

“ Celebrating the PROMISED LAND ”

Understanding the Significance of Joshua 5:11

Despite there Being NO Pointed and Direct Scriptural Mention of a Wave Sheaf Ceremony, the Church of God Continues to Experience the Effects of a Rather Impromptu Conclusion, Based on Little More Than a Series of Presumptions!

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It was at the dinner table the Night to be Much Observed in 1974, as we discussed the doctrinal revisions then being implemented in the Church, particularly the change in observing Pentecost from Mondays to Sundays, that I pointed out to all those present that GTA, who was under disfellowshipment at the time, would be observing Pentecost on a different day than we would, on account of his ‘new’ interpretation of the ‘grain event’ found in Joshua 5:11. This change was a SECOND (co-incident) change regarding how to properly count Pentecost. Most members were blissfully unaware that there were TWO distinct changes implemented regarding the Church’s observance of Pentecost. That evening, I was of the understanding that we were NOT of the same opinion as GTA on the second change, and thus, he and his small group of followers at the time would be keeping Pentecost on a different day than we would be: in fact, a full week earlier than us!

I recall being profoundly embarrassed the next day, during Holyday Services, when it was announced that we, in fact, would be observing the Feast of Pentecost on a **different day** than we otherwise would’ve, due to our accepting this same interpretation of Joshua 5: That change, in effect, offset Pentecost one full week earlier, but only on those not-so-rare occasions when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath. (See the article “*The Karites and You*”)

A person tends to remember vividly when being so highly embarrassed. I opened my blabber a bit too soon. However, this distinct recollection does illustrate the fact of an awareness on my part of there being TWO changes being introduced, which most members at the time were unaware of. The explanation of that second related change was presented to us some time later.

In the November, 2000 issue of the *United News*, Cecil Maranville presents again for the Church that basic consideration which causes us to regard Pentecost being earlier, but just in those years when the Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath, as happened in 2001, and again in 2005 and 2008, according to the Hebrew calendar. In those years, we hold that Pentecost is a week earlier than it otherwise would be, if we were to use the counting method employed prior to that water-shed year: 1974.

The Sabbath, or the Morrow?

The fundamental question is, In counting ‘from the morrow after the Sabbath’, must the morrow fall within the week of Unleavened Bread, or must the Sabbath, from which we determine that morrow, fall within it? In other words, must the Sabbath fall within, or must ‘the morrow’ in which the Wave Sheaf is offered, fall within?

Ordinarily, the question would be irrelevant, as BOTH fall within the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. It is when the Passover (Abib 14), falls on a weekly Sabbath that the question arises. Do we regard that ‘morrow’ immediately following Passover (in those occasional years) as Wave Sheaf Day, or do we work from the morrow after the Sabbath that falls within the week of Unleavened Bread as Wave Sheaf day?

If we regard that Passover-on-the-Sabbath being that first Sabbath from which we determine the ‘morrow’ from which we count, then we create a Day One of the count to Pentecost (the day on which Wave Sheaf is offered), occurring **on** the First Day of Unleavened Bread. (an annual Holyday) If we hold that the weekly Sabbath must fall within those seven days of Unleavened Bread, then a situation is created in which the Wave Sheaf

Sunday falls just after the Last Day of Unleavened Bread! This, it seems, was our ‘problem area’!

Must the Sabbath fall within, or must the morrow fall within, in that situation when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath? The answer to this question is what changed in 1974. Our former position was that the Sabbath must always fall within the seven Days of Unleavened Bread, but the morrow could on occasion, fall just after, when Passover, and consequently the Last Day of Unleavened Bread happened to fall on weekly Sabbaths. It wasn’t seen as a problem, that Wave Sheaf Sunday could occasionally fall outside of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread prior to the change year: 1974.

This second consideration, introduced at the same time the Monday to Sunday change was implemented, caused us to regard the date for observing Pentecost as being one week earlier, in just those years when Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath.

The events, related in Joshua 5: were then seen as having significant bearing on the stated question. Organizations such as UCG, PCG, LCG, CGI and most others of WCG heritage currently hold to this 1974 WCG determination.

It was stated to me by a member that, “*God has given us a means to know how to count Pentecost when the Passover falls on a weekly Sabbath*”. That has been the presumption for decades. What we need to consider is why we think we need to count differently in some years. With the Sabbath day falling within the week of Unleavened Bread, there was never a question. It’s only when we suppose that the ‘morrow after the Sabbath’ must fall within and not the Sabbath Day itself, that any question even arises!

In This, the Jews are No Help.

We can’t refer this question to the Jewish community, as the majority of them regard the ‘morrow after the First Day of Unleavened Bread’ (Abib 16 or Nisan 16) as being Wave Sheaf day, irrespective of which day of the week that day falls on. With them, this question would never have come up! They regard the first Holyday as being that Sabbath! NOT the weekly Sabbath! Under their method, Pentecost is always Sivan 6, without regard to which day of the week it may fall on.

Effectively, under this opinion, there is no real need to count! Just find Sivan 6 on the Hebrew calendar.

That in mind, we need to realize that Jewish scholars would not consider these verses in Joshua 5: with the same view as does the Church.

That consideration also in mind, it may offer a plausible explanation of why the KJV translates the words in Joshua 5:11 & 12 as “old corn”, where others do not, as under the Jewish view of this, the day after the Passover would **not ever** and could not ever have been Wave Sheaf Day, as they held it to be the ‘morrow’ after the First Day of Unleavened Bread. Thus, this ‘morrow after the Passover’ would have been **one day too early** to be allowed by them as being ‘Wave Sheaf’!

Mr. Maranville’s article lays out the basic idea to answer the question, which only a few have even thought to ask. It states clearly and simply what has been the understanding on the issue by us, from at least the early nineteen-seventies. A cursory reading of the two verses in question seems to substantiate what’s stated in UCG’s article. However, in reading and studying the entire passage and those related to this historical event, a number of questions become rather apparent to even the casual reader.

Presumption Upon Presumption.

First, there are a number of presumptions. The most obvious: the matter of Wave Sheaf being a key consideration. Though not mentioned in the passage, and for that matter, nowhere in the entire book of Joshua, it is seen as being the KEY to understanding this passage. It is presumed that Israel faithfully observed the Wave Sheaf Ceremony in this year, just days after they crossed over the Jordan River and entered into the Promised Land. In fact, this premise is **essential** to all that is being stated relative to this ‘early’ Wave Sheaf.

Another key assumption is that they ate ‘new grain’ as opposed to ‘old grain’ (the KJV has ‘old corn’), irrespective of the sense conveyed by the choice of original Hebrew wording. This understanding of ‘new grain’ is essential to the scenario being posed. Where it would matter is, that IF this, in fact, was ‘old grain’, then it would illustrate conversely that this ‘morrow after the Passover’ was NOT a Wave Sheaf occasion, (because Wave Sheaf had not yet

been offered, they could not yet partake of the new harvest!) thus proving that posing this Sunday, this First Day of Unleavened Bread, as Wave Sheaf and 'day one' of the count to Pentecost would be wrong. This is the tack many take in refuting the position.

The First Ever Wave Sheaf

It's that important. We have two major questions. Did Israel observe Wave Sheaf that year? (Keep in mind, it would have been their *first ever!*) Could they have? Did they have an acceptable harvest from which to offer one? And secondly, is the grain in question actually new grain or old? New grain would allow the possibility that a Wave Sheaf was offered, 'old grain' would exclude the possibility! On the strength of what evidence do we determine that a Wave Sheaf, in fact, was even offered? We have no specific statement that one was. Let's be honest! We have only presumptions!

Based upon these presumptions, there's the further presumption that the days in question, the fourteenth and the fifteenth fell on a Sabbath / Sunday. This is deduced on the prior presumption that this 'morrow after the Passover' was a Wave Sheaf Offering day, and the only way Wave Sheaf could be the First Day of Unleavened Bread would be if it were the morrow after the weekly Sabbath. So, in this, we have yet another layer of presumption. It nowhere says this is the case. All these are an interwoven set of presumptions, but, this is where many organizations currently stand on the matter.

So, we have the presumption that Israel observed the Wave Sheaf BEFORE eating of the produce of the land that year, we have the presumption that the grain was, in fact, newly harvested from standing grain, and third, based on the above two presumptions, it was determined that these days were a Sabbath and Sunday, that Passover that year fell on a Sabbath. This final presumption creates a compound presumption situation. If any of these prove incorrect, all of them fall together.

Once there, however, we are faced with a set of disturbing problems. This sounds good, as far as it goes. It sounded good in 1974, and for all these years, no significant challenge has come from the ministry, to my knowledge. As we'll see, there IS basis for one. The scenario, embraced in 1974,

generates its unique set of technical 'problems'. In addition to these, there's a further presumption that, in keeping the Wave Sheaf, they did so at the traditional hour, mid morning, some fifteen hours into the day (days begin at sunset), when there is no Biblical instruction as to when to wave their grain, and certainly no prior tradition for them to go by.

Review the Scriptures

At this point, it would be appropriate for the reader to review the scriptures relating to this subject. Please read carefully Joshua 1:1 thru to at least the end of Chapter 6. Also, familiarize with the passages in the latter half of Numbers 21: and Numbers 31: and 32: for background into their incursion up from the south on the east side of the Jordan River valley. These are the peoples who the harlot Rahab alludes to. (Joshua 2:10) There's much here relevant to our question!

In reading, we are going to realize that there are serious problems with the scenario in the WCG's position of many years standing, which Mr. Maranville's article reiterates.

We might consider first the subject of 'manna'. It says that **manna ceased** on the morrow after they ate of the grain of the land. (Jos.5:12) So the understanding is that after keeping Passover at the appointed time ¹ (Remember, those in the 40 to 60 year age group were present for the Passover in Egypt, having been in the 'under 20' age group and thus had no question as to its proper timing. ²) So, they observed Passover in the early hours of the fourteenth (this timing is essential to the scenario), roughly between sunset and midnight. They then burned any Paschal Lamb remains by dawn, then they ATE the grain of the land 'on the morrow'.

The assumption has always been that they waited until daylight of the NEXT day, 33 to 36 hours after the Passover observance was completed, this in order to accommodate a mid-morning Wave

¹ Keep in mind that Passover as Jews regard it would have been observed toward the **end** of the fourteenth day and on into the fifteenth, making the 'morrow after the Passover' the sixteenth! The WCG understanding makes the morrow after the Passover the fifteenth, one day earlier, based on the New Testament example of Christ, His disciples and early Church.

² Read my article on *The Passover of the Exodus* for further proof of the original timing, which also Christ observed.

Sheaf Offering. Yet another presumption necessary to facilitate the accepted WCG scenario!

Why Did They Wait?

A subliminal component in the interpretation of this scenario is the fact that they waited! We need to ask ourselves, “Why did they wait?” This is the question that, more than any other, caused me to accept the 1974 WCG explanation. All the while, that answer has been CLEAR! They didn’t wait for a Wave Sheaf to be offered, it was in recognition of a major observance in their national history going back 470 years, one that was the very reason they were there in that place: The Promised Land! ³

The Promise made to Abraham was made on the fourteenth day of the first month, but was formally ratified, by God, by an OATH, on the morrow, the day after. This **night** following the Passover came to be known as the ‘selfsame day’. It was on the EXACT ANNIVERSARY of God’s Promise-Oath (Genesis 14:18 thru 15:18) which became illustrious with Israel’s exodus from Egypt on that ‘selfsame day’: the 430th anniversary of the Abrahamic Promise, and the beginning of the Exodus toward the land of that ‘Promise’! They deliberately waited to that *exact day* to first partake of the ‘produce of the land’! That’s right there at the end of verse 11! This had nothing to do with any Wave Sheaf Offering! It was a matter of it being the ‘Selfsame Day’ on which Abraham was promised!

“Touch Me Not!”

Another prime presumption, neatly unconsidered is the suitability of anything in Jericho’s fields to be an Offering to God. We should ask, Would a Wave Sheaf from the fields of an unconquered pagan nation be an acceptable representation of the coming Messiah? God was about to tell them that nothing of Jericho was to be salvaged (Jos. 6:19), other than precious metals, gleaned from the ruins.

³ It was after the sun had set and it was dark (Gen. 15:17) the beginning hours of the fifteenth, that the OATH was made. See the article *The Abrahamic Covenant* for more details as to the occasion and its relevance both in Old Testament and New Testament eras. (Gal. 3:29) This night became known as “The Night to be Much Observed” (Exodus 12:42)

But even these were not for personal retention! There are two questions we need to consider: First, the suitability and acceptability of an offering taken from Jericho’s fields, and second, whether or not Jericho’s fields were pristine, never having been at least partially harvested, in advance of their siege.

Only days before, we see evidence of some field produce having been gleaned and taken into the city in anticipation of the coming siege. Rahab had ‘flax’ in large quantity stored on her roof. (Jos. 2:6) Were these bundles exclusively flax, or did they include other edible grasses, stored in a safe place in anticipation of a siege? Would these have been of last years’ produce, still left from a previous year? The point here is that some early harvesting was very likely, especially, in anticipation of their city soon coming under siege! How likely was it that Jericho’s fields were totally untouched in the days just prior to Israel’s approach? If they were really as scared as Rahab said to the spies, they would’ve been drawing-in anything anywhere near ripened, and letting it dry-out, in the sun, out of the way, up on their roofs! Had God intended they first offer a Wave Sheaf from this source, He likely would have mentioned it and the fact that the fields were a suitable source for such offerings, despite everything else from Jericho being abominable to Him!

Presuming that the fields were ‘untouched’, and also a source of acceptable offerings, we’ve yet another consideration the WCG scenario sidesteps! Could Israel offer acceptable First Fruits out of someone else’s field? (Leviticus 22:25 & 23:10-11) To be accepted, God instructed them that the grain had to be of a field that was ‘of their planting’! Offering up a Wave Sheaf from the fields of a pagan nation would suggest a Messiah as coming out of pagan or at least **doubtful** origin. Did the Savior of the world emerge from pagan stock? A Jerichonian Wave Sheaf would allege that! This illustrates a prime reason why the WCG conclusion is offensively erroneous! Israel didn’t and couldn’t have offered a Wave Sheaf Offering that year. This was not the issue in this passage! Thus, a variant count to Pentecost is NOT the issue here either! It is not what Joshua was relating!

Manna No More!

It says that manna ceased after they first ate the

grain of the land, in fact, on the morrow after the 'morrow' that they first ate. This second morrow is understood as being the sixteenth. Monday the sixteenth. The sixteenth had to have been the first day that manna did not fall, when it otherwise should have? To say that it ceased on the 'morrow' after they first ate, indirectly alleges that it DID fall the morning of the fifteenth. Small problem! That morning that they first ate, (represented by WCG as being after dawn the fifteenth), shows that it had to have fallen that morning, otherwise, it couldn't have ceased the NEXT morning. So, we must conclude that manna fell on an annual Holyday, that First Day of Unleavened Bread! Manna last fell on an annual Holyday! If it didn't, then it didn't the day previous either, as that is represented as being a weekly Sabbath, on which manna never fell! So if it didn't fall on the fifteenth, and it didn't fall the fourteenth either, then how can it be said that it ceased on the morrow after they ate of the grain of the land, when in fact, it would have last fallen on Friday morning, the thirteenth. Two days BEFORE not a day after! Right?

This item alone indicates the accepted 1974 WCG scenario has problems. But there's far more!

A Holyday Harvest ?

So, manna had to have last fallen on the morning of the fifteenth, according to the narrative and the accepted scenario, which was also an annual Holyday. Thus, their eating of local grain was **not** a matter of necessity. But this raises yet another potent and obvious question, should one opt to think it thru. Did Israel harvest, thresh, winnow, grind, mix and bake the cakes, mentioned in the narrative, ON a Holyday? When there was no need to do so? Did they construct the earthen ovens in which to burn the fires to pre-heat those baking ovens? (Why would they have built ovens prior to this, when they'd been eating the 'victuals' they'd been told to prepare days before?) What fuel would they have burned in the ovens? A couple of million people would've quickly exhausted already scarce firewood on the plains of Jericho. The most likely source of oven fuel would have been the stalks from the grain, but which they, to this point wouldn't have been able to access without harvesting, so for what reason would they have built ovens earlier?

The point here is, the posed scenario suggests that Israel totally disregarded the first annual Holyday observed in the Promised Land. They baked cakes! That involved a lot more than just eating a few handfuls of fresh raw grain. To be 'unleavened' it had to have been ground, mixed and then baked! Enough for a couple of million people at least! Why, when there was **no need** to do so? Are we suggesting that they meticulously observed Wave Sheaf, (ignoring the above posed reason why a foreign-derived offering would be offensive, and ignoring the requirement that the offering be of grain which they had planted), while disregarding an annual Sabbath? An High Day!? This, the WCG scenario requires we accept.

Three Weekly Sabbaths

Now, while we're on the subject of the Sabbath, let's consider two other important dates. First, in Joshua 1:11, God instructs Israel to prepare victuals (provisions) for themselves. This was three days prior to their crossing the Jordan River, which was on the tenth. So, three days prior to the tenth was the seventh. Not a difficult deduction. So what?

Also, Jericho fell on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, a commonly held opinion. That would've been the twenty-first! So, we have the 7th, 14th and 21st! Well, if the 14th was a weekly Sabbath, then so were the other dates! All three would have been WEEKLY SABBATHS!

Did God instruct Israel to prepare food for a multi-day military incursion on the Sabbath? Did Israel conquer and destroy Jericho and kill all of its inhabitants ON the weekly Sabbath? If we accept the posed Joshua 5:11-12 explanation as presented, then we MUST!

Another consideration relevant to this, posed by the Joshua 1:11 passage: They were commanded to prepare 'victuals' for themselves for an imminent campaign into the land, three days hence. This proves they had possession of and were eating the produce of other lands that they had conquered, coming up the east side of the Jordan Valley. You CAN'T DO THAT with manna!! Manna spoils rank after just one day! So, we know they had possession of and were eating local grain, but NOT FROM the land, prior to entering it. They baked

cakes to tide them over, as they marched in. As they came to the Passover, it became necessary for them to discard any remains of that, as it likely was leavened. It would've been either rock hard by then, if it wasn't leavened, or at least moldy.

The Selfsame Day

This morrow, the next day, (the First Day of Unleavened Bread) is given as the first day they ATE of the local, west-of-Jordan grains (most likely barley), but, that doesn't say they didn't harvest, winnow, grind, mix and bake unleavened cakes on the daylight portion of the fourteenth, which normally was a work day, unless an obstacle is created, by alleging that this was a weekly Sabbath. More logically, it was not, and the only reason we'd conclude that it had to be a Sabbath, would be the Wave Sheaf consideration, which in reality would have been impossible for them to offer in that first week, for the significant above-stated reasons. (Even all of Jericho's livestock was destroyed!)

The issue here is the 'selfsame day'. That word is THERE! It is NOT about a Wave Sheaf Offering. That word is NOT there! The 'selfsame day' refers to the anniversary of the Abrahamic Promise and Covenant! That is what they waited to commemorate by first drawing their sustenance from the land. The selfsame day was, in actuality, the eve of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, a date we refer to as 'the Night to be Much Observed'. The verse says this is when they first ate. Why do we hold the idea that they waited until mid morning of the **next** day, some 15 hours into it, to first eat? What did they eat the evening prior to the First Day of Unleavened Bread, which is that 'Night to be Much Observed'? The leavened leftovers from their week old 'victuals'? Did they celebrate, eating manna that didn't fall that morning, due to it being a Sabbath?

It is our fundamental ignorance of the Abrahamic Covenant that accounts for our assignment of the subject of this passage to another consideration, while overlooking the obvious. The Abrahamic Covenant Promise is what accounts for the 'grain of the land' first being eaten on the fifteenth. It had nothing to do with their observing Wave Sheaf at that time. God acknowledged and emphasized their formal 'entrance' into the land, by not supplying manna from that day onward. God had them first

eat on the 'selfsame day', the very anniversary of when He made the Promise to Abraham, exactly 430 years before they left Egypt. It was even that very same segment of day no less, being also exactly 40 years after they left, when they formally took possession, thus concluding their Exodus saga. God illustrated His commitment and faithfulness to His Promise by a perfect, on-time, fulfillment!

We don't need to construe this Joshua 5:11 event to provide a technical exception as to how we count Pentecost. In '74, we changed opinion as to which day must fall within the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. We used to hold that the Sabbath must fall within. After '74, it was opined that the 'morrow' must always fall within.

Unnecessary Complication

God gave us a formula that was simple enough. Day one, (Wave Sheaf) is the morrow after the Sabbath that falls within the week. It is always that, in every other year. Our old literature states that in many places. It's the weekly Sabbath that we are to identify, that Sabbath **within** the week. Wave Sheaf need not fall within ⁴, though 80% of the time it does fall within. Roughly one in five times the determining Sabbath, the one that must first occur, falls on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread.

This one place, and this one place ONLY, became the source for both the question and the decision to observe Pentecost at an odd time. As we've seen, the 'Sabbath Day' problem, (Jericho being overrun and conquered on a weekly Sabbath, (the 21st) and God commanding Israel to prepare victuals on what some pose as having been a Sabbath day also, (the 7th)) are strong indication that Passover was NOT a weekly Sabbath (Saturday) that year! For what possible reason do we insist that it was? And, if in fact it wasn't, then the Wave Sheaf upon entrance idea is a goner!

New Corn, Old Corn?

A look at the Hebrew word for 'old corn' is also an interesting study. However, the key issue here can be seen without arguing the vintage of the grains.

⁴ In the case of Essenes and Ethiopian Jews, those who regard the Last Day of Unleavened Bread as being that Sabbath from which the morrow is determined, Wave Sheaf NEVER falls within!

It's largely immaterial whether it was new or old grain, as 'Wave Sheaf' was not the consideration. Old grain could be relevant to someone taking the position that the fifteenth day of the first month was not a properly observed "Wave Sheaf Day". In that case, it would have to have been old, leftover grain! No one but the WCG poses this fifteenth day Wave Sheaf idea, with one minor exception, which we will discuss later.

The Jewish Position

To those of Jewish persuasion, the fifteenth could NEVER have been 'Wave Sheaf', as they hold it to always be the sixteenth, two days after the Passover as we see it, or one day after their 'late' 14th Passover, as they see it. A Wave Sheaf could **never** have been offered on the First Day of Unleavened Bread! This is the day in which they 'eat' the Passover, though they kill it in the late afternoon of the fourteenth, the day prior.

This consideration may have factored into the translators choice of how to render the Hebrew word "*awboor*", to discount the possibility that this could have been newly harvested grains, (as Josephus alleges!). It's a word that conveys a sense of having been 'carried over'. It couldn't have been 'carried (held) over' from the east of Jordan, as they were already shown as having been eating that back in Joshua 1:11 a week earlier!

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Now, the above inset illustrates the problem our scenario poses: IF the "First Day of Unleavened

So, if they didn't happen upon a HUGE cache of stored grain there, ten furlongs out of Jericho, then most likely it was field-harvested. If, in fact, they DID eat new grain here, it demolishes the Jewish determination of when Wave Sheaf should be observed: The 16th. But, regarding our position, it really doesn't matter whether it was new or old, once we realize that the fifteenth was not Wave Sheaf, and thus, not necessarily a Sunday, a morrow after the Sabbath.

And then, and then...

Another area of consideration relevant to this issue is the "waw" issue. The Hebrew word "waw" used between the various sequential events in Joshua 5, is a word corresponding to our "and then"! To see the basics of this, see Fred Coulter's book: *The Christian Passover*, 1999 edition, page 424, Appendix "O". These verses from Joshua 5:8 thru 5:15 are time-related and sequential. It is alluded to in English by the word: "and" beginning each verse. The original Hebrew word is stronger! A better English rendition would be "And then...", rather than just the word "and". We have in the Joshua 5: narrative a continuing series of events, presented in order, with each sentence beginning with "and then...".

The Sequence of Successive Events as presented in Joshua Chapter 5

Verse	Description of Events	Date
5:8	Completed circumcising (remained in camp healing (possibly a week))	10 th to 13 th
5:9	Reproach pronouncement at Gilgal	n.l.t 13 th
5:10	Camped in Gilgal, Kept Passover in the Evening of the fourteenth	10 th to 14 th
5:11	Ate produce of the land on the 'selfsame day'	[?]
5:12	Manna ceased on the morrow after eating, ate local produce thereafter.	[?]
5:13	Joshua approached Jericho – very early morning? Encountered a 'man': "Captain of the Lord's Host" whom Joshua there worshipped.	15 th
6:1	Describes encirclements of Jericho and its conquest	15 th to 21 st
6:20	Jericho's walls fall – City is conquered – all slain.	21 st

Following this narrative, it should be apparent that a

continuing sequence of events is presented.

Bread is Wave Sheaf". In each of these sequential events, the dates we can be certain of are included. The two events mentioned in verses 11 and 12 are not here dated, but we know the dates of events that happened just before and just after. Those two indefinite dates are presumed to be the fifteenth, mid-day, Sunday, to the sixteenth, a Monday. It is evident that if we use those dates, we violate the sequence of events presented by the repetitive connecting Hebrew word: "waw": and then...

The choice of the morning of Sunday the fifteenth for Wave Sheaf puts the cessation of manna a day too late, causing us to have to back-up a day, when we later see Joshua over near Jericho the morning of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the day in which the first encirclement occurred.

The more logical choice, in keeping with the "waw" dictates, would be to assign the first eating at dusk beginning the First Day of Unleavened Bread, aka the Night to be Much Observed, and the cessation of manna to the following morning, dawn of the First Day of Unleavened Bread. The Exodus is given as beginning the morrow after the Passover,⁵ so why isn't it reasonable to suggest that it means exactly the same thing when used here in Joshua 5:?

This scenario works with the narrative sequence, though not 'with' the traditional WCG explanation.

The Days of Unleavened Bread

Another pertinent consideration is the 'unleavened bread' matter. The people, in order to keep the days of Unleavened Bread, would've discarded their 'east of Jordan' victuals, by the afternoon of the fourteenth, as these would most likely have been leavened, or at least near-spoiled, by that time. So, with what would they have observed their most significant Observance to date? The Night to be Much Observed, the day that commemorated the very Promise they had just received? It wasn't with manna, as none would have fallen the morning of the fourteenth, IF that day had been a Sabbath! If

⁵ Numbers 33:3 *"They departed from Rameses... on the fifteenth day of the first month: on the day after the Passover..."*

the day they first ate of the grain of the land was the morning of the fifteenth, it would have left them with no food for some 21 hours! If they began eating 'unleavened cakes and parched corn' on the 'selfsame day' (which actually refers to the evening beginning the 15th in Genesis 15 and Exodus 12:42) then with what did they observe their 'Night to be Much Observed'? Certainly not leftover Paschal Lamb. They would have burned that up by dawn of the fourteenth! Was it week-old 'victuals'?

I pose to you that they did the exact same thing as when leaving Egypt. They prepared in the daylight part of the fourteenth, after eating the Passover before midnight. On both occasions preparing 'unleavened cakes' in haste, just as they did in advance of their 'by night' trek out of Egypt. Here also, in Canaan, they prepared unleavened cakes just prior to the Night to be Much Observed. Those over 40 years old at the time would have remembered, having been there at the Exodus occasion.

So, in the above inset, if we place the 15th at dusk in the first blank, then the 15th at dawn in the Jos. 5:12 blank, it works perfectly with the "waw" sequence.

Not Just a Co-Incidence

The Night to be Much Observed, or to be Much Remembered, which marked the beginning of the Exodus, also marked its full end. Both dates were on the anniversary of the original Night, the occasion when God confirmed the Promise by an Oath. It was an after-dark observance. They then went on to begin the next phase: the conquest of the land on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the same calendar date, the fifteenth. (Read Genesis 14:8 thru 15:8 and compare Exodus 12:41)

This is the reason for their first eating having been delayed until this date, even though they were in the area from the tenth on. Wave Sheaf was not that reason they waited! It's the idea of the fifteenth being Wave Sheaf that did combobulate everything.

Israel entered into the land, crossing the Jordan River, on the tenth of Abib. They observed the Passover, beginning at dusk on the fourteenth of Abib, between sunset and midnight.

The morrow after the Passover, (24 hours after it) in the hours of dusk, they 'feasted' for the first time on

the only source of food they had, the produce of the land. (The assumption that they waited until after mid-morning of the fifteenth, some 39 hours after the Passover, to first eat of it, doesn't work. We need to accept that the 'morrow' after the Passover here means the morning of and daylight portion of the fourteenth, the preparation day for the days of Unleavened Bread.) If this is true, then the Wave Sheaf issue is well out of this picture, as that requires that the first eating be deferred on into the fifteenth, to get past a mid-morning Wave Sheaf .

The Wave Sheaf on the fifteenth position, as we've seen, does not square with the "waw" sequence as given. Manna ceased on the subsequent 'morrow', the fifteenth morning. It would have last fallen the morning of the fourteenth, not a Sabbath, not the fifteenth and would have ceased the dawn of the fifteenth. Incidentally, Christ (our manna ⁶) also had become 'ceased' in His physical life before the morning of the fifteenth.

Continuing in sequence, Joshua is seen in the environs of Jericho, contemplating their options, when he encountered a spirit being. Was he out 'scouting' to verify that manna was not there? He didn't go there alone expecting to encounter this 'man'. So, why was he out there? This scene has to be in the morning of the fifteenth, if we're to see these three things allowed:

- 1.) The "waw" sequence to hold as given,
- 2.) That the seven days marches around the city coincided with the seven days of Unleavened Bread,
- 3.) That manna not be seen as falling on a weekly Sabbath.

Joshua acted immediately, marshalling the forces who were to march around Jericho, doing so in sufficient time to complete the task in the same day: The fifteenth. So, we're here up to the onset of the daylight portion (dawn) of the fifteenth, not the sixteenth, when manna ceased! As we can see, the determination that they ate local grain for the first time on the morning of the fifteenth violates the "waw" dictates. We need to come to grips with that fact! Something has to give: either our presumption

⁶ John 6:51 & 58 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven... This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna..."

or the Hebrew text.

Under either 'eating' scenario, the fifteenth or the fourteenth, we know that manna had to have fallen the morning they ate, otherwise, it couldn't have ceased the following morning. If it didn't fall that morning, yet ceased the next morning, then it would have been present for the last time the day before, not the day after! So, we can know also, that the day they first ate was not a weekly Sabbath, and that manna was present that morning!

The Jericho March

Some take technical exception to the seven days march around Jericho coinciding with the seven days of Unleavened Bread on the basis of the men having just recently been circumcised on the 10th, and thus would have been in no condition to march. This situation is addressed in detail in a companion article, entitled: *The Conquest of Jericho*. We need to remember that the elders, those over 40, had been born in Egypt, and had been circumcised there, thus would've been available to march, pain-unimpeded. That segment of the population was more than sufficient to provide the processional numbers needed.

How the Jews Weigh-In

Further, Jewish scholars and ancient practice, even though they differ from one another, all agree in one basic determination: that the Wave Sheaf Sabbath occurs **within** the seven days of Unleavened Bread, NEVER before them! It is our determination that is the sole anomaly! We borrowed just a minor component from the Karite Jews, (though rejecting most of their other belief structure with regard to the cal-endar and Passover observance), as the only support for our unorthodox position.

The Phariseean view is that Wave Sheaf is always the morrow after the first annual Holyday, the sixteenth, irrespective of which day of the week it falls upon. (Though under the Phariseean rules of postponement, the Wave Sheaf could never fall on the 3rd, 5th or 7th day of the week.) The Sadduceean view (similar to our pre-1974 position), held that Wave Sheaf is always the morrow after the weekly Sabbath that falls **during** the seven days of Unleavened Bread, which could never be earlier than the sixteenth, but could be the day after the

Last Day of Unleavened Bread on occasion. The Essenian / Ethiopian Jews hold that the Wave Sheaf day is the morrow after the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, irrespective of the day of the week it falls on. In each of these, there is a consistency: That the Sabbath that must first occur, must fall within the seven days of Unleavened Bread, the ‘morrow’ need not. Two of these three major Jewish disciplines allow a Wave Sheaf a day **after** the Last Day of Unleavened Bread. One occasionally, one always! None of these three allow a Wave Sheaf Day earlier than the second day of Unleavened Bread, Abib 16! Another way of saying it, they disallow a Sabbath occurring prior, the 15th being the Wave Sheaf determining Sabbath!

Only the opinion of a small Jewish Sect, formed in the eighth century, is offered in support of our opinion, and yet we reject their position on the time of Passover Observance and their calendar determination. Even if they use the Sabbath before the week of Unleavened Bread as their ‘first Sabbath’, it rarely coincides with our date, as they employ ‘observational’ methods and reject the ‘rules of postponement’! A case in point: the year 2001.

All of this controversy emerges on the strength of one indistinct passage of scripture: Joshua 5:11.⁷

It is only our hastily imposed 1974 change that suggests a pre- Unleavened Bread Sabbath for determining Wave Sheaf Day! This in full disregard of our previous position and practice.

It should also be pointed out that the Jews use the same passage, Joshua 5:11-12 to prove that Wave Sheaf IS NOT the fifteenth! The sixteenth is the earliest a Wave Sheaf could ever be, according to either the Pharisean or Sadducean persuasion!

Other than the stated fact that Israel first ate of the (produce) of the land, on the morrow after the Passover, (the **selfsame day**, which is the fifteenth, and could easily have been at the time of day we know as the ‘Night to be Much Observed’), there is no hint or suggestion that a Wave Sheaf Offering factored into this Joshua 5 account! That idea is presumed into it!

What’s even more saddening is that so long as we

⁷ Presuming that they wouldn’t have eaten the new grains without first having offered a Wave Sheaf Offering.

remain under this mis-aimed focus, we miss the **real** point of the Joshua 5 narrative, that this event reflects on the physical fulfillment of the Promise stated in the Abrahamic Covenant Oath, which occurred on that exact calendar date, in that same general vicinity, 470 years before.⁸ Knowing that, we can come to the realization that their first eating was on the ‘*selfsame day*’, **just as the narrative states!** That being the case, it is also apparent that the TIME of their first eating was likely the “Night to be Much Observed”, the exact morrow after the Passover, the anniversary of both the start of the Exodus and now, its formal end! (Num. 33:3)

Our presumption that a Wave Sheaf HAD to have been offered that first year, and the subsequent ‘day of the week’ presumptions based on the previous one, **obscures** that area of understanding!

How It Happened

It was my recollection that GTA was the prime advocate of this new idea brought to our attention, along with the other change to Pentecost, that were finally implemented in the spring of ‘74. That is reflected in my opening paragraph. It was GTA who presented the idea to us. As a result, I was of the opinion that he and his following, would be counting from the ‘early’ date that year for the first time. But, in fact, unknown to me at the time, the WCG had also **already** implemented this change as well, with most members being unaware.

Someone familiar with this change later related to me that the idea had been submitted to our erudite ‘scholars’ for their evaluation: Dr Charles Dorothy for one. It was Dr. D’s opinion, sent to GTA by letter that said, “more study needs to be made”. However, a couple of weeks **before** Dr. Dorothy responded, GTA sent out a letter to all the ministers, dated March 30, 1974, that we would be observing Pentecost on May 26th that year, rather than the pre-1974 projected date of June 3rd. (Eight days earlier!) He was with us just long enough, before his unconquerable infidelities caught up with him, to inject this anomaly, along with another major insertion: the D&R position changes.

⁸ Perhaps that’s the ‘Holy Ground’ site Joshua had gone to visit the morning after they first had eaten, and just before the first Jericho encirclement took place! (Joshua 6:13-15)

It's unfortunate that the same degree of scrutiny being applied *against* the idea of correcting this error wasn't used in its original implementation.

But, we didn't have a doctrinal review system in place back then. At least, not a truly effective one. With all of the 'problems' and anomalies evident in our 'early wave sheaf' determination, we ought to be able to see the need for serious reconsideration. We need to consider these at least:

- Whether or not a Wave Sheaf was called-for in the year of entrance into the Promised Land,
- At what time of day would they have offered it, had they offered one? (being the very first time!)
- Was it new grain or old stored grain that they first ate, and does it actually matter,
- Were Jericho's fields un-harvested and ceremonially acceptable prior to Israel's approach?
- May the Wave Sheaf be taken from someone else's fields, or must it meet the Biblical requirement of being of one's own planting,
- Whether the weekly Sabbath that must first occur can be outside of the Days of Unleavened Bread,
- Whether the Wave Sheaf can occur on an annual Sabbath, normally a heavy work day,
- Whether or not the Passover really was a Sabbath that year,
- Whether the 'morrow' is the very next morning or the morning of the next calendar day,
- Meeting the events-in-sequence requirements of the Joshua 5 narrative without having to back date,

We should keep in mind that the Church of God is unique in this 'early Pentecost' determination. Only one small Jewish group, called Karites, that **claims** to uphold the Sadduceean Tradition, allows the Sabbath from which Wave Sheaf is determined to occur before the Days of Unleavened Bread, rather than within. However, we ought to be aware that we borrow only this small component from them. They're a group that uses 'observational methods' of determining the calendar, they reject 'postpone-ments' and observe Passover in accordance with Phariseean Tradition, late on the fourteenth, a time different than we observe! Interestingly in 2001, the Karites observed Pentecost in a different week than we did, and

usually do! That year, accounting to their 'observational' calendar.

Some in 1974 had posed Luke 6:1 as an example of a year in which Passover fell on a Sabbath, again by deduction, not evidence. That narrative is quite revealing, but not in a way amenable to the WCG 'early wave sheaf' determination. A separate article, *The Enigmatic 'Second-First Sabbath' of Luke 6:1*, addresses this noteworthy passage.

Related Topics

Additional titles, having relevance to this issue are available from this writer. Key ideas in this article are further expanded in each of these:

Pentecost and Its Observance, A doctrinal Study Paper, September, 1997 19 pages plus comments. Sets forth UCG's position on the 1974 changes.

The Abrahamic Covenant, Describing the extraordinary events on that night which later became known as, 'The Night to be Much Observed'.

The Enigmatic 'Second-First Sabbath' of Luke 6:1, How this noteworthy event reveals which Sabbath of three initiates the count to Pentecost.

The Selfsame Day, A unique term, not fully understood by most Bible students. At least five major events occurred exactly on this anniversary date.

Israel's Primitive Observances, Apparently, all of the major observation-worthy occasions in Israel's early history were events that happened at night.

When You Come Into the Land, Many instructions given to Israel by God were prefaced with this lead-in. Why is *only one* regarded as needing to be performed immediately thereupon?

The Passover of the Exodus, A lengthy treatise showing the size of the nation and the timing of key Exodus events. It proves that Christ did not *change* the time for Passover Observance!

The Jerichonean Wavesheaf, A review of God's specific requirements regarding the presenting of an acceptable Wave Sheaf Offering.

The Conquest of Jericho, Some take exception to the idea that Israel marched around Jericho during the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. This article

considers that exception.

All are urged to carefully and prayerfully consider

Appendix A - Comments on Joshua 5 : 10 – 15 (KJV)

10. And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even ⁹ in the plains of Jericho.

11. And they did eat of the old corn ¹⁰ of the land on the morrow ¹¹ after the Passover, unleavened cakes, ¹² and parched corn in the selfsame day.¹³

⁹ This: ‘**at even**’ is defined in several other places by the use of the unique Hebrew term: “*between the two evenings*”, which is further explained in my article of the same name. It indicates that they did so just after sunset as the fourteenth had begun, the same as they had done just before leaving Egypt. My article: *The Passover of the Exodus* addresses the enduring Passover timing question in detail.

¹⁰ A Hebrew expression that is largely mis-represented. It is a unique Biblical word, used in this one place only, thus complicating exact definition, as there is no other reference with which to compare. Many attempt to define it specifically as either ‘new’ grain or ‘old’! It’s actual indication may be the grainfields which Israel ‘passed thru’ or ‘passed by’. In other words, ‘deferred partaking of’ for a time.

This ‘morrow’ could mean either the morning of that same day (dawn after the Passover) or of the next full day following: the fifteenth, (which began at sunset). If it means the dawn of the fourteenth, then the WCG scenario of Joshua 5 events is in need of major redefinition.

This reference to ‘unleavened cakes’ confirms that this was during the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Some suggest the conquest of Jericho occurred later than this. If so, then it’d have to be a full year later? There is a second Passover, but no second days of unleavened bread. By the WCG scenario, this morrow on which this occurred was the mid-day of the fifteenth. If so, what did Israel eat those 18 hours after the fourteenth ended? What did they eat the day prior, if that was a weekly Sabbath, as no manna would have fallen!

This time specific reference is a term largely misunderstood in the religious community. Most assume it means two things happened on the same day, as opposed to it referring to two events happening on the same calendar date: one on the anniversary of the other. The article: *The Significance of the ‘Selfsame Day’* further explains the meaning of this special wording. One needs to understand the Abrahamic Covenant to realize the full importance of this clear and restricted term. This Joshua 5:11 event was the fourth major event in Israel’s history to occur **on** this

this matter, regarding what the Scriptures say and not depending on purely presumptive ideas.

12. And the manna ceased on the morrow ¹⁴ after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. ¹⁵

13. And it came to pass, ¹⁶ when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

14. And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

15. And the captain of the LORD’s host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. ¹⁷

exact anniversary!

This second ‘morrow’ varies drastically, depending on the assumption made as to the meaning of the previous morrow. If one assumes the first was the dawn of the fifteenth, then this would have to be the dawn of the sixteenth. Conversely, if the first morrow was the dawn of the fourteenth, some six hours after the Passover was ended, then this second morrow would be the dawn of the fifteenth. To accommodate a Wave Sheaf Ceremony in the scenario, the first assumption must be accepted, the second rejected, even though, in Numbers 33:3 the morrow after the Passover is the **evening** beginning the fifteenth!

Here, it is stated that their sustenance came from the food products of the land of Canaan. This may have significance when the question is raised as to the acceptability of that source for special offerings to God, especially the **FIRST EVER** representation of the first Firstfruits: Christ!

We need to consider why Joshua was in this location, apparently alone. It had to have been early in the morning of the fifteenth, if the seven day encirclement of Jericho’s walls are to be regarded as coinciding with the seven Days of Unleavened Bread.

Now, it is indicated that this location is a ‘holy location’. We could speculate that he was visiting the site of where

And Joshua did so.

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the Abrahamic Covenant was made. If not here, it was in the general vicinity, some miles northeast of Jerusalem!

Appendix B - A Workable Sequence of Events for Joshua 5

Israel was told to prepare victuals for a multi-day incursion into the land three days prior to crossing over, the seventh day of the first month. (Joshua 1:11)

The ‘east side’ men were notified of their obligation to all assist militarily. (1:12-18)

Spies had been sent into Jericho in the interval. (2:1-24)

Jericho is seen in a ‘siege mentality’ and thus would be desperately preparing for one! (2:9-11)

They crossed over the Jordan River three days thereafter, on the tenth day. (4:19)

The men under 40 years of age were circumcised at Gilgal. (5:2-8)

Israel kept the Passover, starting just after sunset beginning the fourteenth day. (5:10)

In the daylight portion of the fourteenth, the morrow after the Passover, (which was concluded before midnight), they began to harvest. (This was the morning after it, not the morning of the day after.) They had to construct earthen ovens in which to bake their unleavened cakes for the coming Days of Unleavened Bread, find fuel to burn in them (the most available fuel source being the grain stalks), winnow and dry the kernels over a fire, grind them into flour for baking, make dough, finally baking the cakes. All of this work precluding this day being a weekly Sabbath.

They ate the produce of the land on the morrow after the Passover, on what is here called the ‘selfsame day’ which Ex. 12:41-42 indicates is also the ‘Night to be Much Observed’, the anniversary evening of when they began out of Egypt, (Jos. 5:11), which was also the anniversary of the Promise-Oath made to Abraham. (Gen. 15:17 & Heb. 6:17-20). This would be the evening after sunset, beginning the fifteenth day. Exactly one day after the Passover. Only a Wave Sheaf insertion into the narrative would require that this first eating be delayed until the mid-to-late morning of the fifteenth, some 15 hours later. Further, if it is posed that the first eating was on the morning of the fifteenth, then all of the above work would be required on an annual Sabbath, the First Day of Unleavened Bread, when there was no need to do so, as manna would have fallen that morning! Also, the time needed to do all that would have delayed meal time to well into the afternoon, as their harvest wouldn’t have begun until after mid morning!

Manna ceased on the morrow after they ate of the produce of the land, being the morning of the fifteenth. (5:12)

“And then”, Joshua went out to scout the area near Jericho early morning on the fifteenth. (5:13)

Israel assembled and marched once around Jericho the first time mid-day the fifteenth. (6:11)

Israel repeated the first day’s single march around the city each of the next five days, and encircling seven times on the seventh day. (6:14-15)

Jericho fell on the twenty first day of the month, the Last Day of Unleavened Bread. (If Passover was on a Sabbath, then this day also would have been a weekly Sabbath, with God commanding them to kill all of Jericho’s inhabitants (hand to hand combat being one of the most labor-intensive activities there is), and burn the city with fire!) Logically, this would be highly improbable.