

PENTECOST SUNDAY 2021
Scripture: Leviticus 23:15-22
Date: 2021-05-16
Words: 6023

INTRO: Next Sunday is the Christian Day of Pentecost. Since we are to have a guest speaker next Sunday I give this message for Pentecost today. I had worked on this for last year and am not sure why I missed preaching on that day. On the Jewish Calendar, Pentecost will be to morrow. We'll see why such differences of dates in this Message. Now this message is mostly informational and though you won't remember much of it, I trust it will answer some questions that you may have wondered about.

One of the rich studies of the Bible is the feasts God set out for Israel. We have just come past what we call Easter but which is actually...? Passover. In the Spring of the year Israel had three feasts; Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First-fruits.

All the feasts are prophetic in nature. Passover pictured the death of the Lamb of God; Unleavened Bread pictured the righteous walk that becomes possible because of the death of Christ, and First-fruits pictures the first-fruits of the resurrection. These three prophetic pictures have been fulfilled.

The last three feasts are the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Booths. Between those two sets of three feasts came the Feast of Pentecost and that is the day we will commemorate next Sunday.

We saw on Ascension Day that Jesus ascended 40 days after First-fruits. That leaves 10 days until Pentecost and that is what this message is about. Two years ago, I began to study a question regarding Pentecost as it relates to Sunday and that is the topic for this morning. The question is this: How do you determine what day Pentecost is, and what is the significance of the answer to Pentecost Sunday?

I. DETERMINING THE DAY

As I was pondering the question on which day Pentecost falls I discovered that it involves a difficulty. The question as to what day Pentecost should fall on caught my interest and I think you will find it of interest as well.

We go then to Leviticus 23. In this chapter all the feasts are given in one chapter. The Sabbath and the first three feasts are dealt with in verses 1-14. That brings us to the day of Pentecost. So, we begin in verse 15:

15 *'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.*

16 *'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.*

17 *'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.*

18 *'And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.*

Now, our question is, what day was Pentecost to be commemorated? Look once more at verses 15-16:

15 *'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.*

16 *'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.*

It was the fiftieth day after the Sabbath when they brought the sheaf of wave offering. The day they brought the sheaf of the wave offering was the day after the Sabbath. So, you begin counting from the day of First-fruits. This is the day after the Sabbath, and it is the day Christ arose from the grave.

So when did the day of First-fruits take place? It took place the day after the Sabbath of the day of Passover. The Passover always took place on the 14th of Nisan in the evening. But in the Jewish year a month was added every several years to make up for the 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days of the year. In this way the time of the seasons never changed. So now

the 14th of Nisan can be as much as one month different in those years when a month is added. Our day of Easter can vary anywhere from March 22 to April 25. We'll look at that later.

So this is what we have so far. Passover happened on the 14th of Nisan, regardless of whether a month was added in a certain year or not. That is the definite date we have so far. But that brings us now to a difficulty. Look at Leviticus 23:15 again. It says:

15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

We now have the difficulty of determining the day they brought the wave offering. That day is called First-fruits. So verse 15 says, "...you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath...seven Sabbaths..." Now this raises a question of which Sabbath is referred to?

Let us say that in a particular year the Passover fell on Monday. The next day would be the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This day was also a Sabbath, no matter which day of the week it fell. So look at Leviticus 23:5-8:

5 'On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover.

6 'And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

7 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

8 'But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.'"

On the first and seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a holy convocation. These were special or extra Sabbaths. They were not the weekly Sabbath.

Back to our subject now. If the Passover fell on Monday, and the next day was a feast day Sabbath, then on Saturday

would be the seventh day Sabbath. If First-fruits fell on the day after the Sabbath, which Sabbath was it, Tuesday or Saturday? When Pentecost happens depends on which Sabbath you start counting from. I spoke with John Plants, missionary of Friends of Israel, and I gathered that the Jews today count from the Sabbath of the first day of Unleavened Bread.

I understand the question we are considering is 2,000 years old or older. The Pharisees and Sadducees differed. The Pharisees, giving great weight to oral tradition counted from the Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Sadducees, saying oral traditions is not how to determine this question, it must be settled by the Scriptures. So they believed that you start from the seventh day Sabbath after Passover.

Here is what Leviticus 23:15-16 says:

15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

If you count fifty days from the first day of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost can fall on any day of the week. If you count fifty days from the day after the weekly Sabbath, Pentecost always falls on a Sunday. According to verse 15 you count fifty days from the day of First-fruits, seven Sabbaths are to be completed. Conclusion: if you begin at the weekly Sabbath, you always end up on a Sunday.

So far we have looked at the Jewish day of Pentecost. Now let us consider the Christian Pentecost. I now raise this question: Why do Christians sometimes have Pentecost as much as a month later in some years than in some other years? How many have wondered about that? If your birthday is on a certain day of the year one year, it is always on that day unless you were born on one particular day in a leap year. Why would Pentecost vary up to a month on the Christian calendar? Well, once more you have to go back to the day of First-fruits, which we wrongly call Easter. I will call it Resurrection Sunday.

Israel's year was based on the moon. Our year is based on the Sun. This complicates things. But though we base our year on the sun, we base Passover on the moon. It seems that very early in Church history, the date for resurrection Sunday was determined to be the first Sunday after the Spring equinox. The spring equinox can occur on March 19, 20, or 21. So you go to the spring equinox of any year. Then you go to the first full moon after this day. And then you go to the first Sunday after the full moon and that is the day we have as Resurrection Sunday.

In this way, the day we call Easter must always occur between March 22 and April 25. In 2021, the vernal equinox falls on March 20. The first full moon after that date is March 28. The Sunday following that is April 4. That makes resurrection Sunday, April 4. We have Good Friday on Friday, so it is the Friday before the Resurrection Sunday.

Well, you understand that Jesus was not really crucified on Friday because you cannot get three days from Friday evening until Sunday morning. Let me give you one reason, if not the main reason why it is viewed that Jesus died on Friday. For this you need to turn to John 19. In John 19 we have a record of the day of Jesus' crucifixion. And 19:31 says:

31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

I believe that it was viewed that the Sabbath mentioned here is the seventh day Sabbath. But it is the Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread Sabbath which followed the day of Passover. That is why the verse says, "...for that Sabbath was a high day..." It was the holy convocation of Unleavened Bread. It was not the regular Sabbath.

That the Passover fell on a Wednesday the year Jesus died is clear. The one solid date we have is that Jesus was raised on the first day of the week. All four Gospels record that. We know that He died in the evening before the sun set. Count back three days and three nights and you have the time He was buried.

Back to Pentecost now. I agree with the Sadducees that the day to begin counting the 50 days is the day after the weekly Sabbath. Now once one can determine the day of the resurrection, one can also determine the day of Pentecost. It is the fiftieth day after the day of First-fruits. I am fully convinced that the Day of Pentecost was always to be on the first day of the week which is Sunday, which is surprising from a Jewish perspective. So we want to look at the fulfillment of the Day of Pentecost.

II. THE FULFILLMENT OF THE DAY

Well, we said earlier that the day of Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of First-fruits were fulfilled in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The fulfillment of these days is recorded in the Gospels. What now of the fulfillment of Pentecost? For this we go to the Acts 2. We read some of Acts 1 last Sunday as some of it has to do with Ascension Day. Acts 2:1:

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

You will remember that three times in the year all Jewish men were to go to Jerusalem to keep the feasts. This is one of those times so Jerusalem is filled with people from all over the known world.

Now this is a most notable day. First, it is Sunday. Second, it is ten days after Jesus ascended to heaven. We have this in Acts 1. Some of the disciples had met with Jesus on the Mount of Olives. And they asked Him if He was now going to set up the kingdom and He instructed them that they should be witnesses to Him in the entire world.

So just look over at Acts 1:9:

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

And so 2:1 says:

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

We go on then in verse 2:

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

So here we see that Jews from all over the known world had come to worship on this Pentecost day. We go on to verse 6:

6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"

8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"

9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 *"Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,*

11 *"Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."*

12 *So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"*

13 *Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."*

What we have here is a record of the day that the Church was born, and it was born on the day of Pentecost. It is a most amazing fulfillment! It has changed the whole Jewish and Gentile world. The Gospel and the Church have impacted every nation under the sun and still does so today!

Now I want to take you back to Leviticus 23 once more. There is a most interesting revelation about this day. I find it most amazing that there is no direct prophecy to the Church in the OT. This is most amazing, since it is a time period of at least 2,000 years!

But there is something very interesting in Leviticus 23. We go to verses 15-18. It says:

15 *'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.*

16 *'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.*

17 *'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.*

Resurrection Sunday was a day of first-fruits. The first-fruits were from the barley harvest. So this is a grain harvest. It spoke of the first-fruits of the resurrection. First-fruits speaks of more to come, and there certainly is more to come

Pentecost also has a grain offering. This offering is the first-fruits of the wheat harvest. Wheat comes later than barley. And so we ask, just what does this speak of? Note

first that verse 17 says they are to bring two wave loaves. Note now that these loaves were of fine flour baked with leaven. You will remember that in the barley first-fruits there would have been no leaven at all because for seven days they had no leaven. But now there is leaven in these loaves and there is leaven during the feast. What could this possibly speak of?

I have concluded that the two loaves picture the Church made up of both Jews and Gentiles! And the leaven pictures that the Church is made up of saved sinners. If the first-fruits of the barley harvest pictured the resurrection of Jesus Christ, what might these first-fruits speak of? I propose to you that they are the first part of the resurrections yet to come.

Go to 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection chapter of the Bible. We'll read verses 20-23:

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Christ is the First-fruits of the resurrection. The Church is the first part of the resurrection of all the dead. This is the rapture. After the rapture, all the OT saints and those who died in the tribulation will be resurrected. After the millennium all the unsaved will be resurrected, and after that all who have ever lived will then have been resurrected.

Now I can't take time to deal with the passages but several times Jesus said the last would be first and the first last. We are not told of what these would be first and last. But I recommend it is the resurrection. The Jews, who were first on the scene, will be last to be part of the first resurrection; and the Church, which was last, will be first. I am talking about the resurrection at the rapture which will only include the Church. I am not

saying this is what is meant here, but I suggest it may well be.

So what I am saying is that the Church is the fulfillment of the day of Pentecost.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAY

So I want to take us to another point and that is the significance of Pentecost falling on Sunday. We have already seen that Christ rose from the dead on Sunday. But now to find that Pentecost also falls on Sunday, we ask, what is the significance of that? Why would any Jewish feast day fall on a Sunday?

The point is often made by such as the Seventh Day Adventists that we should keep the Sabbath and that Sunday keeping is not biblical. They say that the Catholic church changed the Sabbath to Sunday. Let me say this first, the Sabbath has never been changed. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. It is said that to keep Sunday is to worship the sun god, from which we get the name Sunday. But Sunday is not the original name for this day we know as Sunday. The original name is the first day of the week. Numerous times in the NT we are told that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. God created the earth, not on Sunday, but the first day of the week. If cults later called it by the name of some god, this does not affect the fact that it is the first day of the week.

But in light of this topic, I find it most interesting that Pentecost falls on Sunday or the first day of the week. I will make large use of earlier studies I have done in dealing with this subject without mentioning when I am quoting from my own material.

So we ask, what brought about Sunday keeping? Why did this matter ever become an issue? It is without question that the central event that led to Sunday keeping is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the first day of the week, and which was also the Feast of First-fruits.

It is common to think that Jesus was raised from the dead early Sunday morning because that is when the empty tomb was discovered. But by then He had been raised for 12

hours already. The day of First-fruits began in the evening as did all other days.

When the empty tomb was discovered, the day of First-fruits was already half gone. The very first day of the week was Christ's first day alive in His resurrected body. It is also true that Mary Magdalene met Him in the morning of the first day of the week and that the disciples came to see His empty tomb that same day. It is also true that His disciples met with Christ first after His resurrection on the first day of the week in the evening. John 20:19 says:

19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

The disciples were gathered together, not on the Sabbath, but on the first day of the week, on the day of Christ's resurrection, and Jesus came to meet with them that day. Furthermore, Jesus met with them again on the first day of the week exactly one week later. Listen now to John 20:26:

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

But that is not all. When we get to the book of Acts, we find the record of the birth of the Church in Acts 2. What is of note is that Pentecost always fell on Sunday, or the first day of the week. We found evidence for this in Leviticus 23:15-16. Pentecost took place the fiftieth day from First-fruits and thus it always fell on Sunday. So Christ was raised on Sunday and the Church was born on Sunday, and the Holy Spirit was given on Sunday!

Well, as soon as the Church was born that Sunday, it began to spread out. As it spread out, it began to reach out to the Gentiles, and soon Gentiles were saved by great numbers as Christian missionaries carried the Gospel out into the world as instructed by Christ. And when you study the preaching of those early days in Acts, you will notice the importance placed on the resurrection! It is mentioned over and over. (See 1:22; 2:31; 4:2; 4:33; 17:3; 17:18; 17:32; 23:6; 23:8; 24:15; 24:21).

As the Church spread, we later find Paul meeting with the disciples on the first day of the week in Acts 20:7. As we move into the epistles, Paul instructs the believers to lay by them in store as the Lord had prospered them and they were to do this on the first day of the week. He said, "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come" (1 Cor. 16:2). So very early in Church history, we have record that the Church began to meet on the first day of the week.

When we add all of this together we have a rather impressive emphasis on the first day of the week. And in the epistles we find only one reference to the seventh day Sabbath. We'll see this later. We have the fulfillment of two major feasts of Israel; First-fruits and Pentecost on Sunday. Christ arose from the dead that day; the Holy Spirit was poured out, and the Church was born on the first day of the week!

Turn to Acts 15. When the Gospel went out to the Gentiles and Gentiles got saved some Jews insisted that the Gentiles must keep various laws of the Jews. Paul and Barnabas then went to the Apostles in Jerusalem to ask about this question. Here is what Acts 15:1-5 says:

1 And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

3 So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.

4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.

5 *But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."*

Then in verses 6-21 we have a brief account of that meeting and the conclusion that was reached. I will not read that for the sake of time. So a letter was drafted and a delegation is sent with the letter to the Gentiles. In this letter we have the conclusion reached by the apostles and we will read it as given in verses 22-29:

22 *Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.*

23 *They wrote this letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.*

24 *Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law" —to whom we gave no such commandment—*

25 *it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,*

26 *men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

27 *We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth.*

28 *For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:*

29 *that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.*

Well, when they got back to the Gentiles the letter was read and we have that in verses 30-31:

30 *So when they were sent off, they came to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter.*

31 *When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement.*

What is amazing to me is that nothing is mentioned about the Gentiles keeping the Sabbath. If the Church is to keep the Sabbath, if ever there was a place it should be mentioned, it should have been mentioned here. Yet nothing is mentioned of the Sabbath.

And when we go on in Acts, not much later we read these words in Acts 20:7, "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread..." Here we have early indication that they met on the first day of the week for church service.

And then, when we come to the epistles, which beyond all argument, are specifically addressed to the Church we find further information that is instructive for the Church. We go first to Colossians 2:16-17. It says:

16 *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,*

17 *which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

Here is the only reference to sabbath days in the epistles. And of these verses LEM writes in his book, 'Crowded To Christ', "Turning again to Scripture, we note that there is explicit declaration to the effect that the Sabbath is not a binding obligation upon the Christian in this age.... Let not the Sabbatarian claim that Paul did not here refer to the Sabbath of the seventh day. Such would be dishonest dodging of Paul's use of the plain word 'Sabbath'" (348).

Further, in verse 17 we find that the 'sabbaths' were a shadow, not the substance. What is the substance? The substance is Christ, as verse 17 states. Now Israel was to remember that they were given rest from Egyptian bondage and labor by keeping the Sabbath. In Colossians 2:16-17 we find that the Sabbaths were a shadow of things to come.

Could it be that the Christians keep the first day of the week because of the rest they get from their sins through His death, burial and resurrection? So the Sabbath was not the real thing. It pictured the real thing. What is the real thing which it foreshadowed? You may wish to study this from Hebrews 3-4, where this fulfilled rest is spoken of about a dozen times. Let us here just briefly consider Hebrews 4:8-11 (read).

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

Now this is the Sabbath of the soul given to the believer in Christ and realized in the doctrine of sanctification. This is when the believer learns to fully rest in the Lord, and ceases from his own works as God did from His.

Well, we ask, what did the early church practice with regard to worshipping on Sunday? We asked earlier whether the Roman Catholic Church changed the Sabbath to Sunday or began the tradition of Sunday keeping with Constantine's edict. The answer is a resound, "No!" How so? Because Sunday keeping was already a practice among true believers long before Constantine or Catholicism came on the scene.

Tertulian, who lived from 160-220 AD, long before Constantine, wrote: "We have nothing to do with the Sabbath or the Jewish festivals, much less those of the heathen." And again he writes, "Those who contend for the continued obligation of Sabbath keeping and circumcision must show that Adam and Abel and Noah and Melchizedek and Lot also observed these things." Then he writes, "The Sabbath was a figure of rest from sin and typical of man's final rest in Got, yet with the other ceremonial observances was only intended to last until a new law giver would arise and introduce the reality of these things which were but shadows of things to come."

I want to give a number of quotes from Victor Buksbazen's, book, "The Gospel in the Feasts of Israel". These are quotes of writers who wrote long before Constantine instituted Sunday keeping. He writes of Barnabas, "Barnabas, one of the apostolic fathers of the first century A.D., wrote, 'We keep the Lord's Day with joyfulness, the day on which Jesus rose from the dead'" (92).

Here is another quote, "The Didache of the Apostles, one of the earliest Christian documents also of the first century, which contained the teachings of the apostles, states, 'On the Lord's own day gather yourselves together and break bread and give thanks'" (92).

And again, "Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, in the year A.D. 110, said, 'Those who walked in the ancient practices attain unto newness of hope, no longer observing sabbaths, but fashioning their lives after the Lord's Day, on which our life also rose through Him, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ, our only teacher'" (93).

Justin Martyr, in the year A.D. 135, said, "Sunday is the day on which we all hold common assembly, because it is the first day on which God having wrought a change in the darkness and matter made the world, and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead. And on the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits.'" (93).

In the book, "The Apostolic Fathers", by J.B. Lightfoot on page 5 he claims that Sunday was established as early as AD 65. Sunday keeping did not come from Catholicism, Catholicism got it from the earlier Christians.

So, long before Constantine gave his edict to Rome, Sunday keeping was already in practice. He simply made an edict of a practice already in existence. However, there is no doubt that this edict had a great impact on the practice

CONCL: So, let me briefly conclude. Creation began on the first day of the week. Christ was resurrected on the first day of the week. Consider now, let us say Christ had died a year earlier or a year later, then either He may not have been raised on the

first of the week or He would have had to be in the grave either more or less than three days and three nights. But on the year died, 3 days and 3 nights later was the beginning of the first day of the week.

On the next feast, Pentecost, was on the first day of the week. Then the Church was born on the first day of the week. Christ was the First-fruits of the resurrection, which happened on the first day of the week. The Church was born on the first day of the week. Then the Holy Spirit was poured out on the first Christians on the first day of the week. The early Christians met on the first day of the week.

Pentecost, as I understand Leviticus 23, always falls on Sunday and it is most significant that the Church was born on that day.