

# Many Keep Pentecost One Week Late in 2011

## Synopsis

Some Christians seek to observe Pentecost (Feast of Weeks) based on counting fifty days from the weekly sabbath day falling during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Although many of these rely on the current Jewish calendar to show them the dates of those Days, most of them do not realize that the starting dates of months in the Jewish calendar are subject to “postponement” to accommodate Jewish religious customs. This article explains how postponements in 2011 will cause those people to observe Pentecost one week later than they intend.

## Introduction

Most Christians celebrate Easter, a festival based on ancient Babylonian religion and its offshoots over the centuries, and modified to a Christian format by the heathen Emperor Constantine in the first half of the fourth century AD.

However there are small numbers of other Christians who keep religious festivals based on the “Festivals of the Lord”, or the “Festivals of YHWH” as they are self described in chapter twenty three of the book of Leviticus in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. Such believers have existed continuously since the time of Christ, even though Constantine and successors, at the behest of a would-be universal church with strong influence over the emperors, tried to murder all of them and expunge them from the face of the earth.

This article is addressed to those Christians seeking to follow the Festivals of YHWH, and who use the current Jewish calendar as the reference for the start of months and years. They should be aware that the Jewish calendar in the Gregorian year 2011 has a two day postponement for the beginning of its month of Nisan (the supposed beginning of the Jewish religious year), which not only makes Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread two days later than the dates set by the lunar calendar, but in 2011 makes the date of Pentecost, if determined by counting seven weeks from the day of the Wave Sheaf Offering, a whole week late! This article will explain why.

## Dates of The Days of Unleavened Bread in 2011

Based upon the lunar month beginning with the new moon of Sunday 3 April 2011, 14:32 Universal Time<sup>1</sup> (4:32 pm Jerusalem standard time), the first day of the lunar month is from sunset Saturday 2 April 2011 to sunset Sunday 3 April 2011. The fifteenth of the lunar month is then from sunset Saturday 16 April to sunset Sunday 17 April.

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<sup>1</sup> You can easily find new moon times on the Internet, for example, search for “phases of the moon”.

The Days of Unleavened Bread extend for seven days, from the fifteenth of the month to the twenty first of the month. The Wave Sheaf Offering was presented on the first day of the week, equivalent to the Western Sunday, which occurred during the Days of Unleavened Bread.<sup>2</sup>

The following table shows portion of the month of April 2011, from days sixteen to twenty six in the Gregorian calendar used by Western civilization, and the corresponding dates of the lunar calendar based on the new moon described above, and the corresponding dates of the current Jewish calendar (attributed to Rabbi Hillel II around 350 AD)<sup>3</sup>. As shown, the Hillel calendar introduces two days of postponement in what is the Gregorian year 2011, i.e. it starts two days later than the lunar calendar. The first Day of Unleavened Bread in the Hillel calendar is on day 17 of the lunar month, but appears as day 15 of the Hillel calendar.

The lunar period of Unleavened Bread is shown in italics and background turquoise. The Jewish period is shown in the line below it with a salmon coloured background. The first and last Days of Unleavened Bread are shown in bold type.

Date	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu
Gregorian	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Lunar	14	<i><b>15</b></i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i><b>21</b></i>	22	23	24
Hillel	12	13	14	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19	20	<b>21</b>	22

### Dates of the Wave Sheaf Offering

In 2011, there are two different dates for the Wave Sheaf Offering, depending whether postponements are included or not. In some years it makes no difference, but it does in 2011.

According to the lunar month, day 15 corresponds to Sunday 17 April 2011, and the Days of Unleavened Bread terminate on lunar day 21, Saturday 23 April 2011. The Wave Sheaf Offering is presented on the first day of the week, Sunday, during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Using the lunar based calendar, this would happen on Sunday 17 April.

If the Hillel calendar is used as a substitute for the lunar calendar, the postponed Days of Unleavened Bread extend from Tuesday 19 to Monday 21 April. The Sunday which falls in this period is Sunday 24 April, one week later than when using the true lunar month days.

Judaism would not be using a two day postponement if there were no clash with its customs, or if it did not have the traditional customs at all. If Judaism had no customs involved at this time, it would be using the non-postponed lunar month. The next section explains why a two day offset is necessary so they can observe their customs.

<sup>2</sup> See Leviticus 23:9-15 and Joshua 5:10-12

<sup>3</sup> The Hillel calendar is a fixed nineteen lunar year table. It is binding on devout Jews. It cannot be changed unless done so at a meeting of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin has not met since the time of Rabbi Hillel II because of ceremonial requirements and limitations.

## Judaism's Need for Postponements

Why does Judaism use postponements?

For thousands of years, Judaism has been a tradition based religion with many rituals and customs introduced by the sages and elders. Some of these refer to behaviour on the holy days; some refer to behaviour on the day before a holy day, i.e. on a preparation day.

Often the preparation actions are considered to be work, and these particular actions are prohibited on a holy day.

What happens when there are two holy days together, e.g. an annual sabbath on a Friday immediately followed by the weekly sabbath, or a weekly sabbath immediately followed by an annual sabbath on the Sunday?

Let us look at what happens in 2011. We will consider the case of no postponements, the case of a one day postponement, and the case of a two day postponement.

### No postponements

In the table below, days are shown from the Western / Gregorian calendar from Saturday 16 to Tuesday 26 April 2011. One row of the table shows the corresponding days of the lunar month, e.g. lunar day 15 corresponds to Sunday 17 April. This row shows the Days of Unleavened Bread shaded in turquoise. The bottom row shows the lunar days postponed by zero days, i.e. the same as the lunar days. The sabbath days are shaded in red: Saturday 16, Sunday 17, and Saturday 23, the last date being both a weekly sabbath and the Seventh Day of Unleavened Bread annual sabbath.

Date	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu
Gregorian	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Lunar	14	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	22	23	24
None	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19	20	<b>21</b>	22	23	24

If there are no postponements, then the situation is as shown in the table above.

There is a weekly sabbath on Saturday 16 immediately followed by the First Day of Unleavened Bread annual sabbath. The preparation rituals which are associated with the afternoon before the First Day of Unleavened Bread would need to be done on the Saturday afternoon, but this would be doing work on the weekly sabbath.

This situation is not acceptable to Judaism. Let us see what happens if a day one postponement is made.

### One day postponement

The situation becomes as shown in the table below. The bottom row shows the days corresponding to the lunar day dates delayed by one day. There are now four distinct holy days: two weekly sabbaths (13 and 20), and two annual sabbaths (15 and 21).

Date	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu
Gregorian	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Lunar	14	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	22	23	24
1 day	<b>13</b>	14	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	19	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	22	23

The weekly sabbath remains at Saturday 16 April, and the one day postponement of the month has moved the First Day of Unleavened Bread back from Sunday 17 to Monday 18, eliminating the problem of Saturday-Sunday sabbaths if the lunar month is used.

Of course, a new problem has been created: the weekly sabbath of Saturday 23 April followed by an annual sabbath on Sunday 24.

A one day postponement has removed one clash but created another. Let us now move on to the case of a two day postponement.

### Two days postponement

The two day postponement is represented in the following table. The postponed day 15 of the lunar month moves to Tuesday 19 April.

Date	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sn	Mo	Tu
Gregorian	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Lunar	14	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	22	23	24
2 days	<b>12</b>	13	14	<b>15</b>	16	17	18	<b>19</b>	20	<b>21</b>	22

With this situation, the postponed First Day of Unleavened Bread is safely on a Tuesday, and the Last Day of Unleavened Bread has moved to the Monday. The problem of a double sabbath has been removed entirely.

Of course, we now have the problem that we have abandoned the dates of the lunar calendar and are now using a man-made substitute for convenience. For Judaism, this is undesirable and is not done if it can be avoided, but their priority is to observe the customs of the elders rather than to comply with the lunar dates in Leviticus.

When the lunar dates do not result in a clash with their customs, they do not insert a postponement. If they had no customs of the elders, they would have no postponements.

If a person does not keep the customs of the Judaism elders, what excuse is there for keeping postponements? Remember the statement of Romans 14:12, each will give an account of personal behaviour to God.

## How Postponements Affect Christians in 2011

Check the times of the new moons in an almanac, a reference book at the library, or go on the Internet to sites such as the Royal Observatory in the United Kingdom or United States Navy astronomical applications.

Use these times to work out the dates of the first day of the month at Jerusalem. Jerusalem is geographically two hours ahead of Universal Time (London), so add two hours to the Universal Time. Usually the Jerusalem dates are the same date as Universal Time, but the sunset to sunset reckoning may change the date. For example, a new moon at 11pm Jerusalem means the new moon day, from a sunset to the next sunset, is the following day's date.

Compare the dates with the dates of the Judaism calendar. You will find that the Judaism calendar has a postponement of two days at the Passover season, and a postponement of two days at the seventh month, putting Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles two days later than the lunar times.

Those Christians who follow the Judaism calendar in 2011 will observe all of the Festival of Yahweh late:

Passover / Lord's Supper	two days late
Unleavened Bread	two days late
Pentecost	seven days late
Trumpets	two days late
Atonement	two days late
Tabernacles	two days late
Last Great Day	two days late

Remember the warning of the parable of the ten virgins, and how half went to sleep. There was a time when they were awake and did their Bible study<sup>4</sup> but over time they were slowly choked by the weeds of life, as described in the Parable of the Sower.

Remember the warning that some would think they had grown rich and were in need of nothing but did not realize they were poor and blind and naked.<sup>5</sup>

If you keep the postponements without keeping the customs of Judaism, be sure it is because it is your choice and you know what you are doing, not because you blindly and sleepily go along with a man and his herd. Remember Romans 14:12.

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<sup>4</sup> Study of the Bible as opposed to study of what men have written about the Bible.

<sup>5</sup> Revelation 3:17