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FEAST OF WEEKS - PENTECOST

Fifty days after Passover Shavuot is celebrated. Also known as Pentecost, Feast of Weeks, The Feast of Harvest, and the Latter First fruits. It is the time to present an offering of new grain of the summer wheat harvest to the LORD. It shows joy and thankfulness for the Lord's blessing of harvest. Often called ***Matin Torah*** (the giving of the Law), it is tied to the ten Commandments because it is believed God gave Moses the Ten Commandments at this time. Historically, children receive treats for memorizing Scripture at Shavuot. In a Jewish family, the book of Ruth is often read to celebrate the holiday. Pentecost is a popular day for Jewish Confirmation.

Shavuot is one of the three pilgrimage feasts when all Jewish males were required to go to Jerusalem to "appear before the LORD" (Deut. 16:16).

In the New Testament Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem following his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. 120 men and women were gathered together in one accord (unity) in the upper room for Shavuot on the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week, thus the first day of the week. The Holy Spirit filled the upper room where they were at with a sound like a mighty wind and there appeared as tongues of fire over each of them and they were all baptized with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2) The apostle Peter referred to the prophet Joel who said that God would "pour out his Spirit on all flesh." (Joel 2:28-32)

Because many came from the known world to Jerusalem for Passover that spoke different dialects suddenly heard the 120 speak in languages they had never learned. They said in Acts 2:11 ***"we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."*** They thought the people speaking in "other tongues" were drunk because they were so filled up with joy and exuberance.

Peter then stood up and told them they weren't drunk. He then preached with no fear a powerful spirit-filled message that the risen and exalted Jesus had poured out the Holy Spirit like Joel said God would. The people then responded with repentance and more than 3,000 were saved. Thus began the New Covenant with God and all people that believe on Jesus Christ.

I find it very interesting that the law was given on the same day as grace was given later. The New Covenant being much better than the old and making the gift of salvation available to all men, women and children. When the power of God fell on these disciples that were mostly farmers and fishermen, they became bold for Jesus, and spread the gospel throughout the known world.

Let that same power of Pentecost fall upon us afresh as we celebrate it tonight through tomorrow night. May the fire of God come upon us and burn out all of the old things that have us bound, and fire us up to be powerful witnesses for Jesus and bring revival to a lost and dying world!