



INSIGHT

May 2005

WHY?

International Congregation of Yahweh

INSIGHT

May 2005 Volume 6 Number 2

A MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

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December 26, 2004 Tsunami sent a shockwave of dis-
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What does the Bible say is the real cause of such
natural catastrophes?

Insight is published by the International Congre-
gation of Yahweh, P.O. Box 208, Pocahontas, AR
72455.

ICY is a nonprofit religious organization dedi-
cated to the restoration of the original doctrines of
the Apostolic assembly. ICY follows the practice of
the New Testament assemblies who kept the Law
of the Old Testament. The true assembly is built on
the foundation of the apostles' and the prophets'
(Eph. 2:20) message of obedience to Yahweh's Law
(Isa.24:5,6; Jer.9:13-16; Ezk. 20:19).

Our major doctrines include the name of the
Creator, Yahweh, and His Son, Yahshua. Only these
names are to be used in worship rather than such
names as Jesus, God, Lord, Jehovah, etc. Ample
Scriptural and historical evidence support this belief;
not the least of which is the commandment against
taking the name of Yahweh in vain (Ex. 20:7).

ICY also teaches the restored truth that the week-
ly seventh-day Sabbath is from dawn-to-dark. It is
NOT from sunset-to-sunset as commonly taught.
Yahweh's true Holy Days and New Moons are to be
observed as well. Another major fundamental belief
is the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah Yahshua.

Insight is sent free of charge to all who request
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bers of ICY and other contributors. *Insight* is part
of ICY's effort to proclaim the Gospel in order to
fulfill the commission given to the church. Circu-
lation presently includes 28 foreign countries and
the USA.

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COVER:

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The crucial seventh year:

just months away

From the Editor: Gary C. Miller

Arare event is about to happen! It comes only once every seven years, so the average human sees only ten in a lifetime! What is it? It is the seventh-year land Sabbath (Lev. 25:3-4). This yearlong Sabbath for the land, which starts this fall (Oct. 25) is a rest for those who till the land and also for Yahweh (Ex. 23:10). He takes a time-out too. After all, think of the enormous number of hours *HE* puts in to bring crops to maturity.

Since its inception, our periodical, *Insight*, has continued to alert readers when this special time comes.

The sixth year (the crucial preparatory year: Lev. 25:20-22) of the Biblical seven-year cycle began October 26, last year. Exactly two months later to the day, the tragic tsunami racked the southeastern Pacific Ocean area of southern Asia. Devastation of epic proportions took tens of thousands of lives. The world was shocked at the scale of the carnage and obliteration (see *Tsunami 2004: What does it mean?* pg. 16). It was one of the worst natural disasters in all of recorded history! This occurred in the sixth year of a seven-year cycle.

Fourteen years ago in a previous sixth year of the septennial cycle, the July-September issue of *Insight* alerted readers to the seventh year arriving in October of 1991. Several staggering events were reported in that issue: "We are now in the last months of the sixth year of a seven-year cycle. Up to this point the sixth year has been very eventful: the beginning and ending of the Persian Gulf War, reunification of East and West Germany...a military/KGB coup in the Soviet Union deposing Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev!! All this in the sixth year!" (*Insight*, July-Sept., 1991; p. 1).

When the following sabbatical seventh year (1991-1992) was not observed as required (no sowing crops or gardens), a US record was set for the twentieth century when insured losses due to natural disasters hit the \$10 billion mark! (*Insight*, Oct., 1992, p. 1).

Seven years ago in the sixth year, the March 1998 issue of *Insight* again alerted readers of the October 1998 arrival of the seventh year land Sabbath, 1998-1999. True to form, the sixth year, prior to the crucial sabbatical seventh year, got the world's attention with an unprecedented *global economic meltdown* (*Insight*, Sept., 1998; pp. 10-12)! Nation after nation was plunged into economic chaos through state bankruptcy (Russia), record debt (Japan: \$1.5 trillion; Brazil: \$800 billion), currency devaluation (Malay-

sian *ringgit*: down 37 percent; Indonesian *rupiah*: down 83 percent, etc.), and stock market crashes. Prompted by the economic maelstrom sweeping the nations', Japanese Vice Finance Minister, Eisude Sakakibara, stated, "...This is a crisis of global capitalism." (*Insight*, Sept., 1998; p. 11).

Interestingly, the 1998 economic devastation all started in Asia, the general area where, seven years later in another sixth year, the tsunami struck last December 2004!

Also, in 1998, there was a constant expectancy of war with Iraq, and the lingering dark cloud over the Clinton administration made his impeachment seem inevitable.

Nature also put on an unusual show in the 1998 sixth year, when the 13-year and 17-year cicadas *both* returned for the first time in duo since a previous sixth year in 1754-1755...243 years prior. The dizzying series of exceptional events looked like they would never end!

What we are seeing in the sixth year is an escalation in the severity and scope of calamities as they shift to more and more nations impacted nearly simultaneously. Momentous events, staggering turns in national directions will continue to happen—so long as people continue to ignore the inexorable seventh-year law of land rest.

The seven-year Sabbatical cycle is not just a figment of someone's imagination, a religious relic of a bygone era of "Old Testament" days. It is, rather, an active *LAW* governing land usage.

Notice the *consequences* of breaking the law of the land Sabbath: "I [Yahweh] will bring the land into desolation...Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lies desolate...because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when you dwelled upon it" (Lev. 26:32, 34-35). Are hundreds of square miles of southeastern Asian and Indonesian coastlines lying desolate in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami? Is this a figment of someone's imagination? Hardly! Did those once living there keep previous land Sabbaths?

The world needs some good news! The good news is that there is a way to avoid decimation of the land. But who tells the truth of the way that leads to peace and freedom from the deadly consequences of breaking such laws as the land Sabbath requirements? Part of ICY's mission is to bring this message of hope and salvation to a world that has largely lost its way and gropes in spiritual darkness. If you are involved with produce of the land, Oct. 25, 2005 to Oct. 26, 2006 is your year to rest. Will you? -ICY

Passover: Why & When

WHY?

The Passover is a pivotal Holy Season. Initially founded to release some 1.5 million Israelites plus a 'mixed multitude' of friends (Ex. 12:37) from slavery, it remains to this day a "shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:16).

In the process of freeing Israelite slaves, Yahweh exercised judgment on the false deities of the Egyptian Pharaohist government.

He also destroyed the building blocks of the governmental system by killing all their firstborn. Egypt has never recovered. The pyramids are today mute testimony to a former glory she has never duplicated.

The firstborn sons are to rule. It is a law (II Chr. 21:3), and Pharaoh himself, not being a firstborn (Ex. 12:30), did not have a legal right to the throne of Egypt.

Present Observance

In our present time we observe the Passover as a memorial of that great event (Ex. 12:24-27). ALSO, Yahshua as our Passover was a sacrifice for our sins and by keeping the Passover we show His death until He returns. This is done on Passover by drinking the cup (His *blood*) and eating the unleavened bread (His *body*) during the Passover meal (Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 11:24-26).

Yahshua also showed a deeper significance of eating unleavened bread and drinking the wine during the Passover supper.

Look at His amazing statements: He emphasized that "...Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood you have no life in you" (John 6:53).

He goes even further to show the basis for gaining *eternal life* itself is found in partaking of the Passover bread and cup! *Notice this startling fundamental truth:* "Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has *eternal life*: and I will raise him up at the last day (v. 54)...he that eats of this bread shall live forever" (v. 58).

Actually, this process continues for seven days since unleavened bread must be eaten during a seven-day period (Ex. 12:15) of the Passover feast.

WHEN?

Now that the lasting significance of the seven-day Passover Festival has been shown, we can see the monumental importance of observing it at the correct time.

If we do not take the Passover at the correct time, eating the unleavened bread and drinking the wine do not count—no matter how sincere we may be: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:19).

Passover is on the 14th of Abib

The Passover is the fourteenth day of Abib, the first month of the year: "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover (Num. 28:16; See also Lev. 23:5; Ezk. 45:21; Ezra 6:19). This clear unambiguous fact could not be more certain.

Nowhere does the Bible mention the fifteenth day of the month when referring to the Passover. It says "in" or "on" the 14th; never the 15th.

Next, the fourteenth day of the first month is an annual Sabbath in which a Holy convocation must be held.

Also, the Passover memorial supper is to be held in the *evening* of the

14th: "And the children of Israel...kept the Passover ON the fourteenth day of the month **at evening**" (Heb. *ba'ereb*, "at evening"—starting at sundown: Lev. 22:6-7: "...unclean **until evening**...and when the sun is down he shall be clean...").

Yahshua came with His disciples at evening: "And in the evening he comes with the twelve" (Mark 14:17). This refers to the time *after sunset*: "And at even, when the sun did set..." (Mark 1:32).

Despite these immovable facts some say the Passover is on the 15th day of the first month. They reach this conclusion by first *correctly* stating that Passover is in the evening **at the end of the 14th day**—which *it is!* (See the booklet *The Scriptural Weekly Sabbath is NOT from Sunset-to-Sunset*, pp. 25-27, 34-36.)

But this fact is confounded by their wrong understanding of *when* the Scriptural day begins.

Falsely assuming Biblical days *begin* in the evening, places their Passover on the 15th day of the month. Again, we know Scripture *never* says the Passover is on the 15th, but on the 14th only.

This problem is resolved by the truth that the Scriptural days *begin* early in the morning before sunrise and *end* about an hour or more after sundown as darkness sets in.

The first Biblical hour of the 14th day of the first month *starts* at early dawn before sunrise, and the 14th day *ends* as the twelfth hour expires long after sundown as darkness prevails.

The Passover memorial is, therefore, *on the 14th, and in the evening*, just as the Bible requires.

Passover is the Day before the Full Moon

An additional critical requirement for keeping the Passover, is observing

it at the *proper time of the month*.

The Bible clearly directs us to observe the Passover on the 14th day of the month.

However, we must know what *phase of the moon* coincides with the 14th day of the month

There is a Scripture which tells us precisely that! Turn to Psalms 81:3. This verse when correctly translated shows the proper moon phase.

As we read this translation we *must* bear in mind the Masoretic Hebrew Text has all letters pushed together with *no punctuation, no capitalization, no word divisions, no upper or lower case, no chapters and no verses*. The translators of published translations (*RSV, KJV, NIV, etc.*) are giving the reader *their* view of the intended break in thought, and any punctuation *they* feel that view necessitates.

We should further bear in mind, that *Hebrew has no special words for the English verbs am, are or is*, but are to be understood by the context.

Given these facts, using the *correct* prepositions, not supplying the definite article ('the') and conjunctions arbitrarily, here is the literal Hebrew translation of Psa. 81:3: "Blow at new moon [*chodesh*] ram's horn [*shofar*]. **At FULL MOON** [*keseh*], **at** [or 'in']

day, is pilgrim feast."

Translations (*RSV, KJV, NWT, RSV, Moffat, etc.*) take great liberties in translating this verse in a manner *not justified either by the literal Hebrew nor by the context*.

By the word order, 'Blow at new moon a shofar,' Yahweh clearly separates this *act* related only to the *new moon*, from the *definition* which follows it: "At full moon, at day, is [our] pilgrim feast." He specifies, "at day" (it is to be observed in the day or light), for this feast which was characterized by a daytime pilgrimage (*BDB*, p. 290). A pilgrimage is a long journey. Continuing: "As a statute to Israel this [was] an ordinance by Elohim of Jacob (v. 4). A testimony with Joseph he set it when he went out over Egypt. A lip not did I understand, I heard (v. 5). I turned away from burden his shoulder, his palms from bricks" (v. 6).

Notice here the statute or ordinance to Israel of the pilgrimage feast at the **full moon** was given when Joseph (Israel, Psa. 80:1) went out of Egypt. Israel left a people of strange language and was relieved from making bricks (*BDB*, p. 188).

Question: When did Israel go out of Egypt, out of bondage from heavy burdens in a pilgrimage?

Answer: "And they [Israel] departed from Rameses in the first month **on the fifteenth day** of the first month; on the morrow after the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians" (Num. 33:3).

These verses in Psalms 81:3-6 and Numbers 33:3 are conclusive proof the **15th day of the first month** is at the day of the **full moon**.

Consequently, the Passover, the 14th day of the first month, is the *day before the full moon*.

Counting backwards, we can easily see the first day of the month, the *day of the new moon* is at the time of the *conjunction*; a day in which trumpets and shofars are blown (Psa. 81:3; Num. 10:10).

The moon begins to *rebuild its light each month*, just as the day of sunlight rebuilds its light at dawn. Technically, to accurately be called the first **day** of the month, the moonlight *must build exactly like the day of the week* on which it occurs: *start in darkness and gradually build light*.

The crucial Passover Feast and the night of observations, Passover night, occur in the bright light of the nearly full moon. Yahweh was looking, seeing with this light as He inspected the houses for the covering blood. **-ICY**

2005 CALENDAR

Pocahontas, AR USA

(LAT: 36° 14' N LONG: 90° 5' W)

NEW MOONS MONTH

January	10	11
February	9	12
March	10	13
April	9	1
May	8	2
June	7	3
July	7	4
August	5	5
September	4	6
October	3	7
November	2	8
December	2	9
December	31	10

HOLY DAYS

(and related observances)

Passover.....	Apr. 22 – Apr. 28
Passover Sabbaths....	Apr. 22 & Apr. 28
Passover Supper night of	Apr. 22
Feast of Unleavened Bread.....	April 23
(Unleavened bread eaten sunset	Apr. 22 to sunset Apr. 29)
Wavesheaf Offered.....	May 1
Pentecost.....	June 19
Shoutings (Trumpets).....	October 3
Atonements.....	October 12
Feast of Tabernacles.....	Oct. 17–23
Sabbaths.....	Oct. 17 & Oct. 24
Last Great Day.....	October 24

Head of the Year.....	Feb. 15
End of the Year.....	Oct. 26
Seven-Year Cycle.....	6th Year
Jubilee Cycle.....	26th Year

Sabbaths and New Moons are observed from Dawn-to-Dark
NOTE: New Moons may vary with Longitude and Latitude

Out With the Leaven!

"Even the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses" Exodus 12:15.

During the special Passover season we begin the yearly search for leaven. Those not acquainted with this task may think it rather strange to find adults putting leaven out of their houses! But to those of us who have done it for years, it is just the thing to do in the spring at the Passover season. It can be an enjoyable time as family members join in the hunt for leaven.

This activity, and thinking about what leaven does, can often teach important lessons.

Like sin, leaven is sometimes found in places you would not expect, lurking behind an attractive label with definite eye appeal. Could something that looks and tastes that good be dangerous or sinful? That old pork sausage may have a "down home" flavor and a mouthwatering aroma, but eating it is a sin! It looks good, tastes good, but it is bad!

Like sin, leaven can be overlooked if we are not careful. Maybe something is sinful, but we just carelessly overlooked some vital Scripture or misunderstood the meaning of a word or a phrase. Millions break the weekly Sabbath for just such reasons.

Like sin, leaven puffs up, sort of like you are getting something for nothing. But all that lump of dough is not just flour, it is a lot of hot air (actually carbon dioxide) too.

Sin does the same to the human mind. It puffs it up so we think there is a lot more to us than there really is. That is called vanity and pride. These two are causes of endless strife, wars, competition, sorrow, and anger. Pride was one of Satan's original problems: "Your heart was **proud** because of your beauty..." (Ezk. 28:17). Look what horrendous problems that pride has produced!

The effects of leaven, like some sins, start out small, hardly noticeable. Nothing big. But *if the conditions are not changed*, eventually the effects can be enormous.

So with sin, starting small, *if there is no repentance*, the ballooning effects of evil can be staggering. Petty crimes lead

to more boldness, taking more risks with higher stakes. A grosser more jaded conscience develops resulting in a total loss of innocence.

And how did it happen? For some very **real reasons**. It is not just a ritual. Yahweh wants us to do some very serious thinking about what we do: "...let a man examine *himself*, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (Cor. 11:28). We must examine *ourselves*, not our neighbor; get the beam out of *our* eye (Matt. 7:3).

Removing leaven from our houses, *and by example*, the sin out of our lives, is a preparation for Passover. It is the process of looking closely for sin, and getting rid of it!

What is Scriptural Leavening?

Could there be a more obvious place to start than clearing our houses of the *kind* of leaven the Bible prescribes?

If we do not obey the Scriptures in this command (Ex. 12:15), then we have sinned and are not consistent with the important theme of ridding our lives of sin.

So what is Scriptural leaven? Very often we read *all* leaven must be removed from our homes, our cars, etc., including baking powder, baking soda, even egg whites.

Is this true? What does the Bible teach?

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew for *leaven* (SEC 7603) used in Ex. 12:15 is according to SEC: "barm or yeast cake." *Barm* is the foamy yeast appearing on the surface of fermenting malt liquors (*Webster's*). A *yeast cake* is a small cake of compacted yeast used for baking (*Random House*).

Gesenius says SEC 7603 is "fermentation, leaven," [*leavened* (SEC 2557)].

Most translations of Ex. 12:15 use the word *leaven* for the Hebrew SEC 7603 (*GIL, M, KJV, RSV, NAS, NY, YL, LXX*). Others translate it *yeast* (*NIV, GN, Dake Study Bible*). Some use *fermented* (*Companion Bible*). The *NW* uses *sour dough*.

The *NW* and *YL* use *unfermented* when referring to *unleavened* bread.

The Hebrew for *unleavened* (SEC 4682) means "what is sweet, i.e. *unfermented* bread" (*Gesenius*).

In the New Testament the Greek for *leaven* (SEC 2219) used in I Cor. 5:6 means "yeast, leaven," (AGLNT). Arndt-Gingrich translates this verse: "a little **yeast ferments** the whole lump of dough" (I Cor 5:6).

The LXX (Greek Old Testament) uses this *same* Greek word (SEC 2219)-yeast, *leaven*-in Ex. 12:15 to substitute for the Hebrew word for leaven (SEC 7603) as discussed above.

These facts clearly show **Scriptural leaven** must involve **fermentation**.

Chemical agents such as baking powder and baking soda cause rising by releasing carbon dioxide when mixed with an acid ingredient such as buttermilk.

Egg whites [trap air when whipped], *air* [air trapped in the batter expands when heated] and *steam* [heated water boils in the batter] will cause rising.

None of these *ferment* the dough, however.

Fermentation, on the other hand, is an organic compound's (sugars, etc.) breakdown by the action of a ferment such as yeast or bacteria (*Webster's*).

More specifically, the action of an *enzyme* of yeast or bacteria ferments starch and sugars producing ethanol, which is driven off in baking, and carbon dioxide which causes the dough to rise.

Consequently, removing the leaven from our homes, Scripturally means we must **remove yeast**. We **must** also eat *unfermented* [*unyeasted*] bread (Ex. 12:15).

Eating breads or pastries made with chemical rising agents or *drinking fermented* beverages is *not* prohibited by Scripture during this time. The Bible distinguishes eating (SEC 398) from drinking (SEC 8248). Yahweh clearly knows the differences (Ex. 24:11; Gen. 19:35, etc.). **-ICY**

What is True Worship?

We hear and read of worshipping Yahweh. Scripturally, what is worship?
What should we do or not do in a worship service?

Yahweh demands we worship Him in certain specific ways. It is possible, however, to include all the right worshipful acts, but do it in vain: "But in vain they DO WORSHIP ME, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men" (Matt. 15:9).

Yahshua did not say they were not worshipping Yahweh. They were. They used the proper worshipful acts. Their worship was pointless, however, because their doctrines were not soundly based on Scripture. Tradition, commandments of men and ecclesiastical authority had replaced Scripture. How often do we see this very situation in contemporary religion?

Religions abound in every imaginable form of worship. Some do, in fact worship Yahweh—at least to some degree. Their doctrines are rarely, though, the pure truth of Scripture, despite adamant, often boastful, claims of authentic or true worship.

The doctrines Yahweh honors must extol and revere the Law of Yahweh in all its intricate detail. To validate our worship, His Law must be the rule of conduct. Our will must bend totally and loyally to Yahweh's Law.

This is often far easier said than done for the simple reason that one of the biggest problems is knowing exactly what the Law says.

For example, every religion teaches all should do what is right. But try to get everyone to agree on just what right or righteousness is, and you have your work cut out for you. The hardened skeptic, the one to whom nothing

can be proven except what he wants to believe, will not be convinced though one came back from the grave to tell him. Yahshua understood the intransigent nature of man when He said: "...If they hear not Moses [the Law] and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Matt. 16:31).

We must read and obey the Law, and heed the warnings and admonitions given by the Prophets. If we are not persuaded by these two great witnesses, there is nothing left to say, and all hope is gone.

To avoid vain worship, as Yahshua said: "...those who worship Him [Yahweh] must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

What is Worship?

Notice carefully in Matthew 15:9 quoted above, that Yahshua is *not* defining worship. The *doctrines* per se are not worship.

Worship then is not necessarily a matter of one's belief about a particular doctrine; however his doctrine may neutralize his worship.

So just what *is* worship?

The Hebrew word most often translated *worship* (57 times) is *shachah* (SEC 7812), which means *to bow down, to prostrate oneself*. This is the form worship takes.

Many verses show this. For example: "And the man bowed low and (KJV, NJB, worshipped: SEC 7812) bowed down or prostrated himself before Yahweh" (Gen. 24:26).

"...the man bowed his head and

bent himself down to Yahweh" (v. 26, Rotherham).

"And I bowed low and (SEC 7812): prostrated or bowed down, to Yahweh, and BLESSED (SEC 1288) Yahweh" (Gen. 24:48).

"...when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he BOWED HIMSELF TO THE GROUND before Yahweh" (Gen. 24:52; NAS, NJ, Moffatt).

The *entire phrase*, "bowed himself to the ground" in verse 52 IS SEC 7812; translated "worshipped" in the KJV, GN, etc.

Berry's *Interlinear* translates SEC 7812 in verses 48 and 52 "prostrated myself" and "prostrated himself," respectively.

Now, notice the *additional act* emphasizing the Scriptural form of worship found in this account of Abraham's servant who was seeking a wife for Isaac. This involves the word translated "blessed."

The word 'blessed' here is a primitive root meaning TO KNEEL (SEC). Gesenius p. 142 says of this word: "to bend the knee, TO KNEEL DOWN;" second definition is to bless. See also BDB p. 138: kneel, bless. A close relative, SEC 1290, means simply *knee*.

It is possible, therefore, that Abraham's servant, in addition to his prayer of thankfulness to Yahweh (v. 27), bowed down low, prostrated himself, and *kneeled before Yahweh*.

The *second* definition (Second definitions are usually not the leading, most common or preferred) which scholars have chosen to convey the meaning of SEC 1288 (Gesenius and BDB) is the English word, *bless*. It means to conse-

crate or sanctify, pronounce as holy; to bestow good upon; to extol as holy; glorify.

The word 'bless' is from the Old English, *bletsain*, *bled-sain*: to *consecrate*, originally with blood, earlier *blodis-ian* (*blod* blood + *-iao* [equal] and *ian*, suffixes) (*Randome House Dictionary*); as if meaning to "make equal with blood."

The contexts in which SEC 1288 is used when Yahweh blesses man or man blesses man, shows bless is apparently an appropriate translation.

Should We Bow Down and Pray in the Presence of Others?

The use of SEC 1288 in cases of worshipping Yahweh, clearly indicates prostrating and kneeling:

"Come let us worship (SEC 7812: prostrate ourselves) and bow down (SEC 3766). Let US kneel (SEC 1288) before Yah-

Feasts recorded in both Old and New Testaments: "...will go up from year-to-year to worship (SEC 7812) [*Rotherham, bow down to*] the King, *Yahweh* of Hosts, and ["and" in *RSV, KJV, NAS; Moffatt* has "...to hold..."] keep the *Feast of Tabernacles*" (Zech. 14:16).

On the first day of the seventh month, the Feast of Shoutings, we find Yahweh's people all together, worshipping (prostrating themselves) before Yahweh in *each other's presence*. This is a Scriptural example which does not in any way contradict other verses:

"...on the first day of the seventh month...(v. 2)...

Ezra blessed (SEC 1288: *kneeled*) before Yahweh...And *all the people* answered...while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshipped (SEC 7812): 'prostrated themselves before' Yahweh with *their* faces on the ground" (Neh: 8:2, 6).

These vivid examples—as well as the others—show Yahweh's people *openly* bowing down together worshipping Him in the congregation. Such explicit evidence can

HEBREW WORDS TRANSLATED 'WORSHIP' IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

SEC 7812 (word most often trans. worship in the O.T.: 57 times; worshipped, 39 times), *shachah*: (SEC: prim. rt. of *depress*, i.e. *prostrate*: trans. bow (self), bow down, crouch fall down (flat), do (make) obeisance, do reverence, make to stoop, worship); [BDB, p. 1005, *bow down*...-1. *bow down, prostrate oneself*, before a monarch or superior, in homage...2. before God [Yahweh], in worship...]; [Gesenius, p.813: *to bow oneself down*...in worshipping a deity]

SEC 6087 (trans. worship once) *atsab*: (SEC: prim. rt. to *carve, fabricate* or *fashion*; trans. vex, displease, grieve, hurt, make, be sorry, worship, wrest); [BDB, p. 781: *hurt, pain, grieve*]; [Gesenius, p. 646: *to form, to fashion; to be pained; to labour; hence probably to serve* (an idol), *to worship*... to worship her" (the queen of heaven...Others *to make her*, i.e. her image...)]

SEC 5457 (trans. worship 8 times; exclusively of worshipping the golden image in Dan. 3:5-28): *segeed* (SEC: [corresponds to SEC 5456-*sawgad*, prim. root meaning to *prostrate oneself* (in homage)]; trans.: *fall down*); [BDB, p. 1104: *do homage* (by prostration); SEC 5456, *do homage*]; [Gesenius p. 578: SEC 5456 to *fall down in worship*; SEC 5457, *fall down to worship an idol*].

GREEK WORDS MOST OFTEN TRANSLATED 'WORSHIP' IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

SEC 4352 (word most often translated *worship* in N.T.: 43 times; *worshipped*, 10 times): *proskuneo*: (SEC: meaning to *kiss*, like a dog *licking* his master's hand); to *fawn* or *crouch* to, i.e. (lit. or fig.) *prostrate oneself in homage* (do reverence to, adore): translated—*worship*); [*The Complete Wordstudy Dictionary; Zodhiates*, p. 1234: "In the NT, generally, to do reverence or homage to someone, usually by kneeling or prostrating oneself before him. In the Sept, it means to bow down, to prostrate oneself in reverence, homage (Gen. 19:1; 48:12)]; [*The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament; Mounce*, p. 398: In N.T. *to do reverence or homage by prostration*, Matt. 2:2, 8, 11; 20:20; Luke 4:7; 24:52; *to pay divine homage, worship, adore*, Matt. 4:10; John 4:20-21; Heb. 1:6; *to bow oneself in adoration*, Heb. 11:21.]

SEC 4576 (worship 3 times; worshipped, 2 times) *sebomai*: (SEC to *revere*, i.e. *adore*: trans: *devout, religious, worship*.) [*Zodhiates*, p. 1283: *To worship, to reverence*.] [*Mounce*, p. 412: *to stand in awe of; to venerate, reverence, worship, adore*.]

DEFINITIONS: (*Websters Dictionary*): *prostrate*: lying with the face *downward* in humility or submission
do homage: 1. originally a public avowal of allegiance by a vassal to his lord. 2. anything given or done to show the reverence, honor, etc. in which a person is held.

weh our maker" (Psa. 95:6).

"Then everyone who trembled at the words of the Elohim of Israel...gathered themselves to me...and I fell upon my knees and stretched out my hands to Yahweh...and I said" (Ezra 9:4-5). [What follows is a long prayer witnessed by many people] (See Ezra 10:1).

"But Yahweh...Him you shall fear; and to Him you shall bow yourselves down..." (II Kings 17:36, NAS).

All these cases show bowing and kneeling in the *presence of others* who are apparently doing likewise.

Notice next, all the examples of worship—bowing down, prostrating oneself—before Yahweh at Yahweh's Public

not be ignored.

These examples, and those which follow, were put here for our instruction in righteousness. We must be careful to accept such plain examples, and not be in defiance and rebellion against Yahweh Himself. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (I Sam. 15:23).

Continuing with other evidence: The prophets record that public worship (SEC 7812) is required on the *Sabbaths* (weekly and annually) and on the *New Moons*:

"And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath, ALL mankind will come to *bow down before Me*, says Yahweh" (Isa. 66:24).

"The people of the land shall also (SEC 7812): **bow down and prostrate themselves, before** Yahweh on the New Moons" (Ezk. 46:3).

Is this Yahweh's requirement only for the future? Let the Bible answer: "For I, Yahweh, **do not change**; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). And, "Yahshua Messiah, the same *yesterday, today, and forever*" (Heb. 13:8). This is simply part of what Yahweh has always required at these appointed times.

Also refer to Daniel's example: Daniel 6:10; *kneeled three times a day in prayer*: an observable fact to those around him; Solomon's example: II Chronicles 6:13: kneeling with public prayer; by Yahweh's own decree: Isaiah 45:23; quoted in Romans 14:11.

In the *New Testament* record we find people going to the Passover to worship (SEC 4352: kneel, prostrate: see inset page 8).

"Greeks among those going up to **worship** (SEC 4352) **at the feast** [of Passover, v. 1]" (John 12:20).

Several times in the year Yahweh *requires* that we appear before Him (Deut. 16:16) and worship openly in the congregation of Yahweh by bowing, prostrating ourselves before Him in the presence of our brethren: "While the **whole assembly** worshipped (SEC 7812; see above)" (II Cor. 29:28, also 29:30).

If one does not intend to Scripturally worship Yahweh in the manner prescribed, then why go before Him on His feast days? We go before Him to do as He says, not to do our own thing.

Continuing with N.T. examples, Paul went up to Jerusalem to worship [SEC 4352: **kneel, prostrate**] (Acts 24:11) on Pentecost (Acts 20:16). See also other examples of Paul worshipping (Eph. 3:14; Phlp. 2:10).

Zacharias, John the Baptist's father, was performing his priestly duties at the temple, and notice what was happening outside the temple:

"And the **whole multitude** of the people **were in prayer** outside at the hour of the incense offering" (Luke 1:10).

The whole multitude was openly praying to Yahweh, and there is no indication that Zacharias or Yahweh disapproved.

Another important example, "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple **at the hour of prayer**" (Acts 3:1).

What are we to assume Peter and John were going to do at this *hour of prayer*, if not to pray together with others in the temple? The answer is obvious.

Next is an undeniable case of open prayer:

"And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas,...**These ALL continued with one accord IN PRAYER, and supplication WITH the women, and Mary, the mother of Yahshua, and with his brethren**" (Acts 1:13-14).

Here is proof beyond all controversy that open prayer in

the presence of the brethren by all the brethren of Yahweh is permissible.

Also in this same chapter is additional conclusive proof that open prayer in the congregation is Scripturally allowable: "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples...(the number of the names together were about **an hundred and twenty**)...And **they prayed** and said, You, Yahweh, which knows the heart of men..." (Acts 1:15, 24).

Notice here they prayed in the presence of well over a hundred brethren! And this group (and those in the previous example) was composed of many who had *personally* walked, talked and ministered with Yahshua over a period of years; seeing Him under many different situations, including prayer among the brethren. Recall it was Peter, who was among those praying in this group, who said, "Messiah suffered for you, *leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps*" (I Pet. 2:21).

Would Peter violate Yahshua's directives he personally witnessed by praying among the brethren, if it were contrary to the Messiah's own examples? Hardly.

All the foregoing provides sufficient evidence that we show reverence to Yahweh in what we today call "worship," by bowing down, prostrating our self, kneeling and prayer.

By these clear examples the one/s officiating in the assembly have the authority of the Scriptures to offer public prayer in the congregation as all bow down or prostrate themselves before Yahweh. Additionally, those in the assembly clearly have the right to pray while among the brethren.

This is also the example of the twenty-four elders in heaven who prostrated and prayed openly together before Yahweh's throne:

"And the twenty-four elders, who sit on thrones before Yahweh, **fell on their faces and worshipped** (SEC 4352) **YAHWEH** (Rev. 11:16)... **We thank You, O Yahweh, the Almighty, who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign**" (v. 17).

The angles do likewise (Rev. 7:11-12). We are to go boldly before the throne of grace in worship (Heb. 14:6).

Given all this irrefutable Scriptural evidence, what did Yahshua mean by Matthew 6:5?

"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room...pray to your Father in secret..."

In light of all the Scriptures previously listed, could Yahshua have possibly meant we cannot worship (bow, prostrate) or pray to Yahweh publicly on His commanded Feasts as we are directed to do in the O.T.? Did He change?

He answers this question in *context*: "Therefore **do not be like them** [the hypocrites and Gentiles]" (vv. 5, 7).

Obviously, it was the *ostentatious* attitude and *standing* posture (they did not bow or kneel, v. 5) to which Yahshua objected. Note Yahshua's own example of public prayers

of thanksgiving (John 6:11, 23; Matt. 15:36, 26:26-27).

Bear in mind, too, that Scriptural worship is different from serving a deity. They are different acts. The prophet Jeremiah clearly makes this distinction: "...gone after other deities to serve them and to bow down to them" (Jer. 13:10; 25:6). "You shall not bow down yourselves to them nor serve them" (Deut. 5:9; See also Jsh. 23:7; Ex. 20:5, 23:24, etc.).

The Sabbath Example

Yahweh gives a *personal* example in the Law, which sets a clear precedent for what is to be done on the Sabbath. Notice: "By the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had done; and He **rested** on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then Elohim **kneeled down** (SEC 1288) the seventh day and sanctified it [7th day]" (Gen. 2:2-3).

Note that *Yahweh* **rested, kneeled and sanctified** the seventh day. (See also Ex. 20:11 and Ex. 31:17.)

The word sanctified (SEC 6942) is the same word used in Exodus 20:8 where *Yahweh* said to keep the Sabbath holy: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it sanctified" (SEC 6942; "holy" *KJV*).

We are to sanctify the Sabbath as did *Yahweh*. Sanctified means to make clean, or be clean. We must keep the Sabbath clean.

Yahweh is clearly setting the example as recorded here in Genesis 2:2-3. So what He did on the Sabbath, we must do: **rest**, (Ex. 20:8) **kneel down**, (Psa. 95:6; and bow down, prostrate ourselves, (SEC 7812); Isa. 66:23; Ezk. 46:3) sanctify the day (Ex. 20:8).

The Holy Convocation

The Sabbath as well as the annual feasts of *Yahweh* include a *convocation* (Lev. 23:2-41).

The word translated *convocation*

(SEC 4744) means 'convocation, convoking, reading, sacred assembly' [*BDB* p. 896]; 'a calling together, convocation, an assembly, recitation, reading' (*Gesenius*, p. 504).

According to this definition as confirmed by *Yahshua's* and *Nehemiah's* examples, the convocation includes a **reading**: "...and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up **to read**" (Luke 4:16).

"And all the people gathered...and Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly...And he **read** (SEC 4474) from it..." (Neh. 8:8).

Notice a priest read the Law of Moses, and it is the priest's duty to teach: "...and so as **to teach** the sons of Israel all the statutes which *Yahweh* has spoken to them through Moses" (Lev. 10:11).

Dress for the Feasts

Another aspect of the convocation which should be mentioned is the matter of dress. Notice the following verse: "...bow down to *Yahweh* in the **adornment** (SEC 1927) of holiness" (I Chr. 16:29; *Rotherham*; See also Psa. 29:2, 96:9 same expression: SEC 1927).

Gesenius (pp. 217-218) says of SEC 1927: "ornament, adorning... 'holy ornaments.' i.e. **apparel worn at solemn festivals** (not priestly dresses as some have supposed)."

BDB (p. 214) says of SEC 1927: "**adornment, glory**; holy adornment; **always in connection with public worship of...**"

As we have shown, we assemble, bow down, and have a reading at *Yahweh's* Feasts. Here is a directive to adorn ourselves at the feasts.

The word *adorn* is from a root (*ornare*) meaning 'to deck out' and means 'to serve as an ornament to; add beauty or distinction to; to put decoration on' (*Webster's*).

An *ornament* is an article, accessory, or detail used to beautify the appearance of (*Webster's*)—in this case, a person.

These verses indicate we are to look our best, adorn or ornament-decorate ourselves to some degree at *Yahweh's* festivals. We should enhance our appearance, adorn ourselves in good taste, **not overdone** or gaudy, as we come to bow down before *Yahweh*. This would include grooming and trimming the hair and nails; being clean and neat.

In II Samuel 19:24 we see a man who met King David, had not cared for his feet nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes for some period of time. Thus showing it was customary to care for oneself by grooming.

The importance of dress is further emphasized in the account of the kingdom of heaven in a parable of a wedding feast given for the King's son: "But the King...saw there a **man not dressed in wedding clothes**...he said...**how did you come in here without wedding clothes?**...Then the king said to the servants, '**Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness**'..." (Matt. 22:11-13).

Parables are for our instruction, and this one leaves little doubt the King, *Yahweh*, will not tolerate someone coming before Him slovenly attired. It is an affront, and "in your face" kind of attitude, to come before *Yahweh* inappropriately dressed, unadorned, with a haggardly, unkempt appearance. Appearing before Him is a special privileged occasion.

How far would one get in sweat clothes or army fatigues trying to gain an audience with Queen Elizabeth or the King of Sweden? The palace guard would rightfully throw him out! We should keep uppermost in mind that when we worship *Yahweh* we are **going before the HIGHEST ROYALTY** and should **act like it and dress like it**.

The converse of what we have studied is that one's lack of *proper worship* may well neutralize his doctrines. Think about it.

Yahweh wants our *total* commitment. -ICY

Pentecost 2005:

Who is Counting Correctly?

Each year various groups set a Pentecost date using their own special way of finding Pentecost. But how are we to know if a date is the true Scriptural Pentecost? There is a way to know. Read further to find out what it is and why Pentecost is June 19, 2005!

The Scriptural Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost) is vital to Yahweh's great plan. Major events have occurred on this day. Major events *will continue* to take place on Pentecost. There is no one-time fulfillment of this great prophetic observance. Rather, it is an ongoing "shadow of things to come" (Col. 2:16-17).

But how important is the *right* day to observe Pentecost? The simple truth is a particular day is either Pentecost or it is not. There is no "close enough" when it comes to observing Yahweh's Holy Days.

For example, how many would have gotten the Holy Spirit had they assembled at some other time in 31 A.D. rather than Pentecost, June 24? The Holy Spirit was given on *that* day, not three or four weeks earlier as is typically observed today in most groups professing to keep Pentecost.

Obviously, the timing was crucial back then, and it still is today.

How many would have come to the knowledge of Yahweh's covenant Law had they been at Sinai too soon or too late when the Law was given on Sivan 18 or 19 (in a "late" year this corresponds to June 20/21 like the year 1981)?

The people Yahweh was working with were at the *right place* at the *right time in one accord, speaking the same things.*

Yahweh *makes covenants* on Pentecost with those who appear before Him to worship Him on the day He has chosen.

What day has *He* chosen as Pentecost in 2005? How can we know for certain?

First Mistake Most Make

The first mistake most make when setting a Pentecost date, is assuming-incorrectly, the count to Pentecost must begin during the days of unleavened bread in the spring.

There is not a single verse of Scripture that says directly, or implies the count to Pentecost must begin during the days of unleavened bread. Most all assume the wave sheaf must be offered during that festival. The Bible clearly does not mention the passover week of unleavened bread in the requirements for finding the date of Pentecost.

The "sabbath" debate over the wave sheaf phrase, "on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it," (Lev. 23:11) simply misses the point.

Some say this phrase refers to the *weekly sabbath* which falls *within* the days of unleavened bread.

Others say this phrase refers to the *first annual sabbath* (assumed to be Abib 15) within the days of unleavened bread.

Both are wrong, because the Scriptures *do not require* the waving of the first sheaf of barley take place *within* the days of unleavened bread! **Nowhere** does the Bible require the priest to wave the sheaf at that time.

Yet men persistently insist the wave sheaf, and thus the start of the count to Pentecost, must take place within the seven-day Passover festival.

Why? *Tradition*—not Scripture. Carefully read Lev. 23:9-15 and see for yourself. The

days of unleavened bread *are not mentioned* with regard to the wave sheaf. Neither does it say the harvest cannot start until the wave sheaf is offered. Men *assume* these things.

Who will you believe and follow: the traditions of men or Yahweh's Word?

When the Wave Sheaf was Offered

The Scriptures clearly show when the wave sheaf is offered. It does not say the offering has to be within the days of unleavened bread.

Notice Lev. 23:10: "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and **REAP THE HARVEST, THEN** you shall bring in the sheaf of the **FIRST FRUITS** of your **HARVEST** to the priest" (NASB).

First, notice **NOTHING** said here ties the sheaf of the firstfruits (wave sheaf, v. 11) to the Feast of Passover, i.e. the days of unleavened bread.

Since the sheaf is **OF** the *beginning* (SEC 7225: trans. *beginning* 18 times) of the *harvest* (v.10), the grain must be *ripe* and ready to reap. This refers to the *beginning* of barley harvest (II Sam. 21:9).

Secondly, notice this verse says, "When... you **REAP THE HARVEST, THEN, YOU SHALL BRING IN THE SHEAF...**" It says we must **FIRST reap the harvest** prior to bringing the sheaf for the wave offering. *But it does not mention the days of unleavened bread.* Obviously, the harvest has begun, **before** the wave offering is given.

"There is not a single verse...that says the count to Pentecost must begin during the days of unleavened bread."

"...the harvest must have begun before the wave sheaf is brought to the priest."

Notice too, it says "...beginning **OF** your HARVEST..." showing this offering must be taken from *what has been harvested*. It could not, therefore, be of unripe green ears. This is long *after* the time of green ears.

These immutable facts of Scripture make it clear and certain the *grain must be ready to harvest AND THE HARVEST MUST HAVE BEGUN BEFORE THE WAVE SHEAF IS BROUGHT TO THE PRIEST*.

The Scriptures say to "*Reap the harvest...*" and *afterward* or "...*THEN* bring the sheaf of the firstfruits [beginning] of your harvest to the priest" (v.10). Who can deny this clear statement which shows the harvest must be in progress before the wave sheaf offering is brought?

When is Harvest?

The Bible shows when the harvest is ready: "...Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are **WHITE FOR HARVEST**" (John 4:35).

Yahshua did not say "green for harvest," but *so ripe the fields are white* ("shade of white wine," Arndt-Gingrich, GELNT, p. 473). This statement clearly shows the barley firstfruit sheaf must be of the harvest-from a field *white* for harvest. This must be long after the time of green ears of barley.

Yahshua further verifies this fact by giving the sequence of maturation of grain: "...*First the blade, then the ear* [could only be green ears], *after* that the full corn in the ear, But when the fruit is *ripe* [see margin, KJV], immediately he puts in the sickle, because *the harvest is come*" (Matt. 4:28-29).

He shows beyond doubt *earing time* [green ears] and *harvest* are distinctly different times. Harvest is weeks after green ears (See also Rev. 14:15: "ripe" - become dry or dry up, wither; A.G. p. 550).

Scripture also indicates as much by such statements as "...neither be earing nor harvest..." (Gen. 45:7). And "...in earing time and harvest you shall rest" (Ex. 34:21). These periods are definitely at different times, weeks apart.

Therefore, the fifty-day count of the Feast of Weeks could not possibly start at or near the time of green ears. The wave sheaf must come *from the harvest* which is weeks *after* the time of green ears.

This is the reason why the Leviticus 23 account does not require that the count-to-Pentecost must begin during the days of unleavened bread. That period is usually much too early, falling long before the barley harvest. It is most always at the time of green ears.

Scriptural Reference

There is a Scriptural reference showing the Sabbath-count of Pentecost *starting after* the days of unleavened bread.

Here is that astonishing account: "And we sailed away from Philippi *after* the days of unleavened bread, and came to Troas in *five* days; where we abode *seven* days. [notice] And upon *the first* [day] of the *week*, when the disciples came..." (Acts 20:6-7).

The word "day" in italics is not in the original manuscripts. Very importantly, the word "week" is the Greek *sabbaton* which is *plural* and should be translated "*SabbathS*." The *Concordant New Testament* reads "...*the* one [cardinal number...One; CWSNT, p. 984] of the sabbaths...." That is, on sabbath *number one* of the sabbaths. These are the sabbaths which are counted from the wave sheaf offerings. This is clearly the first of the Sabbaths in the count to Pentecost!

Now notice at *least* how many days *after* the days of unleavened bread Sabbath number one occurred: *5 + 7, twelve AT LEAST. And possibly even more, for*

"This Scripture [Acts 20:6-7] shows, ...the count [to Pentecost] would have to start...*after the days of unleavened bread.*"

Paul (a) does not say how long it was after unleavened bread they departed for Troas (probably about 12 days), and (b) he does say "...and..." leaving an indeterminate period of time between the seven days and the first of the Sabbaths. It could have been as much as six more days until the next Sabbath, after being at Troas five days. This alone would make the first Sabbath, number one of seven, coming some *18 days after the days of unleavened bread.*

Factoring in the unspecified period after unleavened bread before leaving for Troas [case (a)], allows an even greater

number of days. The first Sabbath of the count could easily have been *twenty or more days* after the days of unleavened bread.

This Scripture shows, to figure Pentecost correctly, the count would have to start long *after* the days of unleavened bread.

It disproves the two most common methods of counting to Pentecost mentioned earlier! Persons using either of those erroneous methods would certainly *not* have kept Pentecost with Yahshua's disciples and apostles at that time. Neither will they be keeping Pentecost with His disciples today.

We know this account took place in 57 A.D. (*New Testament History*, Bruce, 1969, p. 336). The last day of eating unleavened bread was April 13, a Wednesday, that year, and Pentecost was Sunday, June 19. Consequently, the first Sabbath, number one of the seven-Sabbath count, was May 7, *twenty-three days after* the days of unleavened bread!

Pentecost Always Occurs on a Sunday

The Scriptural account of counting the weeks to Pentecost shows the fiftieth day must be on the morrow, the Sunday, after the seventh Sabbath of the count: "Even to the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days" (Lev. 23:16).

Now, the stipulation in Lev. 23:11: "...he shall wave the sheaf before Yahweh...*on the morrow after the sabbath* the priest shall wave it," *can only refer to the weekly sabbath.*

Why? Since we now know the count or numbering of weeks to Pentecost does not begin during the days of unleavened bread, *this Sabbath*, after which the wave sheaf is offered, *is not* during that festival week. It *could not, therefore, be one of the annual Sabbaths during unleavened bread of Passover week.* So, it must be a *weekly Sabbath.*

The wave offering is, therefore, made *on a Sunday* following the weekly Sabbath at the time of barley harvest.

Consequently, numbering the fifty days of the Feast of Weeks from *this Sunday and counting seven Sabbaths* places the fiftieth day *also on a Sunday.*

Second Mistake Most Make

We have just discussed the *first* mistake most make when counting to Pentecost. But this is only the beginning of the problem of finding the correct date of the Feast of Weeks.

The *second* major mistake *everyone* makes is *exclusively confining their attention to Lev. 23:10-16 and Deut. 16:9* when deciding the count-to-Pentecost issue.

If those verses were all the Bible had to say on the matter, we would be left with *no definite method of finding Pentecost!* Fortunately, there is more to go on.

The *vital overlooked key to finding Pentecost* is the crucial Scripture, **Exodus 34:22**. This verse unlocks the door to finding Pentecost at all locations in the northern hemisphere.

But to use this vital key we must have the correct translation of this verse. The mistranslation of this important scripture has derailed the truth about Pentecost for centuries!

Here is this important verse (Ex. 34:22): "And you shall observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end (KJV; margin reads "Heb. revolution of the year")."

The word "end" (KJV) is SEC 8622, *tekufah*. The two Hebrew words which mean *end, border, or extremity* are *qaseh* (SEC 7097; 92 times) and *qasah* (SEC 7098; 28 times; also includes edge). The Hebrew *qes* (SEC 7093) has several nuances, one of which has the connotation of "the farthest extremity of," such as the "end of a given period of time," "And after certain years [literally, "at the end of years"...] [Chron. 18:2]" (See *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary*, pp. 69-70).

Clearly, the Hebrew *tekufah* (SEC 8622) has been improperly translated as *end* in the KJV. *Tekufah* according to *Gesenius* (p. 873) is: "circuit as of the sun;" *BDB* (p.880): "coming round, circuit;" *SEC*: "a revolution, i.e. (of the sun) course;" *YAC*: "revolution, circuit."

The root of *tekufah* is *naqaph* (SEC 5365) which *Gesenius* (p. 566) says as relates to feasts: "(3) to go in a circle..."

Tekufah is more properly literally translated **REVOLUTION** [of the year]: (See *Concordant Old Test., Young's Literal Tran.;*

KJV margin) or **TURN** [of the year]: (See *Jewish Publication Society, New Amer. Std., New World Tran., Green's Interlin. Bible*); at the **CIRCUIT** [of the year]: (See *Berry's Interlin. Heb.-Eng. O.T.*).

Two Feasts of Ingathering

The assumption is usually made that the feast of ingathering referred to in this verse (Ex. 34:22) is the feast of tabernacles. This apparently is an attempt to equate the feast of ingathering referred to in Ex. 23:16 to the feast of ingathering referred to in Ex. 34:22.

But these two references are *not referring* to the same festival. The reason we know this is the following.

The feast of ingathering in **Ex. 34:22** occurs at the time of *the revolution or turn (tekufah; SEC 8622) of the year.*

The feast of ingathering in **Ex. 23:16** occurs at the *outgoing (yatsa; SEC 33187) of the year.* *Yatsa*, according to *Gesenius*, means "the end of a period of time."

These two feasts of ingathering obviously occur at different times of the year. The word *tekufah* and *yatsa* are clearly intended to denote different times of the year.

Two *different* feasts of ingathering are further indicated by the phrase in Ex. 23:16, "...the feast of ingathering...when you have gathered in your labors out of the field."

This feast would occur **AFTER** the grain **AND WINE** is gathered (Deut. 16:13: "...observe the FEAST OF TABERNACLES...**AFTER** you have gathered in your corn and WINE." [SEC 3352: *vat of the wine press; Gesenius*, p. 362]). This

"The vital overlooked
key to finding Pentecost
is...Exodus 34:22"

would have to be in the fall *after* harvest-ed grapes had time enough to ferment into wine. This would be what is termed *new wine* (SEC 8492).

This is corroborated by Deut. 14:23: "And you shall eat...before Yahweh... the tithe of your corn, of your wine (*tirosh*; SEC 8492: **NEW WINE**; *Gesenius*, p. 863)." Furthermore, at the Feast of Taber-

nacles it is indicated that one could spend his second tithe which had been turned into money on wine (*yayin*; SEC 3196: *wine; Gesenius*, p. 347 [SEC: as fermented; by impl. *intoxicating*]). This could be aged wines from previous years' vintage.

On the other hand, **Ex. 34:22 does not require** that the ingathering feast referred to be *after ALL the produce is gathered from the field.* Context indicates it refers to the time of harvesting **wheat** and occurs at the *revolution of the year.*

The *other feast of ingathering* (Ex. 23:16) is described in the LXX as: "...the feast of completion at the end of the year." This ingathering feast sounds more like the Feast of Tabernacles which is observed "...after you have gathered in from your threshing floor **and** your wine vat..." (Deut. 16:13; RSV).

It is obviously a feast of ingathering later than the ingathering feast mentioned in Ex. 34:22.

Beyond a reasonable doubt, Scripture indicates there are **two** festivals called "ingathering" feasts, which occur at distinctly **DIFFERENT** times of the year.

A Closer Look at Exodus 34:22

Various translations of Ex. 34:22 clearly show there is no universal agreement on its punctuation.

We should keep in mind the original Hebrew manuscripts of Scripture contain no vowels, no word divisions, no punctuation, no upper or lower case letters, no chapters and no verses. All letters are simply pushed next to each other like this: mrdhltllmbwhsflcwswhstssnw.

Division by verse was introduced by Jewish scribes soon after the time of Yahshua, but chapter divisions of both the Old and New Testament did not come until the thirteenth century.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find differences in translation. Translation depends on the scholar's best estimate of what was intended, and obviously depends on his background, expertise, and, to some extent, his religious beliefs.

Another important factor in translation, is the translator's familiarity with the religious beliefs-*past and present*-of those *nationalities* being referred to in Scripture. A factor too, is the translator's familiarity with the beliefs of dominant

religious bodies which claim the Bible as a basis of their doctrines.

Now, some translate Ex. 34:22 with *three* feasts (TLB). Many others use capital letters, words like "also," or semicolons [remember these are not in the original manuscripts] to indicate two feasts (NAS, GNB, Moffatt, Berry's-Interlinear, NJB, Young's Literal Trans.). While others simply put commas [remember these are not in the original manuscripts either] between the phrases like the KJV quoted above (RSV, Jewish Society Publication).

Given the fact that the Scriptures show *two* feasts of ingathering a more accurate translation of Ex. 34:22 is: "And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest and feast of ingathering at the revolution of the year."

That is to say, the Feast of Weeks *IS* the firstfruits of wheat harvest *and IT IS* the feast of ingathering at the revolution of the year. It ends at or near the revolution of the year.

[NOTE: The word "feast" in the phrase "and the feast of ingathering" is SEC 2282, *chag*. The Masoretic Hebrew text (See Green's Interlinear or Berry's Interlinear) shows it prefixed with the Hebrew conjunction, *Waw* with the *shewa* vowel points (:) added. This form is principally used to connect words or phrases by translating it *and, also* (Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon; p. 233). This is why translating "AND feast..." is preferred. The word "the" in the phrase "and THE feast of ingathering (KJV)" is arbitrarily placed there because the translators apparently feel this helps distinguish "feast of ingathering" from the Feast of Weeks. As mentioned earlier, this bias is echoed by the belief of most all commentators that this refers to the Feast of Tabernacles; which it does not.]

When is the 'revolution' of the Year?

The Scriptural evidence consistently shows the Feast of Weeks, Pentecost, occurs at *the revolution or turn* of the year.

But when is the *revolution of the year*. At what point or points in Earth's yearly course along its orbit does the Sun appear to revolve or turn, i.e. to change its course?

The revolution, *tekufah* (SEC 5365), is commonly assumed in the literature to be the equinoxes which occur in the spring and fall of the year. But what Scriptures support that assumption? There simply are none!

Typically, a verse using *tekufah* is quoted and followed by the authoritarian dictum that it refers to the autumn or spring equinox.

For example, "Ex. 34:22 can only refer to the autumn equinox" (*The Calendar God Gave to Moses*, Solinsky & Anderson; p. 50). This statement lacks any Scriptural support, yet we are somehow expected to believe it on the authors' word alone.

Also, *Spier's, Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar* (1953 ed., pp. 223-224) says, without Biblical support, that *tekufah* refers to *both* the equinoxes *and* the solstices.

What does the *Bible* say about this very important *tekufah* or *revolution*, turning of the year?

Look at Ecclesiastes 1:5-6 from the LXX (Septuagint, [Brenton]): "And the sun arises, and the sun goes down and draws toward its place; arising there it *proceeds southward, and goes round toward the north.*"

Green's Interlinear Bible reads: "...and goes the sun, and to its place panting; arises it there *Going toward the south and turning around to the north.*"

Here is an unmistakable Scriptural reference to the *winter solstice*. Notice the phrase, "...*goes round* to the north." and "...and *turning around* to the north."

This is precisely what happens at the time of the winter solstice (solstice means "sun stop"). The sun "stops" its apparent southward motion along the horizon at the winter solstice December 21 or 22. It then *turns around* and *starts back toward the north*.

This *turning motion* is a *revolving action* which is both an observable fact and a Biblical description of the sun's movement along the horizon at the time of the *winter solstice*. At that time of year the sun's course *changes direction*. Its path undergoes a *revolution: a turning motion occurs*. The Bible unmistakably describes this turning, revolving motion.

This is clearly the tekufah, the turning or revolution of the year!

Though many point to the equinoxes as the revolution of the year, it is an observable fact that *no turning or revolving motion* of the sun's path occurs at the spring or fall equinox.

The sun's course along the horizon northward at the spring equinox and southward at the fall equinox continues on the *same straight line* and *in the same direction* as before and after those points of the year.

The sun's declination as it passes those equinoctial points *does not turn or revolve* or describe any circular motion whatever. Therefore, the *equinoxes definitely do not occur at the time of the revolution or turn of the year*. About this there is no doubt.

It is also an observable fact that there is *another time in the year when the sun's path along the horizon turns or revolves*. It also *turns* after stopping at the *summer solstice* (June 21 or 22) and *starts back south*. This turning action takes place over a period of about six or seven days, depending on the year.

There are clearly *two tekufahs* or *revolutions* of the year: *the summer and winter solstices*.

The feast of ingathering mentioned in Ex. 34:22, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) therefore, occurs at *a solstice*. Since it is also at *the time of wheat harvest*, it must occur *AT THE SUMMER SOLSTICE*.

"ALL the...facts clearly reveal Pentecost occurs...at or very near the summer solstice."

A More Precise Translation

We can now give a more precise translation of Ex. 34:22 which pinpoints the proper time of year when the *Bible* says the Feast of Weeks, Pentecost, must be observed: "And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest and feast of ingathering at the summer solstice."

This defines the Feast of Weeks as (a) a time of the firstfruits of wheat harvest and (b) a feast of ingathering occurring at the summer solstice.

The facts of this verse are the *vital facts—the overlooked facts, which must be combined with the accounts in Lev. 23:10-16 and Deut. 16:9 to give the complete record of the conditions for determining when Pentecost occurs!*

The count of seven weeks plus one day begins somewhere

near the beginning of the barley harvest AND *must extend to a culminating feast of ingathering at the summer solstice*, what we generally call *Pentecost*.

PENTECOST 2005

ALL the Scriptural facts as discussed above clearly reveal that Pentecost occurs on a Sunday at or very near the summer solstice.

This year, 2005, the year's revolution or turning of the sun's path at the time of wheat harvest occurs in the period June 18 through June 25 (Saturday to Saturday).

Pentecost occurs Sunday, June 19, as the sun's angle (declination north) along the horizon is 23° 25'. As its path is turning it increases to 23° 26' from June 20 through June 23 as the solstice occurs. (For a further in-depth treatment of this important topic write for the booklet, *Finding The Scriptural Pentecost: The Forgotten*

ten Biblical Method of Finding Pentecost.)

FINAL REMARKS

For followers of the Messiah in the far-flung corners of the world it is now possible to find the Scriptural Pentecost date and observe the *required Pentecost Sabbath*.

This Holy Convocation is still binding on Israel, Judah, and the church today. We must therefore, know when it occurs.

The decree that Pentecost must occur at the solstice is consistent with the barley harvest requirement: When it is counted *some days after the barley harvest (not before) in Israel it does in fact occur at or very near the summer solstice!*

This should not be surprising, since Yahweh specifies Pentecost must fall *during the wheat harvest and at or near the summer solstice when counted from the barley harvest.* - ICY

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Tsunami 2004: What does it mean?

The staggering toll of human tragedies from the December 26, 2004 Tsunami sent a shockwave of disillusionment, doubt and questions around the globe. What does the Bible say is the real cause of such natural catastrophes?

When word of the 2004 Pacific Ocean Tsunami (formerly called "Tidal Wave") reached the news media, the world was stunned with disbelief and sobered by the gory details. The carnage of truly epic proportions left millions worldwide disillusioned and searching for answers to the ultimate question: Why?

Few of us could grasp the scope of this event either as a Richter scale number (8.9 magnitude) or in human terms. Mile-after-mile of devastated coastal regions were discovered affecting *twelve countries!* Waves lashed Asiatic, African, and Indonesia coastlines bringing death and destruction to regions as far west as 5000 km (3100 miles) from the epicenter, killing beachgoers and fishermen from Somalia to Kenya. The monster quake's epicenter beneath the ocean floor was just north of the island of Simeulue, some 150 kilometers (93 miles) off the western coast of Sumatra.

The tectonic plates' slippage along the Pacific Ocean floor caused a rupture that moved northward from the epicenter at *supersonic* speeds for about 200 seconds. Hard-hit Thailand was struck by tsunamis about 75 minutes after the quake occurred. Sri Lanka and India were pounded by crushing waves in about 4 hours (*Science News*, January 8, 2005, vol. 167; p. 18).

The massive tidal wave left behind an estimated *169,070 to 178,118* dead, *128,426 missing*, and hundreds of thousands homeless and destitute (*Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, February 20, 2005). The tsunami graphically showed how fragile and vulnerable we are when nature acts with such fury and colossal overwhelming power!

The grisly job of cleanup, burial, and reconstruction will

take *years* and *billions* of dollars! Governments and private individuals have committed some *\$7 billion* in tidal-wave relief in Asia, but an estimated *\$4 billion* is still needed for the reconstruction process. However, the many thousands of shattered lives of those who lost family and friends are beyond what time or money can restore: "...what shall a man give in return for his life" (Matt. 16:26; RSV; also Psa. 49:7)?

In the face of such an awesome display of raw force and its irresistible brutal consequences, our helpless meager state is echoed through the ages in the words of the Psalmist, David: "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained, What is man that you are mindful of him..." (Psa. 8:3-4).

Many questions still resonate throughout the religious world: Where was Yahweh (many say "God"-the Babylonian deity) when all this happened? How could a loving Creator let something like this

happen? Surely He would not *cause* such a disaster. Would He? Or is there really a Creator after all? Is man, in fact, facing an existentialist future in a purposeless and irrational universe; alone and at the mercy of the unforgiving ravages of nature?

But are these the *only* questions that need asking? The answers we get depend on the questions we ask.

Too, if a Creator exists, and surely there *must be one*, then is there a reliable record of *HIS* views on such human tragedy? Does it detail *HIS* legislative and executive decisions made with justice and equity and enforced with *unmatched power*? Was the recent Tsunami "*a day of reckoning*?"

"...what shall a man
give in return for
his life?"
Matthew 16:26

Importantly too, is the pressing question of whether or not this staggering toll of human lives and property exacted by an act of nature, is a signal of the prophesied *end time*? Many are now sure it must be.

We will take a look at these questions from the standpoint of the all-important source, the Holy Bible. This document alone claims to be the personal message of Yahweh to mankind. How does HE answer these urgent questions?

Secular and Biblical Record

Secular Record:

A Shadow of Things to Come

In 1946, north of Hawaii, a rapidly moving dark band on the ocean surface was observed by a pilot flying in that region (*Science News*, February 21, 2004, vol. 165; p. 116). The moving band surprisingly *outran the pilot's plane!* Others have also seen this mysterious phenomenon which occurs on the ocean surface as tsunamis pass by or approach. The dark band is typically about one kilometer wide (0.6 mile) and is what researchers' call a *tsunami shadow*. The 1946 shadow was linked with a temblor off the coast of Alaska. Strangely, however, there seems to be no reports of tsunami shadows associated with the December 26, 2004 tsunami.

Tsunami shadows were also seen at several coastal sites in Hawaii on Oct. 4, 1994 when an ocean floor earthquake occurred close to Japan. A video of one of the shadows showed the dark band stretching across the horizon.

Several causes of tsunamis include not only earthquakes, but also landslides below the ocean surface as well as large meteorite impacts in the ocean. Oleg A. Godin of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says tsunami waves travel 700 kilometers per hour (420

"...the destructive power of this one [tsunami]...slightly changed the shape of Earth!"

miles per hour) or more where the ocean is at least 4 kilometers deep [2.4 miles] (*Science News*, February 21, 2004, vol. 165; p. 116).



The Tsunami of December 2004 devastated this western Indonesian coastline, as well as parts of many other countries in the southeastern Pacific Ocean area. Photo/Yahoo

Science in Motion: "The Ice-Skater Effect:" What Goes Around

What do the recent tsunami and ice-skaters have in common? To get some idea of the immense magnitude of the recent deluge, we need to answer this question.

When an ice-skater moving through his/her routine sweeps in a wide circle then pulls their arms upward above the head and draws their legs close together, they spin rapidly. If they change their shape again by lowering their arms, they spin more slowly.

This phenomenon results from the repositioning of their body mass toward (arms up, legs together) or away from (arms lowered, legs apart) the axis about which they rotate, i.e. along the length of their body. Likewise, a change in the shape of any spinning object affects its rotation. This well known "ice-skater effect" apparently happened with the recent 2004 tsunami.

Here is how. Though ocean-based earthquakes are not uncommon, the destructive power of this one was of such epic proportions that it slightly changed the *shape* of Earth! Some parts of the ocean floor *rose* due to the tsunami, but various geophysical models indicate the seafloor *sank* as much as 2 meters in other places. Also, areas of western Sumatra *lost* 1 meter of elevation (*Science News*, January 8, 2005, vol. 167; p. 18). This was due to the shift of the Indian Ocean-floor tectonic plate downward. Some island masses were permanently displaced 65 to 100 feet hori-

zontally. This downward repositioning of land mass, the seafloor and other island-mass changes, triggered by the largest temblor in 40 years, *shifted Earth's mass slightly closer to its north-south spin-axis*. This made Earth's daily rotation speed up (like the ice-skater with their arms above the head).

Now, according to Richard S. Gross of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Earth takes about 2.67 microseconds less time to complete one rotation than before the quake (*Science News*, January 8, 2005, vol. 167;p. 18). That is 2.7 millionths of one second: a small but real amount.

Among the Worst of the Worst

Not since the Noachian tsunamis and flooding some 4000-plus years ago, has there been a recorded tsunami causing as many deaths and such destruction as the one in the South Asian Pacific Ocean on December 26, 2004.

This tsunami ranks among Earth's most devastating natural calamities; perhaps the *third or fourth most destructive in recorded history!* However, Earth is not new to cataclysmic natural events which caused massive human losses. For example, land-based earthquakes have closely matched or even exceeded its human toll in deaths on several occasions. See table below.

Devastating Land-based Earthquakes (526 A.D. - 1976)

Location	# Dead	Time	Earthquake magnitude
Antioch, Syria	250,000	May 20, 526 A.D.	N/A
Shaanxi, China	830,000	January 24, 1556 A.D.	N/A
Calcutta, India	300,000	October 11, 1737 A.D.	N/A
Gansu, China	200,000	December 16, 1920	8.6
Yokohama, China	143,000	September 1, 1923	8.3
Nan Shan, China	200,000	May 22, 1927	8.3
Tangshan, China	255,000	July 27, 1976	8.0

(Source: *The World Almanac 2005*; pp. 207-208)

Biblical Record: Noachian Flood

The worldwide Noachian flood, a global event rather than these more local cases cited, was initiated by multiple tsunamis, fissures opening giant geysers spewing water skyward: "...the same day were the fountains of the deep

BROKEN UP [earthquakes on land and in the ocean floor creating ruptures in the ocean floor, etc.]..." (Gen. 7:11)). This was swiftly followed by unprecedented torrential rainfall continuing for 40 days and 40 nights (v. 11). Nothing in recorded history has since equaled that age-ending human calamity and global decimation. As landmasses disappeared, islands and continents relocated, gulfs the size of continents themselves gaped open. The Grand Canyon in northern Arizona is without a doubt a stark reminder of the awesome hydrodynamic forces unleashed during the Noachian flood, *...and what they left behind!*

What was the TRUE CAUSE of this GLOBAL deluge? WHY did Yahweh personally unleash tsunami-after-tsunami to wrench and shear Earth's surface beyond recognition and destroy perhaps billions of people—all but the EIGHT on the ark? Was He heartless and unfeeling? Was He unjust, not Divine-like in His view and actions? Or is there something more...other questions that need to be asked?

The CAUSE of the Noachian Tsunamis and Flooding

The Creator, Yahweh, left us many historical accounts in the Holy Bible of human calamities, both personal and national, both as "acts of nature" and manmade. He records not only the events but also their *causes*.

Now, what did Yahweh give as the CAUSE for the [Noachian] flood? Here is HIS answer: "And Elohim saw that the *wickedness of man was GREAT* in the earth, and that *every imagination, purpose and desire* [KJV margin] of the thoughts of his heart was *only EVIL every day* [KJV margin]. And it repented Yahweh that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart" (Gen. 6:5-6).

Why was Yahweh grieved at his heart? Why was He sorry He had made man? What was the CAUSE? *The cause was MAN'S relentless WICKEDNESS!* Was Yahweh "heartless?" No. He was grieving and heartsick over what His creation was doing. As with any intelligent being, Yahweh was finding a way

to deal with His grief.

A balanced and realistic view of tragic events (Biblical account of the Flood, famine, disease, wars, etc.), and especially the recent Pacific Ocean tsunami, therefore, requires two things. First, is the event itself, the effect, what happened. Second, and this is the point least discussed, is the *cause in terms of the prior actions of the victims*.

What were they doing BEFORE the tragedy struck? *What were their worship habits, their moral character, their observance of the weekly Sabbath and annual Holy Days? Were they worshipping a pagan deity such as God, Buddha, Allah, Jesus [HaZeus], Baal, or Loride [the Lord]?* In short, what was their alignment with Yahweh's divine natural laws?

THESE are the questions which must be asked. Why? Because they relate the CAUSES to the victims actions. These questions do not shift the focus toward the Creator, what He should have or have not done, but places it where the blame rightfully falls: on the human element of the cause-effect "equation."

So why does the search for the answers, the cause or causes of such events, so rarely include the concept of penalties for actions? Is it not because we humans generally do not want to take responsibility for our actions?

This second matter of CAUSE requires that we must include not only the tragic human event, but also their actions preceding the event. These prior actions contain the essential details necessary to understand why things happen as they do. As there is no effect without a prior cause, *understanding the "why" of human tragedy is not possible without knowing something about the prior thoughts and actions of those involved:* "The curse causeless shall not come" (Prv. 26:2; also 3:33).

Next, what did Yahweh decide to do? What were the consequences of mankind's wickedness? What "act of nature" followed? Here is the Bible answer: "And Yahweh said, I WILL DESTROY MAN whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repents me that I have made them" (Gen.6:7).

Again, what were the thoughts and actions of the victims prior to the Noachian tsunamis and the flooding that followed? What were they doing? The Bible says their thoughts and actions were ONLY evil EVERY DAY...CONTINUOUSLY!

The devastating tsunamis and massive flooding did not "just happen." They were not "just one of those things" allowed "for some greater purpose being worked out in their lives..." as we commonly hear today in the professing Christian community. Obviously, there was "no higher purpose" being worked out in the lives of the pre-flood human race. They were all destroyed. Not one was left (except for Noah and his immediate family). The global destruction was caused by what the human race had done. They were being punished because they would not repent. The purpose of the flood was PENALTY, not "some higher good;" whatever that means. Note that even the wild life was affected by the wickedness of man!

Was the recent
Tsunami "a day
of reckoning?"

The decision to destroy the human race was a personal decision by Yahweh himself, made at the highest executive level of government. This top-level decree was irrevocable! Once made, the die was cast, the plan of action was drawn up, strategies were laid out and man's days were numbered. Yahweh's decision was the strictest of justice.

The Messiah Yahshua, who witnessed the days of Noah, reveals more pre-flood details (remember they did evil continuously), "And as it was in the days of Noe... They did eat [unclean foods? (Lev. 11:3-47)], they drank [to excess, drunkenness?], they married wives [illegal marriages by remarrying-Deut. 24:4, wife swapping, etc.?], they were given in marriage (gay marriages, etc.) until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all" (Luke. 17:27).

Since they did only evil every day, they were breaking Yahweh's weekly and annual Sabbath days by working on those days (Gen. 2:1-2; Ex. 20:8-11) and not having a holy convocation (Lev. 23:1-3) as required. This is a capital crime (Ex. 31:14; Num. 15:33-36).

Remember Yahweh said of the pre-flood generation "...the...imagination, desire and purpose of the thoughts of his HEART were evil..." (Gen. 6:5). What comes from the heart? "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19).

Like the Days of Lot: Sodom and Gomorrah

Another example of great human tragedy is the destruction of the twin-city Canaanite metropolis of Sodom and Gomorrah in ancient Syria. The population is estimated to have been about 100,000 persons.

The Genesis record (Genesis 18 & 19) states that on a warm day in late spring Yahweh and two assistants ["angels"; KJV] visited Abraham living in the plains of Mamre. One purpose of the visit was to inform him that he would have a son (Gen. 18:14). As the three were about to leave, Yahweh decided, apparently on the spur of the moment, to tell Abraham He intended to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. His decision was based on intelligence reports he had received, "...their sin is very grievous" (Gen. 18:20).

The two assistants left, going on ahead to gather first hand evidence of the actual conditions in Sodom. Abraham and Yahweh were left alone to discuss the matter (Gen. 18:32). Through a series of give-and-take, Yahweh agreed that if a total of ten righteous could be found in Sodom, He would not destroy the city. In this extremely generous agreement, the Scriptures appear to imply Yahweh would

have spared *both* Sodom *and* Gomorrah had he found just *ten* in Sodom.

Why did Abraham try to whittle the total down to as few as *ten*? It is almost certainly because his nephew Lot (Gen. 12:5) and his immediate family living in Sodom totaled about that number (Gen. 19:12,14-15).

Note too, the heartrending fact that Lot was unable to convince his *own sons* (Gen. 19:12), nor at least two of his *own daughters* and their husbands to leave (Gen. 19:14)! Only his wife and two unmarried daughters left with him (Gen. 19:8, 15). Is this why Lot's wife took her fatal forlorn look back at what she had left behind? Many say she glanced back because she longed for the ways of "sin" in Sodom. Not likely. After all, *she did leave with Lot*. More probable is she simply looked back with longing for at least *two daughters* and at least *two sons* whom she loved dearly and would never see again. Doubtless too, tugging at her "heartstrings" was any number of precious grandchildren whose loving caress she would never again enjoy.

Sadly, those unconvinced members of Lot's immediate family were so steeped in the ways of Sodom and enmeshed in the cares of this life, that they *would not heed the warning of what was about to happen*. Even in the face of imminent danger just hours away and a way of escape at hand, they refused salvation to the bitter end!

They had witnessed and surely even participated at some point with Lot in the weekly and annual Sabbath observances (days of unleavened bread [Gen. 19:3], etc.) yet, perished for their unbelief. Had they continued to keep Yahweh's law along with their father Lot, their mother and two unmarried sisters, the messengers of Yahweh who visited Lot would *no doubt have given them too, a personal warning of the catastrophe immediately ahead*.

Again, from Yahshua who witnessed those days, we find "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them *ALL*" (Luke 17:28-29).

Now, *why* did every man and woman (young and old), teenager, toddler, statesman, and derelict alike in the houses, streets and government halls of Sodom and Gomorrah meet the same miserable fate? What was the *cause* of their brutal fiery death?



Small businesses destroyed by the tsunami are inspected by curiosity seekers. Photo/Google



Indonesian family surveys the wreckage in disbelief. Photo/Google



Kata Beach looking North from MomTrio. Photo/Jeff Hock



A U.S. Navy ship sails off the debris-ridden coast of Banda Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia, Jan. 14, 2005. Photo/Seaman Jordan R. Beesley



Private boats washed inland by the December 2004 Tsunami. Destruction was spread along hundreds of miles of southeastern Pacific Ocean coastlines. Photo/Google



An Acehese youth walks near debris thrown around by a tsunami in the Indonesian city of Banda Aceh on Dec. 28. Photo/(REUTERS/Beawiharta)

Yahweh said, "...because their sin is VERY GREIVIOUS" (Gen. 18:20). "The men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before Yahweh exceedingly" (Gen. 13:13). Their sins have become proverbial. The very names themselves, "Sodom and Gomorrah", are synonymous with decadence and depravity of every sort [sodomy, sodomites]. The people of these cities are used as a warning in many New Testament passages, Mark 6:11, II Pet. 2:6 and Jude 4:7.

WHAT SINS WERE THEY COMMITTING? Homosexuality was rampant (Gen. 19:5: "...that we may rape them [Yahweh's assistants]...;" *Moffatt*). The iniquities of pride, idleness (laziness), neglecting the poor and needy, haughtiness, and abominations of all sorts were commonplace (Ezk. 16:49).

They broke Yahweh's weekly Sabbath and Holy Days: "...vexed his righteous soul *day after day* [continuously] with unlawful deeds" (II Pet. 2:8). The *New Jerusalem Bible* translates this as "...was outraged... by the crimes...he saw and heard *EVERY DAY*." Since Lot saw crimes and lawlessness *EVERY day*, this had to include the weekly Sabbath and annual Holy Days as well. And, Lot being a *righteous man*, knew what were unlawful acts. He was outraged when he saw the wicked breaking Yahweh's Sabbaths by working on those Holy Days!

Notice too what the prophet Isaiah recorded. "Hear the word of Yahweh you rulers of *Sodom*;...bring no more vain oblations;...the *new moons and SABBATHS*, the calling of assemblies [their worship times]...it is an *iniquity*, even the *solemn meeting*. **YOUR new moons and YOUR appointed feasts MY SOUL HATES**" (Isa. 1:10,14). How clear that Yahweh despised their [*not his*] worship times, *their new moon observances, their Sabbath times*, etc. He had eyewitness testimony of these perverse unrepentant sins of Sodom!

Sodom and Gomorrah had been overrun in the past by Arioch King of Ellasar of the city of Larsa (Gen. 14:1-2) who worshipped the *sun deity Shamash*. It is likely, therefore, they were involved in *sun worship* as are so many millions today who worship on *SUNDAY!* (*The Bible Almanac*; Packer, Tenny, White; Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980, p. 130).

THESE ARE THE REASONS FOR SODOM'S and GOMORRAH'S DEMISE. They were destroyed, not because of some abstract "higher purpose in their lives and their relatives" but for the lowdown sins they were committing! As with the Noachian age, in the age of Lot the cause of the deaths of thousands in Sodom and Gomorrah was *their sins, their unrepentant ways*. Yahweh *personally* decreed the penalty for these "crimes against nature," against His Holy and Righteous Law.

The Same Today: The Cause of the Recent Tsunami!

Did those people of Noah's day or Lot's time committing those crimes think they were bad, evil, and repulsive to Yahweh? It is very doubtful: "The way of a man is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 21:2). Do people *today*, however wicked they may be, committing those *very same* crimes, *really* feel they are bad? Not at all.

Typical of this self-righteous attitude is the account of the infamous murderer, "Two Gun" Crowley. When he was captured in May 1931, he saw himself not as "one of the most dangerous criminals ever encountered in the history of New York," as described by Police Commissioner E.P. Mulrooney. Rather, in his own words he believed, "Under my coat is a weary heart, but a kind one-one that would do nobody any harm."

When he arrived at the execution house in Sing Sing prison, did he finally admit the error of his murderous ways? Hardly. He said, "This is what I get for defending myself." (*How To Win Friends & Influence People*, Dale Carnegie, p. 4).

The pre-flood races of man were

doing what people do; just like now. Thinking evil, plotting, planning, dating, marrying, secure in their religious beliefs. They build, socialize, make money...oblivious to the danger ahead just as those who perished in the recent tsunami.

What were the actions of those unfortunate souls who died in the devastation December 26, 2004? Were they committing the very same sins of those who perished in the age of Noah and Lot? Absolutely. The same sins bring the same penalties. **THIS IS THE CAUSE** of the deaths of those who perished from the 2004 tidal wave inundation. They perished in their sins,

"This tsunami ranks among Earth's most devastating natural calamities."

as did those of an earlier era. Their land was laid waste because of broken land sabbaths (Lev. 26:32, 34-35).

Few, especially of the religious community, tell it like it is, but seek only to whitewash the true cause of this terrible tragedy! Living in denial, they refuse to admit the cause was

sins! It is not denial that is needed, but a sober facing up to our personal responsibility for our actions.

We do a disservice to the world community and disgrace the tragic losses of December 2004 by glossing over the causes of such calamities. What is even worse, we set ourselves up for future tragedies! How? By avoiding the necessary repentance of sins, *the cause*, we lose the only means of preventing further problems. Unless and until the causes are met squarely and honestly and sins admitted, there is no repentance. Without repentance, penalties are inevitable.

We must admit the reality that actions are followed by consequences. The truth is that without repentance and forgiveness we are victimized by our own sins. It is cause and effect, action-reaction...a natural law. *The hard reality is that the tsunami of 2004 was a penalty for unrepentant sins!* Soft-soaping this fact will result in continued losses, heartbreak and tragedy.

It is not heartless to admit this truth. Actually, it is heartless not to admit it, giving people false hope, seducing them: "...they have seduced my people, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no



peace" (Ezk. 13:10). We must not forget that peace and TRUTH go together: "...For there shall be peace and truth..." (Isa. 39:8; also Zec.8:19, Jer. 33:6).

There is another very important factor in all this. This is the little known fact that those Gentile nations who were hit by this consuming tidal wave are now living in the "terrible 70's!" That is, they are living in the last 70 years of their prophetic **280 year period of penalties and punishment**. During this intensified fourth 70-year period of the 280-year period, which began in the year 1773 A.D., these and other Gentile nations have continued to be rocked with devastation and tragedy.

But are WE as a nation and other members of the world community not also steeped in many of those same wayward sins against Yahweh's Law? Absolutely! Do people today the world over commit the high crimes of Sunday and Friday worship and of breaking Yahweh's weekly and annual Sabbaths? Certainly. Do they thumb their nose at His great Law, teaching it has been "done away?" There can be no doubt! Do they worship God, The Lord (Loride—the Sun deity), Jesus

(HaZeus — "Zeus is Savior"), Allah, Budda? Does Yahweh see this evil? If even the sparrow does not fall without His notice (Matt. 10:29), do you think He is oblivious to the gross sins of the present human race? Hardly!

The Worst is Yet to Come!

The **VERY SAME SINS** which destroyed those in Noah's day and the time of Lot, are being flaunted today on a massive scale. Yahweh sees this. He is not turning a blind eye nor deaf ear to the dismal state of wickedness in the present age!

HE IS GOING TO ACT ONCE AGAIN...about this there can be no doubt! The recent tsunami was just the beginning of sorrows...not the end (Matt. 24:8). It is sad to say, but the worst is yet to come!!

The chilling fact is the decision has **already** been made. Yahweh is now planning **another GLOBAL** correction of human misbehavior which will be **MORE DESTRUCTIVE** than the Noachian flood! Imagine that if you can. Shocking but absolutely true! Notice:

"For then shall be great tribulation,

such as was **NOT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD** to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21). Now when is this? At the time of the end of this age (Matt. 24:3) shortly prior to the second coming of the Messiah Yahshua...just after **THE TRUE GOSPEL IS PREACHED "...IN ALL THE WORLD..."** (Matt. 24:14).

What did Yahshua say? **A GREAT TRIBULATION WORSE THAN ANYTHING...EVER!!** Worse than the worldwide Noachian flood! Worse than the fire and brimstone in Lot's day! This mind-wrenching brutal end-time devastation will eclipse **anything in history!!**

What is it? To find out send for our booklet: **Wormwood: On a Collision Course With Earth.**

Was not the tsunami in the South Pacific last December 2004 another warning shot across the bow of spaceship Earth for the world to turn back from its wicked ways? But will we heed? Will we as a world community turn in repentance from breaking Yahweh's great immutable Laws of righteousness **before we reach the point of no return? - ICY**



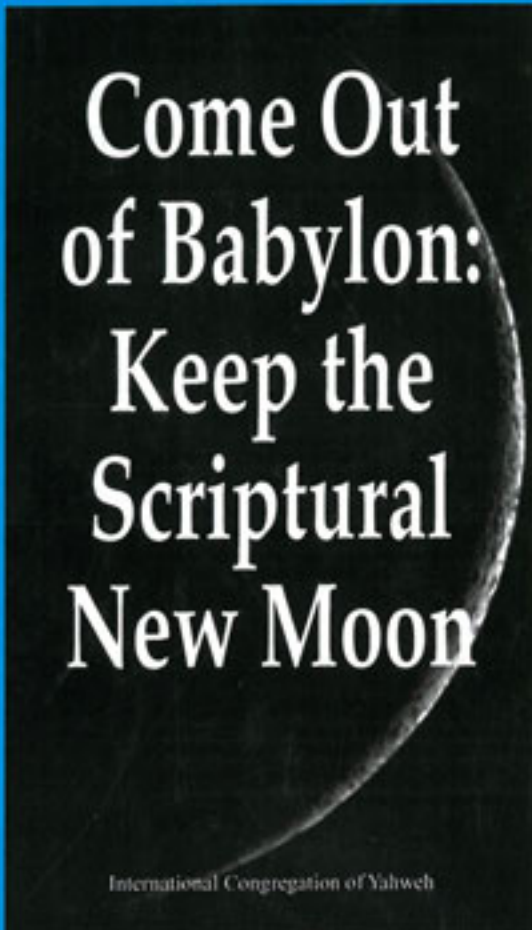
Why does the Jewish calendar use the Babylonian New Moon?

Is the new moon observance of ancient Babylon still used today? The Babylonians of old looked for the first visible lunar crescent as the signal to start the month. Many groups today use this same method while claiming it is Biblical to do so. But is it?

Exactly where in the Bible are we commanded to start the month at evening when the first crescent is sighted in the western sky after sunset? The often-quoted verse, Deuteronomy 16:1, used as justification, does not say that.

In fact, here is what the Bible really says: "...Come OUT OF HER [BABYLON, see v. 2, Rev. 18]...that you BE NOT PARTAKERS OF HER SINS..." (Rev. 18:4). And "...LEARN NOT the ways of the heathen..." (Jer. 10:2). Is there a connection here? Are the writers, John and Jeremiah, trying to tell us something?

Where did the Jews get their evening-to-evening day and the "first visible crescent" traditions? The shocking fact is they got them, not from the Bible, but from ancient BABYLON! Though many scoff at such a statement, facts are facts. Long held beliefs to the contrary, do not change reality. GET THE FACTS. Come out of Babylon "...that you receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Read this booklet that pulls the mask off modern counterfeits masquerading as the true calendar of the Bible.



Come Out
of Babylon:
Keep the
Scriptural
New Moon

International Congregation of Yahweh

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