

# What is the Origin of Sunday Pentecost?

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Sunday, as a day of worship, is steeped in paganism, and in scripture it represents Babylon. The only day of the week that God ever made holy is the seventh day. Why would God have made Sunday a holy day to be observed every year as the day that commemorates the giving of His covenants? Where did the observance of Sunday Pentecost in the churches of God originate? We are going to look at its pagan origins, and see how it came to be observed in the churches of God.

## The Tower of Babel

The Tower of Babel was mankind's first attempt at establishing a hierarchical one-world religious/political/economic system in opposition to the Kingdom of God. Sometime after the flood the people left the area where Noah's ark had come to rest, "And as they journeyed eastward, they found a plain (valley) in the land of Shinar, and they settled *and* dwelt there" (Genesis 11:2).<sup>1</sup> The land of Shinar is Babylon. Nimrod "... was a mighty hunter before [6440, *the face, as in defiance of*] the LORD. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel [Greek, *Babylon*], and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar" (Genesis 10:9, 10).

Nimrod led the people eastward away from the place where Noah's ark had come to rest. Moving eastward represents idolatry because it is moving away from the presence of the Eternal. What the people did in the land of Shinar proves that they went from the Eternal, and into the darkness of idolatry.

"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach into heaven..." (Genesis 11:4). They weren't trying to build a tower that would literally reach heaven. The idea of reaching into heaven was to worship "... the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven..." (Deuteronomy 17:3). The tower was a terraced pyramid called a ziggurat, and it was used for their religious worship.

The Eternal "... scattered them abroad from there upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city" (v. 9). They took their Babylonian nature worship with them to all parts of the earth. The tower of Babel is the source from which all of this world's religions have developed, including pseudo Christianity, whose day of worship, with few exceptions, is the esteemed day of the sun—Sunday.

## The Great Deceiver

Satan, as "... **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan is called "the god of this world" because he is the head of this world's

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<sup>1</sup> Scripture taken from The Amplified Bible, Old Testament copyright © 1965, 1987 by the Zondervan Corporation.

religions. Satan "...is transformed into an angel [32, *messenger*] of light" (2Corinthians 11:14). Jesus Christ is the true messenger of light, but Satan has pawned himself off on the world of "Christianity" as Jesus Christ. "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness..." (v.15). Satan has his pseudo Christian churches, seminaries, and ministers to teach and disseminate his gospel of darkness.

The congregations of God were warned that, "... there **shall be** false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in [3919, *stealthily*] damnable heresies, even denying [720, *to contradict*] the Lord that bought them...And **many shall follow** their pernicious ways [684, *destructive*]; by reason of whom **the way of truth shall be evil spoken of**. And through covetousness shall they with **feigned** [4112, *counterfeit*] words make merchandise [1710, *salesman, peddler*] of you ..." (2 Peter 2:1-3).

The truth would be contradicted within the churches, and not just a few, but "many shall follow" these false teachings. Satan's goal is to stamp out all vestiges of the truth. Therefore, he has continually attacked the congregations of God from within, in an attempt to destroy the truth. Notice that "the way of truth shall be **evil spoken of**." Many have naively thought that false teachings would come from outside the church, but certainly not from within the church itself, through its ministry, but that is exactly what the Word says would happen.

God's people must be ever vigilant. You cannot afford to assume that the "Church" is always correct. You are not the property of "the Church," but of Jesus Christ. The Church did not purchase you with its shed blood. Therefore it is your responsibility to "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. **For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure**" (Phil. 2:12, 13).

### **Pagan Worship Enters the Church**

The people "...changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature [2937, *creation*] more [3844, *rather*] than the Creator..." (Romans 1:25). Israel was warned against such practices. "And lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and when you see the **sun** and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, and should be driven **to worship them, and serve them**..." (Deuteronomy 4:19).

The worship of the sun found its way into pseudo Christianity, because they adopted the pagan practices of the peoples around them, in order to increase their membership. Remember the warning, "through covetousness shall they with counterfeit words make merchandise of you." Religion is a big, profitable business. The apostle Paul said, "For we are not as many, which corrupt [2585, *a retailer, a peddler*] the word of God..." (2 Corinthians 2:17). The idea of selling the Word for a profit was taking place within the congregations of God, and it still is to this day.

Christmas is an example of sun worship. "...The choice of December 25 was probably influenced by the fact that on this day the Romans celebrated the Mithraic feast of the Sun-god (*natalis solis*

*invicti*), and that the Saturnalia also came at this time. The indications are that the Church in this way grasped the opportunity to turn the people away from a purely pagan observance of the winter solstice to a day of adoration of Christ the Lord...”<sup>2</sup>

By adopting these pagan practices into “Christianity,” they “changed the truth of God into a lie.” Just because you put the name of Christ on a pagan festival **does not miraculously transform it into something Christian. It is still a lie.** “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him **must worship Him in spirit and in truth**” (John 4:24). God does not accept counterfeit worship!

### **Ishtar (Easter) and Tammuz**

The pagan god Tammuz is a counterfeit of Jesus Christ. “...According to ... mythology, Tammuz died, descended to the lower world, was resurrected, and ascended again to earth and then to heaven. During his absence the earth remained sterile and the flocks were plundered. Because of his close association with the realm of nature, the fields and animals, he was called “the shepherd.”<sup>3</sup> Jesus Christ said, “**I am the good shepherd**: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

After the death of Tammuz, “... through the weeping of his “MOTHER,” Ishtar (Easter), he mystically was revived. And the sign of his supposed coming to life again, was represented in the springing forth of the vegetation—in Spring!”<sup>4</sup> At the temple of God we find “...women weeping for Tammuz” (Ezekiel 8:14). The temple represents the people of God, “...for **you are the temple of the living God...**” (2 Corinthians 6:16).

Did the pagan practice of “weeping for Tammuz” enter into the churches of God? Yes, it did. “While the Jewish Christians of Palestine, who kept the whole Jewish law, celebrated of course the Jewish festivals, the heathen converts observed only the Sabbath, and, in remembrance of closing scenes of our Savior’s life, the Passover, though without Jewish superstitions”—*Church History, Apostolic Age to A.D. 70, Sec., 29,; Lewis Hist. S & S., page 135.*<sup>5</sup>

The “heathen Christians” **were not observing God’s annual holy days**; therefore they did not observe Passover on a holy day. Instead, they opted for observing Passover on the evening of the fourteenth of Abib, “in remembrance of closing scenes of” Jesus’ life. This practice has continued in the churches of God to this day. They observe the Passover ceremony on the evening of the fourteenth, about 20 hours prior to the death of “Christ our Passover.” It is done in a funeral-like atmosphere, with the emphasis on the closing scenes of Jesus’ life.

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<sup>2</sup> William Joseph Roehrenbeck, “Christmas,” *Collier’s Encyclopedia*, vol. 6, Cromwell Collier and MacMillan, Inc. 1967, p. 403.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen D. Simmons, “Mesopotamia: Ancient Civilization,” *Collier’s Encyclopedia*, vol. 15, Cromwell Collier and MacMillan, Inc. 1967, p. 749.

<sup>4</sup> Ralph Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion Ancient and Modern*, Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Association, 1966, p. 157.

<sup>5</sup> A. N. Dugger and C. O. Dodd, *A History of the True Religion*, Printed in Jerusalem, Israel, 1972, p. 47.

Following the weeping for Tammuz, "...at the door of the temple of the LORD...about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east" (Ezekiel 8:16). The rising of the sun in the east represents the resurrection of the sun-god. Surely this is not practiced by God's people.

Notice the teaching of the Worldwide Church of God concerning the wave sheaf offering that they taught was to take place shortly after Jesus' resurrection. The wave sheaf offering "...pictures the *resurrected* Christ ascending to heaven to be accepted by His Father as the very first human to be actually born of God—the firstfruit of the first harvest of souls!...This fulfillment of the wave-sheaf offering actually occurred on Sunday, the morrow after the Sabbath..."<sup>6</sup>

The Sunday wave offering occurs on Easter Sunday eighty percent of the time. The Worldwide Church of God correctly taught that Jesus was resurrected on the Sabbath, but their teaching that He rose up to the Father on Sunday is the same as that of pseudo Christianity.

### **When Was the Wave Sheaf Supposed to be Offered?**

The wave sheaf offering could not be presented on a holy day, because it was to be from "...the firstfruits of your **harvest**..." (Leviticus 23:10). Harvesting is labor-intensive work, and it is forbidden on a holy day; therefore it had to be offered "...on the day after the Sabbath..." (v. 11).

The people were forbidden to eat any of the harvest of the Promised Land until they brought their wave offering to the priest (v. 14). Notice when they began to eat the produce of the land. "And they did eat of the produce of the land **on the day after the Passover**, unleavened cakes..." (Joshua 5:11). **The wave sheaf was offered on the day after the Passover.**

"Christ our Passover" died on Wednesday, "...in the midst of the week..." (Daniel 9:27), and that was the day before the annual Sabbath. "The Jews therefore, because **it was the preparation** [3904, *a making ready*], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (**for that Sabbath was a high day,**) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken" (John 19:31). The day before the holy day "...was the **preparation** [3904] **of the Passover**..." (v. 14).

In the Promised Land the children of Israel "**kept** [6213, *to prepare, to make ready*] the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even..." (Joshua 5:10). The fourteenth is not a Sabbath day, but it is a preparation day for the annual Sabbath, which is on the fifteenth. Therefore the wave sheaf could not have been offered on the day after the fourteenth, because that day is always a Sabbath day, and the offering had to be presented "the day after the Sabbath."

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<sup>6</sup> Herbert W. Armstrong, *Pagan Holidays – or God's Holy Days – Which?*, Ambassador College Press, Pasadena, CA, p. 29.

The day after the annual Sabbath on the fifteenth is the sixteenth; and that is when the wave sheaf was offered. Jesus was in the tomb on Thursday the sixteenth, therefore **it is impossible for the wave sheaf to picture the resurrected Christ ascending to the Father on Sunday!**

The wave sheaf pictures the people who have been made acceptable to God by the blood of the Passover sacrifice. "...Christ our Passover [*was*] sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Jesus **was not sacrificed that He might be accepted, but rather that we could be made acceptable by His blood.** On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the wave offering was offered up to God as a symbol of the **first (1) fruits of man (6).**

### **Sunday Pentecost in the Church**

Tertullian (c. 155-c. 245), who was one of the early church fathers of what was to become the Catholic Church, wrote, "... for to the heathens each festive day occurs but once annually: you have a festive day every eighth day. Call out all the solemnities of the nations, and set them out into a row, they will not be able to make up a Pentecost."<sup>7</sup> What Tertullian was saying is that every eighth day, i.e. Sunday, as the day after the seventh day Sabbath, is a Pentecost. Sunday, as the eighth day, became a symbol of the spiritual creation, and as such, it replaced the Sabbath, which was merely a symbol of the physical creation.<sup>8</sup>

The Sabbath was eventually eliminated in favor of Sunday. "The Catholic Church...by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday...The Christian Sabbath is therefore *to this day* the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church..."<sup>9</sup>

Sunday Pentecost/Whitsunday (Catholic Pentecost), and Sunday as a day of worship, go hand in hand. The now defunct Worldwide Church of God adopted Sunday Pentecost in 1974. Like the Roman Church, the Worldwide Church of God eventually adopted Sunday as the day of worship, instead of the Sabbath. The Sabbath day had already begun to be watered down several years prior to their adopting a Sunday Pentecost. "...Know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" (1 Corinthians 5:6). All it takes is a little bit of leaven, and in due time the truth has been pushed aside.

### **Sifting out His People**

The early congregations began to split over false teachings. The apostle John mentions Diotrephes, who cast the brethren "...**out of the church**" (3 John 1:9, 10). The people had to believe what the church taught, or else they would be put out. The truth became "evil spoken of" by the church. Why does God allow these false teachings to become imbedded in the churches?

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<sup>7</sup> Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Chap. 14—Of Blasphemy One of St. Paul's Sayings.  
<http://www.blackmask.com/books93c/onidol.htm> . Viewed 9/3/2005

<sup>8</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi, *The Sabbath Under Crossfire*, Biblical Perspectives, Berrien Springs, Michigan. p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> Cardinal Gibbons, The Christian Sabbath, *The Catholic Mirror*, Nov. 25, 1893

God has allowed this for the purpose of sifting His people. He wants to know who is going to follow the truth, and who is going to follow the teachings of men. "...[T]he LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, **to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep** [8104, *to guard, protect*] **His commandments, or not**" (Deuteronomy 8:3). Each person has the responsibility of preserving the truth, even if it means going against the doctrines of the Church. That may mean being put out of the Church.

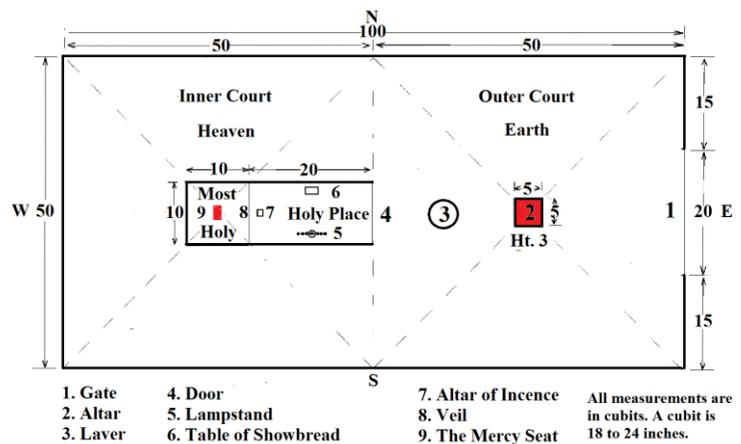
An example of sifting is found in the story of Gideon. Israel was going to battle against "...the Midianites, and the Amalekites and the children of the east..." (Judges 6:33). Israel began with 32,000 men, but the Eternal pared them down to 300 men (Judges 7:3-7). Three hundred is a very significant number.

The number 300 means to walk with God. "And Enoch lived **sixty and five** years, and begat Methuselah; and Enoch **walked with God** after he begat Methuselah **three hundred** years..." (Genesis 5:21, 22). In order to walk with God you must walk according to the covenant, i.e. "His commandments." The covenants were given on the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost, on the fiftieth day from Passover (the fifteenth of Abib). **Fifty** days from Passover is Sivan 6<sup>th</sup>. Sivan 6<sup>th</sup> is the 65<sup>th</sup> day of the year on the Hebrew calendar. Enoch was **65** years old, and he walked with God **300** years. The number **6** (man) x **50** (Pentecost) = **300**.

The number **300** is found in the pattern of the tabernacle. The area of the tabernacle of God is 10 x 30 = **300** cubits. The perimeter of the courtyard is 50 + 100 + 50 + 100 = **300** cubits. These are the boundaries in which we are to walk with God.

Jesus said, "Enter you in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate that leads to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because narrow is the gate and narrow [2346, *compressed, afflicted*] is the way, which leads to life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13, 14). The way that leads to life is not the easy way, for "...we must through much tribulation [2347 from 2346, *pressure*] enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

The gate that Jesus spoke of is on the east end of the courtyard. The number 20 is that of a servant. Jacob served Laban 20 years (Genesis 31:38). The Levites were to serve in their service of the tabernacle for 20 years (Numbers 4:3, 23, 30). We have ten digits on our hands, which represent our works, and ten digits on our feet, which represent the way in which we walk. "LORD, **who shall abide in Your tabernacle?** Who shall dwell in Your holy hill? He that **walks**



uprightly, and **works** righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart” (Psalm 15:1, 2).

It is fifteen cubits on each side of the gate. The Hebrew letters that total fifteen are: ך=5, and ם=10. Combined, they spell Yah, which is *Strong's* #3050, a contraction of #3068, the Eternal. In English Bibles, it is often written as “LORD.” The gate is for the servants of the Eternal who have come out of the world and are walking with Him.

In the pattern of the tabernacle/temple, in order to come into the presence of God you must travel **from** the east to the west. Eastward toward the rising of the sun is Babylon. The Day of Pentecost commemorates the giving of the covenant. God brought His people forth out of Egypt/Babylon/the world to give them His covenant. Does it make sense that He would put them back in Babylon to receive the covenant, as pictured by a Sunday Pentecost?

Christians are warned, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **for you are the temple of the living God...**” (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). We are to stay out of Babylon!

**Conclusion:** God never made Sunday a holy day. All of God’s annual holy days are memorials that are on set dates. The day of the week on which they are observed can vary from year to year. Sunday Pentecost is not of Christian origin, but comes out of paganism and its sun-worship. “Come out of [*Babylon*], My people, **that you be not partakers of her sins**, and that you receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...” (1 Peter 4:17).