

The Feast of Pentecost

The Historical Understanding of Pentecost

In the third month after the Jews left Egypt, they arrived in the Sinai desert and camped opposite Mount Sinai. Moses was then told by God to gather the Israelites together to receive the Commandments (Exodus 19:1-8). The Israelites answered, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do."

Then Moses gave the Jews two days to cleanse themselves, wash their clothes, and prepare to receive these commandments on the third day. At the same time, Moses told them not to come too near Mount Sinai. From early morning, dense clouds covered the peak of the mountain. Thunder and lightning were frequently seen and heard. The sound of the ram's horn came very strong, and the top of the mountain was enveloped in fire and smoke. The Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai stood in great awe (Exodus 19:9-19). Moses then went up alone on the mountain, and as he neared the top, a mighty voice announced the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19:20-25, 20:1-21).

The Feast of Pentecost can be found in Leviticus 23:

Leviticus 23:15-21 ¹⁵ And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: ¹⁶ Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meal offering unto the Lord. ¹⁷ Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord. ²¹ And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

The period called "the omer" begins the day following the weekly sabbath during Passover and continues until Pentecost. The Lord commanded that seven weeks be counted from the time of the offering of the omer.

Because of this ritual of counting, the period between Passover and Pentecost came to be known as the omer. In fact, Pentecost does not have a fixed calendar date in the Bible, but rather falls on the day after the completion of the omer count--that is, the fiftieth day after the omer offering is brought. Therefore, Pentecost is seen as the conclusion to the Passover season.

Because Pentecost culminates with the counting of the omer for 50 days (which should be done the day following the weekly sabbath during Passover), Pentecost is called the conclusion to Passover. Spiritually speaking, the believers in the Lord Jesus are on a journey out of Egypt (a type of the world's system and its evil ways) in the wilderness (of life), awaiting our time to meet God face to face on Mount Sinai (Exodus 3:12). There at Mount Sinai (spiritually), God will forever reveal Himself to us in a new and greater way. For all believers in Christ, the Commands that were given at Mount Sinai represents the Word of God, the entire Bible. The believer in Christ spiritually experiences Pentecost when the Holy Spirit of God reveals the Word of God to him in a deeper and more powerful way, and his understanding and desire for the Bible increases accordingly.

The Themes of Pentecost

A New Revelation

One theme of Pentecost is a new revelation of God's will (Leviticus 23:15-16,21). Two notable historical events happened on this day.

1. The giving of the Ten Commandments

Israel came to Mount Sinai on the third day of the third month (Exodus 19:1). The Lord visited the people three days later (Exodus 19:10-17). Therefore, the commandments were given by God in the third month of the biblical religious calendar, which is the month of Sivan, on the sixth day of this month. This is exactly 50 days from the crossing of the Red Sea.

2. The giving of the Holy Spirit by God

Jesus was resurrected on the Feast of First Fruits, as was seen in the previous study. Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in the hearts and lives of all the believers in Him. God chose the first Pentecost after Jesus Christ's resurrection to pour out the Holy Spirit on 120 believers (Acts

1:15, 2:1-4). These astounding events demonstrated the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Observe the following comparisons to Pentecost, the fiftieth day and the events we just read-

Commandments of God written on tablets of stone (Exodus 24:12)	Commandments of God written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, Psalm 40:8, Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:22-27 and Hebrews 8:10)
Written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18)	Written by the Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 3:3, Hebrews 8:10)
3,000 slain (Exodus 32:1-8, 26-28)	3,000 live (Acts 2:38, 41)
The letter of the Law (Exodus 24:12)	The Spirit of the Law (Romans 7:6, 2 Corinthians 3:6)
Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:11)	Mount Zion (1 Peter 2:6)

Pentecost as a Marriage: A Betrothal Contract

One of the most beautiful images of Pentecost is that of the marriage between God (the groom) and Israel (the bride). The biblical wedding service that God gave marriage consisted of two stages. The first stage is betrothal. You enter this first stage of marriage as soon as a betrothal contract is made between the two parties. During betrothal, you are legally married, but do not physically dwell with your mate. Betrothal is so legally binding that you cannot get out of it without a divorce. The word for betrothal in Hebrew, 'erusin', comes from the Hebrew verb 'aras'. Aras is related to the Hebrew word 'asar', which means "to bind". By this, we can see that betrothal is legally binding.

In the New Testament, we can see that Joseph was betrothed to Mary when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would have a son named Jesus, by the Holy Spirit of God, who would be the Messiah (Luke 1:26-35). When Joseph discovered that his betrothed wife Mary was pregnant, he decided to get a divorce until the angel of the Lord changed his mind by appearing to him in a dream (Matthew 1:18-20).

Betrothal is also mentioned in Exodus 21:8 and Deuteronomy 20:7 and 22:23,24. The second stage of marriage is the fullness or consummation of the marriage.

In Exodus 19, when God by the leading of Moses brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, God betrothed Himself to Israel. On Mount Sinai, God gave the Commandments to Israel. At this time, God was making a betrothal contract with Israel. The written betrothal contract represents "The book of the covenant" (marriage is a covenant) that Moses wrote prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:4,7). The Book of the Covenant spelled out mutual obligations of God and Israel just as the betrothal contract spelled out the obligations between husband and wife. So, God made a marriage contract with Israel in Exodus 19:3-7.

In Exodus 19:8, Israel accepts God's marriage proposal. Israel answered "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

The Spiritual Understanding

What does the wedding mean in terms of the Messiah, and what is the personal application to us? Jesus is the groom and the believers in Him are the bride. When Jesus came to the earth almost 2,000 years ago, He came so that whosoever would put their trust and confidence in Him would be wedded to Him forever. This would include both Jews and non-Jews (John 3:16). Because Jesus came as the suffering Messiah during His first coming, He ascended to Heaven to be with God the Father until He returns during His second coming to be the King Messiah. Today, Christ does not physically dwell with those who trust in Him. Therefore, the believers in Jesus are currently spiritually betrothed to Him. We will enter the full marriage and physically dwell with Him during the Messianic age known as the Millennium. However, before we can physically dwell with the Lord during this time on earth, the wedding ceremony when the believers in Christ will be wedded to Him must take place. This will take place at the beginning of the tribulation period.

In the biblical wedding service that God gave, after you are married, you have a honeymoon. The honeymoon lasts a week. Seven days equals a week. In

Hebrew, a week means a seven. It can mean seven days or seven years (Daniel 9:24-27, Genesis 29:27). In Joel 2:16, we see the marriage of the bride (the believers in Christ) and the bridegroom (Jesus) where the bridegroom is going forth from the chamber and the bride out of her closet. The word closet is the Hebrew word 'chupah', and the chupah here refers to Heaven where the previously raptured believers in the Messiah have been enjoying a seven-year honeymoon with Him while the earth was experiencing the tribulation. After the seven-year honeymoon, Jesus will be returning with His bride to attend the marriage supper (Revelation 19:7-14). Then we will rule and reign with Him physically during the Messianic age known as the Millennium (Revelation 20:4).

The Pouring Out Of God's Holy Spirit

In Exodus 19:19, a trumpet was sounded. The trumpet that was sounded grew louder and louder. "And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice." "And all the people saw the thundering..." (Exodus 20:18)

In a commentary by R. Johanan, he says, When God gave the Commandments on Sinai He displayed untold marvels to Israel with His voice. What happened? God spoke and the voice reverberated throughout the whole world..."And all the people saw the thunderings." God's voice, as it was uttered split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand.

In Deuteronomy 32:8 we read, "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. In Exodus 1:1-5, we can see that the number of the children of Israel who came to Egypt was 70. Therefore, the 70 voices as interpreted by R. Johanan represented all the nations of the world, based upon Deuteronomy 32:8 and Exodus 1:1-5. So, it was seen that God's voice split up into the languages of all the people on the earth to be a witness to them.

This same experience that happened at Mount Sinai also occurred 50 days after the resurrection of Christ on the day of Pentecost almost 2,000 years ago. This experience is also described in Acts 2:1-11 and Hebrews 12:18-19. In describing what happened in Exodus 20:18, Hebrews 12:18-19 says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more." The word 'words' in Hebrews 12:19 is the Greek word 'rhema', which means "an individual word." In this passage in Hebrews, we can see the same thing that happened at Mount Sinai in the first Pentecost is exactly what did happen as seen in Hebrews 12:19. It is also what happened during the first Pentecost following the resurrection of the Lord. At this Pentecost, the people also were as one. When God poured out His Holy Spirit at this time, once again people began to speak in the different languages of the world (Acts 2:1-11). Therefore, we can see that the Pentecost at Mount Sinai was a rehearsal of the Pentecost that would occur immediately after the resurrection of Jesus.

The First Trump of God

Once again in Exodus 19:19, a trumpet was sounded. This trumpet grew louder and louder. The Jewish understand this to be the first trump of God. The trumpet blown by God at Mount Sinai was understood to be the first of the two ram's horns that were present on Mount Moriah during Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22.

The Jewish people understood that there are three primary trumpets that mark major events in the redemptive plan of God. These three trumpets are known as the first trump, the last trump, and the great trumpet.

Jesus referred to this event which happened to Abraham in John 8:56 where He says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." What did Abraham see? What took place on Mount Moriah? Abraham was instructed by God to take Isaac to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him there (Genesis 22:2). The first and second temples were built in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah (2

Chronicles 3:1). It was in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah where our Lord was crucified on the stake-stauros Calvary (Golgotha) was located on Mount Moriah. Abraham in Genesis 22:4 was looking into the future and seeing that God was going to offer up the Messiah to be slain on Mount Moriah at a future time.

God called Abraham to sacrifice Isaac and offer him as a burnt offering (Genesis 22:2-3,6,8,13). A burnt offering is an offering that is totally consumed. It is freely given and done freely, willingly, and joyfully by both parties involved. The Bible tells us that God freely offered up Jesus joyfully and that Jesus was willing and obedient to His death on the stake-stauros (Philippians 2:8). In Isaiah 53:10, it says that it pleased God to offer up Jesus.

When Abraham offered up Isaac, Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). Abraham went willingly, joyfully, and obediently because he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead. This can be seen in Genesis 22:5. In this, we can see that Abraham was a type and picture of God the Father, and Isaac was a type and picture of Jesus, the Messiah. In Genesis 22:8, Abraham said to Isaac that God would provide a lamb; Jesus was the lamb that God offered to us (John 1:29).

This story is an example of the Hebrew expression, "Here now, but not yet." Abraham offered up his only son (Genesis 22:16, Hebrews 11:17, and God offered up His only Son, Jesus (John 3:16). Instead of Isaac, Abraham offered up a ram as the ram was found caught in the thicket (Genesis 22:13). In the Hebrew writings, the ram represents the Messiah and the thicket stands for the sins of the people. In Genesis 22:13 where it says "**behind him**", the Hebrew word is '**achar**', which means **afterward or in the future**. Therefore, the imagery presented here is that Abraham saw this ram being sacrificed in the future. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 8:56.

Once again, relating to the story in Genesis 22, the **left horn** of the ram that was caught in the thicket (Genesis 22:13) is called the **first trump** and the **right horn** of the ram is called **the last trump**.

The Three Trumpets of God

The three great trumpets that mark major events in the redemptive plan of God are associated with days in the biblical calendar. The first trump is associated with and was blown by God on the Feast of Pentecost when God gave the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:19).

The last trump is associated with and is blown on Rosh HaShanah. This will be discussed in the next study. The biblical name for Rosh HaShanah is Yom Teruah, which in Hebrew means **"the day of the awakening blast."** This trump is mentioned by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. Because the last trump is only blown on Rosh HaShanah and because the apostle Paul specifically mentions that the rapture of the believers in Christ will take place at the last trump, Paul was giving a clear understanding that the rapture of the believers in Christ will happen on a Rosh HaShanah.

The great trump is associated with and is blown on Yom Kippur. Jesus said that He would return at His second coming at the sound of the great trump (Matthew 24:30-31). Because the great trump is only blown on Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement) and because Jesus said that He would return with the sound of a great trump, Jesus was stating very clearly that He would return on a Yom Kippur. This too will be discussed in more detail in a further study. Thus, the first and last trump will relate to the ram's horn in Genesis 22. Again, the first trump will be the left horn of the ram and the last trump will be the right horn of the ram. In Exodus 19:19, the trumpet that was blown by God will be the first trump.

The Spiritual Understanding of Pentecost

As we have seen, the Feasts were given by God as a shadow of things to come (Hebrews 10:1) to teach us (Galatians 3:24) about Jesus Christ and the redemptive work of God (Colossians 2:16-17). Pentecost was the birth of the congregation in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). The things given at Mount Sinai were divine and from God, but shown in a physical way (Hebrews 9:1) to enable us to understand the spiritual truth that God wanted to communicate to us (1 Peter 2:5-9). So God gave Israel the covenant, the law, the services, the oracles of God, and the promises, which were divine (Hebrews 9:1), at Mount Sinai to teach us

about the Messiah (Psalm 40:7). With this in mind, let's look at the spiritual understandings that God was communicating to us at Pentecost.

Two Leavened Wave Loaves (Leviticus 23:15-17)

This was to be a new meal offering to the Lord (vs. 16). There were to be two wave loaves baked with leaven (vs.17). At Passover, leaven was absolutely forbidden (Exodus 12:15,19-20) and in the regular meal offering, no leaven was permitted (Leviticus 2:1,4-5,11). We saw earlier that leaven represents sin (1 Corinthians 5:6-8, Galatians 5:9). The Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread spoke of the death and burial of Jesus who was without sin. Yet on Pentecost, God commanded just the opposite. Why?

Pentecost speaks of the birth of Israel as a nation, as well as the birth of the congregation of believers in Christ through the Holy Spirit. The two loaves speak of Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ. Even though both Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ are chosen by God and are holy to Him, sin is still found in Israel and sin still exists in the congregation of believers. The Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread speak primarily of Jesus who is without sin, but Pentecost speaks of Israel and the congregation of believers where sin still exists.

The two loaves speak of Israel and the believers in Christ. The number two in the Bible is the number of witness and testimony. For example, two witnesses in the Bible establishes a truth (Matthew 18:19-20, Deuteronomy 19:15). The Ten Commandments were written on two stones (Exodus 31:18). Also, the Ten Commandments are fulfilled by obeying two commandments (Matthew 22:34-40). Christ and His congregation of believers testify of the love, grace, and plan of God for the whole world.

The meal offering was to be an offering burned by fire upon the altar. A work of the Holy Spirit is an immersion (baptism) of fire (Luke 3:15). Fire is what God uses to burn sin out of the lives of a believer in Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:13-15, 1 Peter 1:7). The followers of Christ are supposed to live a righteous life before God (Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-13, Colossians 3:1-13, Romans 8:1-4).

Two-Tenths Ephod of Fine Flour (Leviticus 23:17)

The grinding and crushing of wheat produces fine flour. The fine flour speaks of the refining process that our faith goes through as we are conformed to the image of Christ and enter into His trial, testing, temptations, and sufferings (Romans 5:3-5, 8:29, 1 Peter 4:12-19).

Jesus was the wheat that was planted into the ground (John 12:24, 1 Corinthians 15:35-38,42-44). As wheat is beaten and refined to become fine flour, so our Lord Jesus was beaten and bruised as He became that fine flour (Isaiah 53:1-6).

Holy to the Lord for The Priest (Leviticus 23:20)

Even though the two wave loaves were leavened, the Lord counted them holy unto Himself for the priest. As mentioned earlier, the two wave loaves that the priest waved represented both Israel and the congregation of believers in Christ. Both the Jewish believers in Christ, represented by Israel, and the non-Jewish believers, represented by the congregation, consist of individuals who are leavened. We still sin before God despite being believers in the Lord. In spite of this sin, because we are believers in Jesus and seek to serve and love Him with all our hearts, we are considered holy before God (Deuteronomy 14:2, Luke 1:68,72-75, Colossians 1:22-24, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, Titus 2:12, and 1 Peter 1:15-16).

A Statute Forever (Leviticus 23:21)

The Holy Spirit came to dwell with the believer in Jesus (John 14:16-17).

The Feast of Harvest of First Fruits (Exodus 23:16,34:22, Numbers 28:26)

Israel was called a land of barley and wheat (Deuteronomy 8:7-8). The spring wheat and barley harvest preceded the major harvest in the fall, the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23:16, 34:22). Both the spring and the fall harvest were dependent upon the rains coming at the right time. The fall rains are called the early rain. The spring rains are called the latter rain. The early rain is spoken of in Deuteronomy 11:10-15, and Joel 2:23. The rain is prophetic of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon people's lives individually as they accept Jesus into their lives and allow the Holy Spirit to teach and instruct them concerning the ways of God. The early rain and the latter rain also teach us about the pouring out of God's Holy Spirit in a corporate way upon all flesh. The early rain refers to the

outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Christ's first coming and the latter rain refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Christ's second coming.

As we are seeing, the harvest speaks of the salvation of people. The spring harvest was the beginning of the harvest of people who would come to receive Jesus as Lord with the greatest harvest being at the end of this age (Matthew 13:39, 9:37-38). The fall harvest or the harvest at the end of this present age is in the seventh month on the biblical religious calendar. Pentecost is in the third month. From Pentecost there are four months until the final harvest in the fall (John 4:34-35). The fall harvest is the fruit harvest.

God said that the coming of Christ would be like the former and latter rain on the earth (Hosea 6:1-3, Joel 2:23). James ties the coming of the Lord to the early and latter rain (James 5:7). Christ's death, burial, and resurrection was in the spring of the year; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of Jesus was in the spring of the year; and all those who believed were first fruits of the entire harvest and were a part of the spring harvest. Jesus second coming will be in the fall of the year and the greatest number of believers will believe at this time. Jesus spoke about this great harvest at the end of this present age in Matthew 24:13-14.

A Harvest of Freewill Offerings and Rejoicing (Deuteronomy 16:9-11, 16-17)

As believers, when we come before God we are to give of ourselves, including our time, talents, and money, and present them before Him with a joyful heart (Acts 4:32-37).

We have seen how the spring festivals are applicable in three dimensions. They are historic to the nation of Israel, they are fulfilled in the Messiah, and they describe how the individual believer is to walk and live his life before God. In other words, we can see that God has a plan for every individual to willingly come to Him. So the spring festivals were not only historic, but they were also our type and example (1 Corinthians 10:1-2, 6, 11).

To natural Israel, Passover was their freedom from the bondage of Egypt. Unleavened Bread was the separation from the land of Egypt into the immersion (baptism) into the Red Sea and the Cloud in the wilderness. Finally, God led the

people to Mount Sinai where they experienced Pentecost and God revealed Himself to the people in a deeper and greater way than He ever did previously.

The spring festivals were fulfilled by Jesus, who was our Passover Lamb, and died on the day of Passover. He was without sin and is the Bread of Life. Jesus was in the sepulcher on the day of Unleavened Bread and He was the kernel of wheat that was buried in the earth. Jesus arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest, He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and received a resurrected body. Finally, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh during the Feast of Pentecost to gather all believers in the Lord to be God's spring harvest in the earth.

Pentecost serves as an annual reminder that our Creator still works miracles, granting His Spirit to the firstfruits of His spiritual harvest, empowering them to carry out His work in this world.