

The Feasts - The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)

April 11, 2021

What is a Biblical Feast?

Leviticus 23:1-2 - The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts (mo’ed) of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy (qodesh) convocations (miqra’); they are my appointed feasts (mo’ed).

“**Mo’ed**” - Feast - Assembly

“**Qodesh**” - Set Apart, Sacred, Separateness

“**Miqra**” - Assembly, a calling together

A Biblical Feast was a Sacred Assembly meant to “Call To Mind” important values for the Nation.

The Feast of Weeks

The first cutting of Barley (First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) started a 7 week countdown (49 days) to the celebration of the “Feast of Weeks” or “Shavuot”. Because this celebration takes place 50 days after the Passover, it became known by Greek translators as “Pentecost”, which means “Fifty”.

The Feast of Weeks was a Pilgrimage Feast, meaning that the people were required to travel to the Temple to celebrate it. While they would travel, a procession of travelers would often form, with people carrying their offering and singing songs of praise together along the way.

This is the Feast that was being celebrated in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit was given as a gift to those who believed. (Acts 2:38)

To celebrate, people would again “set apart” the firstfruits of their Wheat Harvest, which they would harvest, ground into flour, and then bake into 2 leavened loaves of bread. These were then carried into Jerusalem and presented to the priests, who would wave them before the Lord.

What Was It Symbolizing?

- **The Coming of the TORAH** - the timing of the festival became a celebration of the time between their liberation from Egypt and the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. Tradition said that there were 50 days between the Passover and the events of Exodus 24:1-11.
- **It was symbolic of the Marriage of God and Israel** - it would have been on this day, on the 50th day after the first passover (when God entered into the Engagement Period of Marriage) that God and the Elders of Israel would have finalized the covenant and shared a meal together (The Marriage Ceremony/Banquet).

What Does It Mean For Us?

- **A Covenant Relationship** - The Jews viewed the Torah as a “Wedding Contract” between God and the Nation. In some ways, the Feast of Weeks was the “Anniversary” of the Marriage between Yahweh and His people.

The Jewish Wedding Traditions -

- **The Mohar** - In Jewish culture, a father would arrange a bride for his son by paying a price (*mohar*) to the bride’s family in order to negotiate the betrothal and, in essence, “purchase” the bride.
- **The Mattan** - The groom would also give a gift to the bride called a *mattan*, which became a part of the property the bride would bring into the marriage.
- **The Betrothal** - Once the price had been paid, the couple was “set apart” for one another in engagement.
 - The groom would return to his Father’s house to build on a room for he and his new bride. (John 14:2-3)
 - The Father of the groom was responsible for preparing all the wedding festivities and would decide when everything was ready for the Groom to go and receive his bride and bring her to the Wedding Feast.
- **The Harpatzo** - “To snatch away” - The Groom would then go to receive his bride, often with a procession of friends and family members, with Trumpet Blasts and Shouting to alert the Bride to get ready and prepared for the Wedding.
 - The Bride (and even the Groom) had to live in a state of “readiness”, not knowing the day or hour that the Father of the groom would deem to be the Wedding Day.
- **The Ketubah** - A written agreement of the covenant between the Groom and Bride. It was read publicly at the wedding ceremony, and became a public document that the entire community would be witness too.
- **The Wedding Feast** - The culmination of the Wedding would be the sharing together of a Celebratory Meal. This celebration could last many days!

“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Revelation 19:7-9