



May 2001



Shavuot begins the evening of May 27th



Holiday Greetings in Yeshua, *Moadim le simhah*, God's appointed times for rejoicing,

Shavuot: Fulfilled

It had been 10 days since *Yeshua* (Jesus) had been taken up to Heaven, following 40 days of post-resurrection appearances. His *Talmidim* (disciples) had continued daily with one accord in the Temple. They had counted 49 days (7 weeks) from Passover (the counting of the *Omer*) as directed by the Lord. They were in the upper room now that the counting was done. This was a special day to be at the Temple in Jerusalem. Thousands of other Jews were there also as commanded by God in the Torah. The feast of *Shavuot* (Weeks) had come, one of the three times a year when all Jewish males were commanded to appear before the Lord at the Temple in Jerusalem. (Deuteronomy 16:16)

The celebration was two-fold. . . a harvest celebration, giving thanks to God for the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and a birthday celebration, rejoicing at the birthday of Judaism _ the giving of the *Torah* or "The Law." Years before *Yeshua* came to earth, the ancient rabbis had calculated the journey from Egypt to Mt. Sinai and had determined that, in fact, the *Torah* had been given to the House of Israel fifty days after the Exodus. That meant that the Law was given on one of *Yahweh's* appointed times _ *Shavuot* (or as the Greek Jews called it _ Pentecost [pente = fifty]) which occurred seven weeks plus one day (50 days) after Passover.

Every sabbath in Judaism has specified readings from the *Torah* and from the Prophets. The portion for the holiday of Shavuot includes: "*Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: 'Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place.'*" (Ezekiel 3:12) We read in Acts Chapter 2 that the followers of *Yeshua* were seated in the Temple. Since it was customary at the time to stand to hear the reading of Scripture, we can assume that the reading was concluded, and the disciples were seated, ready to be instructed. At that moment, instruction came in a totally unexpected way.

"Now when the Day of Shavuot (Pentecost) had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language." (Acts 2:1-6)

On the very day that God had given the Law to His people Israel, He chose to give the Spirit as well. Were the two connected? Absolutely! The chart on the next page shows some of the connections between *Shavuot* and the first Pentecost following *Yeshua's* resurrection from the dead.

Parallels between the Giving of the Law	and the Giving of the Spirit
God gave the Law on the Feast of Weeks (<i>Shavuot</i>)	

	God gave the Spirit on the Feast of Weeks (<i>Shavuot</i>)
God gave the Law on Mt. Sinai	God gave the Spirit on Mt. Zion
God, the groom, Israel, the bride	Yeshua, the groom, Believers, the bride
Thunder & lightning flashes accompanied (voices & torches Exodus 20:18)	Tongues of fire accompanied the giving of the Spirit the giving of the Law (Acts 2:2-3)
Receiving the Torah made the Israelites a cohesive cohesive group with a priestly calling (Ex. 19:5)	Receiving the Spirit made the believers a group with a priestly calling (I Peter 2:8)
3,000 souls perished (Exodus 32:28)	3,000 souls saved (Acts 2:41)
A ministration of death: the letter of the Law.	A ministration of life: the Spirit
The Law given-on the outside on tablets of stone.	The Spirit given-bringing the Law to the inside the Torah written on our hearts. Only through the power of the Spirit can we do God's will. (Jeremiah 31:31)
"The voice of a great rushing" (<i>Haftorah</i> for <i>Shavuot</i> : Ezekiel 3:12)	"The sound of a mighty rushing wind" (Acts 2:1,2)
Great joy of the physical harvest (grain)	Great joy of the spiritual harvest (souls)
Birthday of Judaism	Birthday of the Church
Rabbis believe that God's voice split into 70 languages (voices plural) so that every nation could understand Him.	Men of every nation were there to hear the Good News of the Kingdom each in his own language. (Acts 2:5-11). God reversed Babel.
A day that celebrates "fruit"-of the harvest-not only wheat, but first fruits of grapes, figs, pomegranates, olive oil and date honey were brought to the Temple.	The Holy Spirit empowers us to bear the "fruit of the Spirit," love, joy, peace, etc. (Gal. 5:22-23).
Two leavened loaves offered up to God, a type of Jew and non-Jew as one.	Two groups of people, Jews and non-Jews, became one in the Spirit.
First fruits of the harvest _ more to come.	First fruits of the Spirit _ more to come (Romans 8:23).

SHAVUOT: MANY FACETED FEAST

Shavuot is one of the most fascinating feasts of the Lord. It begins the evening of May 27 this year. The more we study it, the more interesting it becomes. *Shavuot* is a many-faceted feast. It is the conclusion of Passover, the *atzeret*, showing us that although God's people were redeemed at the Exodus, they were not truly free until they received the Law of God. Freedom without rules is anarchy.

Shavuot is the Anniversary of the Revelation at Mount Sinai, the Feast of the Giving of the Law (*Z'man Matan Torateinu*) with a special countdown (the omer) to the feast from the anniversary of the departure from Egypt. It is said that the days are counted in the same way that one who is expecting his most intimate friend counts the days until they are together. The ten commandments are read in synagogues around the world and studied in all night vigils called *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*.

Shavuot is an agricultural festival, the Feast of Firstfruits, commemorating the time when the firstfruits of the seven species of fruits and grains (Deuteronomy 8:8) were brought to the Temple in Jerusalem. It is a harvest festival in which the Book of Ruth is read, the story of a Moabitess who forsook idolatry, embraced the Covenant of Sinai, and became the ancestress of King David (and of Yeshua, the Messiah)! *Shavuot* is also believed to be the anniversary of both the birth and death of King David.

Shavuot is considered the Anniversary of God giving His people their ketubah or marriage contract. Sephardic Jewish communities often read a *ketubah le-Shavuot* prior to the Torah reading of the holiday, in which the Torah is the symbolic bride and Israel is the bridegroom. God, as the bride's father, gives as dowry the 613 commandments, the Bible, Talmud, and other sacred writings. In the **Shavuot Anthology** by Philip Goodman, an account of a symbolic marriage ceremony is given. This one occurred in Gibraltar:

"In front of the ark burn bridal torches, surrounded with bouquets. The Scrolls of the Law are decked in white vestments, like a bride. When the ark is opened, special hymns are sung. And then comes the climax. The reader unrolls a parchment, illuminated in color as all ketubot (marriage contracts) should be; from it he reads, in the characteristic chant reserved for such occasions, the contract of marriage. Its form is exactly the same as that which serves on all similar occasions _ though with a few poetic embellishments. `And this bride, the holy Torah, was willing and became his wife, engraven on the tablet of his heart; and he placed the crown of sovereignty on her head.' "

Finally, *Shavuot* is a prophetic picture of two people becoming one: Jews and Gentiles. This is first seen in the two leavened loaves waved before the Lord at Shavuot. It is also evident in the Book of Ruth where both Jews and non-Jews worship the God of Israel together. Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer in the Book of Ruth, is a type of Messiah, our kinsman-redeemer in whom two become one.

SHAVUOT: A NEW REVELATION: 120

Each year the Lord gives us new insights about the feasts. As we studied this year, Yeshua quickened to us the significance of the number 120 as it relates to *Shavuot*. We found the following statement in **The Glory of the Jewish Holidays** by Hillel Seidman: "The Ten Commandments, proclaimed in that Revelation are considered the 120 most important words in the Bible as they constitute not only the foundation of Jewish ethics, but the basic moral code for all mankind." God gave **120** life changing Hebrew words and "all the people **answered as one** saying, `All that the Lord has spoken we will do.' " (Exodus 19:8) Approximately 1,500 years later, **120** disciples gathered in an upper room of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Bible tells us that they too were in **one accord** (Acts 1:14-15) when God sent His life changing Spirit. The number 120 is considered the Biblical number that signifies the end of all flesh, the beginning of life in the Spirit. God said in Gen. 6:3 that man's days would be 120 years. A much used blessing in Israel today calls upon the Lord to grant the one being blessed 120 years of life! Moses was **120** years old when he died (Deuteronomy 31:2, 34:7). Perhaps most interesting of all is a final connection between 120 and God's people being in one accord. We read in II Chronicles 5:13-14 that **120** priests sounding trumpets joined the Levites who were singing at the dedication of Solomon's Temple:

"It came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: `For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,' that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God."

The number 120 plus unity of God's people results in life in the Spirit and God's presence and glory being manifested.

What might this mean for us today? A congregation, a group of 120 people who agree to let God be God, seek His face, put Him first above all else, can see the Glory of God! That's good news for small congregations!

A final thought on 120: When the Queen of Sheba came to visit King Solomon she gave him among other things 120 talents of gold as a gift. I Kings 10 seems to indicate that the Queen of Sheba and Solomon were

in one accord and the Queen gave glory to the God of Israel during a visit with him. Could she have had a spiritual beginning at that time? We read in I Kings 10:13 that King Solomon gave her "*all her desire, whatsoever she asked....*"

She gave 120 _ King Solomon gave her whatever she asked _ "A greater than Solomon is here!" (Pray about a \$120 gift for God's kingdom. You can't outgive Him!!!)

NEXT SHAVUOT IN ISRAEL

Plan now to join us in May 2002 as we, like pilgrims of old, go up to Jerusalem to experience a revelation of God and to obtain spiritual elevation! We are planning a very special trip with many "firsts" as well as the "must see" sights in the Holy Land. The theme of the tour will be "From the Giving of the Law to the Giving of the Spirit." We are believing God for a peaceful time, a fruitful time, a time of spiritual harvest, a time of precious gleaning, a time of great bonding between Jew and non-Jew, and a time of great blessing for all those with hearts like Ruth. Dr. Randy Smith will be our teacher and guide. Begin now to pray for Randy and all aspects of this journey of a lifetime.

GOD INCREASES JEWISH JEWELS

Our office staff has been cramped in a "too small space" for a couple of years. We hesitated to move due to increased rent costs. A nearby space in the same shopping center was available that would almost double our present space. We sensed God saying: "Take it." The day we stepped out in faith and said "Yes," a ministry partner called to tell us she had been praying the prayer of Jabez (I Chronicles 4:10) for *Jewish Jewels*.

Come see us at our new location, 7290 West Oakland Park Blvd. whenever you're in the area. Visit the Jewish Jewels gift shop, meet our great staff and be blessed to see what the Lord is doing in our midst.

