

Wave Sheaf Offering and Joshua 5: How to Count to Pentecost in the Year 2001

Fred R. Coulter—January 20, 2001

This is a special study into how to count to Pentecost in the year 2001. And we are going to do some analyzing of the article by John Rittenbaugh, *Countdown To Pentecost 2001*.

What we need to understand is that there are special ways that we need to handle the Word of God and handle the conclusions that we arrive at. Let's understand something that's very important to realize: ***All truth is logical, but all not all logic is truth!***

2-Timothy 2:14: "See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord **not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, but which lead to the subverting of those who hear.**"

This is what happens with every false doctrine that comes along. I have yet to see a false doctrine that is not based upon the Scriptures. How is it that you can, from the Scriptures, come up with false doctrines?

- Verse 15 tells us *why*
- Verse 14 says *don't strive about words*
- Verse 15 says *how you correct the problem*

Verse 15: "**Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God...**" In other words it has to be that:

- you come before God
- you love His Word
- you fear and tremble before His Word
- you love God the Father
- you love Jesus Christ
- you love the brethren
- whatever you do is based upon the things concerning the Word of God

Verse 15: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**"

If the Word of Truth is *wrongly* divided you can come up with a wrong conclusion. When you bring your own logic and your own thinking into it then you can come up with things that are not correct.

That's one of the reasons that I ring the cowbell when I come to my own theories or

explanations, simply because I want people to understand that that's something I'm thinking about, or that is something that I am asking a question concerning. But it is not dogma and it is not Truth from the point of view that it is doctrine. ***I have to rightly divide the Word of God!***

What happens when it's not? You subvert the hearers and you take away their faith. We see this over and over again. Down through the years I've seen it never fail: ***a little leaven leavens the whole lump!*** The leaven can be

- pride
- intellectual vanity
- going back and idolizing a man who used to be a leader of the Church and what he did.

Therefore, what Herbert Armstrong did—as a lot of people think—in the Church of God and the eighteen points that he allegedly restored before he died, that's all anyone needs to know. If that's the case then what they have done they have made Herbert Armstrong *God*.

Do you understand how that happens? It happens if everything there is to know for salvation are those eighteen things, then all you have to do is learn those eighteen things and you can disregard the rest of the Bible. Therefore, you put this man in place of God, and if you put a man in place of God you make him an idol.

There is some very sad understanding drawn from this. It shows also another thing that is important: You never, *never, never* get an idea in your head first, come to your conclusion, and then go into the Bible to prove it. That's why in the book *The Christian Passover* we have **The 14 Rules of Bible Study**, and we also have a booklet on it.

We are going to apply the **14 Rules of Bible Study**; we are going to test and prove this. This is not a picking at John Rittenbaugh, but ***it is to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good!*** I know John Rittenbaugh, and I like him very much, but it really does not surprise me that something like this has come up. So, let's begin to understand what the problem is.

Simply defined: In certain years the Passover falls on the regular weekly Sabbath. Sometimes it's a rare occurrence, and other times it

kind of comes in bunches. According to the Calculated Hebrew Calendar, let's begin in 1949 when the Passover fell on a regular weekly Sabbath; then again in 1954.

In Worldwide Church of God in 1954 they had only about 3,000 members. And at that time they kept the counting of Pentecost with a Monday count, beginning with the first day of the week after the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Very few people even understood that there may be a problem at that particular time because the Church was so small. Now then, it did not occur again until 1974, and at that time they had thousands and thousands in the Church. Between 1954 and 1974 the 'verbal doctrine' came down that the Sabbath from which you begin to count to Pentecost must always fall *within* the Days of Unleavened Bread. Now, we're going to see that that is not necessarily always true.

Whenever you have the Passover falling on a weekly Sabbath, then it's just a little bit different and we will see why, and we will see the Biblical example that tells us why. Here are the following years that they had for the remainder of the 20th century:

- 1976, which was then two years later
- 1986, ten years later
- 1994, which is eight years later
- 2001

Then through all of the 21st century it falls this way:

- 2005
- 2008
- then it jumps clear up to 2021
- then again four years later 2025
- then we have another 20-year period from 2025 to 2045

If time goes on through the whole of this century to the end of it, which it doesn't look like it will, but if it does this is how it would fall:

- 2048
- 2052

then it jumps again 20 years:

- 2072
- 2075
- 2079

So, that's eleven times in 100 years, roughly between a 9 and 10 year average that it happens, but when you have those two 20-year periods your average is a little bit distorted when you try and

average it out. That's why it becomes a problem when it arises this way.

Let's see the command in Lev. 23. What I want to do first is go through and present what the Bible has, and present the Truth so we know and understand it and then we can examine the claims in the article by John Rittenbaugh and understand whether it stands the test of the Biblical Truth or not.

Leviticus 23:9: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "**When you have come into the land**, which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest of it, then you shall bring *the premier* sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. **On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it**'" (vs 9-11).

We've always said that, especially during that 20-year period—and I remember that very well—that the Sabbath always has to fall *within* the Days of Unleavened Bread. However, when the Passover falls on the regular Sabbath, the first Holy Day is on Sunday, the last Holy Day is on the weekly Sabbath. So you do not have a Sabbath *within* the Days of Unleavened Bread from which to count.

Let's read and see what it says here in *The Schocken Bible Vol. 1: The Five Books of Moses* by Everett Fox:

Leviticus 23:9 (Schocken): "YHWH [The Lord] spoke to Moshe [Moses], saying: 'Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: **When you enter the land** that I am giving you, and you harvest its harvest..." (vs 9-10).

King James, v 9: "When ye...reap the harvest thereof..." So it's important to understand: "...its harvest..." We'll come back to that in just a minute.

Schocken: "...you are to bring the premier sheaf of your harvest to the priest... [that's the very first sheaf that is cut] ...He is to elevate the sheaf before the presence of YHWH [the Lord], for acceptance for you; **on the morrow of the Sabbath**... ['ha Shabbat,' the regular weekly Sabbath] ...the priest is to elevate it" (vs 10-11).

Then it tells the sacrifices that are to be given on this day. Let's look at it from the translation from *Owens Analytical Hebrew*. It says the same thing: "...its harvest..."

Now then, let's analyze this, because the claim is made that the Israelites had to harvest their own harvest. In other words they had to plant it

before they could harvest it, but it doesn't say that. Let's go back and see exactly what this says: **“When you have come into the land...”** That's the first thing.

- When did they come into the land?
- Whose land was it? *It belonged to the children of Israel because God gave it to them!*

And when they came into the land, which is in the spring of the year, which we will see, and there is a harvest that is standing there:

- Whose harvest is it when there is a field of barley standing there, or many fields of barley?
- Whose harvest is it then when it's harvested?
- *It's the harvest of the children of Israel because it's theirs!*

The planting of it does not contaminate it. Now we'll see a little later on that Rittenbaugh mixes up another verse where a Gentile is not to handle the sheaf when it's brought to the temple. But that's different from when the Israelites would cut it.

So, we need to understand that it doesn't say that you must harvest *your harvest that you have planted*. But when you come in and take possession of it, *it then becomes your harvest*. That's why it says here a little later:

“...then you shall bring *the premier* sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it” (vs 10-11).

There are many different claims that John Rittenbaugh makes concerning when this took place. So, let's first of all find out exactly what it does say. That way we can understand what it does not say. Let's come to Israel going into the land. So we get an understanding of the time settings so we realize what is taking place:

Deuteronomy 1:1: “These *are* the words, which Moses spoke to all Israel beyond Jordan in the wilderness, on the plain opposite Suph... [then it lists all of them] (v 2): ...eleven days from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea. And it came to pass, in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him in commandment to them; after he had smitten Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth in Edrei, beyond the Jordan, in the land of

Moab... [the east side] ...Moses began to explain this law, saying” (vs 1-5).

So, they came in and they entered the land, took possession of the eastern part this side of the Jordan on the 1st day of the 11th month. When you count to Passover what do you have? Let's figure this out.

- you have the 11th month, which has 30 days
- you have the 12th month, which has 30 days
- *60 days!*

Then from there to the Passover you have another two weeks; so you've got approximately 10 weeks. We're going to see that's plenty of time to do the things that they needed to do. Let's see some more timing, and understand exactly what it's saying.

Deuteronomy 31:1: “And Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them, ‘I *am* a hundred twenty years old today. I can no more go out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, “You shall not go over this Jordan.” The LORD your God will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall possess them, and Joshua will cross over before you as the LORD has said. And the LORD shall do to them as He did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and to the land of those whom He destroyed. And the LORD shall give them up before your face, so that you may do to them according to all the commandments, which I have commanded you. Be strong and of a good courage. Do not fear nor be afraid of them, for the LORD your God *is* He Who goes with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you” (vs 1-6).

Then Moses called Joshua forward and commissioned him to do as God had instructed him.

Deuteronomy 32:45: “And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel. And he said to them, ‘Set your hearts to all the words, which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to observe and to do, all the words of this law. For it *is* no vain thing for you because it is your life...’” (vs 45-47).

Now we need to understand that, too, brethren. The Words of God that we have *are our life!* That's why Jesus said He was ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life.’ That's why He is also called the Word of God. So, you combine it all together, see. It's not vain to follow the Lord.

“...And by this word you shall prolong *your* days in the land where you go over Jordan, there to possess it.’ And the LORD spoke to Moses that same day, saying, ‘Go up into the mountains of

Abarim, to Mount Nebo in the land of Moab, which is opposite Jericho; and behold... [go observe] ...the land of Canaan which I am giving to the children of Israel for a possession. And die on the mountain where you ascend, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered to his people, because you sinned against Me among the children of Israel at the Waters of Strife in Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, because you did not sanctify Me in the midst of the children of Israel, yet, you shall see the land before *you*, but you shall not go there to the land, which I *am* giving to the children of Israel” (vs 47-52). *Moses didn't go in!*

Remember what time period we are dealing with beginning with the first day of the eleventh month.

Deuteronomy 34:5: “And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor. But no man knows of his grave to this day. And Moses *was* a hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eye was not dim, nor any of his natural strength abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days...” (vs 5-8).

We don't know how long it took him to bring this sermon, to write up all the words, to have it ready for them, but there is plenty of time within the ten weeks for them to mourn for Moses for thirty days.

Now we'll get into the book of Joshua and let's begin to see how these things unfolded.

Joshua 1:10: “Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people saying, ‘Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, “Prepare food for yourselves, for within three days you are crossing over this Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess it.”’” (vs 10-11)—*and they did!*

Note booklet: *Understanding God's Command for the Wave Sheaf*, which shows about the time sequence in a little bit more detail. In Josh. 2 they sent out the spies.

Joshua 3:1: “And Joshua rose early in the morning. And they moved from Shittim and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.”

So, within three days they were going to move. Then they got up and moved, and then they

came here right by the River Jordan and they lodged there.

Verse 2: “And it came to pass after three days the officers went through the host. And *they* commanded the people saying, ‘When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then you shall move from your place and go after it’” (vs 2-3).

God had an orderly progression of things that they were to follow. What happened was, beginning in:

Verse 7: “And the LORD said to Joshua, ‘Today, I will begin to magnify you in the sight of all Israel so that they may know that I will be with you, as I was with Moses. And you shall command the priests that carry the Ark of the Covenant, saying, “When you have come to the brink of the water of Jordan, you shall stand still in Jordan”’” (vs 7-8).

So, they stood in the Jordan and it backed up so that all the children of Israel could pass over and cross over the Jordan.

Joshua 4:13: “About **forty thousand armed men** of the army passed over before the LORD to battle to the plains of Jericho.”

Let's stop and just review a little bit what happened here when we come up to this point. Remember that when the children of Israel refused to go in and God said, ‘All right, you're going to wander 40 years in the wilderness, a year for every day that the spies were in spying out the land. Everyone who is 20-years-old and older are going to die in the wilderness.’

That happened, but we have a whole group of people who were circumcised—all the males were circumcised—that were from 20-years-old and under. With the exception of Caleb and Joshua we have this: the oldest ones were 60-years-old, and the youngest ones were a little over 40, because there may have been some babies at that time who had just been born when that took place. We've got a great number of people to where they were the ones who all during the wilderness with the priests and the Levites were keeping the Passover at the regular time.

Verse 14: “On that day the LORD made Joshua great in the sight of all Israel. And they feared him, even as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.” *They crossed the river!*

Verse 19: “And the people came up out of the Jordan **on the tenth day of the first month...**” So, they came up out of the Jordan that day. What is

the 10th day of the 1st month? *The children of Israel were commanded that on the 10th day of the 1st month they were to select the lamb that would be for the Passover (Exo. 12)!*

So after they crossed over the Jordan they selected their lamb and now we begin the countdown to the Passover. Now let's see what else happened here. They picked up the twelve stones, set them up so that it would always be a standing witness that that's where the children of Israel passed over the Jordan.

Joshua 5:2: "At that time the LORD said to Joshua, 'Make sharp knives for yourselves and circumcise the children of Israel again, the second time.'"

We have no account in Exodus that there was a circumcision before they left the land of Egypt. But there had to be because no one uncircumcised could partake of the Passover. So that's why it says "...the second time."

Verse 3: "And Joshua made sharp knives and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins."

We'll talk about the whole circumcision process here, because John Rittenbaugh, in his paper, says that it took a long time to do it. No, those men who were already circumcised were the ones who circumcised the ones who were not circumcised, and it was all done on that one day, on the 10th day of the 1st month. It couldn't be strung out over a long period of time. Remember the key is back here that on the 10th day of the 1st month, that's when they came to Gilgal.

Verse 4: "And this *is* the reason why Joshua had them circumcised. All the people that came out of Egypt, the males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the wayside after they came out of Egypt."

Now we have new men of war because we read about them earlier. These had to then be those who were already circumcised because we will see a little bit later on that there is a distinction made between the men of war when they come to Jericho, and then later on the last day when all the children of Israel were there.

Verse 5: "For all the people who came out were circumcised. But all the people born in the wilderness by the wayside, as they came forth out of Egypt, had not been circumcised."

We have two groups here. The circumcised, who at the time that the 40 years began were under 20-years-old. How many that is we don't know, but

it certainly was a lot if we consider that there was a million to a million and a half people total. You had a couple of hundred thousand, minimum.

Verse 6: "For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness until all the people, the men of war who came out of Egypt, were destroyed because they did not obey the voice of the LORD. To them the LORD swore that He would not show them the land, which the LORD swore to their fathers that He would give us, a land that flows with milk and honey. And Joshua circumcised their sons *whom* He raised up in their place, for they were not circumcised because they had not been circumcised by the way. And it came to pass when they had finished circumcising all the people, they stayed in their places in the camp until they were whole" (vs 6-8).

How long does it take to be healed from circumcision?

1. this doesn't tell us
2. we have this many days to the Passover, so let's count them

You have day 10 when they were circumcised: 11, 12, 13, 14; so, to the Passover you have 5 days. Then from there to the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread you have another 7 days; that's a total of 12 days.

Verse 9: "And the LORD said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' Therefore, the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day."

Verses 10-12 are key critical important verses, because these define for us, from the Scriptures, how a Passover and Wave Sheaf Offering Day is counted by God *when it falls on the weekly Sabbath*. We will see that this fell on the weekly Sabbath, because when the Passover falls on the weekly Sabbath *that is the only time when the Wave Sheaf Offering is waved on the day after the Passover, because it falls on the weekly Sabbath*.

Verse 10: "And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho."

John Rittenbaugh does not assume that this is a Passover, and he also assumes that this is probably the Passover of the second month. This does not say the 2nd month. The reference we have is the 10th day of the 1st month, and everything else flows from that right down to here. So, the 14th day then is the 14th day of the 1st month. That's when the

Passover was to be kept, and that's when they kept the Passover.

It doesn't say the 2nd month. Something is very interesting here when you look in the Scriptures wherever it talks about the Passover appearing in the 2nd month because of the judgment in Num. 9, it always states that they kept the Passover in the 2nd month. Since it doesn't state it we cannot assume that this is the Passover of the 2nd month. This is the Passover of the 1st month because the flow of the days lead right to it.

Verse 11: "And they ate of the old grain of the land on the next day after the Passover, unleavened cakes and roasted *new* grain in the same day."

Unfortunately, that doesn't convey things as clearly as it could. Now let me read to you from the *Septuagint* of that section there

Verse 10 (*Sep*): "And the children of Israel kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even... [or at evening] ...on the westward side of Jordan, on the opposite side of the Jordan in the plain. They ate the grain of the earth..." (vs 10-11).

It doesn't say that it was old. But it could be because when they captured on the east side of the Jordan they obviously captured all the stores, all the food, everything that they had so they could have old grain. But remember, **they were not to eat of any grain until that first Wave Sheaf Offering had been waved!** God strictly forbade them to eat any grain. So, even if they confiscated it from the people that they conquered they still couldn't eat it because the Wave Sheaf Offering had not been given.

Verse 11 (*Sep*): "They ate the grain of the earth unleavened and new corn."

from *Owens Analytical Hebrew*, v 10: "While the people of Israel were encamped in Gilgal they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains, and they ate the produce of the land **on the morrow after the Passover.**"

Since the Passover is the 14th, what is the morrow after the Passover? The morrow after the Passover has to be the 15th. **And the only time that you have the morrow after the Passover, the 15th, is when the Passover falls on the regular weekly Sabbath!**

Here we have the Scriptures that tell us very clearly that on the day after the Passover, that's when the Wave Sheaf Offering had to be waved. Why did it have to be waved though it doesn't necessarily tell us directly here that it was waved? *The reason being is because we have the command*

*in Lev. 23 that says that you are not to eat any of the harvest of it. **You are not to eat any grain, any bread, or any parched corn until the Wave Sheaf Offering has taken place after you come into the land!***

Therefore, the Wave Sheaf Offering had to be given on the morning of the 15th, the day after the Passover. You can come to no other conclusion. Now then, let's understand some of the other things concerning what happened from there and then we will go analyze it a little bit more.

Verse 12 (*FV*): "And the manna stopped on the next day after they had eaten the grain of the land. And there was no more manna for the children of Israel, but they ate the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."

Therefore, they did not have to plant their harvest. When they took over the fields *it was theirs*, so when they harvested it, *it was theirs*. Now then let's also understand something, as we'll see a little bit later on, but let me just mention it before we get there. Come back here to:

Verse 11: "...roasted... [parched (*KJV*)] ...*new* grain in the same day." What is parched corn [grain]? *That is green, fresh and newly harvested!* You never take the old corn and parch it, unless you want puffed wheat or puffed rice, or popcorn. Because to parch it then was to dry it out so that it could be made into fine flour. Let's follow this sequence along and let's understand what happened and how then they circled Jericho.

Verse 12: "And the manna stopped on the next day after they had eaten **the grain** of the land..."—it could be new or old. It says 'old' in the *King James*, but it means *the grain of the land*, not differentiating between new or old; the new is differentiated by the parched corn.

"...And there was no more manna for the children of Israel, but they ate the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. And it came to pass, when Joshua was beside Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold, there stood a Man in front of him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, 'Are You for us or for our foes?' And He said, 'No, but I have come *as* the Commander of the army of the LORD.' And Joshua fell on his face to the earth. And he worshiped and said to Him, 'What does my Lord say to His servant?'" vs 12-14).

This is obviously the One Who became Jesus Christ. This was the Lord God manifesting Himself in a visible form so He was the Captain of the host.

After getting all the instructions of what to do, that they were to take the men of war and they were to go around the city once with the priest bearing the Ark and blowing the trumpets, all the while they went around the city once. Let's see when that started because this relates back to the circumcision that took place.

Joshua 6:9: "And the armed men went before the priests who blew with the ram's horns. And the gathering army came after the Ark... [that means at the end] ...as *the priests* were going on and blowing with the ram's horns. And Joshua had commanded the people saying, 'You shall not shout nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall *any word* come out of your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout.' And the Ark of the LORD went around the city, going around *it* once. And they came into the camp and stayed in the camp" (vs 9-11).

Why did they do that? Those who were the men of war; those who were armed could be that whole group of men that had been circumcised going clear back into Egypt, and were from 60-years-old down to just a little over 40-years-old. That could be a considerable number.

So, for them to walk around Jericho presented no problem for them because they had already been circumcised 40 years before. Therefore, that means that the question of being able to fight or to present themselves or to walk around the city of Jericho was not encumbered by them being circumcised.

(go to the next track)

Now let's see the instructions that God gave to Joshua beginning in:

Joshua 6:2: "And the LORD said to Joshua, 'See, I have given Jericho into your hand, and its king, *and the mighty men of war*'—*for six days!*

Not all Israel! Not all the men! Just the men of war. And the men of war had to be those who had been circumcised forty years earlier.

Verse 3: "You shall go around the city, all the men of war. Go around the city once. So, you shall do for six days."

When did the 6-day period start, because we have a total of 7 days? If the morrow after the Passover was on a Sunday the 15th, which it was, then the next day was the 16th the beginning of the 6 days.

Verse 12: "And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the

LORD. And seven priests carrying seven ram's horns before the ark of the LORD went on without stopping and blew with the ram's horns. And the armed men went in front of them...." (vs 12-13)—*not all the children of Israel!*

So all of those who were back in the camp who had been circumcised and stayed there until they were whole, had the 5 days before Passover, then they had the 15th, which was the 6th day, and then they had 6 more days in addition to that, so they had a total of 12 days to heal. That does not become a problem though John Rittenbaugh makes a big issue of it as we'll see here a little later on.

Verse 14: "And the second day they went around the city once and returned to the camp. So they did six days. And it came to pass on the seventh day they rose early, at the dawning of the day, and circled the city in the same way seven times. Only on that day they went around the city seven times. And it came to pass, at the seventh time..." (vs 14-16).

When you count this they began on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st was the next weekly Sabbath, the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then the 22nd was on a Sunday, when they compassed the city they did it seven times.

Therefore, that Sunday after the last day of Unleavened Bread was not the Wave Sheaf Offering Day in that year when the Passover fell on the regular Sabbath, it was a regular workday. That's why all during the rest of the Days of Unleavened Bread, from the 16th through the 21st, those six days they walked around the city once. Now when it came to the regular weekly Sabbath on the 21st, which was also a Holy Day, therefore, anything that is necessary to do in work for the Holy Day for the purpose of that Holy Day is allowed to be done. That's why God commanded them to go around it once. On the last Holy Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the armed men and the priests went around the city once.

Verse 16: "And it came to pass, at the seventh time, when the priest blew with the ram's horns, Joshua said to the people..."—*not the men of war!* They were now healed enough so they could all go to this battle.

"... 'Shout, for the LORD has given you the city! And the city shall be devoted to the LORD, it and all that is in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all with her in the house because she hid the messengers that we sent...' (vs 16-17). *That's what they did! That's what happened!*

Let's keep in mind all of these things, and examine what John Rittenbaugh has said in his article. First of all, I want to bring to you out of Edersheim's book on page 257-259 about the cutting of the wave sheaf. It tells us about the parched grain. That's what I want to cover first of all, which shows then that the parched grain is the new wave sheaf.

Down there in Jericho was one of the most productive areas for grain, and especially on the east side of the Jordan. The children of Israel on the Holy Day, which fell on a Sunday—15th day of the 1st month that year fell on a Sunday—on that Holy Day whatever is necessary they could do. If God commanded them, which He did, that they could cut the wave sheaf, and all the families of all the children of Israel could also cut a Wave Sheaf for their family or for two or three houses, whatever it may be, they could do that for the Holy Day, because it was commanded that they do it. Now Rittenbaugh makes a great issue of that a little later on.

Edersheim's description of the cutting of the Wave Sheaf from *The Live and Times of Jesus the Messiah* by Alfred Edersheim

Already on the 14th of Nisan the spot whence the first Wave Sheaf was to be reaped had been marked out,

by delegates from the Sanhedrin

by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down....

...When the time for the cutting of the sheaf arrived—that is, on the evening of the 15th Nisan, **even though it were a Sabbath...**

So what he's talking about here is when the Passover falls on the Sabbath.

...just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and a basket, set to work....

And then they had the ritual that they would go through.

They cut it and then the ears were brought into the court of the temple and thrashed out with canes and stalks so as not to injure the corn. Then parched in a pan perforated with holes so that each grain might be touched by the flame, then finally exposed to the wind. The corn thus prepared was ground in a barley mill and then they made their unleavened bread from that.

Now let's also understand something else concerning the Wave Sheaf Offering: Whenever the grain was not ripe, or the lambs were not born—or there were not enough of them born—or the fledges from the pigeons and turtledoves had not yet hatched, *they delayed the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread for thirty days!* The reason they did so was because these things were required for the observing of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The new grain, the parched corn, was to be eaten **during** the Days of Unleavened Bread. If you do not have the Wave Sheaf Offering until after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, you have missed the whole point of the first harvest. Now we'll talk about symbolism and the three days and three nights in just a little bit.

Here's something that's also important to understand. Now you can find this in *The Christian Passover* book, pages 230-231: It's a full explanation as to why *the Passover Day is an unleavened bread day*, and the 14th day of the 1st month is called *the first of the unleaveneds*.

In truth the Passover Day is a separate unleavened bread day *in addition to the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread*. That becomes important to understand. When you have the Passover come on the Sabbath, even if you wanted to exclude the other years, all the leaven would have to have been put out before the beginning of the 14th day of the 1st month, *because the Passover fell on the regular weekly Sabbath!*

One of the mistakes that was made in Worldwide was that they said you could eat the Passover on the 14th. But then on the day portion of the 14th after you ate the Passover you could go to McDonald's and have a hamburger, because the Feast of Unleavened Bread had not yet begun.

Well that can only be done in a society such as ours today. But you can also read in *The Christian Passover* book, and I'll leave that up to you to check that out, where that the beginning of the 13th they went through and they were cleaning out the leaven. They had to have it ***all out of their houses before the Passover began***. *All leaven had to be burned; they had to unleaven the entire country*, which is an entirely different proposition than you just unleavening your home and going getting rid of it someplace. You try unleavening the whole city: every bakery, etc. A whole different proposition!

So, whenever the Passover falls on the regular weekly Sabbath, regardless of what your opinion is of the other of the Days of Unleavened Bread, ***the Passover Day is an unleavened bread day!*** Therefore, you do have a Sabbath during the eight-day period of Unleavened Bread, and Passover

being the Passover Day, which then is a Sabbath, during that time so that's why we find in Josh. 5 *that on the morrow after the Passover they ate of the corn, they ate of the parched corn because the Wave Sheaf was offered!*

Rittenbaugh says that he doubted that the tabernacle was even set up. Listen! To set up the tabernacle with the Levites doing it was quite a fast operation. It didn't take a long time to set it up.

I'm going to go through an analysis that was done by Carl Franklin of Rittenbaugh's article. We are going to look at some of the things that he has said in the article and we are going to see where he errs in his judgment, and why he errs in his judgment and makes conclusions that are not correct.

It's very, very important that you understand the truth of what we've covered here so far so that we can realize that whenever the Passover falls on a regular weekly Sabbath, the first Holy Day being on a Sunday, then is the Wave Sheaf Offering and *that becomes day one in the count toward Pentecost.*

This has to do with the argument that you use some highly respected person—in this case it was Dr. Dorothy—so that you can use that as some basis for your judgment, for Dr. Dorothy sure enough did raise a question concerning that in the 1974 discussion that they had at the Elder's Conference there in Pasadena.

One of the things that Rittenbaugh does in his paper, he understands the problem that the Pharisees have because they always counted from the morrow after the 15th. What he is saying is that if the 15th becomes the Wave Sheaf Offering then you are setting a fixed date. That is not true because you still have to count.

from article: *Countdown To Pentecost 2001* by John Rittenbaugh (JR) with comments by Carl Franklin (CF):

JR: Using common logic...

You have to be careful when you use logic; you have to use the Word of God rightly divided.

...we can tell that God could easily have given a set calendar date for Pentecost, just as He did for all the other festivals. He could have instructed us to keep it on Sivan 6, but He does not....

That's a true statement!

...Therefore, the Pharisees, modern-day Jews—even some who call themselves Christians—are wrong to keep it on Sivan

6 year after year unless God's method of counting happens to end then.

He instructs us to count, but any count that begins on a fixed date...

mixing apples and oranges! The Wave Sheaf Offering *just happens to fall* on the 15th in those years.

...will end on a fixed date.... We count because God commands us to count!

So, you can't reason in a circle and say that because we're doing it here, therefore it is because we are using a fixed date.

CF: If this were a Holy Day Sabbath, it would be telling us to count from the day after a fixed date, on either Nisan 16 or 22. This means that Pentecost would fall on either Sivan 6 or 12.

JR: The weekly Sabbath falls on different calendar dates and therefore so does the day after the weekly Sabbath. Understand why this is so...

Then he talks about when it's on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and so forth.

John interprets Lev. 23:11, 15 as a command to count from the weekly Sabbath that falls *within* the Days of Unleavened Bread, because there is no Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread except the last Holy Day being a weekly Sabbath is during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

So, now trying to make a rule where God never said *during the Days of Unleavened Bread*. He said *on the morrow after the Sabbath*, and most of the time it falls *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread. But when the Passover is on the weekly Sabbath the morrow after the Sabbath then is the first Holy Day, the 15th day of the 1st month.

Here is the faulty premise: that the weekly Sabbath from which the Wave Sheaf is counted must fall within the Days of Unleavened Bread. John's conclusion then is this: that the weekly Sabbath from which the Wave Sheaf is counted must fall within the Days of Unleavened Bread. So, you've got a premise, then you have a conclusion, which is exactly the same as your premise, therefore you are reasoning in a circle.

Although the above premise is not directly stated, it is nevertheless the basis of John's argument. Rittenbaugh begins his argument by stating a few obvious givens:

JR:

1. we must count from a weekly Sabbath
2. the Sabbath we choose is significant

then proceeds to reason that this Sabbath must fall within the Days of Unleavened Bread.

He doesn't give any proof. You cannot prove it from Lev. 23:11, that that Sabbath always must fall during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Most of the time it does.

Rittenbaugh argues that the Wave Sheaf Sunday must follow the weekly Sabbath that occurs during the Days of Unleavened Bread, but now you've got a problem. If the only Sabbath you have during the Days of Unleavened Bread is the last Holy Day, you don't have one within the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Wave Sheaf Offering falls outside the Days of Unleavened Bread, and hence you cannot have any new grain offerings, nor can you have new parched corn flour made into unleavened bread cakes during the Feast of Unleavened Bread because it would fall out of there.

JR: The question, then, is which Sabbath do we need to isolate to arrive at the correct date for Pentecost? The Sabbath we choose to begin the count is significant, or else we could arbitrarily decide to count from any Sabbath. Confusion would be the result.

The Sabbaths of Unleavened Bread are significant. Because Unleavened Bread is seven days long, one and only one weekly Sabbath, with its varying date, will always fall within it. If we were to deny this link between Unleavened Bread and when the count to Pentecost begins, God's counting instructions become unusable.

Not necessarily!

Although the Wave Sheaf is normally offered during the Days of Unleavened Bread, the connecting link between the Wave Sheaf and Unleavened Bread is the Sabbath. The Sabbath Day is the sign between God and His people (Exodus 31:12-17), not just in identifying who they are, but in this case, it also serves as the focal point in counting to Pentecost. Because we must first identify the Sabbath to begin the count, **it is the Sabbath that must fall within the Days of Unleavened Bread**, not necessarily Wave Sheaf Sunday.

So what he's saying is that the Sabbath has to fall within the Days of Unleavened Bread, not the Wave

Sheaf Offering Day. ***There he is wrong!*** The Wave Sheaf Offering Day is the day that must fall *within* the Days of Unleavened Bread.

In the odd years when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath, the only Sabbath Day within Unleavened Bread is the Holy Day at its end. Nevertheless, this Sabbath, a double Sabbath, is of greater importance for beginning the count, not the Wave Sheaf offered the next day.

Outside of the Days of Unleavened Bread! Why is it of greater importance? Rittenbaugh *doesn't state*. God doesn't say so.

CF: We must identify the correct Sabbath by searching the Scriptures to determine how God's command was fulfilled by the children of Israel, to whom it was delivered.

We saw that in Joshua 5 that it was the day after the Passover. There is clear Scriptural proof. All of the other reasoning, all of the other things that have to do with the counting of Pentecost, the way that John Rittenbaugh is doing it, is not correct.

JR: To which festival is the symbolism of the Wave Sheaf Offering most closely related, Passover, Unleavened Bread or Pentecost? On the calendar it is most closely associated with Unleavened Bread...

there is his answer

...because it is observed either within it or adjacent to it....

Now he's beginning to lay the groundwork for his conclusion:

...Because each in its place plays a part in His purpose, all of God's festivals and rituals have a relationship with each other. Some festivals and rituals, though, have a closer relationship with some than they do with others. For instance, the Lamb slain on Nisan 14 has a direct and powerful relationship to Passover—in fact, Passover revolves around it.

Absolutely true, as well as the relationship with the other.

Thus it is with the Wave Sheaf Offering. Although it is observed in or near the Days of Unleavened Bread, its purpose and symbolism are directly tied to Pentecost fifty days away.

Well, it's not 'near,' it's always 'in.' The Wave Sheaf Offering Day in Joshua 5 was within the Days of Unleavened Bread. So, when the weekly Sabbath is the Passover, the day after the Sabbath is the beginning of the count because that is the Wave Sheaf Offering Day.

Conclusion? The Wave Sheaf Offering has a direct connection to Pentecost and nearly a direct one to Passover, but only an indirect one to Unleavened Bread.

There is his false conclusion! That is not true!

The harvest symbolism and the fact that Wave Sheaf Offering Day begins the count that ends at Pentecost nearly detach the Wave Sheaf from Unleavened Bread but firmly attach it to Pentecost.

He's reasoning in a circle!

In other words, it is in reality a Pentecost ritual, not an Unleavened Bread ritual.

Absolutely not true! It is an Unleavened Bread ritual because they were to have the new grain so they could parch it and then they could dry it that way and they could make the fresh barley unleavened bread cakes to be eaten during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Then he says that the Passover Day is not an Unleavened Bread day. You can read about that in the Passover book *where it is an Unleavened Bread day.*

We must ascertain if the Passover can legitimately be considered one of the Days of Unleavened Bread...

No, it is a separate Day of Unleavened Bread! He makes a conclusion here:

We must conclude then that if we do not accept the fact that the Sabbath mentioned in Leviticus 23:11, 15 is the weekly Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are left without any real defining point from which to begin the count.

Absolutely a wrong conclusion! We have an absolute defining point right here in Joshua 5. This defines it for us. We're not left to our own devices. God inspired this to be here so when the Passover would come on a regular weekly Sabbath we would have no doubt.

Joshua 5:10: "And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening..."

We saw that this sequence began with the 11th month and then we had the 12th month follow that; then they came in on the 10th day of the 1st month, so this 14th day has to be the 14th day of the 1st month, not the 2nd month.

Verse 11: "And they ate of the old grain of the land on the next day after the Passover, unleavened cakes and roasted *new* grain in the same day."

They were forbidden to eat it unless the Wave Sheaf Offering had been waved, therefore, the Wave Sheaf Offering had to have been waved. We can conclude from that that the tabernacle, when they got to the other side, was set up because they crossed over the Jordan on the 10th day. That gave them plenty of time to set up the tabernacle and get it ready for the ceremony of the Wave Sheaf Offering. No doubt about it.

When Passover falls on the weekly Sabbath, the only Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread is also the last day of Unleavened Bread.

Now notice what he does. He now makes a rule where God did not make a rule!

When Passover falls on the weekly Sabbath, should we throw out the rule used to calculate Pentecost for all other years? Pentecost is always calculated from the weekly Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread. Nowhere does God say to alter that rule during a year like this one.

The problem is, it is not a rule! Let's go back and read Lev. 23, again. That's why I covered it first so we would have that knowledge and information because you cannot discuss a false doctrine or an illogical conclusion of doctrine, as John has committed here, if you don't first understand the truth.

Leviticus 23:11: "And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you. On the next day after the Sabbath..."—'during the days of Unleavened Bread.' ***It doesn't say that!*** Why?

"...On the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it" (v 11). Why does He not say, clearly defined, 'the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread,' which in most cases it does happen? ***But when the Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath that cannot happen, so therefore, God didn't say it!*** Since God didn't say it you cannot have a rule to make it so, ***because God never gave that rule in His Word!*** To show us the pattern on how it is done God

preserved Joshua 5 for us so we would have no question.

CF: This faulty premise is the beginning and the end of John's reasoning. Based upon this flawed interpretation of Lev. 23:11, 15 John asserts:

JR: We must conclude that if we do not accept the fact that the Sabbath mentioned in Lev. 23:11, 15 is the weekly Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are left without any real defining point from which to begin the count.

Wrong, not true!

CF: John's interpretation of Lev. 23:11 and 15 as a command to offer the Wave Sheaf on the day after the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread is so firmly fixed in his mind that he can see no other possible answer to the question of when to begin the count. Because he has presumed that his interpretation of God's command is correct, he presents this interpretation as a fact of Scripture, failing to see that his premise and his conclusion are one and the same.

And that is not rightly dividing the Word of God! You don't start out with a premise up here and then come on down and say, 'This is my conclusion,' when in between you have all the Scriptural facts which deny that your premise and your conclusion are true.

Therefore, if you have a premise and the Scriptures tell you that your premise is not true, you cannot make your conclusion the same as the premise. Do you understand that kind of logic and reasoning? *That's the only way it can be done!*

CF: John offers no evidence that the Wave Sheaf must follow a weekly Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread, yet he concludes that it is a violation of Scripture if the weekly Sabbath does not.

We clearly showed from the Scripture that this Scripture does not say dogmatically 'the morrow after the Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread.' That's reading into it something that is not there, and the bottom line is this: *John wants to go back to what Herbert Armstrong did in 1954!* In other words, he's wanting to follow a man instead of the Word of God. You can never base doctrine on that if it contradicts the Word of God.

I need to mention something concerning the symbolism of the Wave Sheaf Offering, because when we come to it's fulfillment in the New Testament, it pictures Christ being accepted as the first of the firstfruits. We need to understand something very important concerning that.

The only time that that symbolism truly follows that it is Christ is only when the Passover occurs in the middle of the week. When it occurs like this year, the Wave Sheaf Offering could not directly symbolize Christ because you have the harvest of it in the evening and the waving of it in the next morning. So, you only have something like fifteen hours involved from the time of the cutting to the time of the waving, and that is not three days and three nights in the grave.

But it does symbolize the very first of the harvest for that year. Not all symbolism fits in the various different formats of the Passover falling on different days of the week *with the exception of when it falls on a Wednesday in the middle of the week*, then the symbolism is perfect, and that's why Christ did not die on a week when the Passover fell on a weekly Sabbath.

Now let's carry that a little bit further if you want faulty symbolism. If you have the Passover on a weekly Sabbath and you don't wave the Wave Sheaf Offering until the Sunday after the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then you would have the faulty symbolism that Christ would have been in the tomb a total of eight days. When you try to reason from symbolism you always get yourself in trouble.

Another thing that John does, he says that the Wave Sheaf Offering Day is a workday, and it cannot fall on a Holy Day. *That is an incorrect assumption!*

JR: Where is their authority for saying that God commands us always to begin the count to Pentecost from the Sunday that falls within the Days of Unleavened Bread? No such statement appears in the entirety of the Bible...

That is true, however we have no statement to the contrary, and we have the example of Joshua 5!

...and not a single religious body, using the Bible and drawing upon their own language and history, followed that method in counting to Pentecost.

Yes, they did! It's right here in the English, in the Hebrew, in the Greek!

Notice also that their last paragraph directly contradicts the first. How can a day be a benchmark if it is moveable?

You're just reasoning in a circle!

How can a rule be considered firm if what is *always* to be done can be changed?

CF: John's argument that the Wave Sheaf must fall on a workday is based solely on Jewish tradition.

It's not based upon the Word of God! Remember, any work you needed to do to keep the Holy Day was allowable, including the harvesting of one sheaf of grain.

Now then John talks about a Worldwide Church of God paper which he says ignores the circumcision problem. Concerning circumcision he says:

JR: The logistics of this undertaking demand serious consideration. That if you have 600,000 how long would it take to circumcise them?

Well, really not very long at all! It was all done on the 10th day of the 1st month. He says that it wasn't done till the 11th day, and it doesn't tell us that at all.

When we asked a modern medical doctor how long an adult would take to recuperate from a circumcision, he answered, 'Ten days.' Adam Clarke, from his nineteenth-century perspective, says, 'Three weeks'!

Well, that's not true! The Bible doesn't say so. Let's just also look at it this way: God commanded them to be circumcised. Would not God then make sure that by time they came to the day after the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the 22nd, which would be on a Sunday when they would all go and conquer and spoil Jericho that they would have been healed sufficiently to do that, which we saw was a period of twelve days? So here it says ten days another one three weeks.

Now then, from this Rittenbaugh goes on to say that what they kept in Joshua 5 could not have been the Passover of the 1st month but had to be a Passover of the 2nd month. ***But the Scriptures do not say that!***

I do not know how he ever figured that out. It doesn't say it. It says it very clearly that when we start at the 10th day of the 1st month, when you come to the 14th day that is of the 1st month. And every place in the Scriptures where it mentions the Passover in the 2nd month, or the Days of Unleavened

Bread in the 2nd month then it is so noted and so stated.

The WCG and many of its offshoots say Joshua 5:10-12 can only mean that the eating of unleavened cakes and parched corn, "on the morrow after the Passover"

They assume this to be Nisan 15; it says the 14th—

Could occur only if this day were Wave Sheaf Sunday. Thus, they assume that what is called Passover was Nisan 14th and that it occurred on a weekly Sabbath in the year that the Israelites crossed over the Jordan River.

No, we don't assume it! That's what the Scriptures state. There is no assumption there.

Consider what is implied in the vast number of people involved in Israel's crossing into the land and the WCG's conclusion...

...after the Passover means that on the first day of Unleavened Bread, a Sabbath—just after perhaps a million males had been circumcised—they worked to reap, thresh and winnow the grain; ground it into flour; kneaded the dough; and baked it into loaves for two to three million people! It would also have been necessary for them to have gathered wood for their fires and tote a great deal of water to make bread. Did Joshua and Israel's leadership grossly overlook the strict Sabbath work laws enforced in the wilderness?

No they did not!

- Were the women circumcised? *No!*
- Could they gather the wood? *Yes!*
- Could the children gather the wood? *Yes!*
- Could those who were not men of war gather the wood? *Yes!*
- Could the women gather the wood? *Yes!*
- Could the women gather the water? *Yes!*

All of those things to justify what he is doing to put the Wave Sheaf Offering Day *outside* the Days of Unleavened Bread are ***just his own conclusion and are not true!***

Now one other conclusion that John makes:

Joshua 5:10-12 contains not one solid piece of information to show that they even kept Passover those first few days in the land. What the Bible records Israel keeping in Joshua 5:10-12 is the first day of

Unleavened Bread, referred to by the common misnomer, *Passover*

Not true!

Then he uses several other things to justify his reasoning: by saying that the tabernacle was not set up. There's no reason to believe why it wasn't set up. He goes clear to Joshua 18:1 where the tabernacle is set up in Shiloh, and that's where it was finally set up after the whole land was conquered after the number of years that they had had conquering the land. And then he also makes some other things here. He says in conclusion:

JR: Conclusion: Joshua 5 cannot be used to establish a first day of Unleavened Bread waving of the sheaf. First, the Wave Sheaf is not even mentioned.

It doesn't have to be because they could not eat of the grain until it was waved. So, there we have the whole thing.

What we need to do is ***look at the Word of God and try and test all these things to see if the Word of God has been rightly divided!***

I don't have any hatred or anything toward John Rittenbaugh. I feel very sorry that he came to these conclusions, and I feel very sorry for the brethren who believe him and follow him. ***It's very important that you understand the false conclusions that he has come to based upon very faulty reasoning and not dividing the Word of God correctly!***

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Timothy 2:14-15
- 2) Leviticus 23:9-11
- 3) Deuteronomy 1:1-5
- 4) Deuteronomy 31:1-6
- 5) Deuteronomy 32:46-52
- 6) Deuteronomy 34:5-8
- 7) Joshua 1:10-11
- 8) Joshua 3:1-3, 7-8
- 9) Joshua 4:13-14, 19
- 10) Joshua 5:2-14
- 11) Joshua 6:9-11, 2-3, 12-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Joshua 2
- Exodus 12
- Numbers 9

- Leviticus 23:11; 15
- Joshua 18:1

Also Referenced:

Books:

- *The Schocken Bible Vol. 1: The Five Books of Moses* by Everett Fox
- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Owens Analytical Hebrew*
- *The Live and Times of Jesus the Messiah* by Alfred Edersheim

Booklets:

- *The Fourteen Rules of Bible Study* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Understanding God's Command for the Wave Sheaf* by Fred R. Coulter

Article: *Countdown To Pentecost 2001* by John Rittenbaugh

FRC/cis
Transcribed: 07/21/2005
Reformatted: bo—12/19/18