



A few weeks ago, the “Church” celebrated “Pentecost.” To the Church, this was the day in which we remember that the Holy Spirit came upon and filled Jesus’ disciples while they were in the Upper Room. Therefore, many of us equate, which we all should, the Day of Pentecost with the day that the Holy Spirit was given to empower the believers in Jesus.

We, as believers in the Most High God, must remember that this was not just “any day” that the Father decided for the Holy Spirit to come into the lives of believers in Jesus. No, it was much, much more. It was a day that was planned by God from the beginning. We see this as we read in Leviticus, as He was preparing His people, the Hebrew people, in the wilderness, to enter into the Promised Land.

Actually, we see it first in Leviticus 23. This chapter tells us of all the “feasts of the Lord” that would be celebrated by those who were called to follow Him – the Hebrews. Yes, God gave them, as well as to all the true believers, a guideline to what He would do to restore the relationship of people back to Him. It was a guide set by the Living God as to what God was going to do to restore and bring, not just the Hebrews, but all of His most highest creation, mankind, back to a relationship with Him.

If we look in Leviticus 23 we see the description of the seven “Feasts of the Lord.”

Passover – Leviticus 23:5

Feast of Unleavened Bread – Leviticus 23:6-8

Bikkurum (feast of first fruit of the Barley harvest) – Leviticus 23:10-14

Feast of First Fruits/ Pentecost (Greek) – Leviticus 23:15-22 - (feast of first fruit of the Wheat harvest)

Rosh HaShana – Leviticus 23:24,25

Yom Kippur – Leviticus 23:27-32

Feast of Tabernacles – Leviticus 23:34-43

Before we continue, I would like us to first look at Leviticus 23:2 as it states, *“Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the **feasts of the LORD**, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.”* God is very clear and explicit as He declares that all of these feasts are **HIS FEASTS!!!**

Yes, the people will do the things that are to be done on these feast days. However, we must, must, must always remember that they are all **“feasts of the LORD”** – they are **His** feasts!!! These feasts, which are rich with symbolic and prophetic significance of what God would do in the future for the Hebrews and all people, were properly called the “feasts of the LORD.”

They fundamentally belong to God. He gave them to Israel as holy convocations, sacred gatherings. The people were called to do what they must do on these feast days, but remember that they are all His Feasts and that is where we must start. They all point to what God would do for His people in the future to bring them back into relationship with Him.

We know that the first four “Feasts of the Lord” have been fulfilled. Jesus fulfilled the first three:

- 1) Passover, by dying on the cross
- 2) Feast of unleavened bread - Jesus lived a lifestyle (represented by the 7 days) without leaven (sin). Now, His people through Him, are to live our lives in the same way.
- 3) Bikkurum (the feast of first fruits of the barley harvest). This was when Jesus rose from the grave and went to the Father to present Himself to the Father as the redeemed God/Man – the first “fruit” of many (those who would believe and receive what He did).

Jesus, after He went to heaven to present Himself to the Father, then returned to re-teach His disciples everything He did. After forty days, Jesus declared that He must leave so that the next feast day could be fulfilled, the Feast of First Fruits from the Wheat Harvest which was also called “Shavuot.” We see Jesus declare this in Acts 1:4-8. In verse 8 we read that Jesus decrees that something “very significant” would take place and fulfill the purpose of that Feast Day.

He declared that each of them, *“...shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* Acts 2:1 begins, *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come...”* This was the Feast of First Fruits (Shavuot)/ Pentecost, the feast of the first fruit of the Wheat harvest. Who came on that day??? ... the power of the Holy Spirit!!!

This was prophesied in the Old Testament in Joel 2:28,29, *“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”* We know that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples (John 14:26). It was fulfilled in Acts 2:2-13

Today, we use the Greek term “Pentecost.” We must remember that this is actually the Greek name for the Jewish feast known in the Old Testament as the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15; Deuteronomy 16:9). The term “Pentecost” was used by Luke, who was a Gentile but now a child of God, who wrote the Book of Acts. He wrote Acts in the Greek language, which was the common language of those times, therefore, he used the Greek term, “Pentecost.”

Pentecost, is derived from the Greek word “*Pentēkostē*” meaning “fiftieth.” The term “Pentecost” is therefore used to refer to the fifty days that would elapse from the time of the wave offering of Bikkurum during the week of Unleavened Bread and Passover to this Feast day. The Feast of Weeks (Shavout), the wheat harvest, is to be celebrated 50 days after Bikkurum (our Resurrection Sunday). Just to be clear, it is same feast that the Jewish people celebrate, known as the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot) and celebrated the wheat harvest.

In Hebrew, it also, and more importantly, is tied to celebrate the time when God gave the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) to Moses at Mount Sinai. (Deuteronomy 4:10-13, Exodus 19-20) This is so very important as to why this day is vital to every child of God and why the Holy Spirit was poured out to the believers.

When God gave the Hebrews the “Law” back in Exodus, God revealed himself to His people. He demonstrated His power through the “Law,” His Word. He revealed His holiness. He revealed how His people should live their lives. We know that they could never truly do this in their own strength and ability. Therefore, in His Word, the Father told the world that He was going to send “someone” who would, once and for all, free people from their sin which was separating them from their God. That someone would be Jesus.

This was the real reason why the Holy Spirit was given to the Body of Christ on that day of “Pentecost” and today to everyone who is a child of God. It was so that we could know and do

His Word. It was given so that we could know who our God is and to know who we are as His children through Jesus. Yes, we are sons of the most high God, but more importantly we are now “kings” on this earth with the ability to bring others to know Him. We are also “priests” unto our God, to minister unto Him, forever and ever!!! Wow!!! (Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10)

We must all realize that “Pentecost” is really all about God and His Word and not so much about the power we get through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to God’s people for the main purpose of now living out His Word in this world so that others will see and recognize their need for God.

We see this in 1Thessalonians 4:11,12 where Paul tells the believers, *“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.”*

This “Feast of First Fruits/Pentecost,” as previously mentioned, is also referred to as “Shavuot.” In Jewish tradition, this feast day also implies a “Marriage: A Betrothal Contract” between God and His people. The word “*Shavuot*” comes the Hebrew root word “*shaba*” which means “to swear or make an oath.” Therefore, on this day, according to Jewish thought, God swore His eternal devotion to His people, and they in turn pledged their everlasting loyalty to Him.

Exodus 19:5-6 tells us, *“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: ⁶And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.”* We see that the people responded and accepted this “contract” in Exodus 19:8, by saying, *“this we will do,”* or in other words, “I do.” These are the terms of a “marriage contract.”

This was considered an unbreakable marriage contract between God and His people. This is why we read so much in the Old Testament scriptures that the people were breaking their “marriage betrothal vows” to their God. If you read the Old Testament, we see that God was almost at the point where He wanted to give them up...but He did not. Why? Simply because He loved His creation too much to let them go and give up on them.

This is why the Holy Spirit is so important to the child of God, today. The Holy Spirit was given primarily so that the believer, the true child of God, the “bride of Christ,” would be able to live their lives as true believers and true followers of Jesus and God’s Word.

Yes, we have the power to do the wonderful “gifts” of the Holy Spirit, as needed. However, the most important aspect of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life is that He now helps us, guides us and leads us in living a lifestyle that expresses the “fruit of the Holy Spirit,” the character of God now within our lives. That is the greatest witness that anyone could bring to this lost world.

Isn’t that what Jesus told the disciples in Acts 1:8? That they would be and should be “witnesses” to this entire world. Yes, they were to be witnesses to the Jewish people in Jerusalem and Judea. However, Jesus went on to tell His disciples that they were to also bring the Good News to Samaria, the “half Hebraic, half Gentile” people that were looked down upon by the other Jewish leaders and Jewish people. Jesus goes further and opens up the Good News to the entire world by declaring to His disciples that they were to bring it to the “*uttermost parts of the world*” meaning even the Gentiles.

Yes, God desires for all to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus. The scriptures declare it many times as found in Romans 1:16; Romans 10:12; Colossians 3:11 and others. 2Peter 3:9 tells us, “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*”

When we read Acts 2 it states that, after Jesus ascended into heaven, Jesus’ followers were gathered together for the Feast of the First Fruits of the Wheat Harvest (aka Pentecost). The Holy Spirit “*filled the whole house where they were sitting.*” (Acts 2:2). The Holy Spirit came as a rushing wind and as tongues of fire. Was this a wind? Was there fire? We are not quite sure. It clearly states that something came “as” wind and fire.

It was the closest thing that anyone could describe the power of the Holy Spirit. I believe it was even greater than that. We know that “fire” represented the Holy Spirit. Fire in the scriptures symbolizes the presence and power of God. We know the “wind” is used to signify God’s life-giving presence. These were symbols used by the writer of Acts to give a close description as to

what those who were there were experiencing. However, they could never truly have told anyone what they truly saw or what it was like – it was simply the fullness of God's Holy Spirit.

Next we read that, "*All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them*" (Acts 2:4). They all went from the building into the streets. What was happening? The Holy Spirit was using these believers to declare the Good News of Jesus and salvation to all those who were in Jerusalem.

Notice, that the believers were not speaking in "unknown tongues." No, but rather they were speaking of the wonderful things of God in the "known languages" of all the different people who were from other parts of the world who were now in Jerusalem for this Feast of First Fruits of the Wheat Harvest. God had a plan and it was coming to pass.

This unusual event drew a large crowd. Peter then stood up to speak to them about the Gospel of Jesus Christ - accept Him and turn from their wicked ways (Acts 2:14). The listeners were "*cut to the heart*" (Acts 2:37) which meant that they had heard the truth. If they received the truth, they would now be "saved." Peter then declared to those who truly believed and accepted Jesus for who He is to then "*repent, and be baptized*" (Acts 2:38). By the end of that day, the Church grew by 3,000 people (Acts 2:41).

This is why, as true believers, we still celebrate Pentecost. Many say that it was the birth date of the true church of the Living God upon this earth. All I know is that God moved and performed His promised Word that He declared back in Leviticus and this Feast Day was fulfilled. Through Jesus, who is the Word of God, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit now within the believer's life, the fullness of God's Word and the revelation and illumination of His Word, is now written and sealed upon and within our hearts.

Let's review. Why is this day still important to children of God?

- Jesus had left this earth 10 days earlier BUT in Acts 1:5-8 - Jesus said that He must leave so that the Holy Spirit could come and empower us to share the Good News of salvation that came through Jesus Christ to the world.
- At the Last Supper the disciples witnessed the end of the Messiah's earthly ministry as He asks them to remember Him after His death until He returns.

- At Pentecost, the disciples witnessed the birth of the New Testament church at the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would now dwell within all believers so they could go out and share the Good News of Jesus to the world.

Pentecost is the fourth “Feast Days” that have already been fulfilled – Passover, The Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Bikkurum and the feast of First Fruits of the Wheat Harvest (Pentecost). The last three feasts – Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur and the Feast of Tabernacles are still to come.

We know that there are “giftings” given by the Holy Spirit that God gives to His believers, as needed, to help bring others to know and receive Jesus. Paul reviews these in Corinthians 12-14. However, the most important thing for all believers to understand is that we all have been given the “Fruit of the Holy Spirit”- the characteristics and lifestyle of God that we are to live out and bring forth on this earth. That is the true witness of Jesus to the unsaved – the witness of our own brand new lifestyle as a child of God. (Galatians 5:22)

On that day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out and He is still being poured out to every believer to help each one of us to live our lives for and onto our God. Our lives and lifestyle, as well as our testimony and the words we speak, should tell others about the Good News of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection and the new life they can have in Him. Our lives should be living testimonies of who our God is and who we are now as His sons and daughters.

The Holy Spirit was given on that day of Pentecost and is still being poured out to all believers in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is still here on this earth to help every believer, you and I, in our lives, to not just tell others of the Good News of Jesus but to live out that Good News as witnesses for and unto our God until Jesus returns and then forever!!! Thank you, Father...Thank you, Jesus... Thank you, Holy Spirit!!!