

CHAPTER 6

The Festival of Pentecost (*Shavuot*)

And you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, that is, the first fruits of the wheat harvest... (Exodus [Shemot] 34:22 NAS).

You shall count seven weeks for yourself; you shall begin to count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. Then you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with a tribute of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the Lord your God blesses you (Deuteronomy [Devarim] 16:9-10 NAS).

The Omer: Countdown to Sinai

The period called "the omer" begins the day following the sabbath during Passover (*Pesach*) and continues until *Shavuot* (Pentecost). The Torah commanded that seven weeks be counted from the time of the offering of the omer, as it says:

You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete [temimot] sabbaths. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering.... On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations (Leviticus [Vayikra] 23:15-17,21 NAS).

Because of this ritual of counting, the period between Passover (*Pesach*) and Pentecost (*Shavuot*) came to be known as the omer. In fact, *Shavuot* 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.

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The Ceremony of Counting the *Omer*

A sharp controversy existed between the rabbis and a variety of Jewish sects over the interpretation of the words "the day after the sabbath" in the verse commanding the counting of the *omer*. According to the rabbis, the sabbath refers not to the weekly sabbath, but rather to the first festival day of the Passover (*Pesach*). [This is Nisan 15, the first day of Unleavened Bread, which (G-d designated to be a high sabbath (*shabbaton*). Because of this, the counting of the *omer* traditionally begins from Nisan 15.] Various groups, beginning with the first-century Sadducees and continuing with the Karaites of the early Middle Ages, interpreted the word *sabbath* to mean the weekly sabbath during the Passover (*Pesach*) season. The implication of this interpretation is that *Shavuot* (Pentecost), which falls on the day after the *omer* count of 49 days, would always occur on a Sunday. Before the counting of the *omer*, this blessing is recited: "Praised are You, L-rd our G-d, Ruler of the Universe who has sanctified us with His commandments, commanding us to count the *omer*." This is followed by the count for the day: "Today is the first day of the *omer*." Weeks are counted as well. For example: "Today is the seventeenth day of the *omer*, which equals two weeks and three days of the *omer*." This counting is done at night, as the new day begins at sundown, (6:00 p.m.). Some people recite Psalm (*Tehillim*) 67 after the counting, since it consists of seven verses and a total of 49 words in Hebrew.

The Historical Understanding of Pentecost (*Shavuot*)

In the third month after the Jews left Egypt (*Mitzrayim*), they arrived in the Sinai desert and camped opposite Mount Sinai. Moses (*Moshe*) was then told by G-d to gather the Israelites together to receive the Torah (Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:1-8 NAS). The Israelites answered, "*All that the Lord has spoken we will do!*" In Hebrew, it is *Na'aseh V'Nishmah*, which means, "We agree to do even before we have listened."

Moses (*Moshe*) then gave the Jews two days to cleanse themselves, wash their clothes, and prepare to receive the Torah on the third day. At the same time, Moses (*Moshe*) 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 *shofar* (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 [*Shemot*] 19:9-19). Moses (*Moshe*) then went up alone on the mountain, and as he neared the top, a mighty voice announced the Ten Commandments (Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:20-25; 20:1-21).

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Later Development of the Holiday

Pentecost (*Shavuot*) traditionally has been seen in different ways. One is to see it as the concluding piece of the Passover (*Pesach*) season. The other is to see it as an independent festival. Because Pentecost (*Shavuot*) celebrates the revelation of G-d at Mount Sinai, Pentecost (*Shavout*) would seem to be of a clearly independent nature. It is, after all, counted as one of the three pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 16:16). Yet, beginning with the Targum (the Aramaic translation of the Scriptures from the second century of the Christian Era or Common Era (C.E.), known more commonly as A.D.), Pentecost (*Shavuot*) is referred to in the rabbinic tradition as *Atzeret*. The word *atzeret* in Hebrew means "conclusion." The word *atzeret* is used in the Bible with the festival *Shemini Atzeret* (Numbers [*Bamidbar*] 29:35) and seems to mean "remain with Me [G-d] another day." There is a sense, therefore, that *atzeret* is the final part or completion of a festival. Therefore, *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is seen as the conclusion to the Passover (*Pesach*) season. One strong connection between Passover (*Pesach*) and *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is the counting of the *omer* serving as a chain that links the two festivals.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). Because *Shavuot* (Pentecost) culminates with the counting of the *omer* for 50 days, *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is called the *Atzeret* or conclusion to Passover (*Pesach*). Spiritually speaking (*halacha*), the believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* 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 G-d face to face on Mount Sinai (Exodus [*Shemot*] 3:12). There at Mount Sinai (spiritually), G-d will forever reveal Himself to us in a new and greater way. For all believers in the Messiah *Yeshua*, the Torah that was given at Mount Sinai represents the Word of G-d, the entire Bible. The believer in *Yeshua* spiritually experiences *Shavuot* (Pentecost) when the Holy Spirit of G-d (*Ruach HaKodesh*) reveals the Word of G-d to him in a deeper and more powerful way, and his understanding and desire for the Bible increases accordingly.

Themes of *Shavuot* (Pentecost)

New Revelation

One theme of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is a new revelation of G-d's will (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:15-16,21). Two notable historical events happened on this day.

1. The giving of the Ten Commandments or the Torah.

It should be noted here that the Hebrew word *Torah*, commonly translated as "law" in English, does not mean "law," but "instruction or teaching" in the Hebrew language. By understanding the meaning of the Hebrew word *Torah*, we can see that the *Torah* was **never** intended, nor should it ever be understood by non-Jewish people, to mean a code of do's and don'ts. Rather, it should be seen as G-d's instruction and teaching to us so we can understand Him better.

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

Shavuot (Pentecost) is called the season of the giving of the Torah (*Z'man Matan Toraseinu*) in Hebrew because this is the literal day that G-d revealed Himself to the people of Israel as they stood at the base of Mount Sinai.

2. The giving of the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) by G-d.

Yeshua was resurrected on the Feast of First Fruits (*Bikkurim*), as was seen in the previous chapter. Fifty days after the resurrection of *Yeshua*, the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) came to dwell in the hearts and lives of all the believers in *Yeshua* (Acts 1:8; 2:1-18; Luke 24:49; Joel 2:28-29; Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:16; Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 44:3; Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 16:5-6,16; 2 Kings 21:4).

At this point, let's make a comparison.

Shavuot in the Tanach (Ex 19) *Shavuot in the Brit Hadashah* (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

- | | |
|--|---|
| - The fiftieth day | - The fiftieth day |
| - Commandments of G-d written on tablets of stone (Exodus 24:12) | - Commandments of G-d written on our hearts
Jeremiah 31:33; Psalm 40:8; 37:31; Is 51:7;
Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:22-27; 2 Cor 3:3;
Hebrews 8:10) |
| - Written by the finger of G-d (Exodus 31:18) | - Written by the Spirit of G-d (2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10) |
| - 3,000 slain (Exodus 32:1-8,26-28) | - 3,000 live (Acts 2:38,41) |

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- The letter of the Torah
- The Spirit of the Torah (Romans 2:29; 7:6; 2 Cor 3:6)
- Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:11)
- Mount Zion (Romans 11:26; Hebrews 12:22; 1 Peter 2:6)

Shavuot as a Marriage: A Betrothal Contract

One of the most beautiful images of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is that of the marriage between G-d (the groom) and Israel (the bride).

In the biblical wedding service that G-d gave (Romans 9:4; Hebrews 9:1; 1 Chronicles 28:11-12), marriage consisted of two stages. The first stage is betrothal, called *erusin* in Hebrew. You enter this first stage of marriage as soon as a betrothal contract (*a shitre erusin*) is made between the two parties. The written contract is called a *ketubah*. 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, called a *get* in Hebrew.

In fact, by understanding the Hebrew language, we can see how betrothal is legally binding. To G-d, Hebrew is the pure language (*Zephaniah* 3:9), and Hebrew will allow us to understand deeper spiritual truths in the Bible that would be more difficult to understand otherwise. 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 the Hebrew language communicates to us that betrothal is legally binding.

Messianic Fulfillment. In the New Testament (*Brit Hadashah*), we can see that Joseph (*Yosef*) was betrothed to Mary (*Miryam*) when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary (*Miryam*) that she would have a son named *Yeshua* (Jesus), by the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) of G-d, who would be the Messiah (Luke 1:26-35). When Joseph (*Yosef*) discovered that his betrothed (espoused) wife Mary (*Miryam*) was pregnant, he decided to get a divorce (*get*) until the angel of the L-rd changed his mind by appearing to him in a dream (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 1:18-20).

Betrothal is mentioned in the Torah in Exodus (*Shemot*) 21:8; Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 19:20; Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) 20:7; 22:23. The second stage of marriage is the fullness or consummation of the marriage. This stage of marriage is called *nesu'in*.

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The Bible tells us in Jeremiah (*Yermiyahu*) 2:2 that at Mount Sinai, G-d betrothed Himself to Israel, as it is written:

Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of His increase... (Jeremiah [Yermiyahu] 2:2-3)

In Exodus 19, when G-d by the leading of Moses (*Moshe*) brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, G-d betrothed Himself to Israel. On Mount Sinai, G-d gave the Torah to Israel (Exodus [*Shemot*] 20:1-21). At this time, G-d was making a betrothal contract, a *ketubah*, with Israel. The *ketubah* (or written betrothal contract, which is understood to be the Torah) represents "The book of the covenant" (marriage is a covenant) that Moses (*Moshe*) wrote prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai (Exodus [*Shemot*] 24:4,7). The Book of the Covenant spelled out mutual obligations of G-d and Israel just as the *ketubah* spelled out the obligations between husband and wife. So, G-d made a marriage contract with Israel in Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:3-7.

In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:8, Israel accepts G-d's marriage proposal. Israel answered in Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:8, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (*Na'aseh V'Nishmah* -- we agree to do even before we have listened).

In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:2, Israel camped before the L-rd. The word *camp* in Hebrew is *chanah* and in this case is singular, while Israel is plural. By this we can see that at that time all Israel had become one. This is also a necessary requirement for marriage (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 2:24; Ephesians 5:31).

The biblical wedding ceremony that G-d gave requires that the marriage be consummated under a wedding canopy known as a *chupah*. In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:17, Moses (*Moshe*) brought forth the people out of the camp to meet G-d and they stood at the *nether* part of the mount. The word *nether* in Hebrew actually implies that the people stood underneath the mountain. This imagery gives the understanding that the mountain had become a *chupah* and Israel was standing underneath the mountain or under the *chupah*, the place where the wedding takes place.

Every wedding will have two witnesses. They are called the friends of the bridegroom. One is assigned to the groom and one is assigned to the bride. In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:17, Moses (*Moshe*) is seen as one of the two witnesses whose job is to escort the bride to meet the groom under the *chupah* (Mount Sinai). In order for the *ketubah*, the written contract between the husband and the wife, to be legal in consummating the marriage, it must be signed by the two witnesses, the friends of the bridegroom. Since we can see that Moses (*Moshe*) was one of the two witnesses, he had to sign the *Ketubah* (Torah) in order for the full marriage between G-d and Israel to be consummated.

However, when Moses (*Moshe*) returned from being with G-d on Mount Sinai, he did not sign the *Ketubah* (Torah). Instead he broke the two tablets (*ketubah*), which were in his right hand (Exodus [*Shemot*] 32:19), thus not signing the *ketubah* which G-d had made with Israel. Therefore, he did not allow Israel to enter into the full marriage. Moses (*Moshe*) broke the two tablets (*ketubah*) when he saw that Israel was worshiping the golden calf and thus were being unfaithful in their marriage.

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Spiritual Understanding (Halacha). What does the wedding mean in terms of the Messiah *Yeshua*, and what is the personal application (*halacha*) to us? Messiah *Yeshua* is the groom and the believers in the Messiah are betrothed to Him. When *Yeshua* came to the earth almost 2,000 years ago, He came so that whosoever would put their trust and confidence (*emunah*) in Him would be wedded to Him forever. This would include both Jews and non-Jews (John [*Yochanan*] 3:16). Because *Yeshua* came as the suffering Messiah, *Messiah ben Joseph*, during His first coming, He ascended to Heaven to be with G-d the Father until He returns during His second coming to be the King Messiah, *Messiah ben David*. Today, *Yeshua* does not physically dwell with those who trust in Him. Therefore, the believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* 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 Messiah during the Messianic age on earth, the wedding ceremony when the believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* will be wedded to Him must take place.

In the biblical wedding service that G-d gave, after you are married, you have a honeymoon. The honeymoon lasts a week and is known as the seven days of the *chupah*. 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 [*Bereishit*] 29:27). In Joel (*Yoel*) 2:16, we see the marriage of the bride (the believers in *Yeshua*) and the bridegroom (*Yeshua*) 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. After the honeymoon in heaven, *Yeshua* 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 G-d's Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*)

In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:19, a trumpet (*shofar*) was sounded. The trumpet (*shofar*) that was sounded grew louder and louder. Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:19 says, "...and God answered him with thunder [by a voice, KJV]." Exodus (*Shemot*) 20:18 says, "And all the people perceived the thunder [saw the thunderings, KJV] ..."

In the Midrash, which is a rabbinical commentary on the Scriptures, in *Exodus Rabbah* 5:9, it says:

When G-d gave the Torah on Sinai He displayed untold marvels to Israel with His voice. What happened? G-d spoke and the voice reverberated throughout the whole world... It says, And all the people witnessed the thunderings [Exodus (Shemot) 20:18].

Note that it does not say "the thunder" but "the thunderings"; wherefore, R. Johanan said that G-d's voice, as it was uttered split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand...

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In Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 32:8 it is written, "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 (*Shemot*) 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 (*Devarim*) 32:8 and Exodus (*Shemot*) 1:1-5. So, it was seen that G-d's voice split up into the languages of all the people on the earth to be a witness to them.

In the book *The Midrash Says*, by Rabbi Moshe Weissman, the author wrote:

In the occasion of Matan Torah [the giving of the Torah], the Bnai Yisrael [children of Israel] not only heard Hashem's [the L-rd's] Voice but actually saw the sound waves as they emerged from Hashem's [the L-rd's] mouth. They visualized them as a fiery substance. Each commandment that left Hashem's [the L-rd's] mouth traveled around the entire Camp and then to each Jew individually, asking him, "Do you accept upon yourself this Commandment with all the halochot [Jewish law] pertaining to it?" Every Jew answered "Yes" after each commandment. Finally, the fiery substance which they saw engraved itself on the luchot [tablets].

Messianic Fulfillment. This same experience we just discussed that happened at Mount Sinai also occurred 50 days after the resurrection of *Yeshua* on the day of *Shavuot* (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 (*Shemot*) 20:18, Hebrews 12:18-19 says, "And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words...." 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 Rabbi Moshe Weissman understood happened at Mount Sinai in the first *Shavuot* (Pentecost) in his commentary is exactly what did happen as seen in Hebrews 12:19. It is also what happened during the first *Shavuot* (Pentecost) following the resurrection of *Yeshua*. At this *Shavuot* (Pentecost), the people also were as one (Acts 2:1-2; Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:2). When G-d poured out His Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) 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 *Shavuot* (Pentecost) at Mount Sinai was a rehearsal (*miqra*) of the *Shavuot* (Pentecost) that would occur immediately after the resurrection of *Yeshua*.

The First Trump (*Shofar*) of G-d

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

The Jewish people understood that there are three primary trumpets (*shofarim*) that mark major events in the redemptive plan of G-d. These three trumpets are known as the first trump, the last trump, and the great trumpet. Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22 is one of the most important Torah readings to the Jewish

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people. In some Jewish circles, it is read every day of the week except for the sabbath. It is also the primary Torah reading for *Rosh HaShanah*. The theme of the chapter includes the binding of Isaac on the altar, known in Hebrew as the *Akeidah*, in addition to the phrase "to be seen." The key verse concerning the phrase "to be seen" is Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22:14, as it is written, "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh [the L-rd will see or provide]: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22:4 says, "Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off."

Messianic Fulfillment. *Yeshua* referred to this event which happened to Abraham (*Avraham*), in John (*Yochanan*) 8:56, as it is written, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad." What did Abraham (*Avraham*) see? What took place on Mount Moriah? Abraham (*Avraham*) was instructed by G-d to take Isaac (*Yitzchak*) to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him there (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 22:2). The first and second temples (*Beit HaMikdash*) were built in Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) on Mount Moriah (2 *Chronicles* 3:1). It was in Jerusalem (*Yerushalayim*) on Mount Moriah where *Yeshua* was crucified on the tree. Calvary (Golgotha) was located on Mount Moriah. Abraham (*Avraham*) in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22:4 was looking into the future and seeing that G-d was going to offer up the Messiah to be slain on Mount Moriah at a future time.

G-d called Abraham (*Avraham*) to sacrifice Isaac (*Yitzchak*) and offer him as a burnt offering, known in Hebrew as an *olah*. This is mentioned in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22:2-3,6,8,13. A burnt offering (*olah*) 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 G-d freely offered up *Yeshua* joyfully and *Yeshua* was willing and obedient to His death on the tree (*Philippians* 2:8). In Isaiah (*Yeshayahu*) 53:10, it says that it pleased G-d to offer up *Yeshua*.

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

This story is an example of the Hebrew expression, "Here now, but not yet." Abraham (*Avraham*) offered up his only son (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 22:16; Hebrews 11:17), and G-d offered up His only Son, *Yeshua* (John [*Yochanan*] 3:16). Instead of Isaac (*Yitzchak*), Abraham (*Avraham*) offered up a ram as the ram was found caught in the thicket (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 22:13). In the Hebrew writings, the ram represents the Messiah and the thicket stands for the sins of the people. In Genesis (*Bereishit*) 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 (*Avraham*) saw this ram being sacrificed in the future. This is what *Yeshua* was referring to in John (*Yochanan*) 8:56.

Once again, relating to the story in Genesis 22, the left horn of the ram that was caught in the thicket (Genesis [*Bereishit*] 22:13) is called the first trumpet (*shofar*) and the right horn of the ram is

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called the last trump (*shofar*).

The Three Trumpets (*Shofarim*) of G-d

The three great trumpets (*shofarim*) that mark major events in the redemptive plan of G-d are associated with days in the biblical calendar. The first trump is associated with and was blown by G-d on the Feast of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) when G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai (Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:19).

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

The great trump (*shofar HaGadol*) is associated with and is blown on *Yom Kippur*. *Yeshua* said that He would return at His second coming at the sound of the great trump (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 24:30-31). Because the great trump (*shofar HaGadol*) is only blown on *Yom Kippur* and because *Yeshua* said that He would return with the sound of a great trump, *Yeshua* was stating very clearly that He would return on a *Yom Kippur*. (This will be discussed in more detail in the chapter concerning *Yom Kippur*.) Thus, the first and last trump will relate to the ram's horn in Genesis (*Bereishit*) 22. Again, the first trump (*shofar*) will be the left horn of the ram and the last trump (*shofar*) will be the right horn of the ram. In Exodus (*Shemot*) 19:19, the trumpet (*shofar*) that was blown by G-d will be the first trump.

The Spiritual Understanding of *Shavuot* (Pentecost)

Spiritual Application (*Halacha*). The giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai involved the Aaronic priesthood, the sacrificial system, the tabernacle, the sabbath days, the festivals, the civil and ceremonial laws, and the Ten Commandments (Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:17,20; 20:1,21-22; 21:1-2,12; 22:1,16; 23:10-11,14; 24:1-8,12,18; 25:1,8-9,40; 28:1; 31:12-18; 32:1; 34:27-28; Hebrews 8:1-6; 9:1-12,15,18-24; 10:1,10; 13:20). These things were given by G-d as a shadow of things to come (Hebrews 10:1) to teach us (Galatians 3:24) about the Messiah *Yeshua* and the redemptive work of G-d (Colossians 2:16-17). *Shavuot* (Pentecost) was the birth of the congregation (*kehilat*) in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). The things given at Mount Sinai were divine and from G-d, but shown in a physical way (Hebrews 9:1) to enable us to understand the spiritual truths that G-d wanted to communicate to us (1 Peter 2:5-9). So G-d gave Israel the covenant, the Torah, the services, the oracles of G-d, and the promises (Romans 9:4-5; 3:2), which were divine (Hebrews 9:1), at Mount Sinai to teach us about the

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Messiah (Psalm [*Tehillim*] 40:7). With this in mind, let's look at the spiritual understandings that G-d was communicating to us at *Shavuot*.

The Two Leavened Wave Loaves (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:15-17)

This was to be a new meal offering to the L-rd (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:16; Numbers [*Bamidbar*] 28:26). There were to be two wave loaves baked with leaven (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:17). At Passover (*Pesach*), leaven was absolutely forbidden (Exodus [*Shemot*] 12:15,19-20) and in the regular meal offering, no leaven was permitted (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 2:1,4-5, 11). We saw earlier that leaven represents sin (1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:9). Passover (*Pesach*) and Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) spoke of the death and burial of *Yeshua* who was without sin. Yet on *Shavuot* (Pentecost), G-d commanded just the opposite. Why?

Shavuot (Pentecost) speaks of the birth of Israel as a nation, as well as the birth of the congregation (*kehilat*) of believers in *Yeshua* through the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*). The two loaves speak of Israel and the congregation of believers in the Messiah. Even though both Israel and the congregation (*kehilat*) of believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* are chosen by G-d and are holy to Him, sin is still found in Israel and sin still exists in the congregation of believers. Passover (*Pesach*) and Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) speak primarily of *Yeshua* who is without sin, but *Shavuot* (Pentecost) speaks of Israel and the congregation (*kehilat*) of believers where sin still exists.

We have just stated that the two wave loaves speak of Israel and the congregation (*kehilat*) of believers in the Messiah. The number two in the Bible is the number of witness and testimony. For example, two witnesses in the Bible establishes a truth (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 18:19-20; Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 19:15; John 5:30-33,36-37; Luke 24:44; 1 John 5:8; Revelation 12:11; 11:3). The Ten Commandments were written on two stones (Exodus [*Shemot*] 31:18). Also, the Ten Commandments are fulfilled by obeying two commandments (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 22:34-40). Messiah and His congregation (*kehilat*) of believers testify of the love, grace, and plan of G-d for the whole world.

The meal offering was to be an offering burned by fire upon the altar. A work of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) is an immersion (baptism) of fire (Luke 3:16). Fire is what G-d uses to burn sin out of the lives of a believer in the Messiah (1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 1 Peter 1:7). The followers of *Yeshua* are supposed to live a righteous (*tzaddik*) life before G-d (Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-13; Colossians 3:1-13; Romans 8:1-4).

Two-tenths Ephod of Fine Flour (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 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 Messiah *Yeshua* and enter into

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His trials, testings, temptations, and sufferings (Zechariah 13:9; Romans 5:3-5; 8:29,35-39; 2 Corinthians 1:3-11; 1 Peter 1:7; 4:12-19; Revelation 3:18).

Messianic Fulfillment. *Yeshua* was the wheat that was planted into the ground (John [*Yochanan*] 12:24; 1 Corinthians 15:35-38,42-44). As wheat is beaten and refined to become fine flour, so the Messiah was beaten and bruised as He became that fine flour (Isaiah [*Yeshayahu*] 28:28; 52:14; 53:1-6; Psalm [*Tehillim*] 81:16; 147:14).

Holy to the L-rd for the Priest (Leviticus [*Vayikra*] 23:20)

Even though the two wave loaves were leavened, the L-rd 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 (*kehilat*) of believers in *Yeshua*. Both the Jewish believers in *Yeshua*, represented by Israel, and the non-Jewish believers, represented by the congregation (*kehilat*), consist of individuals who are leavened. We still sin before G-d despite being believers in the Messiah. In spite of this sin, because we are believers in *Yeshua* and seek to serve and love Him with all our hearts, we are considered holy before G-d (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 7:6-8; 14:2; Luke 1:68,72-75; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; Colossians 1:22-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Titus 2:12; 1 Peter 1:15-16).

A Statute Forever (Leviticus 23:21)

The Holy Spirit came to dwell with the believer in *Yeshua* forever (John [*Yochanan*] 14:16-17). Therefore, the followers of *Yeshua* should have a continual *Shavuot* (Pentecost) experience; one on a daily basis.

The Feast of Harvest of First Fruits

(Exodus [*Shemot*] 23:16; 34:22; Numbers [*Bamidbar*] 28:26)

Shavuot (Pentecost) is called the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Harvest, or the Feast of the First Fruits. Passover (*Pesach*) was the barley harvest and *Shavuot* (Pentecost) was the wheat harvest (Exodus [*Shemot*] 34:22; Ruth 1:22; 2:23; Joel 1:11).

Israel was called a land of barley and wheat (Deuteronomy [*Devarim*] 8:7-8; 2 Chronicles 2:15; Jeremiah [*Yermiyahu*] 41:8). The spring wheat and barley harvest preceded the major harvest in the fall, the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus [*Shemot*] 23:16; 34:22). Both the spring and the fall harvests 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 (*Devarim*) 11:10-15; 28:12; Leviticus (*Vayikra*) 26:4; Joel 2:23,28-29; and Zechariah 10:1. The rain is prophetic of the

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outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) upon people's lives individually as they accept *Yeshua* into their lives and allow the Holy Spirit to teach and instruct them concerning the ways of G-d. The early rain and the latter rain also teach us about the pouring out of G-d's Holy Spirit in a corporate way upon all flesh. The early rain refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) during *Yeshua's* first coming and the latter rain refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) during *Yeshua'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 *Yeshua* as Messiah with the greatest harvest being at the end of this age (Matthew [*Mattityahu*] 13:39; 9:37-38; Mark 4:29). The fall harvest or the harvest at the end of this present age (*Olam Hazeah*) is in the seventh month on the biblical religious calendar. *Shavuot* (Pentecost) is in the third month. From *Shavuot* (Pentecost), there are four months until the final harvest in the fall (John [*Yochanan*] 4:34-35). The fall harvest is the fruit harvest.

Messianic Fulfillment. G-d said that the coming of *Yeshua* would be like the former and latter rain on the earth (Hosea 6:1-3; Joel 2:23). James (*Ya'akov*) ties the coming of the L-rd to the early and latter rain (James [*Ya'akov*] 5:7). *Yeshua's* death, burial, and resurrection was in the spring of the year; the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of *Yeshua* 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. *Yeshua's* second coming will be in the fall of the year and the greatest number of believers will believe at this time. *Yeshua* spoke about this great harvest at the end of this present age (*Olam Hazeah*) in Matthew (*Mattityahu*) 13:39; 24:13-14; and Revelation 14:6,15-16.

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

As believers in *Yeshua*, when we come before G-d 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; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9).

The Conclusion of the Spring Festivals

This concludes the study of the spring festivals. 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 *Yeshua*; and they describe how the individual believer is to walk (*halacha*) and live his life before G-d. In other words, we can see that G-d 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 (*Pesach*) was their freedom from the bondage of Egypt (*Mitzrayim*) (Exodus [*Shemot*] 12). Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) was the separation from the land of Egypt

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into the immersion (baptism) into the Red Sea and the Cloud in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10:1-2). Finally, G-d led the people to Mount Sinai (Exodus [*Shemot*] 19:1) where they experienced *Shavuot* (Pentecost and G-d revealed Himself to the people in a deeper and greater way than He ever did previously.

Messianic Fulfillment. The spring festivals were fulfilled by *Yeshua*. Messiah, who was our Passover Lamb, died on the day of Passover (*Pesach*). He was without sin and is the Bread of Life. *Yeshua* was in the sepulchre on the day of Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*) and He was the kernel of wheat that was buried in the earth. *Yeshua* arose as First Fruits of the barley harvest, He Himself being the first of those to rise from the dead and receive a resurrected body. Finally, the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) was poured out upon all flesh during the feast of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) to gather all believers in the Messiah to be G-d's spring harvest in the earth. As these four feasts describe in detail the significant events during the first coming of Messiah when He came as the suffering Messiah, *Messiah ben Joseph*, to redeem both man and the earth back to G-d following the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, we will find that the fall festivals give us tremendous insight and understanding concerning the events of *Yeshua's* second coming. Then He will return as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and come back to earth as the kingly Messiah, *Messiah ben David*, to rule and reign on earth during the Messianic age or the Millennium.

Spiritual Application (Halacha). Every time a person receives *Yeshua* the Messiah as his own Savior, he spiritually experiences Passover (*Pesach*). He is to flee Egypt (the world's evil system and ways) and trust (*emunah*) in the Messiah, the Lamb of God, and allow *Yeshua* to be the doorpost of his heart. As believers, we are then to seek to live holy lives before G-d and experience Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzah*). Just as *Yeshua* arose from the dead, we are to consider our former ways dead to us and experience the newness of life in the Messiah. Once we do this, we can be immersed (baptized) in the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) and have the power of G-d (the anointing) in our lives. At that time, G-d will begin to take us on a spiritual journey through the wilderness of life.

In the process of experiencing life's bitter disappointments and struggles, if we keep our eyes upon G-d, He will take us from Passover (*Pesach*) to *Shavuot* (Pentecost) where He will reveal His ways and His Word, the Bible, in a deeper and progressive way. By keeping our eyes on the Messiah through life's struggles, G-d will not only reveal His Word, the Bible, to us in a greater way, but He also will refine our faith like fine flour just as was done to the wheat. Meanwhile, if we put our entire trust (*emunah*) in *Yeshua* through our spiritual journey in the wilderness of life as G-d refines our faith and reveals Himself to us in a greater way, our spiritual journey will not end in the wilderness of life. Instead G-d will take us forward to spiritually experience the fall festivals and our spiritual promised land. It is when we spiritually experience the fall festivals, especially the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), and enter into our spiritual promised land that G-d will anoint our lives for Him in an awesome way as we live and serve Him. We will then experience the greatest joy in our entire lives. Joy unspeakable! This is what the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*) is all about. It is called "the season of our joy" and this joy is what we have to look forward to as we read about the fall festivals in the following chapters.