

"Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17

Jewish Heritage Revival



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"And When he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" John 10:4

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Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost) - The Giving of God's Commandments and the Giving of God's Ruach ha Kodesh

As we have discovered during our study of the first three Feasts of God (Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits), there is more than one meaning or significance for His Feasts. Shavuot / Pentecost is no different. It is set apart, between the spring Feasts and the fall Feasts. This is a day that all within God's Congregation should know more about.

It is unfortunate that in today's "church" more emphasis is placed on the celebrations of christmas and easter than in this Feast of Shavuot...a Feast with enormous significance, not only to Jewish (both believer and non-believer in Messiah) but also to the non-Jewish world within the "church".

The significance of this Feast will become apparent as you continue to read and see how our God is a God of design and planning. We will look at this Feast in the following manner:

- Historical Biblical Account
- Current Celebration
- Prophetic Meaning

Historical Biblical Account

We find the ordinance of Shavuot, given to Moses in Leviticus 23:15 - 22:

"From the day after the day of rest-that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving -you are to count seven full weeks, until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to ADONAI. You must bring bread from your homes for waving-two loaves made with one gallon of fine flour, baked with leaven-as firstfruits for ADONAI. Along with the bread, present seven lambs without defect one year old, one young bull and two rams; these will be a burnt offering for ADONAI, with their grain and drink offerings, an offering made by fire as a fragrant aroma for ADONAI. Offer one male goat as a sin offering and two male lambs one year old as a sacrifice of peace offerings. The cohen will wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before ADONAI, with the two lambs; these will be holy for ADONAI for the cohen. On the same day, you are to call a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work; this is a permanent regulation through all your generations, no matter where you live. ""When you harvest the ripe crops produced in your land, don't harvest all the way to the corners of your field, and don't gather the ears of grain left by the harvesters; leave them for the poor and the foreigner; I am ADONAI your God.""

The ordinance for this Feast is also found in Deuteronomy 16:9 - 12

"You are to count seven weeks; you are to begin counting seven weeks from the time you first put your sickle to the standing grain. You are to observe the festival of Shavu'ot [weeks] for ADONAI your God with a voluntary offering, which you are to give in accordance with the degree to which ADONAI your God has prospered you.

You are to rejoice in the presence of ADONAI your God - you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, the L'vi'im living in your towns, and the foreigners, orphans and widows living among you - in the place where ADONAI your God will choose to have his name live."

Our first encounter with this Feast can be found in Exodus 19:1 where the children of Israel are in the wilderness at Sinai -

"In the third month after the people of Isra'el had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came to the Sinai Desert. After setting out from Refidim and arriving at the Sinai Desert, they set up camp in the desert; there in front of the mountain, Isra'el set up camp. Moshe went up to God, and ADONAI called to him from the mountain: "Here is what you are to say to the household of Ya'akov, to tell the people of Isra'el: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep my covenant, then you will be my own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el." Moshe came, summoned the leaders of the people and presented them with all these words which ADONAI had ordered him to say. All the people answered as one, "Everything ADONAI has said, we will do." Moshe reported the words of the people to ADONAI." Exodus 19:1 - 8

The fourth holy day of Israel is not calendar specific but is based on counting 7 Sabbaths + 1 day from the Feast of First Fruits, during the Passover season, as referenced above in this passage of Leviticus 23:16. The time frame (Gregorian calendar) in which this Feast occurs is during the months of either May or June, depending on the Jewish calendar.

The term Shavuot is Hebrew meaning weeks.

Other terms associated with this Feast that you will want to be familiar with are:

- Hag Hashavuot - Feast of weeks
- Yom Habikkurim - the day of first fruits: found in Numbers 28:26 ("On the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to ADONAI in your feast of Shavu'ot, you are to have a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work;.)
- Hag Hakatzir - Feast of the harvest: found in Exodus 23:16 (Next, the festival of harvest, the firstfruits of your efforts sowing in the field; and last, the festival of ingathering, at the end of the year, when you gather in from the fields the results of your efforts.)
- Sefirah - Hebrew meaning counting.
- Omer - Hebrew meaning measure, sheaf

At the Feast of First Fruits, during the Passover season, (what we know as our Messiah's resurrection) an offering of barley is brought to the Temple. This offering was an omer...a measure of barley. From the time of this offering, 50 days are counted until Shavuot. This period of time is also called the omer.

This Feast is also associated with the summer harvest, specifically the wheat crops and signify the beginning of the summer wheat harvest. Shavuot is a time of thanksgiving for the summer harvest. To show thanksgiving for the summer harvest, a wave offering of two loaves of bread, made with leaven are waved before the Lord. (see above)

At times there would be confusion in that the Feast of Shavuot, would also be known as the Feast of First Fruits, similar to the First Fruits Feast during the Passover season. Please note that even though they may be construed as First Fruits Feasts, the harvest is very different. The harvest during the Passover season was the spring harvest of less hardy crops, such as barley, while the harvest during the summer is for more hardier crops such as wheat. There will be a third harvest Feast that we will look at later called The Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles), that is celebrated during the fall harvest season.

It is at this time in the desert when Moses receives God's Commandments (Torah)...for it is stated that the time is the third month. The first month being when the Passover occurs. Counting forward from First Fruits, seven Sabbaths, we are now in the third month. Even though we do not know the exact day, as we have seen in our study on the Passover, God has a prophetic plan for His Feasts. Shavuot is no different. By faith we believe that God gave His Commandments to Moses on this day. Our God is not a God of chaos or chance...He is a God of purpose.

It is also at this time that the golden calf is being made and worshiped to by the children of Israel. [Exodus 32](#)

The result of this terrible event would result in the death of 3000 for this transgression.

"When Moshe saw that the people had gotten out of control - because Aharon had allowed them to get out of control, to the derision of their enemies - Moshe stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted, "Whoever is for

ADONAI, come to me!" All the descendants of Levi rallied around him. He told them, "Here is what ADONAI, the God of Israel, says: 'Each of you, put his sword on his side; and go up and down the camp, from gate to gate; and every man is to kill his own kinsman, his own friend and his own neighbor!' The sons of Levi did what Moshe said, and that day three thousand of the people died. Moshe said, "You have consecrated yourselves today to ADONAI, because every one of you has been against his own son and against his own kinsman, in order to bring a blessing on yourselves today." Exodus 32:25 - 29

Please keep in mind that the estimated population of the nation of Israel when they exited Egypt was approximately 2 million people. It is thought that the 3000 mentioned were the leaders who initiated the transgression of the golden calf.

More on this later.

Omer – Measure

Previously, I had listed the Omer as a term associated with the feast of Shavuot. It is much more than just a term, but conveys a duration of time that is important, both during the Exodus and in relation to Yeshua.

When we consider the instruction given for Shavuot, it is dependent upon the correct date because from that date you are counting 7 Sabbaths. It is unlike the other Feasts, that fall on a specific date. In order to determine when Shavuot is to occur, you must count. If you start on the wrong day, you will end up on the wrong day.

"From the day after the day of rest-that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving -you are to count seven full weeks, until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to ADONAI. Leviticus 23:15 - 16

Clearly, the instruction indicates that after the day of rest, the Sabbath, you are bring the first fruits for waving before Adonai. It is after this day, that you begin counting 7 weekly Sabbaths. Every time, you end your counting on the 50th day, it will be the first day of the week. This seems pretty cut and dry, however, the challenge arouse in determining which Sabbath scripture was referring to. Was it the weekly Sabbath or the Sabbath that was the first day of Unleavened Bread.

In order to understand how we got to today, we must first know what the views were at the time. Below are three separate views regarding the question of which Sabbath is Adonai referring to:

- The *Tzaddukim* (Sadducees) believed that the word "Sabbath" was used in its regular sense, as the seventh day of the week, and therefore began the countdown on the first Sunday after Passover (Talmud: Menachot 65). Now since Shavuot occurs 7 weeks later to the day, this implies that it also fell on a Sunday. Moreover, since the day of the week for Passover varies over the year, the date of Shavuot would likewise vary.
- The *Perushim* (Pharisees), on the other hand, believed that "the day after the Shabbat" referred to not the weekly Sabbath but to the first day of Passover (which is a shabbaton or day of work restrictions), and therefore began counting the following day, that is, the day after Passover (which is also the second day of Unleavened Bread). This is supported in Joshua 5:11 - 12 when Israel first entered the land and ate of its firstfruits. Now since Passover always occurs on Nisan 15, this established a fixed date for Shavuot 49 days later on Sivan 6.

"The day after Pesach they ate what the land produced, matzah and roasted ears of grain that day. The following day, after they had eaten food produced in the land, the man ended. From then on the people of Israel no longer had man; instead, that year, they ate the produce of the land of Kena'an." Joshua 5:11 - 12

- The *Karaites* rejected both these methods but instead relied upon the sighting of the new moon (Rosh Chodesh) and the appearance of the first sheaves of barely to determine the month of Aviv and the festival of First Fruits, respectively. After these observations, the wave offering of the first fruits would then be presented at the temple on the day after the weekly Sabbath, and only then would the 49 day countdown to Shavuot begin. Therefore, since the appearance of the first barely sheaves is not constant, the date Shavuot could not be foreknown with any certainty.

So, which position prevailed?

If you look at a traditional Jewish calendar today you will see that the Pharisee position won out. The counting of the Omer begins on what is known as the second day of Passover and concluding on the 6th day of Sivan of the Jewish calendar. . This corresponds with the testimony of first century historians Josephus and Philo, who both state that the "day after the Sabbath" meant the day after the holiday Sabbath.

I would take a different position and ultimately disagree with their position that the Sabbath referenced, was the Sabbath associated with the holiday. Quite simply put, the sheaf offering was done the day after the weekly Sabbath, and therefore the position presented by the Sadduces is more in line with how scripture is worded.

Now that we have addressed this issue, it is time to look at the time line that occurred with Israel's exodus from Egypt. There is a connection between Passover, the Omer Count, and the holiday of Shavuot that is rooted in the redemptive actions of Adonai, the God of Israel. According to various Jewish sources, the basic time line for the giving of the Torah at Sinai is as follows:

Nisan 1 - The Start of the Year

On the first of Nisan, two weeks before the Exodus, the LORD showed Moses the new moon and commenced the divine lunar calendar. This is called Rosh Chodesh.

"Adonai spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt; he said, "You are to begin your calendar with this month; it will be the first month of the year for you." Exodus 12:1 – 2

Nisan 10 – Lamb selected and Separated

In order to have the Passover, a lamb was to be selected on the 10th day. It was to be without spot or blemish:

"Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household — except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats." Exodus 12: 3 - 5

Nisan 14 - Passover

Two weeks later, on a Thursday, God was ready to deliver Israel from their bondage in Egypt. Earlier that evening the Israelites had their Passover Seder and sprinkled the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their homes.

" You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra'el will slaughter it at dusk. They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the two sides and top of the door-frame at the entrance of the house in which they eat it." Exodus 12:6 - 7

Nisan 15 – Unleavened Bread

As the sunset brought forth Nisan 15 the LORD sent the last of the ten plagues on the Egyptians, killing all their firstborn. This was the breaking point for Pharaoh and Israel was "permitted" to leave Egypt. 600,000 adult males (plus the woman and children and a "mixed multitude") left Egypt and began the journey to Sinai under the leadership of Moses.

"You are to observe the festival of matzah, for on this very day I brought your divisions out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, you are to observe this day from generation to generation by a perpetual regulation. " Exodus 12:17

Nisan 18 - Pharaoh Pursues

Three days after the Exodus, and regardless of the plagues and devastation that befell Egypt, Pharaoh mobilized his army and pursued the Jews to bring them back. Perhaps this was the result of Pharaoh realizing that the "three-day feast to the LORD" in the wilderness was a permanent escape from his clutches....

"When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people. They said, "What have we done, letting Isra'el stop being our slaves?" So he prepared his

chariots and took his people with him — he took 600 first-quality chariots, as well as all the other chariots in Egypt, along with their commanders. Adonai made Pharaoh hardhearted, and he pursued the people of Isra'el, as they left boldly." Exodus 14:5 - 8

Nisan 20 - Pharaoh traps the Israelites

Pharaoh's army trapped the Jewish people against the Sea of Reeds. The Shekhinah Glory of the LORD intervened and blocked them from attack.

"The Egyptians went after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, with his cavalry and army, and overtook them as they were encamped by the sea, by Pi-Hachiroth, in front of Ba'al-Tz'fon. As Pharaoh approached, the people of Isra'el looked up and saw the Egyptians right there, coming after them. In great fear the people of Isra'el cried out to Adonai and said to Moshe, "Was it because there weren't enough graves in Egypt that you brought us out to die in the desert? Why have you done this to us, bringing us out of Egypt?" Exodus 14:9 - 11

Nisan 21 - the parting of the Sea

The following day the LORD commanded Moses to order the Israelites to march directly into the waters of the sea. Nachshon ben Aminadav of the tribe of Judah was the first to jump into the sea; the water split, and "the children of Israel walked across on the dry land in the midst of the sea." When the Egyptians attempted to follow after them, the waters rushed back and drowned them. The Israelites celebrated their deliverance with the "Song at the Sea" in praise to the LORD.

"Adonai asked Moshe, "Why are you crying to me? Tell the people of Isra'el to go forward! Lift your staff, reach out with your hand over the sea, and divide it in two. The people of Isra'el will advance into the sea on dry ground." Exodus 14:15- 16

Nisan 24 - the first Shabbat celebrated

Two days later the Israelites arrived in Marah where they received the commandment to observe Shabbat.

"The people grumbled against Moshe and asked, "What are we to drink?" Moshe cried to Adonai; and Adonai showed him a certain piece of wood, which, when he threw it into the water, made the water taste good. There Adonai made laws and rules of life for them, and there he tested them. He said, "If you will listen intently to the voice of Adonai your God, do what he considers right, pay attention to his mitzvot and observe his laws, I will not afflict you with any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians; because I am Adonai your healer." They came to Eilim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and camped there by the water." Exodus 15:24 - 27

Iyyar 15 - Manna is given

One month after the Exodus, God provided bread from heaven (manna) which sustained the Israelites during their years of wandering through the desert. In light of the divine provision of food, the commandment not to collect manna on Shabbat is restated (on Iyyar 22).

"They traveled on from Eilim, and the whole community of the people of Isra'el arrived at the Seem Desert, between Eilim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving the land of Egypt. There in the desert the whole community of the people of Isra'el grumbled against Moshe and Aharon. The people of Isra'el said to them, "We wish Adonai had used his own hand to kill us off in Egypt! There we used to sit around the pots with the meat boiling, and we had as much food as we wanted. But you have taken us out into this desert to let this whole assembly starve to death!" Adonai said to Moshe, "Here, I will cause bread to rain down from heaven for you. The people are to go out and gather a day's ration every day. By this I will test whether they will observe my Torah or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they have brought in, it will turn out to be twice as much as they gather on the other days." Moshe and Aharon said to all the people of Isra'el, "This

evening, you will realize that it has been Adonai who brought you out of Egypt; and in the morning, you will see Adonai's glory. For he has listened to your grumblings against Adonai — what are we that you should grumble against us?" Exodus 16:1 - 7

"On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two `omers per person; and all the community leaders came and reported to Moshe. He told them, "This is what Adonai has said: 'Tomorrow is a holy Shabbat for Adonai. Bake what you want to bake; boil what you want to boil; and whatever is left over, set aside and keep for the morning.' " They set it aside till morning, as Moshe had ordered; and it didn't rot or have worms. Moshe said, "Today, eat that; because today is a Shabbat for Adonai — today you won't find it in the field. Gather it six days, but the seventh day is the Shabbat - on that day there won't be any." However, on the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather and found none. Adonai said to Moshe, "How long will you refuse to observe my mitzvot and teachings? Look, Adonai has given you the Shabbat. This is why he is providing bread for two days on the sixth day. Each of you, stay where you are; no one is to leave his place on the seventh day." So the people rested on the seventh day." Exodus 16:22 - 30

Iyyar 23 - Water from the Rock

38 days after the Exodus the Israelites arrived at Rephidim, a desert area. The people complained that they would die of thirst but the LORD commanded Moses to strike a rock with his staff to produce water.

"The whole community of the people of Isra'el left the Seen Desert, traveling in stages, as Adonai had ordered, and camped at Refidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moshe, demanding, "Give us water to drink!" But Moshe replied, "Why pick a fight with me? Why are you testing Adonai?" However, the people were thirsty for water there and grumbled against Moshe, "For what did you bring us up from Egypt? To kill us, our children and our livestock with thirst?" Moshe cried out to Adonai, "What am I to do with these people? They're ready to stone me!" Adonai answered Moshe, "Go on ahead of the people, and bring with you the leaders of Isra'el. Take your staff in your hand, the one you used to strike the river; and go. I will stand in front of you there on the rock in Horev. You are to strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so the people can drink." Moshe did this in the sight of the leaders of Isra'el. The place was named Massah [*testing*] and M'rivah [*quarreling*] because of the quarreling of the people of Isra'el and because they tested Adonai by asking, "Is Adonai with us or not?" Exodus 17:1 - 7

Sivan 1 - Arrival at Sinai

The Israelites finally arrived at the desert of Sinai where Moses was initially commissioned. Note that the question of whether the new moon of Sivan fell on Sunday or Monday is undecided (*Talmud, Shabbat 86b*).

"In the third month after the people of Isra'el had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came to the Sinai Desert." Exodus 19:1

Sivan 2 - The Day of Distinction, "Yom HaMeyuchas"

On this day Moses ascended Mount Sinai and God told him to tell the people of Israel: "You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:2-7).

"After setting out from Refidim and arriving at the Sinai Desert, they set up camp in the desert; there in front of the mountain, Isra'el set up camp. Moshe went up to God, and Adonai called to him from the mountain: "Here is what you are to say to the household of Ya`akov, to tell the people of Isra'el: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep my covenant, then you will be my own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el." Moshe came, summoned the leaders of the people and presented them with all these words which Adonai had ordered him to say." Exodus 19:2 - 7

Sivan 3-5 - the three days of preparation

On Sivan 3 the LORD instructed Moses to "set boundaries" (hagbalah) for the people around the mountain in preparation for the giving of the Torah three days later. (Exod. 19:9-15).

"Adonai said to Moshe, "See, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, so that the people will be able to hear when I speak with you and also to trust in you forever." Moshe had told Adonai what the people had said; so Adonai said to Moshe, "Go to the people; today and tomorrow separate them for me by having them wash their clothing; and prepare for the third day. For on the third day, Adonai will come down on Mount Sinai before the eyes of all the people. You are to set limits for the people all around; and say, 'Be careful not to go up on the mountain or even touch its base; whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death. No hand is to touch him; for he must be stoned or shot by arrows; neither animal nor human will be allowed to live.' When the shofar sounds, they may go up on the mountain." Moshe went down from the mountain to the people and separated the people for God, and they washed their clothing. He said to the people, "Prepare for the third day; don't approach a woman." Exodus 19:9 - 15

Sivan 4 - Moses writes the Torah

According to midrash, on Sivan 4 Moses wrote down the first 68 chapters of the Torah, from Genesis 1:1 to the account of the giving of the Torah in Exodus 19. This is obviously unlikely, but it is part of Jewish tradition, nonetheless.

Sivan 5 - the Covenant offered

On Sivan 5 Moses made a covenant with the Jewish people at the foot of Mount Sinai at which the people declared, "All that the LORD has spoken, we shall do and hear" (Exod. 19:8; cp. Exod. 24:7).

"All the people answered as one, "Everything Adonai has said, we will do." Moshe reported the words of the people to Adonai." Exodus 19:8

Sivan 6 - The giving of the Torah

On the 6th Sivan, exactly seven weeks after the Exodus, the LORD revealed Himself on Mount Sinai. All of Israel (600,000 heads of households and their families) heard the LORD speak the first two of the Ten Commandments. Following this initial revelation, Moses re-ascended Sinai for 40 days, to receive the remainder of the Torah. This date coincides exactly with the festival of Shavuot.

"He said to the people, "Prepare for the third day; don't approach a woman." On the morning of the third day, there was thunder, lightning and a thick cloud on the mountain. Then a shofar blast sounded so loudly that all the people in the camp trembled. Moshe brought the people out of the camp to meet God; they stood near the base of the mountain. Mount Sinai was enveloped in smoke, because Adonai descended onto it in fire — its smoke went up like the smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently. As the sound of the shofar grew louder and louder, Moshe spoke; and God answered him with a voice. Adonai came down onto Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; then Adonai called Moshe to the top of the mountain; and Moshe went up. Adonai said to Moshe, "Go down and warn the people not to force their way through to Adonai to see him; if they do, many of them will perish. Even the cohanim, who are allowed to approach Adonai, must keep themselves holy; otherwise, Adonai may break out against them." Moshe said to Adonai, "The people can't come up to Mount Sinai, because you ordered us to set limits around the mountain and separate it." But Adonai answered him, "Go, get down! Then come back up, you and Aharon with you. But don't let the cohanim and the people force their way through to come up to Adonai, or he will break out against them." So Moshe went down to the people and told them." Exodus 19:15 - 25

The Omer is significant to Yeshua in that it traces the time line of His resurrection, leading up to Shavuot, where Adonai pours out His Ruach ha Kodesh. We see this in Luke's account. From Luke chapter 22 through Acts chapter 2 we have a complete and uninterrupted account.

Current Celebration

In order to truly understand the origins of how the current celebration of Shavuot would require an additional article on the history of Israel and what transpired over the centuries. For the purposes of this article, we will include some key historical events in a table format, that will provide the needed perspective in how we got from point A (Historic Biblical account) to point B (current synagogue celebration of this Feast)

Year	Event
	Judea under Roman control
AD66	Judea rebellion against Roman control. Jerusalem was freed from Roman rule for a three year limited independence
AD70	<p>After their defeat, Rome was intent on making an example of Judea, resulting in the destruction of the Temple and expulsion of all Jewish people from their own land. It would become illegal under Roman occupation for a person of Jewish birth to step foot back into Judea, including Jerusalem.</p> <p>Rome made this event a landmark - minting coins with the picture of a woman under a palm tree weeping, and the caption reading "Judea Capta". A monument known as the Arch of Titus was erected near the entrance of the Roman Forum. Romans soldiers carried away all Temple artifacts to Rome.</p> <p>Jerusalem was destroyed. An example for all within the Roman empire to see.</p>
AD 117 - 138	<p>Tension under Roman occupation grew continued until Hadrian became emperor. He had promised to restore Jerusalem and the Temple.</p> <p>Influenced by Greek culture (known as Hellenism) led to a change in Hadrian's support for the Jewish people, becoming more anti-Semitic Followed the actions of Antiochus Epiphanes outlawing circumcision, the Sabbath and synagogue prayers.</p>
AD 132	<p>During the reign of Hadrian, the second Jewish revolt occurred under the leadership of Simon Bar Kochba. Jerusalem was liberated.</p> <p>The Sanhedrin declared Simon Bar Kochba to be the Messiah. A renewed passion flourished under the leadership of Bar Kochba with the belief that the new golden age of Israel would begin. It was thought that he would lead them into the messianic kingdom, rebuilding the Temple.</p>
AD 133 - 135	<p>All was for naught. The Roman Legion counter attacked with over 35,000 foot soldiers. The battle would last for three years.</p> <p>The Jewish uprising was defeated. Bar Kochba was killed at Betar.</p> <p>Rome forbid the burring of the dead Jewish bodies...ultimately desecrating them.</p> <p>In the end...the Jewish death toll was over 500,000; 50 fortresses and nearly 1000 villages were destroyed.</p>
AD 140	The remnant of Israel that remained was without a home. The Sanhedrin assembled in the village of Usha, today known as Haifa (the third largest city in Northern Israel (on Mount Carmel)

The results of this meeting were to take focus away from the harvest aspects of this Feast and focus on historical events, in order to keep the Feast alive and relevant. It was at this time that emphasis was placed on the giving of Torah to Moses. As stated previously, even though the days are not recorded, the month is the same as found in Exodus 19:1.

As stated previously, the Feast of Shavuot was not given a specific date, as the other Feasts were, but was calculated from the Feast of First Fruits during the Passover season. Today, Shavuot is celebrated on the 6th day of Sivan. Today, the counting begins the day after Passover or what is known as the second day of Passover.

Traditional foods eaten during this Feast are dairy. It is said that the Rabbi's had suggested that Torah is the equivalent to milk and honey for the soul. Some of the dishes include cheese blintzes (cheese rolled in pancakes and fried), kreplach (dough pockets stuffed with cheese).

In keeping with the biblical references found in Leviticus 23, it is also tradition to bake two loaves of hallah (bread).

During this Feast, it is customary within the synagogue to stay up the entire night and study the opening and closing verses of each Sabbath reading, opening and closing passages for each book of the Tenach, and the entire book of Ruth.

In Israel, many will go to the Western Wall where the Temple once stood and recite the Amidah prayer (standing prayer) with its original 18 blessings:

Number	Blessing
1	Known as <i>Avot</i> ("Ancestors") this prayer offers praise of God as the God of the Biblical patriarchs, "God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob."
2	Known as <i>Gevurot</i> ("powers"), this offers praise of God for His power and might. This prayer includes a mention of God's healing of the sick and resurrection of the dead. It is called also <i>Tehiyat ha-Metim</i> = "the resurrection of the dead." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rain is considered as great a manifestation of power as the resurrection of the dead; hence in winter a line recognizing God's bestowal of rain is inserted in this benediction. Except for many Ashkenazim, most communities also insert a line recognizing dew in the summer.
3	Known as <i>Kedushat ha-Shem</i> ("the sanctification of the Name") this offers praise of God's holiness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the chazzan's repetition, a longer version of the blessing called Kedusha is chanted responsively. The Kedusha is further expanded on Shabbat and Festivals.
4	Known as <i>Binah</i> ("understanding") this is a petition to God to grant wisdom and understanding.
5	Known as <i>Teshuvah</i> ("return", "repentance") this prayer asks God to help Jews to return to a life based on the Torah, and praises God as a God of repentance.
6	Known as <i>Selichah</i> , this asks for forgiveness for all sins, and praises God as being a God of forgiveness.
7	Known as <i>Geulah</i> ("redemption") this praises God as a rescuer of the people Israel.
8	Known as <i>Refuah</i> ("healing") this is a prayer to heal the sick.
9	Known as <i>Birkat HaShanim</i> ("blessing for years [of good]"), this prayer asks God to bless the produce of the earth.
10	Known as <i>Galuyot</i> ("diasporas"), this prayer asks God to allow the ingathering of the Jewish exiles back to the land of Israel.
11	Known as <i>Birkat HaDin</i> ("Justice") this asks God to restore righteous judges as in the days of old.
12	Known as <i>Birkat HaMinim</i> ("the sectarians, heretics") this asks God to destroy those in heretical

	sects, who slander Jews and who act as informers against Jews. (**Not part of the original 18 prayers of the Amidah, but added later...a story in itself.**)
13	Known as <i>Tzadikim</i> ("righteous") this asks God to have mercy on all who trust in Him, and asks for support for the righteous.
14	Known as <i>Bo'ne Yerushalayim</i> ("Builder of Jerusalem") asks God to rebuild Jerusalem and to restore the Kingdom of David.
15	Known as <i>Birkat David</i> ("Blessing of David") Asks God to bring the descendant of King David, who will be the messiah
16	Known as <i>Tefillah</i> ("prayer") this asks God to accept our prayers, to have mercy and be compassionate.
17	Known as <i>Avodah</i> ("service") this asks God to restore the Temple services and sacrificial services.
18	Known as <i>Hoda'ah</i> ("thanksgiving") this is a prayer of thanksgiving, thanking God for our lives, for our souls, and for God's miracles that are with us every day. The text can be found in the next section. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the chazzan reaches this blessing during the repetition, the congregation recites a prayer called <i>Modim deRabbanan</i> ("the thanksgiving of the Rabbis").
19	Known as <i>Shalom</i> ("peace"); the last prayer is the one for peace, goodness, blessings, kindness and compassion. Ashkenazim generally say a shorter version of this blessing at Minchah and Maariv.

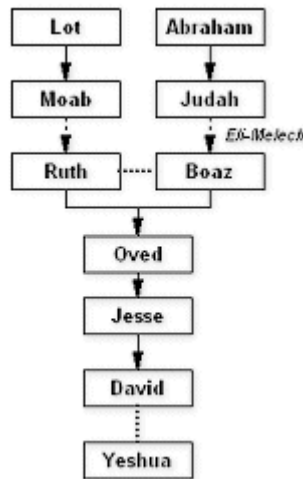
There are a total of 19 prayers listed as part of the Amidah. The 12th was added as a prayer against Messianic Jews, believers in Yeshua who were considered to be heretics. This addition came during the first century at the Council of Yavne:

The writing of the benediction is attributed to Shmuel ha Katan at the supposed Council of Yavne which was inserted in the "Eighteen Benedictions" as the 19th blessing in the silent prayer to be said thrice daily, the Amidah. The benediction is thus seen as related to the Pharisees, the Development of the Hebrew bible canon, the split of early Christianity and Judaism as heresy in Judaism, the origins of Rabbinic Judaism and the Origins of Christianity.

During this time, it is customary for the Book of Ruth to be read in the synagogue. The events documented in Ruth took place during the spring harvest, which links it to Shavuot. Ruth's experience is a portrait of several significant things:

- Her willingness to accept a Jewish lifestyle, linking her with Israel's acceptance at Sinai
- Ruth was a Moabitess, a non-Jew who converted to the Jewish faith and became part of the lineage of King David and the Messiah Yeshua through the love of a *goel*, or kinsman redeemer:
- As the *Goel* (kinsman-redeemer), Boaz was a wealthy man of the tribe of Judah who married a Gentile bride. Boaz's name means "in Him is strength," a picture of the Messiah Yeshua, his greater Descendant, who also redeemed for himself a bride from among the Gentile nations.

There is no more appropriate time then Shavuot for all this to happen.



Prophetic Meaning

Pentecost is the Greek term for Shavuot and is also known as the "Feast of Weeks" in that it is seven weeks (plus one day) after First Fruits, that Shavuot is celebrated. Along with Passover and Sukkot, it is one of the pilgrimage Feasts that were celebrated in Jerusalem, when the Temple was still standing and are ordained by God as Feasts that are to be kept forever.

Within the New Testament writings, the Feast of Weeks is known as Pentecost. The term Pentecost is of Greek origin and simply means 50th. As we have seen throughout this article, the calculation of Shavuot is seven Sabbaths (49 days) plus 1 day after the last Sabbath, thus equaling 50 days.

The animal sacrifices that were required during the Feast of Pentecost are no longer required in that our Messiah offered Himself a sacrifice, once for the remission of all sin. There is also no sacrifice today in that the Temple is no longer standing. No longer are animal sacrifices required in that our Messiah has brought forth the New Covenant as proclaimed by Jeremiah.

" "Here, the days are coming," says ADONAI, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'udah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says ADONAI. "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says ADONAI: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, 'Know ADONAI'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more.'" Jeremiah 31:31 - 34

and by Ezekiel 36:26 - 38...

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them. You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and increase it, and not send famine against you. I will multiply the yield of fruit from the trees and increase production in the fields, so that you never again suffer the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your actions that were not good; as you look at yourselves, you will loathe yourselves for your guilt and disgusting practices. Understand,' says Adonai ELOHIM, 'that I am not doing this for your sake. Instead, be ashamed and dismayed for your ways, house of Isra'el.' "Adonai ELOHIM says, 'When the day comes for me to cleanse you from all your guilt, I will cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins to be rebuilt. The land that was desolate will be tilled, whereas formerly it lay desolate for all passing by to see. Then they will say, "The land that used to be desolate has become like Gan-'Eden, and the cities formerly ruined, abandoned and wasted have been fortified and are inhabited!" Then the nations around you that remain will know that I, ADONAI, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was abandoned. I, ADONAI, have spoken; and I will do it.' "Adonai ELOHIM says, 'In addition, I will let the house of Isra'el pray to me to do this for them: to increase their numbers like sheep - like flocks of sheep for sacrifices, like the flocks of sheep in Yerushalayim at its designated times, in this degree will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am ADONAI.'"

Imagine what the scene during the time of our Messiah, after His resurrection. He spends forty days with His disciples, teaching them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God:

"After his death he showed himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. During a period of forty days they saw him, and he spoke with them about the Kingdom of God. At one of these gatherings, he instructed them not to leave Yerushalayim but to wait for "what the Father promised, which you heard about from me. For Yochanan used to immerse people in water; but in a few days, you will be immersed in the Ruach HaKodesh!" Acts 1:3 - 5

What a Bible Study that must have been.

Our Messiah was raised on First Fruits and taught his disciples for forty days. His disciples remained in Jerusalem as commanded, waiting on the promise that Yeshua spoke of...Ruach Ha Kodesh (The Holy Spirit).

Further, imagine the anticipation leading up to Shavuot...another Feast is to come, what will happen next?

You have seen Messiah after His death; He brought God's Word alive, teaching of the mysteries that were hidden, regarding the Kingdom of Heaven, and then ascends into the clouds. The buzz, the excitement that must have been going through the Apostles and followers of our Messiah. He specifically instructed them to wait for the promise.

The fulfillment of that promise is recounted in Acts 2:

"The festival of Shavu'ot arrived, and the believers all gathered together in one place. Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them. They were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to talk in different languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak. Now there were staying in Yerushalayim religious Jews from every nation under heaven." Acts 2:1 - 5

It is at this time, during Shavuot, that we identify the birth of the ""church"". Unlike the "church" as we know it today, the first congregation was comprised primarily of Jewish believers. There may have been a few gentiles in attendance, such as the Centurion at the crucifixion, but what is identified as the first "church" was very Jewish. It wasn't until we read about Cornelius in Acts chapter 10 that salvation is truly received by gentiles, some 15 years after this powerful day had occurred.

What many miss regarding the time of this Feast, as it is written above, is that it was a very Jewish beginning to what has been labeled the "church". A movement within the Jewish community would lead to the expansion of the commonwealth of Israel that would include non-Jewish believers in a Jewish Messiah.

The Schofield Study Bible offers an interesting commentary regarding the Feast of Pentecost and the birth of the "church".

"The foreshadowing of the Feast of Pentecost is the descent of the Holy Spirit to form the "church". For this reason, leaven is present, because there is evil in the "church". Observe, it is loaves and not a sheaf of separate growths loosely bound together, but a real union of particles making one homogeneous body. The descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost united the separate disciples into one organism. Pentecost took place fifty days after the offering of first fruits, coming at about the beginning of summer. This is the precise period between the resurrection of Christ and the formation of the "church" during Pentecost, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit."

Therefore, unlike the Passover sacrifice and a sheaf offering that is waved before God, being without leaven (sin), (as our Messiah presented Himself before God), the offering of loaves on Pentecost are not without leaven or sin.

Therefore, there was (and is) no sin or evil in Messiah, but from its birth, sin and evil are present in the "church", and remain there to this day.

One homogeneous body!!!

This is what the congregation of God is supposed to be.

Even though this body is to be united, there still remains a Jewish identity and a non-Jewish identity of believers in Messiah. In other articles we will be exploring this distinction and thus elaborating on what is meant by the commonwealth of Israel.

Is it that way today?

Far from it. We have a multitude of denominations offering various doctrines. Many are supported by God's Word, while many are not. The "church"es that offer supported doctrine, do not always offer the full scope of God's Word, but rather, pick and choose, what ""church" leaders" deem acceptable.

The birth of the "church" was of unity...for it is written in Acts 2:1 "...they were all with one accord..." There was no division, but, a unity of believers in Messiah.

How are we able to witness to unbelievers when our house is not in order? (we are trying to remove a speck from our neighbor's eye, while the "church" has a log in its own eye) In talking with many unbelievers, they bring up the many devastating events, that make up "church" history, and ask why? Events such as the holocaust, the plague, the inquisition and the crusades remain a major stumbling block for the "church". Then, you bring in the many denominations and doctrines, and you have an unbeliever who is confused and considers the current "church" structure to be a vast contradiction.

God can and does prepare the way for our path to unbelievers, but why do we still hinder our own progress, by offering contradiction of God's very Word?

Shavuot, like Passover is a Feast of God that is ordained FOR EVER. It did not pass away when Messiah fulfilled the requirements for the remission of our sin. If anything, Shavuot, like Passover is even more relevant today, in that it is the day in which God fulfilled His promise of sending the empowerment of His Spirit. Therefore, as the body of Messiah, we should be continuing to celebrate this Feast as it is commanded by God...if not for the harvest, but simply it is a commandment that lead to the outpouring of His Spirit, birthing His congregation of believers in Messiah. The fulfillment of His promise was sending His Ruach ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit) identified as the great comforter.

As we have seen with both the giving of God's commandments and the giving of His Ruach ha Kodesh, in neither are we made perfect by either. It is not by Torah or being a congregation member that redeems us.

"Or is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, he is indeed the God of the Gentiles; because, as you will admit, God is one. Therefore, he will consider righteous the circumcised on the ground of trusting and the uncircumcised through that same trusting. Does it follow that we abolish Torah by this trusting? Heaven forbid! On the contrary, we confirm Torah." Romans 3:29 - 31

Before our Messiah came and died, the children of Israel were living by faith, looking forward to the coming of Messiah. Today we are living through faith in that what our Messiah did is sufficient for our redemption. In living through faith, Paul states that we establish God's law...we don't do away with it.

Another Feast of God that is ordained for ever - **"a permanent regulation through all your generations, no matter where you live."**

Again, a Feast of the Lord has been used for two extremely significant events, that were part of God's plan from the beginning of time. The giving of His commandments as found in Torah and the giving of His Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit). A truly generous and gracious God is He...

His Word to live by, and the power (through His Spirit) to do so!!!

Conclusion

We have journeyed through God's Word and have seen the relevance of Shavuot, not only to the Jewish people, but also to the non-Jewish believers in Yeshua.

A Feast that unfortunately, the "church" knows very little about, and at times seems to be apathetic towards it.

The significance of this Feast to the "church" is enormous. It was during this Feast that the power behind the New Covenant was given. It would be this power that would propell this New Covenant beyond the boundaries of Judea and into the nations. Unfortunately, they don't seem to care very much about this extremely significant Feast of Adonai. Yet when we look at the promise of the New Covenant, where Adonai would write His instructions on our heart, it is on Shavuot, that this promise is realized. The very time when Torah is given on Shavuot, it becomes a matter of the heart through the New Covenant. Ultimately, it becomes part of us.

This is a time when Jew and Gentile are brought together. A dynamic that dates back to the Covenant Adonai made with Avraham, indicating that all the nations of the world would be blessed through his descendants, his family, Israel, the Jewish people.

Shavuot marks the time when God entered into covenant with the Jewish nation. During the first Shavuot at Sinai, God instituted the Mosaic covenant and gave the Torah in written form. Likewise, during the Shavuot in Jerusalem, after the resurrection of Yeshua, God empowered the New Covenant when He wrote the Torah on the hearts of Yeshua's followers.

- Shavuot at Mount Sinai is sometimes considered the day on which Judaism was born. Shavuot in Jerusalem (Mount Zion) is the day on which the New Covenant was empowered when the Ruach ha Kodesh, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the followers of the Mashiach.
- At Mount Sinai the Ten Commandments were written on tablets of stone by the "finger of God", but at Mount Zion, the Torah is written on our heart by the Spirit of God.

“When he had finished speaking with Moshe on Mount Sinai, Adonai gave him the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God.” Exodus 31:18

““For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra’el after those days,” says Adonai: “I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.” Jeremiah 31:33

- Just as the Israelites were affirmed as God's chosen people on Shavuot with the giving of the Torah, so followers of Yeshua were affirmed as God's chosen people at Shavuot after the Mashiach's ascension into heaven as the Mediator of a Better Covenant. The 3,000 that were added that day were firstfruits of the redeemed people of God.

“But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs, just as the covenant he mediates is better. For this covenant has been given as Torah on the basis of better promises.” Hebrews 8:6

- In Jewish tradition, Shavuot is compared to a wedding, for it was on Shavuot that the covenant between God and the Jewish People was sealed at Mount Sinai. The Commonwealth of Israel is restored as the Bride of Messiah, and we eagerly await the marriage supper to come.

“Also I saw the holy city, New Yerushalayim, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.” Revelation 21:2

“The angel said to me, “Write: ‘How blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb!’ ” Then he added, “These are God’s very words.”” Revelation 19:9

The Pentecostal "churches" of today center their existence on the verses found in Acts 2, yet do little to recognize this Feast as a yearly celebration...unfortunate.

God's Word is very clear about this Feast...it is to be celebrated for ever.

Many in the "church" will say that it is for Israel only. This is true. It was commanded specifically to Israel. However, given the additional relevance to believers, I would pose the following...Rather than ask yourselves, “why should we celebrate this feast?” ask yourselves “Why not? There are more reasons to keep this feast even if you are not Jewish, than to not recognize it at all.

The fulfillment of this Feast, doesn't mean that it is no longer relevant or meaningful, but rather you should continue to recognize what our God has done by giving us His Holy Spirit.

You have been grafted into the vine, in which the original branches are Israel and therefore have received the blessings associated with the covenants given to Israel. Why not honor God through this special appointed time?

It is never too late to start honoring God through His Feasts.

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Wikipedia
John Parsons

Color Type	Indication
Blue	Bible Text
Red	Bible Text referencing Jesus speaking
Black	General Text

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