

Pentecost ... 2024

The Day of Pentecost is celebrated fifty days from the wave sheaf day—hence the terms “Feast of Weeks” in the Old Testament and “Pentecost” (Greek for “fiftieth”) in the New. It is the “birthday” of the Church of God, commemorating the sending of the Holy Spirit; and foreshadows the resurrection of the “firstfruits.” Jesus Christ, the apostles, and the New Testament Church continued the practice of observing this ancient festival of God.

The Feast of Weeks

Lev 23:15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

Lev 23:16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

Lev 23:17 You shall bring from your dwellings **two wave loaves** of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

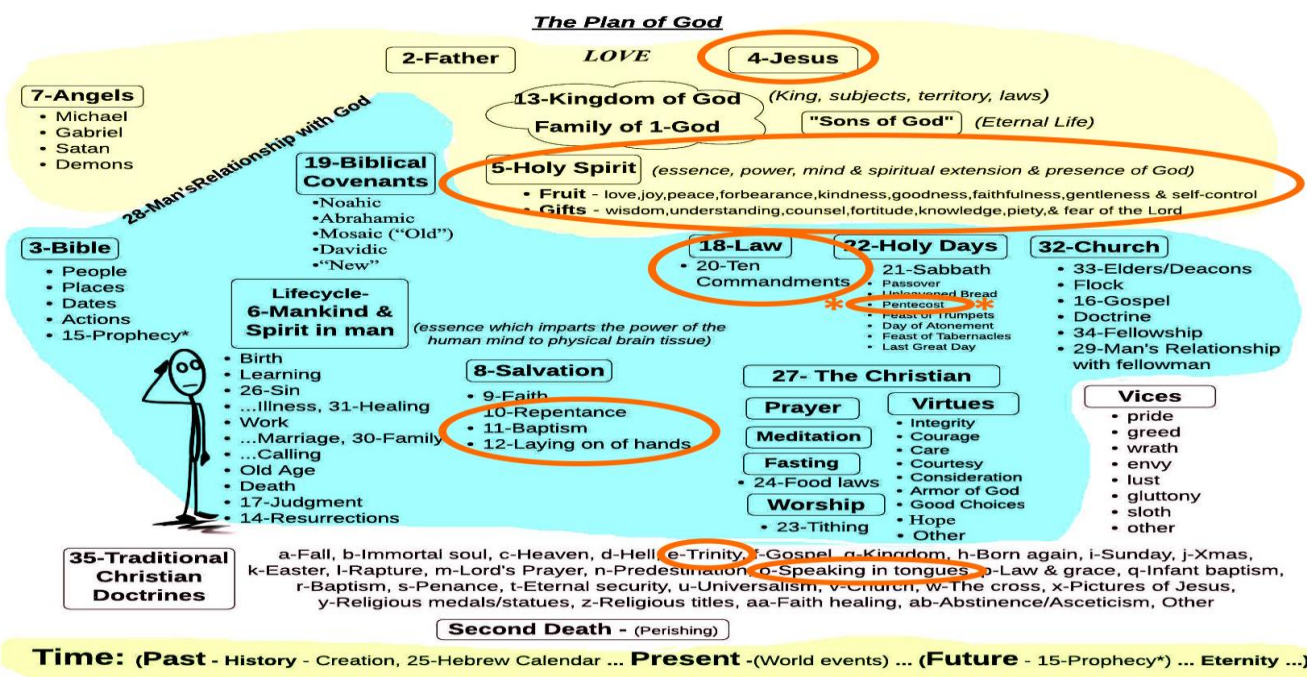
Lev 23:18 And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.

Lev 23:19 Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

Lev 23:20 The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

Lev 23:21 And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

Lev 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.' "



Luk 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.
Luk 24:46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,
Luk 24:47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
Luk 24:48 And you are witnesses of these things.
Luk 24:49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry (*wait, remain*) in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Act 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
Act 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
Act 2:3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.
Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.



Act 2:5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.
Act 2:6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.
Act 2:7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?
Act 2:8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language

in which we were born?

Act 2:9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
Act 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,
Act 2:11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."
Act 2:12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"
Act 2:13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

Peter's Sermon at Pentecost

Act 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.
Act 2:15 For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.
Act 2:16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:
Act 2:17 'AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, SAYS GOD, THAT I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH; YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.
Act 2:18 AND ON MY MENSERVANTS AND ON MY MAIDSERVANTS I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS; AND THEY SHALL PROPHECY.

Act 2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Act 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

A Dozen Pentecost Topics of Interest

1. Old Testament meaning to Israel ... **Feast of Weeks** (Ex 34:22) was a **thanksgiving festival** that signified the **seven weeks of the spring harvest**. Also called the **Feast of Harvest** (Ex 23:16) & **Day of Firstfruits** (Num 28:26). It reminded Israel about the Covenant, and the promises God promised if they diligently obey His commandments. (Lev 26, Deu 28 - Blessings & Cursings)

2. New Testament meaning ... **Jesus** is the first of the Firstfruits (the freshly cut sheaf of barley grain waved on the Sunday by the priest during the days of Unleavened bread Lev 23:10-11). Jesus is risen from the dead to become the firstfruits of those who have died ("fallen asleep") 1Cor 15:20-23

The **two loaves** (baked with leaven) we read about in Leviticus 23:17 cover the two periods of the Old Testament and the New Testament Church. "Church" has been translated from the Greek word *ecclesia*, which means the "called-out ones." Today we like to use the term "covenant community". **1Jn 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.



The 7 weeks of harvest remind us of the ongoing harvest of lives for the Kingdom of God - the work of gathering the firstfruits. ***Is it a giant group??***

Luk_12:32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom

Mat_7:14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Mat_22:14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

For us, the Feast of Weeks - or Day of Pentecost - is both:

- A memorial of the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) &
- An encouraging reminder of our responsibility to "**live** in the Spirit" (Gal 5:25), **walk** in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), be "led by the Spirit" (Gal 5:18), produce the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22-23), & "quench not the Spirit" (1Thes 5:19, KJV)

3. Did the New Testament Church **continue** to keep Pentecost after the Spirit was given?

Act 20:16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of **Pentecost**

1Cor 16:8 But I will tarry in Ephesus until **Pentecost**.

4. Should Pentecost be observed on the fixed calendar date of Sivan 6? Or, should it be observed on a Sunday?

Cgi has a *technical* booklet titled Should We Observe Pentecost on Sivan 6? by Vance Stinson which explains (at the time of Jesus) there were at least 4 ways that religious groups were calculating *when* to keep Pentecost. The controversy has to do with:

Lev 23:15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the **Sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.
 Lev 23:16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

Nisan 14	Nisan 15	Nisan 16	Nisan 17	Nisan 18	Nisan 19	Nisan 20	Nisan 21
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Passover	Annual Sabbath (Unleavened Bread)			Regular Weekly Sabbath			Annual Sabbath (Unleavened Bread)
	+ 50 days = Sivan 6			+ 50 days = a Sunday between Sivan 6-13			+ 50 days = Sivan 13

Which Sabbath to start the count for 7 weeks?

The Jews today pick this option
 So their Pentecost was Tuesday
 May 11-13

The Church of God chooses this option,
 So Pentecost always on a Sunday

Other Holy days are *exactly specified* with a calendar date (eg Passover is Nisan 14) **Not so with Pentecost** ... Because the weekly Saturday Sabbath (where we start the count) could fall anywhere from Nisan 15-21 ... Hence, the date of Pentecost needs to be counted (as it would occur between Sivan 6 - 13)

One last *technical decision* was to determine if we should count “inclusively or exclusively” ... So ... for a time (until 1974) the Church of God kept Pentecost on **Monday** ... until we came to understand to count the starting Sabbath as Day 1 (& not Day 0) ie “from the day after the **Sabbath**” ... From a Sunday to a Sunday = 50 days.

5. The Jews have a **historical tradition** that is not explicitly discussed or confirmed in the Bible ... saying it was on Pentecost that God gave the nation of Israel the Law on Mount Sinai

Eze 11:19-20 Then I will give them one heart, & I will put a **new spirit** within them, & take the stony heart out of their flesh, & give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My **statutes** & keep My **judgments** & do them; & they shall be My people, & I will be their God.

Eze 36:26-27 I will give you a new heart & put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh & give you a heart of flesh. I will put **My Spirit** within you & **cause you** to walk in My **statutes**, & you will keep My **judgments** & do them.

6. Benefits of the Holy Spirit

The Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)



The “Catholic list” of Fruit adds ... **GENEROSITY**
MODESTY
CHASTITY

9 Gifts of Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Word of wisdom

Word of knowledge

Faith

Gifts of healing

Working of miracles

Prophecy

Discerning of spirits

Divers kind of tongues

Interpretation of tongues

PROPHECYING

SERVING

TEACHING

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

ENCOURAGING

ROMANS 12:6-8

GIVING

LEADING

SHOWING MERCY

7. Do we need to *prove* our receiving the Holy Spirit via speaking in tongues?

Speaking in tongues is a supernatural gift that God has given at times during the history of the Church to further the growth and development of His work. It is neither a guarantee nor a proof of conversion. It was certainly never intended to be used to try to show spiritual superiority... nor was it meant to be practiced at all times by all believers as a proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

1Co 14:32-33 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Modern manifestations ...including speaking gibberish, “**holy laughter**” (getting drunk in the Spirit), or “Holy Spirit glue” are not orderly, not scriptural & not done in the Church of God.



We have scriptures like Acts 19:11 (Sons of Sceva) to show us that “taking it upon ourselves” to cast out demons -- is tempting God & a **WRONG** understanding of how Spiritual gifts work

8. Are there requirements to being given the Holy Spirit?

Act 5:32 And we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also *is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to **those who obey Him.**"

(NLV) We have seen these things and are telling about them. The Holy Spirit makes these things known also. God gives His Spirit to those who obey Him.'

(NCV) We saw all these things happen. The Holy Spirit, whom God has given to all who obey him, also proves these things are true."

Act 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent,** & let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; & you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

Luk 11:11-13 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who **ask** Him!"

9. Why did Jesus have to go... to send the Holy Spirit?

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Joh 7:37-39 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke

concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, **because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

For mankind to have the Holy Spirit of the Father & of Christ “indwelling” us ... Jesus had to live a sinless life, be crucified, buried & resurrected and ascend to the Father to be glorified. THEN ... mankind had a path... an atonement & forgiveness for our sin ... So that the power of God, the indwelling of the Father & Son via the Holy Spirit could happen -- and it started at Pentecost

Joh 14:11-12 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, **because I go to My Father.**

Joh 17:20-22 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one

10. How do we know we have the Holy Spirit?

- We have done the prerequisites (repent, baptism, Laying on of hands)
- We are inspired as God works with us
Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
(Inspiration happens)
- We bear fruit in our lives
Mat 7:17-18 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.
Mat 7:20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

11. How do we grow the Holy Spirit?

2Tim 1:6 Therefore I remind you to **stir up** the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

The “Big 4” Spiritual Disciplines



12. How is Pentecost related to the *next* Holy Day ... the Feast of Trumpets?

Quoting from ... our STP (Systematic Theology Project) statement of church doctrines ...

- **Just as Pentecost marked the spring or first harvest, so Pentecost symbolizes the first small harvest of individuals through God's Church.**
- &
- **The Day of Trumpets also symbolizes the resurrection of all who died in Christ and the "change" of all who will be living in Christ.**

So... the Cgi (& Church of God) understanding is that the spring harvest of Pentecost "forshadows" the *actual event* of the return of Christ & the resurrection of the saints that occurs at the Feast of Trumpets. In this understanding it is correct to see "overlap" (not contradiction) in the symbolism of Pentecost & Trumpets in the work (harvesting) & reward (resurrection) of the firstfruits.



SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- DOVE (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22)
- WATER (John 7:37-39; Titus 3:5)
- OIL (Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 1:9)
- FIRE (Acts 2:3)
 - Presence of God (Exodus 3:1ff)
 - Power of God (1 Kings 18:38-39)
 - Protection of God (Exodus 13:21)
 - Purging judgment of God (Hebrews 12:29)
- SEAL (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30)
- PLEDGE (Ephesians 1:14; 2 Corinthians 1:22)