

Church of God, The Eternal

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Dear Brethren:

The prophesied turmoil within the Body of Christ continues unabated—a fact which has served to destroy some because they somehow have allowed themselves to believe that within the true body only peace, love, harmony, and a right spirit will prevail. How contrary to the expressed prognostication of Jesus Christ Himself. He said: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? . . . Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division" (Luke 12:49, 51). Why? As has been explained many times, this is a time of refining and proving, initiated by God. Only those who can and will endure unto the end will be saved (Matt. 10:22). The severity of that test is demonstrated by the fact that the very real source of turmoil will come from relatives, friends, and even mates. How many of us have the courage and depth of appreciation, or love, for God's Truth to resist even the pulls of those closest to us? Such is a test of ultimate design. Most will orient themselves according to the demands of physical existence, and then according to the true nature of flesh, construct a self-justifying concept which will allow the mind to feel completely exonerated. That is, man never feels he is wrong. For, all the ways of a man are right in his own eyes. Self-deception is one of man's greatest curses.

In this *Monthly Letter* we want to explain again in a generalized manner the matter of the Pentecost count and what we did say from the very beginning of this work. Please do not close eyes, ears, and minds. Let us all be honest and take a good look at the facts which apply. How can we properly make required decisions if we do not hear and if we refuse to take note of the actual facts involved?

After this explanation, this issue is going to be laid to rest as far as we are concerned. There is too much of a constructive nature which yet needs to be addressed. Anyone who wishes to abort his opportunity for life certainly has that right. On our part, we merely want to make sure we are not held accountable for having failed to warn and appeal to honesty and integrity of mind.

Truth By Revelation

From the beginning of the work in the last days, Mr. Armstrong always taught that truth comes by revelation. This concept was at the very base of one article which Mr. Armstrong wrote in 1939. The very essence of the article which he wrote about "Church Government" specifically dealt with the matter of how doctrine is understood. One church, with which Mr. Armstrong had an initial working relationship, wanted doctrine determined by a vote of the board. This he refused to accept. He was thoroughly convinced that doctrine came by divine revelation. Of course, Mr. Armstrong by his own admission did not completely understand the Biblical form of church government at that time. Why? Because he was the *only* minister called and commissioned to preach the gospel at that time. The necessity of understanding the correct form of church government did not surface until after the establishment of Ambassador College when other men began to be added to the ministry of the last days. At that time the correct form of church government was revealed by God. It worked beautifully for many years. It was not until men began to question every concept Mr. Armstrong taught that the 1939 article reappeared and became the basis of nearly every unauthorized "activity" which exists today. However, it must be remembered that few, if any members of the church today, ever had as a part of their beliefs the concepts of the 1939 article. How, then, can *they* legitimately claim that the 1939 article formed a part of "the faith" which they were taught and practiced? This claim is but another manifestation of the myriad hypocrisies used to justify rebellion and the pursuit of individualized concepts—concepts of the minds of men who are in open defiance of and rebellion against "the faith once delivered."

Nearly all members of the church today were taught by Mr. Armstrong during the later 1940's and from that time forward. That is the body of "the faith" to which all of you were called. It is the body of faith to which we must remain loyal—the body of "the faith" from which those who revolted against the truth departed. Any other concept does violence to honesty and the accuracy of plain facts.

Yes, the faith once delivered was known and understood by all who were truly called and responded to the call which God gave to them. It was the basis of their baptism—the covenant agreement they entered into with God and His Son, Jesus Christ. In baptism we were asked to accept Christ. And Who is Christ? He is the Word, the Truth, the Way of Life.

How can one accept that which he does not know or understand? Did we accept a false Christ—knowledge which was wrong? Or, did we accept the True Christ—knowledge which is unalterable, correct, an absolute? (Remember, we are not talking about spiritual growth; growth does not change the original revelation.)

Pentecost Revealed

God revealed a Monday Pentecost. It is the *day* which is holy. Yet, there are other significant components of the holy day which must be understood. Those factors have been understood and are still accepted by this little group without reservation, question, or change.

The wavesheaf does represent Christ. The harvest itself does picture the first harvest of souls determined in the overall plan of salvation. However, from the beginning of my ministry I do not recall any sacredness attached to specific count—with the exception that the count must be correct to arrive at the day—that *day* which is holy. At this juncture, let us emphatically state: At no time have we ever taken any exception to the English count used by Mr. Armstrong. Later quotes will reveal this fact. At the same time, factors did creep into the doctrinal issue which had to be faced in order to be honest and forthright. The Bible was written in Hebrew and Greek—not in English.

How did those who spoke only Hebrew for nearly 1500 years prior to the time of Christ fulfill the obligation to count Pentecost? It is for sure, they did not use English. Further, how did Christ, His Apostles, and other ministers of that first century count Pentecost? To insist that one must count in English—a claim that the revelation of our day, in English, is the *only* correct count and formed the basis of the revelation which occurred prior to the establishment of "the work" of these last days—is foolish and at best manifests a total lack of honesty and integrity. Did the revelation change? If it did not, then Christ did not correctly count Pentecost because He did not speak in the English language. Therefore, if Christ received His own revelation in Hebrew, and the revelation of today was in English, then revelation changed. Or we are correct in what we have said from the beginning, God can make His Truth known in any language. As stated earlier, all essential concepts of the doctrine of Pentecost have not been altered, nor are they dependent upon the language used. For that reason, we have since 1975 stated that contrary to the claim of the parent "body" of the last days, the count in Hebrew or Greek substantiates what God revealed to Mr. Armstrong in the English. Certainly, the count in Hebrew is different from that of the English. However, the essentials of the doctrine are substantiated regardless of the language of the count. More about this later.

What We Wrote

In our article entitled, *The Plain Truth About Pentecost* (page 45) we wrote: "Those who support a Sunday Pentecost have been quick to state that there has not been one case in recorded history where anyone besides the Worldwide Church of God observed a Monday Pentecost. But Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, in his Bible Study of April 20, 1973, gave historical proof that the Jews originally understood Pentecost was on a Monday. Otherwise, the necessary calendar change—which historically took place in the second century—would not have transpired until the fourth century." How could these Jews have kept the correct Pentecost if they did not speak or use the English language to count the count of Pentecost? Or do you suppose that the Hebrew count could be and is correct in the sight of God?

In our article entitled, *The Doctrine of Pentecost, How and Why It Was Changed* (page 20) we read: "Pentecost is the only Holy Day that we must count. God tells us to count fifty days and then observe Pentecost. He did not say to count forty-nine and then observe it! But the intellectuals and the scholars have for centuries fought among themselves, trying to count fifty. Only one way is right, and no man will ever find that way except through revelation! Once revelation is accepted, the physical falls into line. The historical and technical substantiation of that revelation—that is, the sorting out of truth from the maze of confusion—then becomes achievable."

What was revealed? Let Mr. Armstrong explain: ". . . It is of very grave importance we figure the right day. This day, and this only, is made HOLY by the Eternal Creator." And, "God revealed a Monday Pentecost to me, I did not receive it nor was I taught it of any man but of Jesus Christ!" (ibid., page 21)

What God revealed was the correct holy *day*. Further, He gave Mr. Armstrong an understanding of the meaning of Pentecost as well as all the other holy days. As we shall soon see, the technical information made available years later substantiated the revelation which God originally gave to Mr. Armstrong—a revelation which involved not only the day for Pentecost, but also, the meaning of the day and the details which relate to that day.

One other quotation seems essential. In our article, entitled, *The Faith Once Delivered About Pentecost* (page 11) we read: "God saw to it that apart from a technical understanding of Hebrew counting, His true people would keep Pentecost on the correct day. The English count, using the word "from," would clearly lead to a Monday Pentecost. Now that the rule of Hebrew counting with respect to *min* is understood—that the count is always inclusive—the *mi-mohorat*, found at the *beginning and end* of the fifty-day numbering, requires an inclusive count. Thus, a Monday Pentecost. The original Hebrew, and the honest examination of clear scriptures, once again demonstrates the validity of "the faith once delivered", and that "the foundation of God stands sure."

How inspiring! The English count leads to a Monday Pentecost. And every significant meaning of the holy day stands unchallenged. At the same time, the Hebrew count leads us to a Monday Pentecost. And in a comparable fashion, every significant aspect of the holy day is left in harmony with that of the English. But, to say that the Hebrew is counted in the same way as English is ridiculous. Such a person is left open to ridicule and contempt. All the facts are against him.

We take no exception with an English count. Neither do we reject a Hebrew count. After all, the Bible was written in Hebrew—that is, the Old Testament. Even more importantly, the law was given in Hebrew. That law is found in Leviticus 23. It is imperative that we know and understand how it was written and how it is counted in the Hebrew. Would it not seem foolish to adamantly state: "I do not care how it is counted in the Hebrew; God revealed it to us in the English; therefore, we will accept only the English count?" How are you going to give an answer for the faith you hold if someone insists you accurately count "the count" from the Hebrew? Some may get by insisting on the right to hold to "the faith once delivered" regarding the English count. However, the ministry must be able to explain under all given situations. It is for that reason we have had to face the real issue of the count in the Hebrew.

Further, for anyone to insist that the Hebrew count is the same as the English manifests a total ignorance of the Hebrew. The Hebrew does not count in the same way as the English. Yet, both counts will bring us to a Monday Pentecost and neither count will do violence to the meaning of the holy day, including the meaning of wavesheaf. The technicalities of this statement will be given shortly.

Why The Count Issue Was Raised

Those who had faith and confidence in the revelation of God were not looking for any loose bricks in the doctrinal structure of the Church of God. Yet, Satan knew that a weak area did exist. He knew the disparity which

exists between the English and the Hebrew counts. Knowing this he created a division in the church—that is, the parent body. On the one hand, some turned to scholarship to substantiate their belief that Pentecost should be on Sunday. The other faction held to the original faith, knowing that Pentecost had to be on Monday, convinced that the technicalities did *not* support a Sunday Pentecost but were instead a substantiation for the observance of Pentecost on Monday—the basis for many years of great blessings and growth granted by God.

As became evident, the technical aspects of the Hebrew count did not support a Sunday Pentecost but, in reality, substantiated the Monday Pentecost and an English count. It made the certainty of a Monday Pentecost all the more inspiring and rewarding.

Once the technicalities of the Hebrew count were raised, the realities of such a count had to be faced—honestly. What we did from the beginning, due to our firm belief in the revelation of God—holding first and foremost to the conviction that Pentecost was on Monday—was to examine the abundance of evidence that the Hebrew does technically support that revelation given to Mr. Armstrong. We did not try to run away from the challenge, nor did we use any form of deception in an attempt to camouflage the issue. We faced it and we adduced the evidence which supported a Monday Pentecost. Yes, the Hebrew count is different. Nowhere did we even infer anything to the contrary. What we did say, however, is this: The Hebrew count requires a Monday Pentecost just as surely as an English count requires a Monday Pentecost.

Truly we were ready to give an account for the faith which we possessed. In fact, that account was given to both Dr. Herman L. Hoeh and Mr. Raymond McNair. In the end of 1974 the two were sent to Coquille, Oregon to talk to me about the changes of doctrine in the church which I had refused to accept. On that occasion, Mr. Raymond McNair admitted that the technicalities of the count did not substantiate their concept of a Sunday Pentecost. By his tacit acceptance of the facts presented, Dr. Hoeh too, admitted that the real technicalities did not substantiate that claim. He did not respond one way or the other, but merely manifested shock when Mr. McNair

said: "Even though you have forced me to admit the Hebrew count requires an inclusive reckoning, do you not think that Pentecost could be an exception?" If Dr. Hoeh had evidence to the contrary, why did he not present that evidence at that time? On the contrary, several times following that tragic period of time in the church, Dr. Hoeh seemed to imply that he knew that I was right in my assessment. Why all the fuss now? In fairness, let us state, we firmly believe some of the problem lies in the fact that many of the people who are contacting him are not presenting a correct conception of what we believe or teach. This is another tragedy. How can one expect to arrive at correct answers unless the appropriate questions are asked? We stand firm and committed on the premise of what we do believe, have always believed, and that which we presently teach. We do not claim to abide by what others think we believe and teach. Where did honesty and fidelity go? It seems to us that many tragic and unscrupulous mistakes have been made in this whole affair.

The above quotes from our early literature must surely explain adequately what we said from the beginning. We have not attempted to hide anything. We have been open and honest with our teaching. What we would like to know is this: Why has the matter of Pentecost become an issue to you at the present time? Is it that Satan has again attacked that particular holy day? You came to the knowledge of your present beliefs through what we have taught over the years. Were you led into error all those years, just now beginning to understand the truth about your mistakes? If so, then you are forced to believe that truth comes from contention, strife, and confusion.

What Is The Revelation?

Was God's revelation in the last days an English count—and an English count only? If so, how can people in other areas, those who speak different languages, ever come to know and appreciate the truth concerning Pentecost? Or, is the important thing to come to the knowledge of the holy day set apart by God and to understand its significance in the great plan of God?

Indeed, God did reveal the knowledge of the true Pentecost in the English language to Mr. Armstrong. Equally certain is the fact, God gave the original knowledge of Pentecost to Moses and the children of Israel in the Hebrew language. Further, Christ taught the truth and counted the Pentecost count in the Hebrew language. Therefore, language is *not* the important factor involved in any aspect of the truth. What counts are the concepts—the Ways of Life sustained and spoken into existence by God.

Anytime there is a translation from one language into another, major problems are confronted. A good translator tries to convey in the new language what is contained in the original. When one reads from the language into which the subject material has been translated, it is imperative to ascertain what was intended in the original. In other words, the same message must be evidenced in both, even though differing approaches are necessitated due to constraints of each language. In the case of Pentecost, the English count and the Hebrew count are entirely different. Despite this fact the same message must be conveyed. Further, when studying or making an attempt to count the Pentecost count it is most imperative that the two counts not be confused. To intermingle the two results in total confusion. A problem which some of us are experiencing.

Now let us get to the gist of the subject. Is the language of the count that which is sacred and holy? Or is it merely the means by which we may properly locate the day which God made holy? Further, is the count inherently sacred or is the basic significance of that count—factors on which the count is predicated—of prime importance? Remember, if the count is of itself inherently significant it becomes most obvious, since the law was written in the Hebrew, the only count acceptable to God is the one made in Hebrew. To conclude such a premise would make the count by Mr. Armstrong wrong, for he used the English count. To say that the only acceptable count is the English is to deny the veracity of the law which was written in Hebrew and even more importantly, it would deny the count by Christ and His Apostles since they spoke in Hebrew and Greek. To say that the count in both the English and the Hebrew are one and the same is to deny every factor of the two languages. On the other hand, to conclude that both languages substantiate the inherent significance of the day, as well as making

it possible to arrive at the correct day, makes the whole issue all the more glorious.

Again, what was revealed to the church of the last days? The correct day—the one and only holy day ordained of God, and the basic significance—meaning—of the holy day, including the factors involved in the count.

What was revealed? Monday is Pentecost. The count begins from the morrow after the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread. The day following that Sabbath is wavesheaf Sunday. The wavesheaf depicts the resurrected Christ. The harvest which is depicted between the time of the Days of Unleavened Bread and the observance of Pentecost represents the first harvest of souls as determined by God.

Now let us take a look at the issue from the perspective of the Hebrew. Remember, do not attempt to compare the two counts. What we are interested in is the product. Will the Hebrew count result in the same picture as that which we were taught from the English? Keep in mind the factors, mentioned above, which are the revelation.

The Two Counts in Hebrew

Let us begin by quoting the law. "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord" (Lev. 23:15–16).

1. By law we are required to count 50 days—"number fifty days."
2. In the Hebrew that count begins on Sunday. Compare verse 11 of Leviticus 23. "And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow [*mi-mohorat*] after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." Was the wavesheaf offered to

God on Sunday or Monday? *If* the Hebrew requires that the "from the morrow" used in verse 15 be interpreted to mean Monday; then the "on the morrow" of verse 11 requires exactly the same thing. Wavesheaf day would therefore be Monday, not Sunday. However, if the "on the morrow" of verse 11 requires a Sunday (Wavesheaf Sunday), then the "from the morrow" of verse 15 requires a Sunday, also. The expression is exactly the same in Hebrew. How can it mean one thing in one verse and the exact opposite in the other verse? If words do not mean anything, then, indeed, we are hopelessly lost in confusion.

3. The expression, "from the morrow" (Lev. 23:15) and the expression, "on the morrow" (Lev. 23:11) are exactly the same in Hebrew. They both dictate a Sunday reckoning.
4. Ex. 12:15 proves the above point. It reads: "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from [Heb. is *mi*] the first day until [Heb. word is *ad*] the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." The *mi* above requires that the first day be counted. It is inclusive. Inherent factors make that deduction obvious. We must eat unleavened bread for a period of seven days. The first day of unleavened bread is the first day of the count. If it is true in this text, why is it not also true in Lev. 23:15?
5. In Ex. 12:15 two Hebrew words are of imperative significance. They are *mi* ("*From* the first day") and *ad* ("*Until* the seventh day"). When they are used in conjunction, time restraints are very specific. Of that combination the *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament* states: "Like other Hebrew prepositions it [*mi* or *min*] is used in many combinations. *Min* plus '*ad* means literally from . . . to, or inclusively" (*T.W.O.T.*, page 512). Of the word *ad* Gesenius says: "of time . . . even unto this day, i.e. . . . the limit being included" (*Hebrew and English Lexicon* by Gesenius, page 606).

6. Since both the *mi* and *ad* are used in both Lev. 23:16 and Ex. 12:15, the first and last days of the count must be included.
7. In Hebrew the first day of the "count fifty" must be included. And due to the usage of the *ad*, the last day of the count must be included.

Second, let us now consider the count in Num. 28:26 and Deut. 16:9. We read: "Also in the day of the firstfruits, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the Lord, after your weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation . . ." (Num. 28:26). What weeks? In Deuteronomy we read: "Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn" (Deut. 16:9).

1. In both of the above cases we are dealing with weeks, not days. There are seven weeks which must be counted. Since a week is a period of seven days and there must be counted seven weeks, we are confronted with a period of 49 days—not 50.
2. The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, follows the count in every case. Where does the disparity between 49 and 50 fall? It can be either at the beginning or ending of the count—no other time. Yet, we have already seen that all counts are immediately followed by the day of Pentecost or as it is called in the Old Testament, the Feast of Weeks. Therefore, the beginning of the two counts is on different days. The fifty count begins on Sunday and the forty-nine count begins on Monday.
3. As we have seen, in the Hebrew both the first and last days of the count are included. There is no difficulty with the count of forty-nine. But the fifty count still troubles some. Yet, if we count the entirety of the 49 days (Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:9) of the seven complete weeks, we are forced to count the entire number of the 50 days (Lev. 23:15,16). To do anything less is to be totally inconsistent.

4. Wavesheaf Sunday prefigures Christ. Regarding the harvest of the firstfruits and the wavesheaf, let us read the following in Ex. 23:14, 16: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. . . . And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field. . . ." In Ex. 23:19 we read: "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." In Ex. 34:22 we read: "And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest" Ex. 34:26 states: "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God." And finally in Lev. 23:10 we read: ". . . then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest"

Summarizing the above five texts what conclusions can we determine?

1. A feast follows the weeks of the early harvest.
2. This early harvest is called the firstfruits of the labors of Israel.
3. That the first of the firstfruits, or wavesheaf, must be taken to the House of God and presented to the priest. Notice: The sheaf was not a separate item; it was taken from the general harvest, offered up to the priest to be accepted on a specific day (Lev. 23:10–11). Secondly, any partaking of the harvest of that year was forbidden until after the wavesheaf had been presented and was accepted (Lev. 23:14).

The First Harvest In Type

The Feast of Weeks looked forward to the receipt of the Holy Spirit (Compare Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1). The receipt of that promised Holy Spirit initiated a new beginning. With the receipt of it we became the firstfruits of the plan of God (Rom. 8:23). In fact James specifically calls the first-called and begotten firstfruits. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth [via the Holy Spirit], that we should be a kind of firstfruits of

his creatures" (James 1:18). The whole harvest is called a harvest of firstfruits. But, what is the relationship between Christ and all human beings called to be firstfruits? Paul explains in I Cor. 15:23. "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Indeed, Christ depicts the first of the firstfruits—the first sheaf, wavesheaf, of the harvest of wheat in the days of ancient Israel. Paul explained this in Rom. 8:29 where he said: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Christ was the firstbegotten (Heb. 1:6). However, it is imperative to remember that He is but the first of many brethren to be begotten and ultimately to be born into that family—the harvest of souls. Further, we must remember He is not separate. He is a part of that first harvest; He is the first of the firstfruits—the wavesheaf which had to be waved and accepted of God.

The spring harvest depicts a harvest of the firstfruits. It is a harvest of those begotten by and ultimately born of the Holy Spirit. It is a spiritual harvest which will be accomplished at the time of Jesus Christ's return (Rom. 8:23; Matt. 9:37–38; 13:30, 39).

Christ is the first of the firstfruits. That is, He is a part of that harvest which occurred between the Sunday following the Sabbath within the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Weeks:

Pentecost occurs after a count of fifty days, including that day which represents Christ and His acceptance by the Father—for He is a part of the harvest, unless we exclude Him.

And: Pentecost occurs seven weeks—49 days—from the Monday on which the generalized harvest began concluding the day before that holy day which pictures the harvest of the firstfruits.

To exclude the day which represents Christ and His acceptance is to exclude Him from that initial harvest. That first day is His; but as the historical pattern of the physical harvest of ancient Israel and the New Testament explanation of the antitype (the spiritual harvest of souls) reveal,

the first of the firstfruits—wavesheaf—is a part of the harvest. It, therefore, is a part of the count in Leviticus 23. Christ's day is excluded from the count in Num. 28:26 and Deut. 16:9, which prefigure the generalized harvest of the firstfruits of human beings. The picture is complete and beautiful.

Acts 2:1

Does not Acts 2:1 prove that Pentecost is the fiftieth day? Indeed, it does *not* if we will read it from the original Greek. Let us take a look at it from the Greek.

The original is translated as follows: "And during the accomplishing of the day of Pentecost they were all with one accord in the same place." Let us not forget the Greek definition of Pentecost. It simply means the fiftieth. Let us now replace the Greek word Pentecost with its English equivalent. Those who lay heavy emphasis upon the necessity of using only the English for the count should not mind this transition. What does it reveal in the English? "And during the accomplishing of the day of fiftieth they were all with one accord" That is sufficient to make it very clear that if the term Pentecost means the day to be observed, the Apostles were already too late. The day was coming to a close. Checking the usage of the Greek word which is translated "accomplishing" (*sumpleeroo*) you will find this application. In Luke 8:23 we read: "But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were *filled* with water, and were in jeopardy." Does not the word in this text imply that the boat was virtually full of water? It was not just beginning to take on water; it was filled. Next, in Luke 9:51 we read: "And it came to pass, when the time *was come* that he should be received up" Had the time come, as Jesus said; or was the preparatory time just beginning? Which? Jesus said, the time had come for this fateful event of history to occur.

The above two texts are the only places the word *sumpleeroo* is used besides the usage in Acts 2:1. Translating Acts 2:1 on the basis of what we have read in the other texts, one can honestly come to no other conclusion than that the fiftieth day had come to an end—that is, the fifty-count was

fulfilled, it had come to the full, the count was completed. Now, according to Luke, in Acts 2:1, the Apostles and others were all gathered together in anticipation of the celebration of what proved to be a most monumental holy day.

The Hebrew count supports everything which we believed, initially, as a divine revelation. The harvest pictures the first harvest of souls which is to occur at the return of Christ. Christ is that wavesheaf which had to be accepted before the generalized harvest could begin. But Christ is a part of the first harvest of souls; even as the wavesheaf was a part of the firstfruits—called the first of the firstfruits.

We have never denied the significance of the English count. It was the means by which God made known to His servant of the last days the correct day and the true significance of the Feast itself. But, if we have honestly evaluated, we can truly see that the Hebrew count confirms the same time and meaning of the holy day. We have chosen to use the Hebrew simply because we now understand it and it does carry with it the weight of the original law as given to Moses and confirmed in the fact Christ and the first century Apostles had to use it in all their work.

We have not denied the original faith. On the contrary, taken to a logical conclusion, anyone refusing to place Sunday in the Hebrew count, is rejecting Christ—in the fact they are saying that He has no part with them, that is, that His day does not form a part of the firstfruits count.

Could There Be Any Hypocrisy?

So much flack was thrown into the air about the Pentecost count, by those who have departed, that most of you did not even catch the fact there are major denials of the faith once delivered in other areas of their belief. How can we pontificate about "the faith once believed" in relationship to Pentecost, and at the same time: 1) spurn the truth of tithing as originally delivered to God's servant of the last days; 2) accept someone who has *appointed himself* to be the steward of truth; 3) accept someone who allows

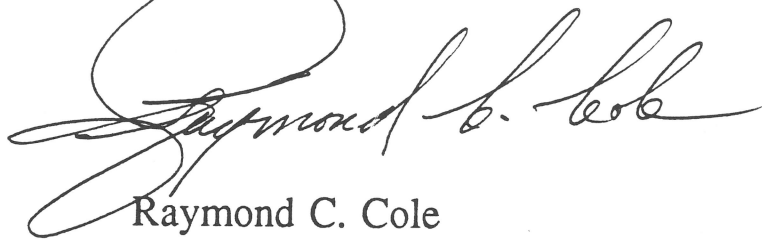
a party, directly involved in divorce and remarriage, to become a teacher or minister—which the church initially forbade; 4) accept someone who revolts against constructive authority as ordained of God (I Cor. 12:18)? Remember, this rebellion is one of the classic manifestations of departure. Note Jude 8: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." Who are these "dreamers?" Interestingly, the explanation of that word is most revealing. By checking its original usage one quickly ascertains it means one who presumes to be the recipient of a revelation or dream and conveys his experience in emphatic terms. Tragically, this is the very manner, as we were informed, by which the contention over Pentecost again surfaced. But as noted above, the real issue is not "the faith once believed." It is a revolt against the government of God. This is not a guess on our part. One member was told pointedly that the issue was not the count to Pentecost, but authority. Is that not what the last day prophecy of Jude says?

Brethren, the ministry wants no tyrannical control over anyone. All we have ever been interested in is the right to manifest kindness, mercy, and understanding toward the people whom God has chosen. The only areas in which we refuse to compromise are those of doctrine and the need administratively to show all manner of kindness, forgiveness, love, affection, and sympathy. Jesus Christ did. Is there anything so wrong about such an orientation?

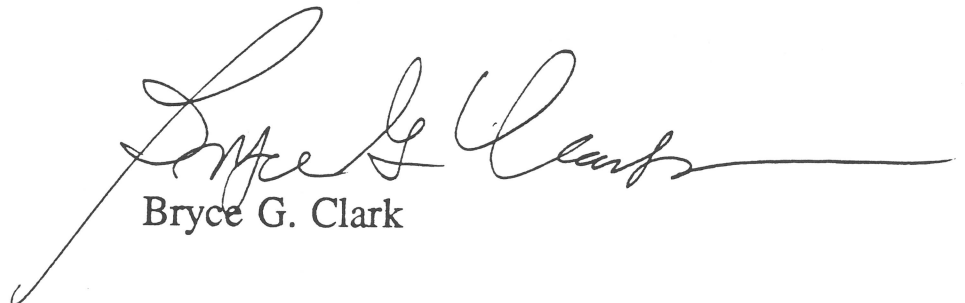
A refining process is being experienced. Will any of us be robbed of our right to everlasting life? Before I was put out of Worldwide, I tried to talk to several leading ministers about the situation which was surfacing in the church. I was never able to make any headway with anyone. Change was uppermost in the minds of those who were determined to reorient the church. If any of you have questions, will you please, with honesty and purpose, please come to us and give us an opportunity to explain. *Why* are we always willing to hear anyone who desires to denigrate? That seems to be a proclivity of all human beings. In the duty of ministering, we refuse to reveal the problems of others unless they presume to contact and attempt to divide and injure the members of the flock. You can rest assured that we will not write or say anything about others unless they have first created the issue.

We, all, are going to be tried from time to time. In some cases, if any doubt exists, those trials might be rather severe (II Thess. 2:9–12). How many of us, if any, will falter in this crucial time of testing? Can we endure unto the end? Mr. Clark, Mr. Aviolat, and I are doing our level best to warn and prepare you for the tragic days which we know lie ahead of us. Faith is simple. Why did you not continue in your confidence without doubt when these storm clouds of agitation began to accost you? Why did you listen to what someone else said about us? Why not come to us and find out what we teach, believe? Have you heard us say anything contrary to the "faith which we have always believed?" Of course not! Some are listening to what others are saying that we say and believe. *Do not take the word of anyone else!* Always go to the individual!

In Christian Love,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark