



The Festival of Weeks (Pentecost)

By R. Baruch, PhD

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Before Yeshua's ascension back into the heavens, He commanded His disciples not to depart from Jerusalem, but to remain there for the **Promise of the Father** (See Acts 1:4). The Promise, who He was referring to, was of course the Holy Spirit. In Acts chapter two, when the day was fulfilled, i.e. when the period of counting the Omer was complete (Seven weeks and one day, which totals fifty days, the meaning of the term Pentecost) the Holy Spirit came upon all believers. This event was not understood by many and as some began to mock what was taking place, Peter stood up with the other disciples and began to speak.

When Peter began to teach, the Scripture states it was the third hour. Although this refers to nine o'clock in the morning, it is very important for the reader to pay attention to the actual numbers in the Bible. The number three relates to revelation and therefore the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at the third hour reveals something. The prophet Isaiah states that there is a direct relationship between redemption and the Spirit of G-d (See Isaiah 59:20-21). In fact, these two verses from Isaiah are read every day in the synagogue. Peter, however, was led to speak from another prophet, the prophet Yoel. He instructs the people saying,

"And it will be in the last days, says G-d, I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions and your old men will be made to dream dreams. And also upon My servants and upon My maidservants in those days I will pour out from My Spirit and they will prophesy. And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs upon the earth below; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and manifested Day of the L-rd comes. And it will be all whoever should call upon the Name of the L-rd will be saved."

Acts 2:17-21

Peter uses the term, "*the last days*". This phrase must be understood in two distinct manners. The common use of this term is the "*End Times*", relating to the last seven years prior to the establishment of the **Millennial Kingdom** (frequently, the events just before these last seven years are also included). However, Peter uses this phrase according to the second usage. This usage emphasizes not the period immediately before the establishment of the Kingdom, but the period when one can begin to experience some of the Kingdom benefits. Peter mentions the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh; as the verses from the prophet Isaiah taught (See Isaiah 59:20-21). This is only possible as a result of redemption, which relates to the work of the Messiah. Peter wanted to reveal that this work of redemption was completed when Yeshua died on the Cross on Passover and confirmed by G-d when He raised Yeshua from the dead on the first day of the counting of the Omer. Now one can enter into the New Covenant, which is the Kingdom Covenant. In other words, the invitation concerning the Kingdom of G-d (the Gospel) is no longer just a prophesied concept, but now is available to all when he or she responds to this invitation.

One of the mysteries that Paul reveals is the Church. In the same way that Moses thought that when the Children of Israel entered into the Land of Israel the Kingdom would begin, so too did the people think that Messiah's coming would also initiate the beginning of the Kingdom in the fullest sense. The error of both the people and their leaders was the failure to perceive that Biblical redemption contains two necessary elements. The first element is the payment for redemption פְּדוּת 9 (Pdut) and the second one is the outcome or the results of this payment גְּאוּלָּה (Geulah), which relates to the establishment of the Kingdom. There was also a failure to comprehend that there would be a significant period of time between the payment for redemption and the establishment of the Kingdom. During this period, believers would serve G-d, proclaim the Gospel and testify of the power of redemption which they had received through the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. This testimony was to include demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit by doing both good works and manifesting G-d's will in one's life.

In Peter's message on the Festival of Shavuot (Pentecost), he also mentioned,

"And I will give wonders in the heaven above and signs upon the earth below; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and manifested Day of the L-rd comes. And it will be all whoever should call upon the Name of the L-rd will be saved."

While these events did not occur on Pentecost, when they do take place, they will mark the **end** of the period known as the Church Age. When one examines this prophecy closely, such signs relate to the time immediately before the **Day of the L-rd**. The Day of the L-rd relates to the wrath of G-d, which believers are promised never to experience,

"Because G-d has not appointed us for wrath, but for the obtaining of salvation through our L-rd, Yeshua HaMashiach."

1 Thessalonians 5:9

The sun turning black and the moon becoming red like blood are also mentioned in the book of Revelation,

"and I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood."

Revelation 6:12

John instructs the reader that this is the sign of "*The Wrath of the Lamb*"; however, the sixth seal only announces the coming of G-d's wrath and His wrath does not begin until the seventh seal is opened and the **Seven Trumpet Judgment** starts.

In conclusion, Peter's message revealed that the Feast of Pentecost (The Feast of Weeks) initiated the Church Age, when those who accept the Gospel will experience one of the outcomes of redemption, i.e. the receiving of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit Who equips every believer to serve G-d, carrying out His purposes and will. The Church Age will continue until just prior to the beginning of the **Day of the L-rd**. The event that will bring about the

end of the Church Age is the Rapture, when every believer will be changed and receive a new body which is perfectly designed for eternity in the Kingdom of G-d. Now is the time when believers should utilize G-d's provision of the Holy Spirit to do the will of G-d and bear witness to the truth of G-d in order to be found faithful when this age will come to an end.

May you have a blessed festival celebration!