

# Feast of Weeks

or

## Pentecost

Blow Trumpets  
Songs  
Opening Prayer

### Morning Service

This Great Day Sabbath celebrates the power and glory of God's Holy Spirit. It reminds us of our need to have God's Spirit dwelling in us, enabling us to know and to please God.

The Feast of Weeks (Deu 16:10) is also called the Feast of Harvest (Exo 23:16) and the Day of First-fruits (Num 28:26) in the Old Covenant Scriptures. In the Greek New Covenant it is called *Pentekoste* and the Aramaic Peshitta uses *Pentaqostia*. Pentecost is Greek for Fiftieth, referring to the seven weekly Sabbaths plus a day from the Wave Offering to Pentecost, making fifty days. Pentecost's link back to the Wave Offering makes this a Holy Day that has a close connection with Passover and Unleavened Bread. In contrast, there is a long delay between these Holy Days and the Autumn Holy Days, which suggests there may be a substantial delay before they will be fulfilled.

The Feast of Weeks coincides with the wheat harvest in Israel. For this Feast, Jehovah God instructs the Israelites to make two leavened loaves of bread. This leaven represents the spreading of God's Truth. The two loaves signify that this is a much larger harvest than the single sheaf of the First-fruit. It has been suggested

that one loaf represents the Israelites and the other loaf the redeemed Gentiles.

Israelite tradition says that it was on the Feast of Weeks that Jehovah God spoke the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, thus linking this Great Day with obedience to God's Instructions. Though the Bible does not specifically state that, it is almost certainly true. Here is the beginning of that account: (Exodus 19:1 to 20:19)

In the third new moon after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai.

Then Jehovah said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day Jehovah will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. You will set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death. Not a hand will touch him, but he will surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he will not live.' When the jubilee sounds long, they will come near the mountain."

Then Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near your wives."

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the shophar<sup>1</sup> was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the

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<sup>1</sup> This is a ram's horn that has been made into a musical horn.

mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.

And when the blast of the shophar sounded long and became loud and then louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then Jehovah came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

And Jehovah said to Moses, “Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at Jehovah, and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near Jehovah consecrate themselves, lest Jehovah break out against them.”

And Moses said to Jehovah, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, ‘Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it.’”

Then Jehovah said to him, “Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Jehovah, lest He break out against them.” So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

And God spoke all these words, saying:

“I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You will have no other gods before Me.

“You will not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You will not bow down to them nor serve them, for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing

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mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

“You will not lift up the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way, for Jehovah will not leave anyone who lifts up His name in a worthless way unpunished.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you will labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah your God. You will do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your livestock, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

“Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which Jehovah your God is giving you.

“You will not murder.

“You will not commit adultery.

“You will not steal.

“You will not testify a false witness against your neighbour.

“You will not covet your neighbour’s house; you will not covet your neighbour’s wife, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour’s.”

And all the people observed the thunderings, the flashes of lightning, the sound of the shophar, and the mountain smoking; and the people saw it, they trembled and they stood a long way off. Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but do not let God speak with us, lest we die.” Exodus 19:1 to 20:19

And so it is that Jehovah, our God, personally spoke to all of the people and told them the ten basics of His Instructions for mankind. Jehovah also commanded us to keep His Feasts: (Exodus 23:14-17)

“Three times you will celebrate unto Me in the year: You will keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You will eat unleavened bread for seven days, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the new moon of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. No one will appear before Me empty. And keep the Feast of Harvest, the first-fruits of your labours which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labours from the field. Three times in the year all your males will appear before Lord Jehovah.

Jehovah never gave us a new set of Holy Days to replace these ones. His only addition to them, given through His Son Jeshua, is the Last Supper. The instruction to bring an offering to Jehovah in verse 15 above is repeated in Deut 16:16-17, where it is applied to all three of these Holy Days. This is why we take a collection at this Holy Day, to be used in a way that will glorify God.

[Pause to take the collection and discuss and pray about how it will be used.]

In Leviticus, God tells us how He required Israel to observe the Feast of Weeks: (Leviticus 23:14-22)

‘You will eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it will be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

‘And you will count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of

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the wave offering: seven Sabbaths will be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you will offer a new grain offering to Jehovah. You will bring from your habitations two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They will be of fine flour; they will be baked with leaven. They are the first-fruits to Jehovah.

‘And you will offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They will be as a burnt offering to Jehovah, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to Jehovah. Then you will sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and sacrifice two male lambs of the first year as a peace offering. The priest will wave them with the bread of the first-fruits as a wave offering before Jehovah, with the two lambs. They will be holy to Jehovah for the priest.

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

‘When you reap the harvest of your land, you will not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor will you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You will leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am Jehovah your God.’”

We observe much of the above, but the animal sacrifices are no longer required, as the sin offerings were performed to foreshadow the sacrifice of Jeshua for sin, and the other offerings require a priesthood and consecrated altar which was destroyed in 70 AD. So now we will offer the two Loaves, representing two aspects of God’s Harvest, the Israelites and the Gentiles.

[Offer up the two loaves of leavened Bread and pray for Jah's blessing upon it.]

On Pentecost, in 31 CE, Jeshua sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples, thus launching a new era for His followers that will continue until He returns. Similar to Jehovah descending onto Mt. Sinai in fire, the Holy spirit descended in tongues of fire. This event is recorded for us in the Book of Acts: (Acts 2:1 to 2:43)

And when the days to Pentecost<sup>2</sup> were fulfilled, they were all assembled as one. And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, like a mighty wind, and the whole house in which they were sitting was filled by it. And there appeared to them tongues like fire that divided, and they sat on each one of them. And all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and they proceeded to speak in languages, whatever language the Spirit gave them to speak.

There were men dwelling in Jerusalem then who feared God, Jews from all nations under heaven. And when that noise occurred, the entire populace gathered and was agitated, because everyone heard them speaking in their own languages. Then they were all astonished and marvelled, and they were saying, each to the other, "Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? So how are we hearing, everyone in his language in which we were born? Parthians, Medes and Elamites,

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<sup>2</sup> From the Greek for "fiftieth", referring to the seven weeks and a day from the Wave Offering until this feast day. Known as the Feast of Weeks (Exo 34:22, Deu 16:10, 2Ch 8:13), Feast of Harvest (Exo 23:16) and Day of First-Fruits (Lev 23:15-22, Num 28:26) in the Old Covenant. As the count of days leading to Pentecost has been fulfilled, this day is Pentecost. The Peshitta uses *Pentaqostia*, an Aramaic transliteration of Pentecost in this verse, Acts 20:16 and 1Cor 16:8, thus acknowledging the spread of Christianity into Greek speaking regions by the time Acts was written.

and those dwelling between the Rivers,<sup>3</sup> Judeans and Cappadocians, and those who are from the regions of Pontus and Asia, and from the regions of the Phrygians and Pamphylia, and of Egypt and of the regions of Libya which are near Cyrene, and those who came from Rome; Jews and proselytes, and those from Crete and Arabia. Behold, we are hearing some of them speaking in our own languages of the wonders of God.” So they were all astonished and bewildered as they were saying one to another, “What is occurring?”

But others were mocking them and they were saying, “They have drunk new wine and have become drunk.”

Then Simon Peter arose with the eleven apostles, and he lifted up his voice and said to them, “Men, Jews and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. For these are not drunk, as you are thinking, for behold, it is only the third hour now.<sup>4</sup> Instead, this is what was spoken by Joel the prophet: ‘It will be done in the last days, says God. I will pour out My Spirit on everyone. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions and your elders will dream dreams. And upon My menservants and upon My maidservants I will pour My Spirit in those days; and they will prophesy. And I will give signs in the heavens and mighty deeds on the earth: blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, until the great and awesome day of Jehovah comes. And it will be that everyone who calls on the Name of Jehovah will receive life.’<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Aramaic is *Bayth-Nahrayn*, meaning the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

<sup>4</sup> That is, about nine AM, or three hours after sunrise.

<sup>5</sup> Joel 2:28-32; the Peshitta uses “the Lord Jah” in place of Jehovah both times.

“Men, descendants of Israel, hear these words: Jeshua the Nazarene, the Man from God who appeared to you with miracles and signs and mighty deeds, which God did among you by his hand, as you know. This One, who was separated to Him for this, by the prior knowledge and will of God, you have betrayed into the hands of the wicked and you have impaled and you have murdered Him. But God raised Him up, and He released the cords of Sheol, because it was not possible for Him to be held captive in Sheol. For David said about Him: ‘I see Jehovah<sup>6</sup> always before me, who is at my right hand, that I should not be shaken; therefore my heart rejoices, and my glory celebrates; and my body will also rest in hope, because You will not leave my soul in Sheol, and You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.’<sup>7</sup> You have shown the ways of life to me; you will fill me with joy with Your presence.’<sup>8</sup>

“Men and brethren, it is permitted to speak boldly<sup>9</sup> to you of the patriarch David, who died and he was also buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. For he was a prophet and he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that “One from the fruit of your body I will seat on your throne.”<sup>10</sup> And foreseeing this, He spoke about the resurrection of the Messiah, that He would not be left in

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<sup>6</sup> As in Psalm 16:8; the Peshitta uses “My Lord”.

<sup>7</sup> Unlike the Greek underworld, from the Biblical viewpoint Sheol was simply where all of the dead slept in death awaiting resurrection (ie- their grave). It also appears from this passage, and vs 31, that Jehovah divinely prevented Jeshua’s body from deteriorating while he was in the grave for the three days and nights, as a sign of respect for His Son who did not deserve to die.

<sup>8</sup> Psalm 16:8-11

<sup>9</sup> The Aramaic is literally “*with open eyes*”, an idiom that means boldly, and implies openly and truthfully.

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 132:11

Sheol, nor would His body see corruption.<sup>11</sup> God has raised up this Jeshua, and all of us are His witnesses. And He is the One exalted at the right hand of God, and He has received from the Father a promise about the Holy Spirit, and He has poured out this gift, which behold, you are seeing and you are hearing.

“For David has not ascended into heaven, but he says: ‘Jehovah said to my Lord, “You sit at My right, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”<sup>12</sup> “Therefore let the whole house of Israel know truly that Lord Jah has made this Jeshua, whom you impaled, God and the Messiah.”<sup>13</sup>

And when they heard these things, they were stricken in their hearts, and they said to Simon and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what should we do?”

And Simon said to them, “Repent, and every one of you be immersed in the Name of Lord Jah,<sup>14</sup> Jeshua, for the release from sins so you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are far off, to them who God calls.” And with many other words he testified to them and he beseeched them, as he said, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

And among the people were those who readily received his word, and they believed and were immersed; and in that day about three thousand souls were added. And they continued in the apostles’ teaching, and they were partakers in prayer and in the breaking of the eucharist.<sup>15</sup> Then fear came upon every soul, and many

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<sup>11</sup> Psa 16:10

<sup>12</sup> Psalm 110:1, the Peshitta renders this as ‘Lord Jah’.

<sup>13</sup> Num 21:7-9

<sup>14</sup> As in the Peshitta. Here Peter joins the names of Jah and Jeshua together, showing that Jeshua can also be referred to as Lord Jah.

signs and miracles occurred by the hands of the apostles in Jerusalem. Acts 2:1 to 2:43

The Holy Spirit is given to those who believe in Jeshua: (Acts 5:31-32)

“God has appointed Him to be Prince and Saviour and has exalted Him at His right hand, and so gives repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. And we are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Spirit whom God gives to those who are believing in Him.”

**Break for Eucharist** (Thanksgiving) of Bread and Wine as Jeshua established at the Last Supper: (Matthew 26:26-29)

And as they were eating, Jeshua took bread, and blessed and broke it, and He gave it to His disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And He took a cup, and He gave thanks, and He gave it to them, and He said, “Take, drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed in exchange for the many for their release from sins.<sup>16</sup> And I say to you, I will not drink of this product of the vine from this hour until that day when I will drink it with you anew in the Kingdom of My Father.”

Let us meditate upon these things and our readiness for taking the Bread and the Wine.

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<sup>15</sup> The Peshitta has *Eukharestyā* אַחְרֵי־הַכֶּזֶב here. *Eukharestyā* is from the Greek and originally simply means thanksgiving or gratitude. As this thanksgiving was being broken, it seems to be referring to unleavened bread, taken in remembrance of the Last Supper. The Greek manuscripts just say bread in this verse.

<sup>16</sup> 1Co 10:16

[Quiet time for personal reflection and prayer.]

Now we will take the Bread and then the Wine according to Luke 22:19 and 20 [—using unleavened bread and red wine (or red grape juice).]

And He took bread, and He gave thanks and He broke it and He gave it to them. And He said “This is My body which will be given for your sakes; you will do this for My memorial.”

[Rise up and offer the unleavened bread to Jehovah and give thanks for it, using Jeshua’s words above. Then break the unleavened bread into pieces and pass them around. Wait for everyone to receive their bread and eat it.]

Then He also took the cup after they had dined. He said “This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which will be shed for your sakes.

[Rise up and offer the wine to Jehovah and give thanks for it, using Jeshua’s words above. Then pour the wine into glasses and pass them around. Wait for everyone to receive their wine and drink it. Then thank Jeshua for offering us His body and blood for our healing, our salvation and our life, both for now and for everlasting life.]

**Break for Lunch**, including the offered loaves of bread.

## Afternoon Service

God teaches us that Jeshua is the First-fruit, then we become the First-Fruits, the next step in the Harvest: (1 Corinthians 15:19-23)

If it is only in this life that we hope in the Anointed, so it is that we are more wretched than all the children of men. But now the Messiah is risen from the place of the dead, and has become the First-fruit of those who sleep. For since by a man came death, also in this way by a man came the resurrection of the dead.

For just as by Adam all the children of men die, also in this way by the Anointed all of them will live. But each person in his order: the First-fruit was Messiah, afterwards those who are the Messiah's at His Coming.

This last reference to those who are the Messiah's at His Coming also includes the 144,000 who are sealed with the Holy Spirit during the Great Tribulation, as can be seen in Revelation 7. It is quite possible that this sealing occurs on a Pentecost. It is also likely that Christ will return as King of Kings and raise us from the dead and transform us on the last Feast of Weeks near the end of the Tribulation. But what must we be to be a true disciple of Jeshua?

The apostle Paul explains more about the First-fruits in Romans 8:1 to 39:

Therefore there is no condemnation to those who are not walking in the flesh, but in the Anointed Jeshua. For the Instruction of the Spirit of Life in the Messiah Jeshua has freed you from the Instruction of sin and of death. For the Instructions were weak because of the infirmity of the flesh. God sent His Son in the form of sinful flesh, because of sin, to condemn sin in His flesh, that the righteousness of the Instructions would be fulfilled in us,

that we would not walk in the flesh but in the Spirit. For those who are in the flesh are governed by that flesh and those who are of the Spirit are governed by that Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death, and the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. Because the mind of the flesh is enmity towards God, it is not subject to the Instructions of God, for that is impossible. And those who live in the flesh are not able to please God.

But though you were in the flesh, now you are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God truly dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of the Anointed in him, this one does not belong to Him. And if the Anointed is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised our Anointed Lord Jeshua from the house of the dead dwells in you, He who raised Jeshua the Messiah from the house of the dead, He will also give life to your dead bodies because of His Spirit who dwells in you.

Therefore, my brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, that we should walk in the flesh. For if you live in the flesh you are going to die; but if in the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you are living. For those who are led by the Spirit of God, these are the children of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as children, by whom we cry out, "Aba, our Father." And that Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, also heirs. Heirs of God and children inheriting with Jeshua the Anointed, for if we suffer with Him, we will also be glorified with Him.

For I conclude that the sufferings of this present time are not comparable to the glory which will be revealed in us. For the entire creation hopes for and expects the revelation of the Children of God. For the creation was

subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because that creation will also be set free from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the Children of God. For we know that all created things groan and are in labour until today. And not only them, but also we who have the first-fruits of the Spirit in us. We groan in ourselves and we look for the adoption as children and the redemption of our bodies.

For we live in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for if we see it, why would we still be looking for it? But if we hope for something we do not see, then we wait with perseverance. In this way the Spirit also helps us in our weaknesses. For we do not know what is necessary for us to pray for, but the Spirit prays for us with groanings which cannot be spoken.

Now He who searches the hearts, He knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He is praying for the sake of the saints according to the will of God. And we know for those who love God; He helps them who He knew before, called and ordained in everything for their good. For whom He knew before, He also shaped them in the likeness of the image of His Son, that He would be the firstborn of many brethren. Moreover, those whom He shaped before, He also called them; and those whom He called, He justified them; and those whom He justified, He glorified them.

Therefore, what will we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? And if He did not spare His own Son, but He delivered Him over for the sake of all of us, how will He not give us everything with Him?

Who will bring accusations against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is condemning? The Messiah has died, and He is risen, and He is at the right hand of God, and He prays for our sake. What can separate me

from the love of the Anointed? Will suffering, or imprisonment, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed every day and we are counted as sheep for slaughter."

Yet in all these things we are conquerors through Him who loves us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor envoys nor authorities nor armies, nor what is present nor what will come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate me from the love of God which is in our Lord Jeshua the Messiah. Romans 8:1-39

We are chosen by Jehovah God to be First-fruits with our Messiah, but we must walk the walk, not just talk the walk (From Jacob, aka James 1:16-27):

Do not be led astray, my beloved brethren. Every good and every perfect gift descends from above, from the Father of light, with whom there is no change, not even a shadow of variation. He was willing and He gave birth to us by the word of truth, that we would be the first-fruits of His creation.

And you, my beloved brethren, let every one of you be swift to hear and slow to speak and slow to become angry; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away from you all abominations and the multitude of evils, and accept in humility the Word which is planted in our nature, which is able to save your souls.

But be a doer of the Word, and not a hearer only, and do not deceive yourselves. For if a person is a hearer of the Word and not its doer, this one is like a man who sees his face in a mirror; for he sees himself and goes away and forgets how he was. But everyone who gazes into

the perfect Instruction of Liberty and continues in it is not a hearer who has forgotten what he heard, but a doer of the works, and this one will be blessed in his work.

If anyone thinks that he serves God, and does not hold his tongue but deceives his own heart, his service is worthless. For pure and holy service before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, and for a man to keep his soul without defilement from the world.

This Day also reminds us of our extraordinary place with our Messiah: (John 15:4-19)

“Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot yield fruit from itself, unless it remains in the vine, neither can you, unless you remain in Me. I AM! I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in Me, and I in him, this one brings forth much fruit; because without Me you are not able to do anything. For unless a person remains in Me, he is cast out like a withered branch; and they gather and throw them into the fire to burn. But if you remain in Me, and My words remain in you, you may ask whatever you desire; it will be done for you. In this My Father is glorified, that you yield much fruit; and you will be My disciples.

“Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; remain in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and remain in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be perfect.

“This is My commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this, that a person will lay down his soul for the sake of

his friends. You are My friends if you will do everything that I command you.

“After this, I do not call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master does; but I have called you My friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have taught to you. You have not chosen Me, but I chose you and I have appointed you that you should also go and yield fruit, and your fruit will remain, so all that you ask My Father in My Name He will give to you.

“These things I command you, that you will love one another. And if the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you. And if you were from the world, the world would have loved its own. But you are not from the world, for I have chosen you from the world. Because of this, the world hates you. John 15:4-19

It cannot be more intimate than this: Jeshua lives within us, and allows us to live within Him. It is no wonder that we must love each other, and that the world hates us.

And it is likely that there is yet a future event to be fulfilled on the Feast of First-fruits: Jeshua may return on the last Pentecost during the Great Tribulation to claim control of earth and to resurrect and transform his disciples. Jeshua also gives us some insight into the times leading up to His Return in Matthew 24:3-39:

And while Jeshua sat on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came and said to Him, among themselves, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what is the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?”

Jeshua answered and said to them: “Beware! Let no one deceive you. For many will come in My Name, and they will say “I AM! I am the Anointed,<sup>17</sup> and they will

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<sup>17</sup> Literally, “I am Messiah” from the Aramaic, meaning they are claiming to be the Anointed Son of God. Also see Jer 29:8.

deceive many. And you are certain to hear of revolutions and rumours of wars. Be careful, but do not be troubled; for it is necessary that all these things happen, but it is not the end yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines and plagues and earthquakes in different places.<sup>18</sup> All of these things are the beginning of sorrows.

“Then they will deliver you over to tribulation and they will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My Name. Then many will stumble and will hate one another and will betray one another. And many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because of the growth of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold. But whoever endures patiently to the end will have life.

“And this Good News of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

“And when you see the sign of uncleanness and desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (let he who reads this understand),<sup>19</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And he who is on the housetop, do not let him come down to take that which is in his house. And he who is in the field, do not let him go back to get his clothes. And woe to the pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight will not be in winter nor on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, nor will ever be again.<sup>20</sup> And if those days

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<sup>18</sup> Psa 18:1-13, Rev 6:12

<sup>19</sup> Dan 9:27, Dan 11:31 and Dan 12:11

<sup>20</sup> 2Pe 3:12, Rev 7:14, Rev 16:18

had not been limited, none in the flesh would live; but because of the chosen those days will be limited.<sup>21</sup>

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look! Here is the Anointed!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. For false Messiahs and lying prophets will arise and they will produce signs and great wonders in order to deceive, if possible, even the chosen. Behold, I have told you beforehand. Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner room!’ do not believe it. For as the sunlight comes from the east and is seen even in the west, thus will the coming of the Son of Mankind be. Wherever the carcass may be, there the eagles will gather.

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and light will not shine from the moon; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Mankind will be seen in heaven, and then all the branches of the earth will mourn and will see the Son of Mankind coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His envoys with a great trumpet, and they will gather His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other end.<sup>22</sup>

“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branches become tender and it brings forth its leaves, you know that summer is arriving. So you also, when you have seen all these things, know that it is arriving at the door. Truly, I say to you, this branch will not pass away until all these things happen.<sup>23</sup> Heaven and earth may

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<sup>21</sup> Zec 12:1-14:16

<sup>22</sup> Dan 7:13, 1Th 4:13-18, Rev 14:12-16

<sup>23</sup> Based on Paul Younan’s ‘this branch’ in his Peshitta translation. It probably refers to the branch of Judah, which is still with us today. Alternatively, it is ‘this generation’ and probably refers to the generation which sees all of these end-time things happening and then sees Jeshua

pass away, but My word will not pass away. But which day and which hour no person knows, not even the envoys of heaven,<sup>24</sup> but My Father alone.

But as the days of Noah, so will the coming of the Son of Mankind be. For as they were before the Great Flood,<sup>25</sup> eating and drinking, and taking their women and giving them in marriage to men,<sup>26</sup> until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the Great Flood came and took them all, so also will the coming of the Son of Mankind be.<sup>27</sup> Matthew 24:3-39

So we need to watch, stay alert and keep obeying Jeshua. Like the Great Flood, Christ's Return will be a time of both death and joy, an ending and a new beginning.

Here are some precious details of our Messiah's Return: (1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:11)

But I want you to know, my brethren, that you should not be sorrowing for those who sleep like the rest of mankind who have no hope. For if we believe that Jeshua died and rose up, even so God will bring those who have fallen asleep in Jeshua with Him. For this we say to you by the word of our Lord, that we who have life which remains until the coming of our Lord will not

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return as King of Kings, not to the generation that was alive when He spoke to the Apostles. Jeshua is pointing out how rapidly all these things will happen once they begin.

<sup>24</sup> As in the Peshitta. The Greek inserts "nor the Son," here.

<sup>25</sup> From the Aramaic *tawphana* תַּוּפְחָנָא, meaning the Great Flood, and used exclusively throughout the Peshitta Old and New Covenants to refer to the world-wide Flood of Noah's day.

<sup>26</sup> As in the Peshitta: unclear, but probably means the women were being given in marriage.

<sup>27</sup> Gen 6:1 to 8:2

overtake those who are asleep. For our Lord, with a command and with the voice of the head envoy and with the blast of the trumpet of God, will descend from heaven. And those who died and are in the Messiah will rise first. And then we who remain and who have life, we will be carried away with them, as one in the clouds, to meet with our Lord in the air. And in this way we will always be with our Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words.<sup>28</sup>

But about the times and the seasons, my brethren, you do not need to be written to. For truly, you yourselves know that the Day of our Lord comes like a thief in the night. When they say there is peace and quiet, then from the silence, destruction will rise upon them, as labour pains upon a pregnant woman. And they will not escape. But you, my brethren, you are not in darkness, that this day, like a thief, should overtake you. For all of you are children of light and are children of the day and you are not children of the night nor children of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as the rest do, but let us be watchful and prudent.<sup>29</sup> For those who sleep are sleeping in the night, and those who drink are drunk in the night.

But we who are children of the day, let us be vigilant in our minds, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and let us take the helmet of the hope of Life.<sup>30</sup> For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation in our Anointed Lord Jeshua; He died for our sake, so if we are awake or if we sleep, we will live as one with Him. Therefore comfort one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing. 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:11

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<sup>28</sup> Mat 24:29-31, Rev 14:12-16

<sup>29</sup> Mat 24:35-44

<sup>30</sup> Isa 59:17, Eph 6:14

—Again, there is life or death, joy or pain. We must remain diligent and encourage each other.

God's Promise is wonderful: (Revelation 20:4-6)

And I saw seats, and they sat on them, and judgement was given to them and the souls of those who were cut off for the testimony of Jeshua and for the Word of God, and because these had not worshipped the beast nor its image, nor received the mark between their eyes or on their hands. They lived and reigned with Messiah for one thousand years. And this is the first resurrection.<sup>31</sup> Blessed and holy are they who have their part in the first resurrection, and over them the second death has no authority, for they will be priests of God and the Messiah, and they will reign with Him for one thousand years.

May we all strive to be in the First Resurrection!

Our Messiah's Return is a Day of Joy for Christians, alluded to in this account: (Matthew 21:6-9)

So the disciples went and did just as Jeshua had commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt and they laid their garments on the colt, and Jeshua rode on him. And a crowd of crowds spread their clothes on the road; but others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Then the crowds who went before Him and those who followed behind Him cried out, and they were saying: "Hosanna! The Son of David!"<sup>32</sup> 'Blessed is He who

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<sup>31</sup> Many Greek manuscripts begin this verse with "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished."

<sup>32</sup> Hosannah is an Aramaic word meaning 'Save Now'.

comes in the Name of Jehovah!’<sup>33</sup> Hosanna in the highest!”

This Day also leads into Jeshua’s Wedding Feast. We will be raised from the grave, transformed, and as His congregation, become the bride of our glorious Anointed Jeshua:

Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and worshippers of His Name.<sup>34</sup> All, the small with the great!” And I heard a sound like that of many crowds, and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying, “Hallelu Jah! For our Almighty God, Lord Jah<sup>35</sup> reigns! We rejoice and we celebrate and we give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His woman has prepared herself.” And to her it was granted to wear fine linen, pure and bright, for the fine linens are the uprightness of the saints.

Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”<sup>36</sup>

And I fell at his feet and I worshipped him. But he said to me, “No! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren, those who have the testimony of Jeshua. Worship God! For the testimony of Jeshua is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:5-10

Jeshua’s Wedding Feast is also referred to in this parable He gave to the Pharisees: (Matthew 21:42 to 22:14)

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<sup>33</sup> As in Psa 118:26 and Shem-Tob’s Hebrew Matthew. Lord Jah in the Peshitta.

<sup>34</sup> The Greek substitutes ‘*those who fear Him*’.

<sup>35</sup> As in the Peshitta.

<sup>36</sup> Mat 22:1-14, Mat 25:1-13

Jeshua said to them, “Have you ever read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This has come from Jehovah, and it is marvellous in our eyes’?<sup>37</sup> Because of this, I say to you that the Kingdom of God will be taken from you and will be given to a people who will produce fruit. And whoever falls on this stone will be shattered; and everyone on whom it falls, it will grind him like dust.”<sup>38</sup>

Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they knew that He had spoken against them. And they sought to seize Him, but they were afraid of the crowds, because they upheld Him as a prophet.

And Jeshua answered again in a parable and He said: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man, a king, who made a wedding feast for his son, and he sent out his servants to call those invited to the wedding feast; and they chose to not come. Again, he sent out other servants, and he said, ‘Tell those invited, “Behold, my banquet is ready, and my oxen and fatted cattle are sacrificed, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.’ But they showed contempt and they went, one to his field and one to his business. And the rest seized his servants and abused and killed them.

“But when the king heard, he was angry. And sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and he burned their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go to the ends of the roads, and everyone who you find, call them to the wedding feast.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered

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<sup>37</sup> As in Psalm 118:22-23, also indicated in the Peshitta and Shem-Tob’s Hebrew Matthew.

<sup>38</sup> The Sinaiticus Aramaic manuscripts omit this verse.

everyone whom they found, evil and good. And the wedding feast house was filled with guests.

“Then the king came in to see the guests, and he saw a person there who was not wearing a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘My friend, how did you come in here when you do not have a wedding garment?’ But he was speechless.

“Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind his hands and his feet, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, and few are chosen.”<sup>39</sup> Matthew 21:42 to 22:14

So we see that many are called, but few chosen. We must be obedient to receive. Isaiah 61:10 &11 explains that it was traditional for the host of the wedding feast to provide wedding garments for their guests. Thus the man without the garment refused to put on the covering offered by his host, which represents Jeshua’s sacrifice as our covering for our sins.

Christ’s return to Jerusalem will initiate Satan’s desperate attempt to convince the world’s leaders to send their armies to Israel so they can retain their power. While they are doing this, Jehovah will pour out his last Seven Plagues on the earth (Revelation 15:1 to 16:21). We will examine these things, and Christ’s war with Satan, on the Day of Shouting, God’s next Great Day.

Closing prayer

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<sup>39</sup> Rev 19:6-9

## **Feast of Weeks**

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Scripture quotes are from the CHCoG translation, based on the Aramaic Peshitta New Covenant.