

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, which are both Pentecost in English. 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 would be a substantial delay before they will be fulfilled.

The Feast of Weeks coincides with the beginning of the wheat harvest in Israel. For this Feast, Jehovah God instructs the Israelites to make two leavened loaves of bread. The leaven signifies 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 shall 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 shall surely be put to death. Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live.' When the jubilee sounds long, they shall 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 shophar¹ 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 mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire. Its smoke

¹ This is a ram's horn that has been made into a musical horn.

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 shall have no other gods before Me.

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

“You shall not lift up the name of Jehovah your God

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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 shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah your God. You shall 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 shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

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

“You shall not covet your neighbour’s house; you shall 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)

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“Three times you shall celebrate unto Me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall 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 shall 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 shall appear before Lord Jehovah.

Jehovah never gave us a new set of Holy Days to replace these ones. His only addition to them 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 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 shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

‘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. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to Jehovah. You shall bring from your habitations two wave loaves of

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two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the first-fruits to Jehovah.

‘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 Jehovah, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to Jehovah. Then you shall 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 shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits as a wave offering before Jehovah, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to Jehovah for the priest.

‘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.

‘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 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. This event is recorded for us in the Book of Acts: (Acts 2:1 to 2:43)

And when the days to Pentecost² 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 every man of them 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, every man in his language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those dwelling between the Rivers,³ 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

² 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.

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

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.⁴ Instead, this is what was spoken by Joel the prophet: ‘It shall be done in the last days, says God. I will pour out My Spirit on everyone. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your elders shall dream dreams. And upon My menservants and upon My maidservants I will pour My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. And I will give signs in the heavens and mighty deeds on the earth: blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, until the great and awesome day of Jehovah comes. And it shall be that everyone who calls on the Name of Jehovah will receive life.’⁵

“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

⁴ That is, about nine AM, or three hours after sunrise.

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

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 Jehovah⁶ 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.⁷ You have shown the ways of life to me; you will fill me with joy with Your presence.’⁸

“Men and brethren, it is permitted to speak boldly⁹ 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 shall seat on your throne.”¹⁰ And foreseeing this, He spoke about the resurrection of the Messiah, that He would not be left in Sheol, nor would His body see corruption.¹¹ 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.

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

⁷ 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.

⁸ Psalm 16:8-11

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

¹⁰ Psalm 132:11

¹¹ Psa 16:10

“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.”’¹² “Therefore let the whole house of Israel know truly that Lord Jah has made this Jeshua, whom you impaled, God and the Messiah.”¹³

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,¹⁴ 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.¹⁵ Then fear came upon every soul, and many 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

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

¹³ Num 21:7-9

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ The Peshitta has Eukharestya אֲכֻלֵּי טַבָּח here. Eukharestya 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.

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.¹⁶ And I say to you, I will not drink of this product of the vine from this hour until that day when I shall 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.

[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.]

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 shall do this for

¹⁶ 1Co 10:16

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 shall
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 shall 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.

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 shall 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 shall 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 shall He not give us everything with Him?

Who shall 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? Shall 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 representatives nor authorities nor armies, nor what is present nor what will come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall 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):

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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.

And 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.¹⁷ 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!

Pentecost is the last of the annual Holy Days that have been mostly fulfilled and arise from the first month of the year. The next holy day is Trumpets, in the seventh month, which marks the Return of Jeshua our Messiah as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Closing prayer

Prepared by the Central Highlands Congregation of God

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

¹⁷ Many Greek manuscripts begin this verse with “But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”