



The Feast of Shavuot

I. Introduction

a. Review

- i. Last session—detailed examination of various reckonings for counting from the omer offering
- ii. What we know: count seven weeks (49 days) to the 50th day, Shavuot

b. Spiritual Significance

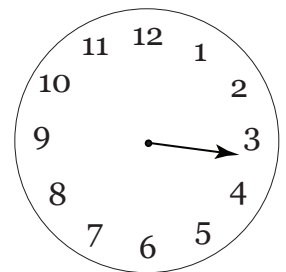
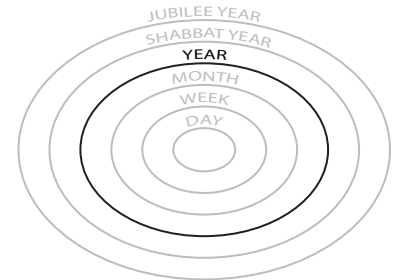
- i. Following a week of “unleavenedness” (Feast of Matzah)—a time to purposefully practice sinlessness
- ii. Counting from the omer: to grow toward maturity in that context
 1. עֹמֶר, omer from ראשית, *reshiyt*, the beginning of the barley crop (when the sickle is put to the standing grain (De. 16)
 - a. vs. 11 - waved by the priest on our behalf so that it will be accepted; acceptance of the beginning of the harvest means favor/blessing for the entire harvest (implication for future crops; no danger of losing current crop, etc.)
 - b. We are asking Adonai to bless and multiply our crops—to bring them to maturity (wheat crop still maturing)
 - c. After His resurrection, Yeshua remained with the disciples for 40 days—during the omer (Acts 1:3, “...over a period of 40 days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.”)
 2. Another theme: waiting, patience (Acts 1:4, “...He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised”); we need to wait for the harvest while we grow and mature; not getting ahead of God or lagging behind
- iii. Leads directly into Shavuot—last moed of the Spring season

c. This session

- i. What Scripture says about Shavuot
- ii. The relation of Shavuot to the giving of the Torah
- iii. A second look at the “upper room” experience
- iv. The spiritual significance and fulfillment of Shavuot
- v. How Shavuot is related to and closes the season of mo’adiym beginning with Passover

II. What the Hebrew Scriptures say about Shavuot

- a. Shavuot (שבועות) = “weeks”—primary name; שבוע, *shavuah* = “week”)
- b. First reference to this feast Ex.23:16, called חַג הַקִּצִּיר, *Chag HaKatzir* (Feast of the Harvest)
 - i. Mentioned among the other two pilgrim feasts
 - ii. “Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits (בכורי, *bikurei*) of your labors from what you sow in the field.”
 - iii. The harvest has reached maturity



- c. Exodus 34:22—first called חַג שָׁבֻעֹת, *Chag HaShavuot*
 - i. Similar passage to Ex.23:16, mentioning the pilgrim feasts
 - ii. New clarifying information: wheat harvest
- d. Leviticus 23:16-21—Counting from the Omer, leading up to Shavuot
 - i. 23:16—At the end of the 49 day/7 week period of counting (50th day); not given a name in Leviticus
 - ii. 23:17—New grain offering
 - 1. two loaves of bread for a wave offering (echoes wave offering of the omer of barley)
 - 2. Explicitly leavened
 - 3. Explicitly firstfruits
 - iii. 23:18-20—The accompanying animal sacrifices
 - iv. 23:21—holy convocation and no-work day; perpetual statutes for all generations
- e. Numbers 28:26-31
 - i. 28:26—יּוֹם הַבִּכּוּרִים, *Yom HaBikuriym* = Day of the Firstfruits; reiterates Lev. 23:21: holy convocation, no work
 - ii. 28:27-31—animal sacrifices and grain offering
- f. Deuteronomy 16:10-12, 16
 - i. 16:10—freewill offering according to how Adonai has blessed us
 - ii. 16:11—joy is commanded for everyone in Israel
 - iii. 16:12—Memorial of slavery in Egypt; connection to Passover/Matzah
 - iv. 16:16—pilgrim feast, reiteration of Ex.23:16 and 34:22
- g. 2Chronicles 8:12-13—mentioned again as one of the three pilgrim feasts
- h. Summary
 - i. Names: חַג הַקִּצִּיר, *Chag HaKatzir* (Feast of the Harvest), חַג שָׁבֻעֹת, *Chag HaShavuot* (Feast of Weeks), יּוֹם הַבִּכּוּרִים, *Yom HaBikuriym* (Day of the Firstfruits)
 - ii. Firstfruits offering from the wheat harvest; Two leavened loaves waved by the priests before Adonai
 - iii. One of three annual pilgrim feasts
 - iv. Holy convocation, no-work day (rest is not commanded)
 - v. Freewill offerings, joy commanded, memorial of slavery in Egypt (connection to Pesach/Matzah)
 - vi. This is all that the Hebrew Scriptures say about Shavuot—so, what about the giving of Torah??? This is Judaism's primary Shavuot observance—is there any Scriptural support?

III. Date of Shavuot

- a. Scripture does not give explicit date of Shavuot
- b. Need to first establish Possible range of dates for Shavuot—counting 50 days after “the day after the shabbat”
- c. Factors to consider:
 - i. Passover is Nisan (Aviyyv) 14, Matzah begins Nisan (Aviyyv) 15 (the day Israel came out of Egypt)
 - ii. Minimum and maximum lengths of months—29 or 30 days
 - iii. Varying methods of counting from the omer offering
- c. Results of various reckonings (see chart next page)
- d. Judaism fixes the date on Siyvan 6
- e. Range of possible dates: Siyvan (third month) 5 through 13

Two Consecutive 29-day months

KEY

Calendar Dates
Pharisees/traditional reckoning (shortest time)
Falasha/After Matzah reckoning (longest time)

Two Consecutive 30-day months

Nisan 15	Omer Week 1					
Omer Week 1	Omer Week 2					
Omer Week 2	Iyyar 1					
Omer Week 3	Omer Week 4					
Omer Week 4	Omer Week 5					
Omer Week 5	Omer Week 6					
Omer Week 6	Omer Week 7	Siyvan 1				
Omer Week 7	Shavuot Siyvan 7					
Shavuot Siyvan 13						

Nisan 15	Omer Week 1					
Omer Week 1	Omer Week 2					
Omer Week 2	Omer Week 3	Iyyar 1				
Omer Week 3	Omer Week 4					
Omer Week 4	Omer Week 5					
Omer Week 5	Omer Week 6					
Omer Week 6	Omer Week 7			Siyvan 1		
Omer Week 7	Shavuot Siyvan 5					
Shavuot Siyvan 11						

IV. Giving of the Torah—Exodus 19

- a. 19:1—Israel comes to the Desert of Sinai “in the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on the very day” or TNK “On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone forth from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai.”
 - i. On the first day of the third month
 - ii. Or, on the 15th day of the third month
- b. 19:10—(Assuming all this took place on the same day as verse 1) consecration of Israel “today” and “tomorrow”
- c. 19:11—on the third day, Adonai will come down on Mt. Sinai
- d. 19:16—morning of the third day
- e. 19:17—the people meet with God
- f. Chapter 20-23—giving of “Ten Commandments”; various laws
- g. 24:3—Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of Adonai and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words which Adonai has spoken we will do!”
- h. Giving of the Torah: on the third day
 - i. Siyvan 1 (“today”); Siyvan 2 (“tomorrow”); Siyvan 3 (“third day”)
 - ii. Siyvan 15 (“today”); Siyvan 16 (“tomorrow”); Siyvan 17 (“third day”)
 - iii. The only way to get Siyvan 6 is to have Israel arrive at Sinai on Siyvan 1 and Moshe to be on the Mountain with Adonai until Siyvan 4, which cannot be substantiated by Scripture.
- i. Lining up the Giving of the Torah with Shavuot
 - i. Most likely dates: Siyvan 3 or Siyvan 17
 - ii. Range of possible dates of Shavuot: Siyvan 5 through 13
- j. Scripture’s testimony puts the Giving of the Torah either before Shavuot or after—it does not fall within the possible range of dates
- k. There is no doubt that Shavuot and the Giving of the Torah occur during the same season, but that is the end of their link.

- I. Other extra-Biblical, Jewish traditions associated with Shavuot: eating dairy products, reading the book of Ruth, all-night Torah study.

V. The True Fulfillment of Shavuot

- a. Shavuot (called “Pentecost” in Greek, meaning “fiftieth day”) is mentioned in only three passages outside the Hebrew Scriptures: Acts 20:16 (Paul is hurrying to be in Jerusalem for it), 1Corinthians 16:8 (Paul speaks of remaining in Ephesus until Shavuot), and Acts 2 (fulfillment of Shavuot)
- b. For Christianity, “Pentecost” marks the birth of the Church, and is celebrated seven weeks after Easter, but let’s see if the account of Acts 2 can help restore the original Jewish context of Shavuot.
- c. Acts 1
 - i. 1:1-3—40 day period, pre-ascension of Yeshua (omer)
 - ii. 1:4-8—wait in Jerusalem, Restoration of the Kingdom, pattern for witnessing
 - iii. 1:9-11—Yeshua’s ascension
 - iv. 1:12-14—the apostles in the “upper room”
 - v. 1:15—In those days/at this time Keifa was a leader among the believers (numbering 120)
 - vi. 1:16-26—Y’hudah’s replacement among the 12
- d. Acts 2
 - i. 2:1-4—the so-called “upper room experience”
 1. Pentecost a.k.a. Shavuot
 2. “The whole house where they were sitting”—they were sitting in the upper room of the house where they went to in 1:13
 3. Consider a possible alternative
 1. “The house”—a term used for the Temple (Luke 19:45-46; 2Chr.29:16)
 2. If you were a Jew, and it was the morning of a pilgrim feast, when you were commanded by the Torah to appear before Adonai, where would you be?
 - ii. 2:5-13—The Jews from the diaspora hear their own language
 - iii. 2:14-21—Keifa explains from Joel 2:28-32
 1. Context—Joel 2:12-13; The outpouring of the Spirit is to be understood in the context of Israel repenting and returning to Adonai.
 2. This opens the door for Keifa to proclaim Yeshua
 - iv. Yeshua’s resurrection is proof of His fulfillment of the Davidic covenant, therefore establishing Yeshua is Messiah (2:22-36)
 - v. 2:37-41—3,000 Jews saved and immersed (mikvaot?)
 - vi. 2:42-47—restoration of Israel

VI. Conclusion

- a. Shavuot is a harvest feast that has no formal connection to Scriptural events until the giving of the Spirit and the harvest of Jewish souls in Acts 2.
- b. We need to no longer lock ourselves away in our “upper rooms,” but come down and out into the open air of the Temple courts so that the Spirit may be poured out upon us, and by the power of our testimony, we may reap a harvest of souls.