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WHY DOES GOD REQUIRE US TO COUNT FOR PENTECOST?

God established a number of annual observances. They are identified as “Feasts” and as “Holy Days” (plus the Passover which is limited to baptized members of God’s Church). Each of these annual observances has some unique characteristics, which are not shared with any of the other annual observances.

God placed all of these annual observances, except one, on fixed days in the annual cycle. They are all, except one, **on fixed days** in either the 1st month of the year or in the 7th month of the year. Their dates in the annual cycle are rigidly fixed, and they cannot be moved to other dates.

But the Feast of **Pentecost is different**!

The date for Pentecost is not fixed at all. In fact Pentecost is guaranteed to **never be on the same date in two consecutive years**. That is how God designed it.

You are already familiar with the instruction that **we are to count** seven Sabbaths, and to then take the day that follows the 7th Sabbath, a Sunday, to be the Feast of Pentecost. A vital requirement in this counting exercise is that the Sunday after the Sabbath, which starts the counting process, must be a part of the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread. That Sunday cannot be outside of the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread, because the counting cannot start outside of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The counting process for Pentecost is discussed in three different articles on my website, written between 1995 and 2000. Specifically, the November 2000 article “COUNTING FOR PENTECOST WHEN THE LAST DAY OF U.B. IS A SATURDAY” explains how we must count in a specific though less common situation. Here **I will not be addressing the counting process**. The three articles already do that.

The result of God’s counting instructions is that the Feast of Pentecost is in some years on the **5th** Day of the 3rd Month, and in other years on the **6th** or **7th** or **8th** or **9th** of **10th** or **11th** Day of the 3rd Month. But it is always on a Sunday.

This means that in some years Pentecost will be as much as **6 days later** in the annual cycle than in other years. And most of the time Pentecost will be from 1 day to 5 days later than the earliest possible date. The obvious point is this: the Feast of **Pentecost keeps moving around** in the annual cycle. It is not rigidly fixed like all the other observances.

The questions are:

Why did God set it up this way? Why did God cause Pentecost to **always move** from one year to the next? **Why is Pentecost not fixed** in the year?

The answers to these questions are tied very closely to the event to which Pentecost applies.

A BRIEF DIGRESSION

The Feast of **Pentecost** represents **the people** in the **1st resurrection**. And the Holy Day of **Trumpets** represents Jesus Christ's **2nd coming**. But that raises the question: how can you possibly have the people in the 1st resurrection (Pentecost) **before** the 2nd coming (Trumpets), since we obviously know that the 1st resurrection does **not** take place **before** Jesus Christ returns?

Without splitting hairs about nano-seconds, Jesus Christ's 2nd coming and the 1st resurrection **basically** take place **at the same time**, though the 2nd coming is ahead by a whisker.

So we have two very powerful significant things (i.e. the 2nd coming and the people in the 1st resurrection), for each of which God wanted to institute an annual observance. While those two events are in practical terms basically simultaneous, some people feel that God should have placed Trumpets before Pentecost, thereby placing the 2nd coming before the people in the 1st resurrection. That would make sense to some of us.

But God didn't do it that way!

So we need to ask ourselves: **why** did God place Pentecost before Trumpets?

Consider the following:

Since Jesus Christ's resurrection and His return to God the Father in heaven,

Christ has been ready to return. **He is ready**. But Jesus Christ **has to wait** until 144,000 men and women have been made ready for the 1st resurrection. Those individuals will come from an approximately 6,000-year period. And the process of preparing those 144,000 people has not yet been completed. The number of 144,000 has not yet been achieved. Some people, and that includes us, are still in the process of being made ready to be a part of that 144,000 group.

The reality is that **Christ's 2nd coming has to wait** until exactly 144,000 are guaranteed to be in the 1st resurrection. It is not that the 144,000 are ready, but they somehow have to wait until Jesus Christ can return. No, it is the other way around.

Consider a harvest of wheat in biblical times.

The harvest has to be fully ready for harvesting **before** the reapers can come. The reapers cannot come until the harvest is ready for reaping. But the actual reaping of the harvest cannot begin until the reapers have arrived.

So the reapers have to come first, and then the harvesting can begin. But the reapers cannot come until the harvest is actually ready for harvesting.

The point is this:

Pentecost represents that **the harvest is ready**! But Pentecost does not represent that harvest being reaped. Before the harvest can be reaped, the reapers must come. And before the reapers can come the harvest must be ready. Pentecost represents **readiness**, but not the actual reaping. Think of it as "the souls under the altar" **being ready** to be harvested (see Revelation 6:9) before the actual harvest takes place.

A basic point to understand:

Pentecost does not represent any specific event!

Pentecost represents **people**! To be precise, it represents **the people** who will be in the 1st resurrection. But Pentecost gives no indication at all regarding when those people "will be reaped" into the Family of God. Pentecost focuses on "who", without any regard for "when".

Trumpets represents "**the Reaper**" (i.e. Jesus Christ) **coming** to do the actual reaping (i.e. gathering in) of the harvest (i.e. the 144,000), which harvest must be fully ready for harvesting before He actually comes.

So the Feast of Pentecost refers to all 144,000 having qualified to be in the 1st resurrection. They haven't yet been resurrected. But they are all "called and chosen"; **their place is guaranteed** even before they are actually resurrected at Christ's 2nd coming.

The Holy Day of Trumpets then refers to Christ's 2nd coming and the 1st resurrection (the reaping) taking place at that point in time.

So much for why Pentecost is before Trumpets. Let's get back to looking at Pentecost.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

As already stated, Pentecost refers to the people in the first small harvest into God's Family, those who during the millennium will reign with Jesus Christ as kings and priests (see Revelation 5:10 and 20:4).

Here is what the instructions for Pentecost tell us.

Pentecost is the only annual observance that is not fixed to a specific day in the year. Rather, it is the only observance that **must be calculated**. And those calculations will produce different results every year. In fact, those **calculations depend 100% on other factors**! Those “other factors” are the day of the week on which the 14th Day of the 1st Month happens to fall.

The yearly cycle in our present age consists of either 12 or 13 lunar months. And since neither 12 nor 13 lunar cycles are equal to an exact number of weeks, therefore the Saturday during the Passover-Unleavened Bread period (i.e. the Saturday that initiates the counting period) will fall on different days in the 1st Month. That in turn results in the Feast of Pentecost then falling on different days in the 3rd Month.

In other words, when the 14th Day of the 1st Month is a Tuesday, then that results in **a different date for Pentecost**, when compared to a year where the 14th Day falls on a Friday, or a Wednesday, or a Sunday, etc.

The weekday on which the 14th Day of the 1st Month falls, **completely controls the actual date for Pentecost**.

Here is what this constant switching to different dates for Pentecost is supposed to tell us.

The actual date for “**when the harvest will be ready**”, i.e. when exactly 144,000 men and women will be ready to be included in the 1st resurrection, has **not** been **established in advance**! It can be on any day in a specific 7-day period. That allows for a considerable flexibility, in terms of dates, for the harvest to be ready.

So when Jesus Christ conducted His ministry in the late 20s and early 30s AD, God the Father had not yet established a specific date for Jesus Christ’s 2nd coming. For example, it was **not** a case of God saying something like:

I’ll have **exactly 2,000 years** between Christ’s 1st and 2nd comings. So since Christ’s ministry started in 26 AD (or 27 AD), therefore I’ll place Christ’s 2nd coming in 2026 (or 2027). Or: Since Christ’s ministry ended in 30 AD (or 31 AD), therefore I’ll place Christ’s second coming in 2030 (or 2031). And that will look really neat on people’s prophecy charts.

That’s not how God is doing this!

And Pentecost is supposed to tell us that. Pentecost could be **as early** as the **5th** Day of the 3rd Month, and it could be **as late** as the **11th** Day of the 3rd Month. But it must always be a Sunday, the 1st day of a week.

God did not preordain a specific date for when 144,000 people will be ready for the 1st resurrection. God in fact established **a lot of leeway** for the date when that number of people will be ready for the 1st resurrection. That amount of leeway was essential, because God cannot force anyone to really repent. And when some people don't respond to the calling God gave them, then others need to be tried and tested to take their place. That may require more time.

And Jesus Christ cannot return before exactly 144,000 people are prepared for the 1st resurrection. And therefore the 2nd coming may need to be moved to a later date than would **theoretically** have been possible. Theoretically the 5th Day of the 3rd Month could be Pentecost (i.e. the readiness date), but **other factors** (represented by other days of the week) can push that date back to as late as the 11th Day of the 3rd Month.

God designed the date for the readiness of the harvest to be flexible.

And "the Reaper" cannot return before the harvest is ready. Therefore 2,000 years ago God did not establish a specific date for when Jesus Christ will return. Pentecost tells us that **the date for Christ's return has always been flexible**.

But that brings up another question.

How can the date for the return of Jesus Christ be flexible, when **that date is inflexibly fixed to the 1st Day of the 7th Month**, the Holy Day of Trumpets?

Good question.

THE DATE FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

We have always misunderstood the correct application of the Day of Trumpets! Here is the point which prophecy buffs have never understood correctly.

It is not correct to say that "Jesus Christ will return on the Day of Trumpets"!

Rather ...

The **correct view** is that "the day on which Jesus Christ returns **will become the Day of Trumpets**"!

It is not that the existing calendar somehow controls Jesus Christ, telling Him when He must return. It is really that **Jesus Christ controls the calendar**! And the calendar will fit in with when God the Father sends Jesus Christ back to this earth.

Our present annual cycles and our present lunar cycles will simply not exist after Jesus Christ's 2nd coming. There are literally going to be "astronomical changes" in this universe. Jesus Christ will not rule with (in approximate numbers) either 365.25-day annual cycles, or with 29.5-day lunar cycles.

Revelation 6:12-14 tells us that there will be a massive shaking of the heavens ("earthquake" in verse 12 is a mistranslation) to restore perfect monthly and annual cycles. And that will happen shortly **before Jesus Christ will return**. The stars and the constellations in the sky will be moved into different locations and different combinations, so that viewed from this earth the night sky will look completely different from the way it looks today.

Those astronomical changes will mean that the calendar which is correct today will become **totally obsolete**. Therefore at present it is **impossible to predict** when the next Day of Trumpets after those changes in the heavens is supposed to be. With different solar and lunar cycles having taken over, all previously calculated dates will be rendered meaningless.

A new annual system must be established.

It doesn't make a difference whether those alterations in the heavens will take place in the month of June or August or December, or any other month. New annual cycles will be installed, which may even involve a spontaneous change in the seasonal cycle.

And when Jesus Christ then returns, whatever month in our present calendar that might be, **that day of Christ's return will become Day 1 of the 1st month** of the millennial rule of Jesus Christ! To us that might be February 25 or May 14 or November 8, etc. The date doesn't matter at all! But in the calendar that will be in force during the millennium, that day will be Day 1 of the 1st month. And with the rearrangement of the heavens that will also be the autumn equinox for the Northern Hemisphere.

Originally in Genesis 1 Christ started the year in the autumn. And that was how Christ intended to rule over this earth. With the change of plan after the flood, God **temporarily** moved the start of the year to the spring. But when Jesus Christ assumes full control over this planet earth, then Christ will also move the start of the year **back to the autumn**.

That's right! **The year will start with a harvest** into the Family of God! And then the Holy Day of Trumpets will become Day 1 of the 1st month, just as Christ had originally intended it to be. That's how it will be in the millennium. (These are obviously my speculations.)

So Jesus Christ will indeed return to this earth on the Day of Trumpets!

But that date will not be based on our present calendar and on our present lunar cycles. It will be based on the rearranged heavens that will exist during the millennium. And **Jesus Christ will simply establish that day as Day 1 of the 1st month** (i.e. as the day we today view as the 1st Day of the 7th Month). And then Jesus Christ will rule for exactly 1,000 years from that day, before Satan will be released for a short period.

Look, Jesus Christ is not going to start His rule in the middle of some year, and then finish in the middle of some year. No, Christ's rule will start on the **1st Day of a new year**. And that means that the 1st resurrection also takes place on the 1st Day of a new year. By our present calendar it might still be March or December, etc. one day before Christ's return. But the day when Jesus Christ returns **will become the 1st day of a new year**. And the changes in the heavens and in the earth's annual cycles will ensure that it will also be the start of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere.

IN CONCLUSION

God established Pentecost in such a way that the date in the annual cycle changes every year. Pentecost does not represent any specific event. Rather, Pentecost represents **the people who will comprise the 1st resurrection**. They are "a harvest". It represents the exact number of 144,000 people **being ready** to be resurrected (or changed) into the Family of God.

Pentecost does not represent those people being resurrected. It only represents those people **being ready to be resurrected**. And "being ready" must certainly come before "being resurrected". Pentecost has nothing to do with the actual timing of the 1st resurrection.

The constant changes in the actual dates for Pentecost are to tell us that **God has not established a predetermined date** for when the 144,000 must be ready for the 1st resurrection. Rather, God shows us that outside factors **may** cause that "readiness date" to be shifted to a later date than would theoretically be possible.

The consequence of this is that **the return of Jesus Christ cannot be determined in advance** by any kind of formula! Before the start of the end-time events there is absolutely nothing that can tell us how close we are to the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. So **all prophecy charts** that attempt to establish an approximate date for Christ's return **are flawed**. There is nothing in the past that can possibly predict the yet future return of Jesus Christ.

Yes, we can look at our world, and at the inexorable progression in our destruction of this planet earth. And we can reason that surely things cannot continue much longer. We have polluted the air, the water and the soil. Most of those of us who are over 60 years of age now have about a third of an ounce of **micro-plastics in our brains**. And that is only getting worse for the younger generations. Things cannot continue like this.

Yes, there are many evils we can look at.

But no matter how bad things look to us, that still cannot tell us when Jesus Christ must return.

All we can do, and must do, is **hope for and pray for** a soon return of Jesus Christ. That is what God's servants have done ever since the days of the original apostles. We must pray "let Your Kingdom come soon". But we cannot make predictions based on some or other calculations.

That is what **the constantly moving date of Pentecost** tells us.

And **the application** of the Holy Day of **Trumpets** has nothing to do with the “accurate” calendar that we use today to determine the annual observances. Today’s “accurate” calendar must be based on the present rather flawed monthly and annual cycles, rather than being based on antiquated and flawed calculations, like the present Jewish calendar. But what is “accurate” for today’s conditions is going to be grossly in error for conditions during the millennium.

Simply put, we don’t know the day when Jesus Christ will return, because Christ’s return will not be connected to the calendar that is in force today.

The present calendar has to deal with **imperfect lunar cycles** and with **imperfect annual cycles**. They are imperfect because a perfect lunar cycle is exactly 30 days long, and a perfect annual cycle is exactly 360 days long. But today’s 29.5-day lunar cycles and 365.25-day annual cycles are far from perfect.

So we calculate the date for keeping the Holy Day of Trumpets based on today’s imperfect cycles. But **the actual application** of the Holy Day of Trumpets **involves a different calendar**, one that God has not yet established. Jesus Christ can return on any day of the year, from January 1 to December 31 by our reckoning, and that day will then become the Day of Trumpets, because **that will be the day when the 7th Trumpet will be blown**. That will be the day to usher in a new calendar. That will be the day when God will reverse the instruction God gave in Exodus 12:2.

And whatever season it was the day before (actually the day before the heavenly upheavals), that day of Christ’s return will announce the beginning of autumn, Northern Hemisphere. And it will be the 1st Day of a new year. And Christ will rule for 1,000 years according to that calendar. Then Satan will be loosed for a short while to stir up into a rebellion all those people alive at that time, who have never been willing to submit their lives and their minds to God’s rule. You already know the rest of the story.

Now the change in calendar at the beginning of the millennium raises another question:

If the Day of Trumpets becomes Day 1 of the annual cycle, that will mean that the **Passover and Unleavened Bread will come after the Feast of Tabernacles** in the yearly cycle. How can that be?

With the change in calendar Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles will be in the 1st month of the year, and the Passover and Unleavened Bread will only be in the 7th month. How does that work.

God established the sequence of Feasts and Holy Days at the time of the exodus from Egypt. That sequence was to reflect God’s plan from **the perspective** of Old Testament Israel, and not from any other perspective. It was to lead human beings to the millennium and to God’s Family.

Now once the millennium starts human beings will be faced with **a completely different perspective**.

Their perspective will be that they are living in the millennium. For them the Feast of Tabernacles will represent the present! They don't have to "look forward to" the millennium. And so the perspective for people at the start of the millennium is as follows:

1) They have just lived through the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. They have just lived through the 1st resurrection taking place. In other words, they have already lived through the Holy Day of Trumpets. **Trumpets is past**.

2) They have also lived through Satan being bound. For them Satan is not around any more. They will know that Satan has been bound for 1,000 years. So for them **Atonement is also past**.

3) They will be living at the very start of Jesus Christ's millennial rule. For them the Feast of **Tabernacles will represent the present**.

But they are not yet repentant!

4) They have not yet submitted their minds to God. And therefore they have not yet received access to the forgiveness of their sins. And they have not yet put sins out of their lives. (In fact, some of them will never repent.) So for people at the start of the millennium **the Passover is still future**. Their access to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ only becomes available once they have repented.

5) And for them **the Days of Unleavened Bread are also still future**, since thus far they have not made any efforts to put sins out of their lives.

6) But for them the Feast of **Pentecost is in the past**. That's because the readiness and the subsequent resurrection of the 144,000 will be an event in the past, an event which they all witnessed.

So for people in the millennium the situation is that they will experience **the millennium** (i.e. Tabernacles) **before they repent**, and before their sins are forgiven (i.e. before the Passover). They will experience Tabernacles before they experience the Passover and Unleavened Bread.

People in the millennium will certainly keep the Feast of Tabernacles (see Zechariah 14:16), with punishments for those who don't initially keep Tabernacles (see Zechariah 13:17-19).

I suspect that when the calendar is changed at the start of the millennium, that there will also be "**a rearrangement of all annual observances**". And for people at that time having Tabernacles before having the Passover will not at all look out of place. Rather, it will reflect the reality that they will be living.

I am obviously speculating. But it shouldn't surprise us if at the start of the millennium and with a new annual cycle Jesus Christ rearranges the annual observances.