

FANTASTIC FEASTS... & WHERE WE FIND THEM

We're taking a quick look at each of the seven feasts on God's prophetic calendar. The last of the spring feasts is Pentecost.

Lev 23:15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

Lev 23:16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

Lev 23:17 You shall bring from your dwellings two wave *loaves* of two-tenths *of an ephah*. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. *They are* the firstfruits to the LORD.

Lev 23:18 And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be *as a burnt offering* to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.

Lev 23:19 Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

Lev 23:20 The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits *as a wave offering* before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

Lev 23:21 And you shall proclaim on the same day *that* it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work *on it*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

Lev 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.' "

The English word "Pentecost" is a transliteration of the Greek word *pentekostos*, which means "fifty." Fifty days after the Feast of First-Fruits, the Feast of Pentecost was observed. The space between the two Feasts, which included seven sabbaths, was called the Feast of Weeks. It began with the offering of the First-Fruits of the barley harvest, and ended with the ingathering of the wheat harvest. The first day was the Feast of the First-Fruits, the last day was the Feast of Pentecost. Only the first and last day were celebrated.

At the Feast of First-Fruits stalks of grain were to be offered and waved, but at the Feast of Pentecost the grain was to be ground and made into flour, from which two loaves were to be baked with leaven. The loaves were to be waved before the Lord.

A burnt offering of seven lambs without blemish of the first year, one young bullock, and two rams, was to be offered with the wave loaves, as was also meat and drink offerings for a sweet savor unto the Lord. These were to be followed by a sin offering of a kid of the goats, and two lambs of the first year for a peace offering.

The requirements for individual worship were recorded in Deuteronomy 16:9-12.

Deu 16:9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from *the time* you begin *to put* the sickle to the grain.

Deu 16:10 Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.

Deu 16:11 You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who *is* within your gates, the stranger and the

fatherless and the widow who *are* among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.

Deu 16:12 And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

In the same way Jesus fulfilled the first three feasts, in His death, burial and resurrection (Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits), the Feast of Weeks is fulfilled in the empowering of the church to bring the harvest of the Gospel:

- Jesus was our Passover Lamb for the redemption of humanity. His blood allowed death to pass-over our sins, since he took our sins upon Himself.
- Jesus was in the grave, but he did not decay, fulfilling the picture of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- Then Jesus rose on the Feast of Firstfruits, Himself being the Firstfruit of the resurrection.
- Jesus instructed His followers to remain in Jerusalem until they receive the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which occurred on the fiftieth day, Pentecost. With His empowering, the harvest proceeds.

The two loaves made from *the same* sheaves of wheat appear to symbolize believing Jews and believing Gentiles who have been incorporated into *the same* spiritual body, that is, the church. The fact that both loaves are *leavened* likely symbolizes the presence of sin from which believers will be *progressively sanctified* by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Pentecost is “fulfilled” by Jesus in the sense that the church age is a harvest of wheat - the ingathering of believers - until the Lord returns for us.

I came across some things about the Day of Pentecost that I trust you will find as interesting as I did. One is its location. Where were the disciples when the Holy Spirit came upon them?

If you say, "In the Upper Room," you may be right. But consider the following. Immediately after His ascension into Heaven, we read in Acts 1:12-13,

Act 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

Act 1:13 And when they had entered, they went up into **the upper room where they were staying**: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas *the son* of James.

Note the upper room is "where they were staying." It was likely the same Upper Room they had secured for their last Passover with Jesus.

The next verse says,

Act 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

In the Gospel of Luke we read,

Luk 24:52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,

Luk 24:53 and were continually **in the temple** praising and blessing God...

Luke omits the detail about where they were staying while pilgrims in Jerusalem, but he lets us know that they were daily in the Temple.

Unless they were staying in some upper room in the Temple, it might be that the Upper Room was where they were living, but they came to the Temple daily to praise God.

According to Acts 5:12, they met in a part of the Temple called Solomon's Porch. Josephus describes Solomon's Porch this way: "There was a porch without the temple, overlooking a deep valley, supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of four square stone, very white; the length of each stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six; the work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole temple" (*Antiquities* I. 20. c. 8. sect. 7).

It's likely, then, that the pouring-out of the Spirit upon the believers happened in Solomon's Porch. This explains how the Jewish pilgrims gathered in the Temple heard the disciples praising God in their native tongues, thinking they were intoxicated.

While we are on the subject, we normally say there were 120 gathered in the Upper Room. We get that exact number from the description of Peter standing up in the Upper Room to call for a vote about replacing Judas with Matthias. We are nowhere told that the 120 in that meeting were the ones later baptized with the Holy Spirit.

It may have been a smaller group... **Or it may have been a larger group.** We know, for example, that after His ascension Jesus appeared to 500 believers at one time. The apostle Paul said,

1Co 15:6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

It's therefore wrong to assume there were only 120 believers left on earth after Jesus ascended. And since we are not given a definite number on the Day of Pentecost, we just can't say for sure it was 120 who were baptized with the Spirit.

I want to clear up one more misconception about what happened on the Day of Pentecost. Here is the description of the moment of impact (as it were):

Act 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Act 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Act 2:3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them.

Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Act 2:5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

Act 2:6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

Act 2:7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"

Act 2:8 And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?

Act 2:9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

Act 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Act 2:11 Cretans and Arabs - we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God!"

We are told "everyone heard them speak in their own language," and then a partial list of those languages is given.

Now listen to the apostle Paul as he describes the supernatural gift of speaking in tongues:

1Co 14:2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

A little later he adds,

1Co 14:13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret.

1Co 14:14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.

If you go back and read First Corinthians fourteen, you'll see that throughout the point Paul makes is that the gift of tongues is unintelligible without a supernatural interpretation.

The supernatural gift of speaking in tongues is not a known foreign language. It is a "mystery" which requires another supernatural gift, interpretation, in order to be understood.

Interpretation is not translation. When you interpret speaking in tongues, it's not a word-for-word translation. You are simply told or shown by the Holy Spirit what was said.

On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples did not receive the gift of tongues. They experienced a miracle of speaking known foreign languages.

Thus speaking in tongues is not the evidence that you have received the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues is indeed a gift for today; but it's not a gift given to every believer.

The sending of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was a one-time event. It doesn't get repeated.

Read the New Testament and you'll see that the Spirit-filled, Spirit-led life is the norm for all believers. We receive the Spirit at conversion, and are to go on continually receiving Him. He's compared to a torrent of water constantly coming into us to go through us to touch others.

We're told to ask, seek, and knock for Him - believing by faith we've received Him. We are to go on being filled.

A recurring problem in the church is that having begun in the Spirit, we try to go forward in the flesh. We ignore, then lose His empowering.

When a Christian realizes he or she has quenched the Holy Spirit, and they seek Him, He may come upon them in great power. Thus it seems as though His empowering is a second experience after salvation.

But that isn't the New Testament norm. He isn't a second blessing unless you've quenched Him.

Go on asking, seeking, and knocking, and believe your Father is good, and will continually grant the Holy Spirit.

