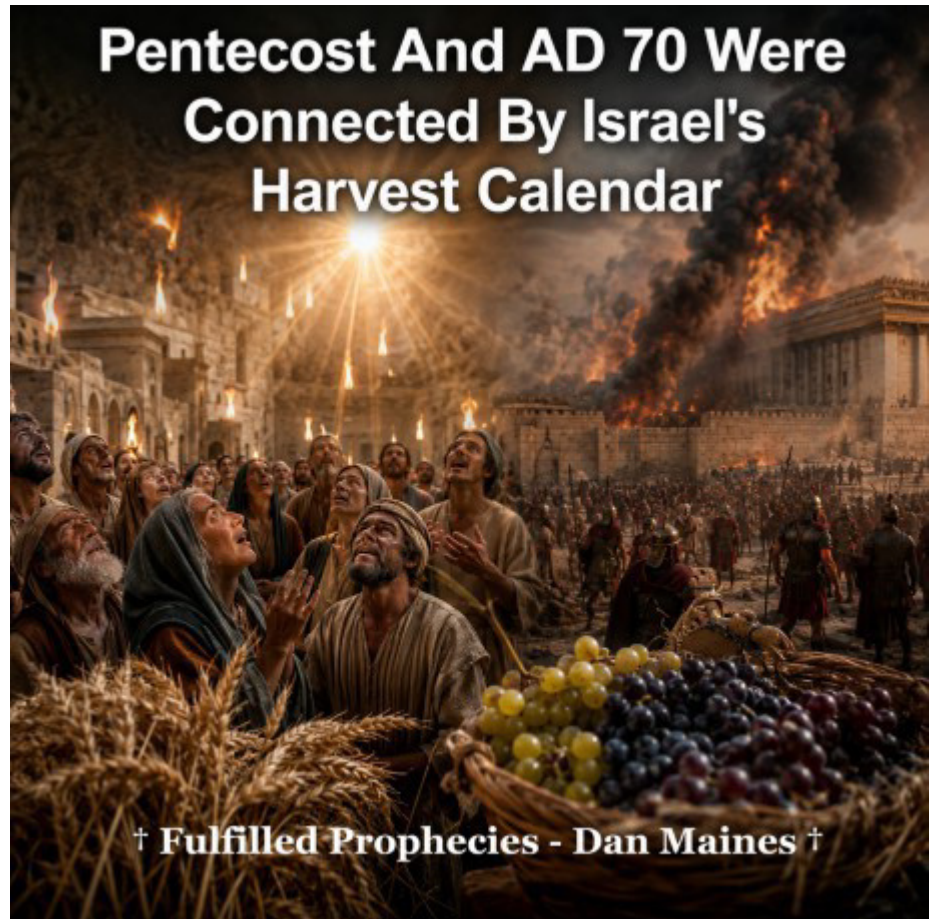


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**Pentecost And AD 70 Were
Connected By
Israel's Harvest
Calendar**



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Israel's feast calendar wasn't a collection of disconnected religious ceremonies. God arranged the feasts around Israel's agricultural year, and together they formed a prophetic picture of redemption, beginning with sacrifice and ending with the completed harvest and joyful dwelling with God.

† Passover pointed to Christ's sacrifice, Firstfruits pointed to His resurrection, Pentecost marked the first gathering of the

harvest, and the later feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles pictured the approaching judgment, cleansing, final ingathering, and dwelling of God with His people.

† This gives us an important framework for understanding the period between Pentecost and AD 70. Pentecost wasn't the end of the harvest story. It was the beginning of the first-century gathering that moved toward its covenantal completion.

† Jesus and the apostles repeatedly used harvest language for events belonging to their generation (Matthew 13:39-43; Matthew 24:30-34; James 5:7-9; Revelation 14:14-20). When we read that language against Israel's feast calendar, the connection becomes powerful.

Leviticus 23:5-6

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

† The redemptive calendar began with Passover. Before there could be Firstfruits, Pentecost, or the final harvest, there had to be a sacrifice.

† Jesus fulfilled the Passover pattern through His death. Paul directly identified Christ with the Passover sacrifice when he wrote, For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7).

† The harvest story therefore begins at the cross. Redemption didn't begin with human achievement, it began with the Lamb.

Leviticus 23:10-11

"Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and you gather its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

† Firstfruits wasn't the entire harvest. It was the first portion presented to God as the beginning and pledge of what was still

to come.

† Paul used exactly this harvest imagery for Christ's resurrection, calling Christ the firstfruits of those who had fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

† Christ's resurrection therefore wasn't disconnected from Israel's feast calendar. The first sheaf pointed forward to the risen Christ, and the firstfruits guaranteed that God's redemptive harvest had begun.

Leviticus 23:15-17

You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete Sabbaths. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread as a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the Lord.

† Fifty days after Firstfruits came Pentecost, also called the Feast of Weeks. It was explicitly connected with harvest and firstfruits.

† This makes Acts 2 far more significant than simply the day the Holy Spirit was poured out. God chose a harvest feast for the beginning of the great first-century gospel gathering.

† Pentecost was firstfruits, not the completed harvest. That distinction matters. What began in Acts 2 continued throughout the apostolic generation as the gospel gathered God's people before the end of the old covenant age.

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a noise like a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And tongues that looked like fire appeared to them, distributing themselves, and a tongue rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with different tongues, as the Spirit was giving them the

ability to speak out.

† Luke specifically tells us that this happened when the day of Pentecost had arrived. The timing wasn't meaningless. The harvest feast became the setting for the first great gathering under the gospel.

† That same day about three thousand people received the word and were added to them (Acts 2:41). The imagery couldn't be more appropriate, Pentecost was a harvest feast, and thousands were gathered into Christ.

† James later called first-century believers a kind of firstfruits of God's creatures (James 1:18). The apostles understood themselves to be living during God's harvest.

Matthew 13:39-43

and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. So just as the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears, let him hear.

† Jesus Himself connected harvest with the end of the age. The Greek word translated world here is *aion*, meaning age. Jesus wasn't predicting the destruction of planet Earth. He was describing an age-ending harvest.

† That harvest language fits the covenant transition taking place in the first century. The gospel was gathering the wheat while judgment was approaching the covenant system centered in Jerusalem (Matthew 23:36-38; Matthew 24:1-3, 34).

† Pentecost began the great gathering, but Jesus had already taught that harvest involved both gathering and judgment. Salvation and judgment were two sides of the approaching end of the age.

Leviticus 23:24-25

"Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord.'"

† After the spring feasts came the seventh-month feasts, beginning with Trumpets. Trumpets announced, warned, assembled, and prepared the people for what followed.

† Jesus used trumpet and gathering language when describing His coming within that generation (Matthew 24:30-34). Paul also used the trumpet as resurrection and transformation imagery (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

† The point isn't that every prophetic trumpet must be forced onto the exact calendar date of the Feast of Trumpets. The point is that the feast supplied biblical imagery for announcement, gathering, judgment, and covenantal transition.

Leviticus 23:27-28

On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble yourselves and present an offering by fire to the Lord. You shall not do any work on this very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the Lord your God.

† The Day of Atonement followed Trumpets. Christ accomplished the sacrifice necessary for atonement at the cross, but Hebrews describes the first-century saints as waiting for the appearing associated with the completion of the high-priestly pattern (Hebrews 9:24-28).

† The cross and AD 70 therefore shouldn't be confused. Jesus didn't need to die again in AD 70. His sacrifice was completed once for all. AD 70 publicly and covenantally demonstrated the removal of the old temple order that His sacrifice had already made obsolete (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 10:9-14).

† The destruction of the earthly sanctuary showed that access to God was no longer centered on Jerusalem, animal sacrifices,

or the Levitical priesthood. Christ was the final High Priest and His sacrifice was sufficient.

Leviticus 23:34, 39

Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the Lord. 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day.

† Tabernacles came when the produce had been gathered in. This was the great feast of completed ingathering and rejoicing.

† Notice the language, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land. The calendar that began with Passover sacrifice moved through Firstfruits and Pentecost until it reached completed ingathering.

† This pattern helps explain why Revelation combines harvest, judgment, temple, and dwelling imagery. The story moves toward God dwelling with His people in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 14:14-20; Revelation 21:2-3).

† The biblical movement is therefore sacrifice, resurrection, firstfruits, harvest, judgment, completed gathering, and God's dwelling with His covenant people.

James 5:7-9

Therefore be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

† James brought the harvest picture directly into the expectation of Christ's first-century coming. He told his original readers to be patient like a farmer waiting for precious fruit.

† He didn't tell them that this harvest was thousands of years away. He said the coming of the Lord was near and that the

Judge was right at the door.

† This is exactly what we'd expect if Pentecost had begun an end-of-the-age harvest that was approaching its covenantal climax in that generation.

Revelation 14:15-16

And another angel came out of the temple, calling out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

† Revelation doesn't describe a harvest that had barely begun. It announces that the hour to reap had arrived and that the harvest was ripe.

† Revelation opened by saying these things must shortly come to pass and that the time was near (Revelation 1:1-3). It closed with the same urgency (Revelation 22:6, 10).

† Pentecost and Revelation therefore belong within the same first-century redemptive movement, firstfruits followed by maturation, gathering, judgment, and completed harvest.

Historical References

† Josephus records that Jerusalem became crowded with people during Passover when the Roman siege tightened around the city. This is significant because the war that brought the old covenant center to its end unfolded against the background of Israel's own feast system. Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5.

† Josephus describes famine, internal violence, the burning of the temple, and the devastation of Jerusalem as the Roman war reached its terrible climax in AD 70. Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-6.

† Tacitus also records the Roman siege of Jerusalem under Titus and describes the enormous population gathered in the city, connecting the catastrophe with the Jewish national and religious setting. Tacitus, Histories, Book 5.

† Eusebius later preserved the Christian tradition that believers

in Jerusalem left the city before the war and went to Pella, connecting their escape with the warning given to them before Jerusalem's destruction. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5.

† These historical writers don't prove the theological meaning of the feasts. Scripture does that. History confirms that the first-century judgment Jesus warned about actually came upon Jerusalem and the temple generation.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We aren't waiting for another Passover sacrifice. Christ our Passover has already been sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5:7).

† We aren't waiting for Christ to become Firstfruits. He has already risen and become the Firstfruits (1 Corinthians 15:20).

† We aren't waiting for another Pentecost to begin the first-century harvest. The Holy Spirit was poured out and the gospel harvest began in Acts 2.

† We aren't living under Israel's old covenant feast calendar waiting for its prophetic story to start over again. Those shadows pointed to the redemptive work accomplished in Christ (Colossians 2:16-17).

† We live on the fulfilled side of that covenant transition. Our access to God isn't through an earthly temple, an earthly priesthood, or Israel's agricultural feast calendar. We come to God through Jesus Christ.

† The feast calendar tells one magnificent story, Passover sacrifice, Firstfruits resurrection, Pentecost gathering, Trumpets announcement, Atonement through Christ, and Tabernacles ingathering and dwelling.

† Pentecost and AD 70 weren't disconnected events separated by meaningless decades. They stood within the same first-century harvest period, Pentecost displaying the firstfruits gathering and AD 70 marking the decisive covenantal judgment at the end of the old covenant age.

Q: Was Pentecost the completed harvest?

A: No. Pentecost was associated with firstfruits. The New

Testament continued to speak about an approaching harvest after Pentecost (James 5:7-9; Revelation 14:15-16).

Q: Does this mean Jesus fulfilled every feast on the exact calendar date?

A: That's not necessary to establish the pattern. Scripture itself uses Passover, firstfruits, harvest, trumpet, atonement, and ingathering imagery to explain Christ's redemptive work and the first-century covenant transition (1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Hebrews 9:24-28).

Q: Why connect AD 70 with harvest?

A: Because Jesus connected the harvest with the end of the age, then placed the judgment of Jerusalem within His own generation (Matthew 13:39-43; Matthew 23:36-38; Matthew 24:1-3, 34).

Q: Did AD 70 accomplish the sacrifice for sin?

A: No. Jesus accomplished His sacrifice once for all at the cross. AD 70 removed the old covenant temple system that had become obsolete and demonstrated historically what Christ's finished sacrifice had already established (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 10:9-14).

Q: What does Tabernacles contribute to the picture?

A: Tabernacles celebrated completed ingathering and dwelling. That imagery reaches its redemptive goal in God's dwelling with His covenant people in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2-3).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Leviticus 23:5-6; Leviticus 23:10-11; Leviticus 23:15-17; Acts 2:1-4; Matthew 13:39-43; Leviticus 23:24-25; Leviticus 23:27-28; Leviticus 23:34, 39; James 5:7-9; Revelation 14:15-16

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-6; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5

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