

## SABBATH THOUGHT 2026-05-02—PENTECOST – THE DAY OF GOOD WORKS

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

There are three festival seasons that portray God's plan for the salvation of mankind<sup>1</sup>. The First Festival Season consists of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, which deals with the problem that the entire world is under a penalty of death for sin. The Third Festival Season begins with the vengeance of God upon the wicked pictured by the Day of Trumpets followed by the great harvest of mankind into the Kingdom of God as portrayed by the Day of Covering (Atonement) and Tabernacles.

The Second Festival Season is Pentecost and, unlike the other seasons, it is only a single holyday. The Greek name Pentecost refers to counting 50 days starting with the Wavesheaf Offering. It is also the only holyday that has a unique Greek name. The original name, from which Pentecost is derived, is Festival of Weeks:

EXODUS 34:22 “And you shall observe **the Feast of Weeks [Pentecost]**, of the Firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.

**NOTE:** The word *feast* is translated from *chag* (H2282); however, it means *festival*, not *feast*. A feast is a lavish meal whereas a festival is a celebration. What are commonly called feasts should be referred to as Festivals of God.

Festival of Weeks refers to counting “seven Sabbaths,” weeks ending with the Sabbath, from the observance of the Wavesheaf Offering:

[TS2009] LEVITICUS 23:15 ‘And from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, you shall **count for yourselves: seven completed Sabbaths.**

The seven Sabbaths must be completed; that is, come and gone, meaning that Pentecost occurs on the day *after* the seven weeks, on day 50 after those 49 days.

It is interesting that of all three Festival Seasons, only the first two, which include Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread, and Pentecost, are mentioned specifically and extensively tied to significant events in the New Testament. The holydays of the Third Festival Season, Trumpets, Day of Covering, and Tabernacles, are only mentioned in passing. The first two Festival Seasons were or are being fulfilled before Jesus Christ returns when the Third Festival Season comes into focus.

The First Festival Season—Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread—required the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for them to have meaning and significance. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called the Four Gospels because they focus on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that fulfilled the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread for the purpose of dealing with sin. The book of Revelation provides a great deal of information on the Third Festival Season. The Second Festival Season, consisting of the single holyday Pentecost, is the main topic of the remaining books aside from the Four Gospels and Revelation in the New Testament. To understand why this is the case, take a look at the original names for Pentecost. Besides being originally called the Festival of Weeks, it has two other names in the Old Testament:

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<sup>1</sup> Exod. 23:14-17; Deut. 16:16.

NUMBERS 28:26 ‘Also on **the day of the firstfruits [Pentecost]**, when you bring a new grain offering to the LORD **at your Feast of Weeks**, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.

EXODUS 23:14, 16 “Three times you shall keep a feast to Me [*the LORD*] in the year: ... 16 “and **the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits** ...

In addition to the Hebrew name Festival of Weeks, Pentecost was also called the Day of Firstfruits and Festival of Harvest of Firstfruits. The main focus of Pentecost is, obviously, firstfruits. What are firstfruits? It refers to initial or first ripe produce harvested from a crop. The Second and Third Festival Seasons are both wheat harvest seasons:

EXODUS 34:22 “And you shall observe **the Feast of Weeks, of the Firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering [Third Festival Season]** at the year’s end.

Pentecost is a firstfruits harvest of the wheat crop and Tabernacles is the ingathering of the main wheat harvest. But there is an important distinction between the harvests of Pentecost and Tabernacles when viewed from the perspective of salvation for mankind. Pentecost is the smaller of the two harvests and, in the sequence of the three Festival Seasons, it occurs BEFORE the beginning of the Third Festival Season; notably, the Day of Trumpets that portrays the return of Jesus Christ. With that in mind, note the difference in the descriptions of the Second and Third Festival Seasons:

EXODUS 23:16 “and **the Feast of Harvest [Second Festival Season, i.e., Pentecost], the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering [Third Festival Season, primarily Tabernacles] at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field.**

The Second Festival Season—Pentecost—is the firstfruits harvest of the wheat crop that is SOWN by “**your labors.**” The Third Festival Season, Tabernacles in particular, is the main harvest of the wheat crop but it is GATHERED as a result of “**your labors.**” What could be the significance of our labors that sow the crop for Pentecost and our labors that *gathers* the crop for Tabernacles? In the context of God’s plan of salvation for mankind, the wording is both intentional and important. Harvests represent bringing children of God into His Kingdom and His children today are the result of seeds of the Gospel being sown as described in the Parable of the Sower<sup>2</sup>. The important point is that the Gospel message is spread as the direct result of evangelical work of flesh and blood. Paul describes the spreading the Gospel as a labor of workers:

1 CORINTHIANS 3:6-9 **I [Paul] planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.** 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 8 **Now he who plants and he who waters are one,** and each one will receive his own reward **according to his own labor.** 9 For **we are God’s fellow workers;** you are God’s field, *you are* God’s building.

However, after the return of Jesus Christ as portrayed by the Day of Trumpets in the Third Festival Season, the Gospel will no longer be spread by flesh and blood but by God<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>2</sup> Matt. 13:3-9, 18-23.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. 31:33-34; Mic. 4:2; John 6:45.

ISAIAH 54:13 **All your children shall be taught by the LORD**, and great *shall be* the peace of your children.

Pentecost is the Festival of Harvest of Firstfruits that portrays the Firstfruits of mankind who receive salvation:<sup>4</sup>

ROMANS 8:22-23 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs [*resurrection into the Kingdom*] together until now. 23 Not only *that*, but **we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit**, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting [the placing as sons], the redemption of our body.

JAMES 1:18 Of His [*God's*] own will He [*God*] brought us forth by the word of truth, that **we might be a kind of firstfruits of His [*God's*] creatures**.

Pentecost is the initial, small harvest of mankind into the Kingdom of God and Tabernacles is the final, large harvest of mankind. The Gospel message of salvation has been and continues to be spread by the flesh and blood begotten children of God; that is, until the return of Jesus Christ when it is taught to mankind directly by God. That explains why Pentecost is a harvest SOWN by "**your labors**"—the Gospel is spread by people—but why is the large harvest of Tabernacles is GATHERED by "**your labors**?" Notice the involvement and work of those who are the spiritually-born Firstfruits after the return of Jesus Christ:

ISAIAH 30:20-21 And *though* the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but **your eyes shall see your teachers**. 21 Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "*This is the way, walk in it,*" whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

The spiritual-born Firstfruits during the millennial rule of Jesus Christ have a labor—a work—to guide the majority of mankind unto salvation. The resurrection of the final great harvest of mankind is a GATHERING of "**your labors**." People are taught by Jesus Christ—sown with the seeds of the Gospel—but are tended by the Firstfruits until the final judgment day. Labors is simply another word for *works* so Pentecost is a Day of Good Works because it is "the Feast of Harvest, **the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field**."<sup>5</sup> SPREADING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE IS A GOOD WORK THAT GOD EXPECTS THE FIRSTFRUITS TO BE DOING! This is the point of the Parable of the Minas (Pounds):

LUKE 19:11-27 Now as they heard these things, He [*Jesus Christ*] spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, '**Do business till I come.**' 14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign over us.' 15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had **gained [or earned] by trading**. 16 "Then came the first, saying, '**Master, your mina has earned ten minas.**' 17 "**And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'** 18

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<sup>4</sup> Also Rev. 14:1-5.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. 23:16.

“And the second came, saying, **‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’** 19 **‘Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’** 20 “Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 ‘For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ 22 “And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and **reaping what I did not sow.** 23 ‘Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ 24 “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him who has ten minas.’ 25 (“But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) 26 ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, **even what he has will be taken away from him.** 27 ‘But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me.’ ”

Notice that it says the Master reaps “what **I did not sow.**” The sowing is done by the Firstfruits. Good Works are required for salvation as explained numerous times in other messages and it includes the labor of spreading the Gospel message, which is a Good Work. This parable says the one who did not work to gain more from the single mina he was given loses everything. What that loss might be is not indicated; however, the Master calls him a “wicked servant” and it is certain that no one wants to hear those words from Jesus Christ when He returns.

Those of the Body of Christ have gone from darkness into the light of Jesus Christ who said, “He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but **have the light of life.**”<sup>6</sup> He also said:

MATTHEW 5:14-16 **“You are the light of the world.** A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. 16 **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works** and glorify your Father in heaven.

Being a light in this world is a mainstay of spreading the Gospel message and that, brethren, is a Good Work:<sup>7</sup>

2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts **to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God** in the face of Jesus Christ.

And that, brethren, is why Pentecost is the day of Good Works. It is a labor of sowing the seeds of the Gospel of light<sup>8</sup> unto the world!

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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<sup>6</sup> John 8:12.

<sup>7</sup> Also Phil. 2:15.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Tim. 1:10.