow after the Sabbath" can never fall outside of the Days of U.B., because God the Father will NEVER apply the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ to people who are not in the process of "putting leaven out of their lives".

While the Passover shows what Jesus Christ has done for us, the 7 Days of U.B. show two other things:

A) How the Father ACCEPTS what Christ has done for human beings from all 7 of the 1000-year periods of His plan.

B) THE STATE OR PROCESS we human beings MUST be in, for the Father to apply that sacrifice to us.

So 7 Days of Unleavened Bread cover 7000 years ... a day for each 1000 years.

The wave offering is firmly connected with the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread, and for that reason we have already discussed it to some extent. Let's note a few other points in that regard.

THE SUNDAY DURING THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

The wave sheaf, which pictured the resurrected Jesus Christ ascending to God the Father and then returning to this earth, was always waved on the Sunday DURING the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread. This is also the Sunday that represents the starting point for counting to the Feast of Pentecost.

It is vitally important that this Sunday for the wave sheaf to be offered had the ability to sometimes fall on the 1st Day of U.B., sometimes on the 2nd Day, sometimes on the 3rd Day, sometimes on the 4th Day, sometimes on the 5th Day, sometimes on the 6th Day and sometimes on the 7th Day of U.B. ... to clearly show that God the Father accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for human beings from all 7 of the 1000-year periods He has allotted for His plan.

While this is not the primary focus of this article, it should be noted that this point all by itself shows the absolutely DIABOLICAL CHARACTER OF THE JEWISH POSTPONEMENT RULES! Those postponement rules are designed to prevent the Passover (Nisan 14th) from ever falling on a Sunday, a Tuesday and a Thursday. This means that the wave sheaf could NEVER be offered on the 7th Day of U.B., on the 5th Day of U.B. and on the 3rd Day of U.B..

This means that the Jewish postponement rules imply that God the Father does NOT accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for any human beings who lived during the 3rd 1000-year period (this included Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, etc.) and during the 5th 1000-year period (this included Peter, James, John, Paul, Matthew, Luke, Mark, etc.) and during the 7th 1000-year period (salvation will not be available to anyone during the millennium). That is what the postponement rules imply! We need to think this point through very carefully!

Can we see the diabolical character of those "postponement rules"? God the Father accepts Christ's sacrifice for people from all 7 of the 1000-year periods; AND THEREFORE it simply MUST be possible for the wave sheaf to sometimes be offered on every single one of the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread. Who, other than Satan, would want to see the wave sheaf, representing the sacrifice of Jesus Christ being accepted by God the Father, not be accepted for a full 3000 out of a total of 7000 years?

Is there really anyone in God's Church who still wishes to argue in favour of these diabolical postponement rules? Does anyone still want to infer some kind of "divine inspiration" for those postponement rules, that are designed to prevent the Passover from falling on specific days of the week?

So, to recap:

The wavesheaf offering always had TWO specific features:

- A) It was ALWAYS to be offered on a Sunday, THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.
- B) That Sunday itself, however, could be the 1st or 2nd or 3rd or 4th or 5th or 6th or 7th Day of Unleavened Bread.

These two features point to two different things:

- A) Offering it always on the 1st day of the week shows that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is applied from the start of the 1st 1000-year period, i.e. "from the foundation of the world".
- B) But that sacrifice is "AVAILABLE" to people from all 7 of the 1000-year periods God has planned for human reproduction.

Let's now move on to the next event.

THE COUNTING OF PENTECOST

Pentecost is the only day we are to observe in the year which is not on a fixed date. For the calculation of this day we are instructed "to count".

WHY IS PENTECOST NOT ON A FIXED DATE?

There is only one reason why Pentecost is not on a fixed date! That reason is because the date of the Father's acceptance of Jesus Christ's sacrifice is ALSO not on a fixed date. This latter date is always on a Sunday, but could be on any day from the 1st to the 7th Days of U.B., to show that it covers and will apply equally to all 7000 years of God's plan.

Pentecost is tied to, and COMPLETELY DEPENDENT ON, the day on which God the Father accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for human beings from the whole 7000-year period. Pentecost is ALWAYS EXACTLY 7 WEEKS AFTER God the Father has accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It is also always on a Sunday!

If we can grasp this complete dependence of Pentecost on the day when God accepted the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ, then we should also clearly understand WHY the Jewish observance of Pentecost on a fixed day is contrary to God's instructions. A fixed day removed the connection to the Father's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice.

Pentecost pictures the people in the first resurrection, the second step in the process of building the Family of God.

In this instance God uses 7 weeks to represent 7000 years. Pentecost is exactly 7 weeks after the Sunday on which God accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Pentecost represents THE ONLY ONES

from the entire 7000-year period who will be IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION!

This "harvest of firstfruits" takes place after only 6000 years, a full 1000 years before that 7000-year period comes to an end. But the remaining 1000 years (the millennium) will not produce any additional firstfruits. Likewise, the first 4000 years will have also only produced a very small number of firstfruits. The overwhelming majority of firstfruits will come from the 5th and the 6th 1000-year periods of human existence.

So the timing of Pentecost does NOT represent "the time" when this event is to take place (the next Holy Day, the Day of Trumpets, will tell us about "the time" for this event). Rather, the timing of Pentecost points to THE TIME PERIOD FROM WHICH THIS "HARVEST" IS DRAWN ... it covers all 7000 years of human beings coming into existence.

So Pentecost is always exactly 7 Sundays after the Sunday during the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread. And even as that Sunday during U.B. moves from the 1st Day of U.B. to the 7th Day of U.B. (in an irregular pattern), so likewise the Feast of Pentecost moves from an earlier date in the 3rd month to a later date in the 3rd month, but always on a Sunday. It is vital to keep that 7-week gap between those two Sundays ... because they point to 7000 years. This 7-week period amounts to exactly 50 days by employing INCLUSIVE counting: one week after day 1 is day 8; 7 weeks after day 1 is day 50. That is the type of counting employed in Leviticus 23:15-16.

Now let's look at those who want to keep Pentecost on a Monday.

WHY would God want us to always observe the 2nd day of the week exactly 51 days after the benchmark date of the wave sheaf offering? Or, to put it another way, WHY would God want us to observe the Monday exactly 7 weeks after the Monday during the Days of U.B.? What significance does that Monday during U.B. have? It has no specific significance at all!

In Leviticus 23:16 God very clearly refers to the day after the 7th Sabbath as the 50th day. So the 50th day is a Sunday. Thus a Monday would be the 51st day from the date God has designated to start the counting process.

The 7 weeks (or 50 days inclusive counting) gap between "Christ the firstfruits" (1 Corinthians 15:23) and between "those that are Christ's at His coming" (also 1 Corinthians 15:23) is very significant. A "7 weeks plus 1 day" (or a 51 day) gap has no significance at all.

Consider also one other point in this regard.

A Sunday Pentecost is also arranged in such a way that Pentecost always falls within the 7th full week after the 7th Day of U.B.. Thus, when the 7th Day of U.B. is a Sunday, then Pentecost is 49 days after the 7th Day of U.B.; when the 7th Day of U.B. is a Saturday, then Pentecost is 43 days after the 7th Day of U.B.; for the 7th Day of U.B. falling on any of the other weekdays Pentecost will be from 44 - 48 days after the 7th Day of U.B.. So a Sunday Pentecost will always be from 43 - 49 days after the 7th Day of U.B. (or 44 - 50 days inclusive counting) ... it will always be WITHIN the 7th week AFTER the 7th Day of U.B., thereby keeping a connection to the Days of Unleavened Bread.

But IF you had a Monday Pentecost, THEN such a "Pentecost" would on some occasions only occur on the 1st day of the EIGHTH WEEK after the 7th Day of U.B. ... and the connection to the Days of Unleavened Bread would be broken! Thus, when the 7th Day of U.B. is a Sunday, then such a Monday "Pentecost" would be on the Monday 51 days after the 7th Day of U.B. (inclusive counting), which would be 7 full weeks plus one more day after the 7th full week after the Days of Unleavened Bread concluded.

So a Monday "Pentecost" would be both, on the 51st day (inclusive counting) after God the Father accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (i.e. the wave offering), and in some years also on the 1st day of the EIGHTH week after the 7th Day of Unleavened Bread, thereby severing any possible link to the Days of Unleavened Bread. Both of these points are at variance with the general pattern God has employed in the timing of other events.

So BEFORE anyone goes about interpreting Leviticus 23:15-16 to refer to a Monday, they need to provide some reason as to WHY God would possibly have selected a Monday. What purpose would a Monday serve?

I realize that this is unlikely to convince Monday observers, but hopefully it will provide some additional insight for those who already understand that Pentecost must always be observed on a Sunday.

Let's move on to the next day in the year.

THE DAY OF TRUMPETS

This day is observed on the 1st day of the 7th month. It pictures the return of Jesus Christ to this earth.

This tells us that Jesus Christ is scheduled to return EXACTLY 6000 years after the creation of Adam, at the beginning of the 7th 1000-year period. Here God has used 6 months to represent 6000 years. So when 6 full months in the year have passed, then 6000 years have passed since the creation of Adam and Eve.

[Comment: This symbolism does not provide for the later added detail that "for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened", Matthew 24:22. It simply represents things as initially intended.]

This is the only Holy Day which falls on the 1st day of a month. [None of the Feasts fall on the 1st day of a month either.] This indicates something happening AT THE START of a new 1000-year period.

Since the 1st resurrection takes place when Jesus Christ returns to this earth, therefore this day also tells us THE TIMING for the 1st resurrection. So where Pentecost reveals the time period from which all those in the 1st resurrection are drawn (i.e. from a period of 7000 years), the day of Trumpets reveals the time when that 1st resurrection will take place (i.e. at the start of the 7th 1000-year period after the creation of Adam).

Thus the Day of Trumpets pictures the return of Jesus Christ and the time of the 1st resurrection. Then the marriage supper "of the Lamb" will take place. Then the 7 last plagues will be poured out on this earth in the presence of Jesus Christ and of those in the 1st resurrection. And only after the great battle, that will then take place, has taken place will Satan then be bound for 1000 years.

So with the Day of Trumpets, God has used 6 months to represent 6000 years, with each month representing 1000 years.

Let's move on to the next day.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

This day falls on the 10th day of the 7th month.

The most obvious connection with this date seems to be the 10th day of the 1st month. Thus we have:

10th day, 1st month : Jesus Christ is set apart as Saviour;

10th day, 7th month : Satan is bound for 1000 years.

That makes a time gap of exactly 6 months between these two events. This indicates Satan being bound after having deceived humanity for exactly 6000 years from the time Adam was created.

So here too God has used 6 months to represent 6000 years.

I suspect, as I mentioned earlier, that this selection of the "10th" day has something to do with Satan's actions prior to the creation of Adam and Eve. It "may" in some way refer to the period of time that Satan was tested before he rebelled? But anyway, this 10th day of the 7th month seems to provide the reason for why Jesus Christ was set apart on the 10th day exactly 6 months earlier.

It is clear that there will also be a short period of time between when Jesus Christ returns and when Satan will be bound. Whether the number of days between the 1st and the 10th days of the 7th month in any way reflects this time period remains to be seen. However, the 6 months (representing 6000 years) between Christ being set apart as Saviour and Satan being bound for 1000 years are fairly easy to recognize.

Let's now examine the Feast of Tabernacles.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

The 7 days of the Feast of Tabernacles go from the 15th to the 21st days of the 7th month. This is EXACTLY 6 months after the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus we have:

15th - 21st of 1st month = 7 Days Feast of Unleavened Bread;

15th - 21st of 7th month = 7 Days Feast of Tabernacles.

The 6-months gap between these two Feasts shows that the Feast of Tabernacles refers to something exactly 6000 years after the creation of Adam ... God again using 6 months to represent 6000 years.

It is the Feast of "temporary dwellings" for 7 days, to show that for all 7000 years of God's plan of salvation man will ALWAYS have lived in "temporary dwellings". There is nothing "permanent" about this physical life. It is only once God the Father comes to the new earth that we will be given "permanent abodes" within the Family of God. Until then everything, including "the world tomorrow", is only temporary.

The Feast of Tabernacles also starts exactly 2 weeks after the Day of Trumpets, which represents the 2nd coming of Christ. And while there is a 2000-year gap between Christ's 1st coming and His 2nd coming (and thus the start of His millennial rule), I see no way of applying the Day of Trumpets to His 1st coming ... so I can't really find a connection between the 2 weeks and the 2000 years? Perhaps there is some connection that I am not aware of?

This is the 3rd and final "Feast" in the year, and it pictures the 3rd and final step in the building of the Family of God. It pictures a time when large numbers of people will submit themselves to God's ways.

IF Adam and Eve had not taken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but had instead taken the fruit of the tree of life, then THIS Feast would probably have concluded the plan of salvation. As with Unleavened Bread, God "could" have pronounced the 1st Day and the 7th Day to be "Holy Days" (i.e.

holy convocations), thereby maintaining 7 Holy Days for the year.

When "a feast" is only 1 day long (i.e. Pentecost), then it is also declared to be "a Holy Day". When "a feast" is longer than 1 day (i.e. Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles), then that feast is bounded by, and enclosed within 2 Holy Days (i.e. a Holy Day to start that feast and another Holy Day to conclude that feast). This is the case with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is also the way the Feast of Tabernacles STARTS OUT (i.e. with a Holy Day). But the fact that, instead of the 7th Day of Tabernacles being a Holy Day, God has declared the EIGHTH Day to be the Holy Day indicates two things:

A) I believe that it indicates a modification of the originally-intended plan to limit things to exactly 7000 years.

B) It also indicates that God, in some ways, views this 8th Day to be a part of the period pictured by the 7 Days of Tabernacles (i.e. to be a part of the millennium), by indicating that this 8th Day forms the other boundary of the Feast of Tabernacles.

This latter point tells us: the same conditions will apply to the millennium and to the 100-year period following it (i.e. Christ will be ruling over mortal human beings, Satan will be bound, and the Holy Spirit will be available to all who respond to God); the people in the millennium and those in the 100-year period are offered the same positions within the Family of God (i.e. none of them can become 'firstfruits'); and those that respond positively to God from these two periods will become a part of the Family of God at exactly the same point in time; and together this one group from these two periods of time will make up what Revelation 7:9 calls "A GREAT MULTITUDE WHICH NO MAN COULD NUMBER of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues". When the 2nd resurrection takes place, those that have lived during the millennium will be there, still as physical human beings, to welcome them and to absorb them into the society that has been achieved through the 1000-year rule of Jesus Christ. The two groups will merge into one single group.

Anyway, as it turned out, Adam and Eve didn't do it the way God had planned as the first option; and so God did NOT choose to make the 7th Day of Tabernacles a Holy Day, instead making the Last Great Day the 7th Holy Day of the year.

THE LAST GREAT DAY

When Adam and Eve gave in to Satan's temptation and sinned within that one day testing period, then, I suspect, God MODIFIED His 7000-year plan by adding the 100-year period to the end of the 7th 1000-year "day", in order to compensate for the consequences of man's sins having to take effect. God would STILL achieve His goal of building His Family; but under different circumstances and by adding 100 years to the initially intended 7000 years ... i.e. by lengthening His intended plan by EXACTLY ONE-SEVENTIETH!

Revelation 20:10 makes clear that Satan is AGAIN bound, this time for good, BEFORE the 2nd resurrection takes place.

This has the following consequences:

Those in the 2nd resurrection will be given the opportunity to live under basically the same conditions that would have applied to humanity had Adam and Eve taken the fruit of the tree of life and rejected the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; but without the opportunity to produce any children and without the opportunity to have a position within the Family equal to those who will be in the 1st resurrection. Also they will not be pressured by Satan.

Adam and Eve's wrong choice did NOT result in God changing the amount of time He had set aside for human beings to be born; God did not extend that opportunity by 100 years. All God did was add one-seventieth to the time He had determined as perfect for His purposes ... to provide for His Holy Spirit not being freely available to all people during the first 6000 years of man's existence. Those who have never had a "real" opportunity during their first lifetime will be given such an opportunity ... an opportunity for salvation, but NOT an opportunity to have more children and to build new families.

And this Last Great Day, attached immediately to the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, pictures this modification to the original plan.

This modified character of God's initial plan is also indicated by the fact that the Last Great Day is clearly "a Holy Day" (i.e. a holy convocation), but it is NOT "a Feast"! This day also clearly involves a very large number of human beings being given their first real chance for becoming a part of the Family of God. Thus, if the Last Great Day was something that God had planned and intended even before Adam sinned, then it really should be designated as "a Feast" ... because of its Family-building aspect. The fact that Leviticus 23 does NOT designate the Last Great Day as "a Feast" indicates that God considers it to be "a part of", or "attached to" the great harvest of the millennium.

And that about concludes the days and periods of time God laid out for observance by His people. The timing for all of them was intended to convey certain things to us. And while I have obviously presented my personal speculations in this article, I hope that it will at least in some measure help you to come to a clearer understanding on these matters.

Frank W. Nelte