

Deuteronomy 16:9-12 - Feast of Weeks – Pentecost

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Calvin, Barnes, Geneva, Gill, JFB, K&D, Henry, Trapp, Clarke, Eclectic, Edersheim, INT, Handfuls, Schultz, Poythress, 65 Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: We now move from the Passover (which was the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread – the first feast) to the Feast of Weeks, which was also called the Feast of Pentecost.

In the Passover you saw a remarkable view of the Lord Jesus – your Passover Lamb – the Pascal Lamb, but the Passover did not have joy. It was sad. It was in a hurry. It ate an animal that was not even cleaned. It was with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The joy was in the future. Today you will hear of a **feast with joy - joy after hardships**.

Our headings are:

When the offering was done

How the offering was done

Why the offering was done

Our goals are: That you will remember God’s provision, not just of food, but especially for the work of his Holy Spirit, so the church is properly equipped with physical and spiritual life to work for God’s kingdom.

When the offering was done

9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.

1. The Feast of Pentecost was celebrated on the 50th day after the Jews started harvesting their crops, so it was May/June.

The word “Pentecost” was used because “penta” meant “five,” referencing 50.

2. Why was it called the “Feast of Weeks” also?

It was called the Feast of Weeks because the Jews had to count off 7 weeks before they celebrated this feast. Seven is the number of completion. This took place on the 50th day, a Sunday.

3. The Feast of Pentecost naturally flowed from the Passover because in the Passover the Israelites were given new life.

With new life, you then produce fruits! But this wasn’t simply about providing physical food. This was to teach of spiritual food – the food that was to come!

Jesus was the firstfruits from the dead and like the Feast of Pentecost, Jesus was raised from the dead as the firstfruits.

Because he was raised, if you receive him (eat of him) you too are raised from the spiritual dead! If Jesus wasn’t raised from the dead you are all futile in your beliefs. But he was! So you are not futile in your beliefs.

1Corinthians 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has **become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

4. Lessons:

a. On Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was raised from the dead, as the church gathered to celebrate the Old Testament Feast of Pentecost, they celebrated new spiritual life they found in Jesus. This was an increase of spiritual blessings.

Believers received the special gifting of the Holy Spirit. They were equipped to sow more seed to get a richer harvest of souls.

b. Those who think the Holy Spirit only came at Pentecost don’t understand salvation very well. **Regeneration, the coming to life from the dead, is the work of the Holy Spirit alone.** So all Christians have the Holy Spirit in them. Some confuse **baptism with the Holy Spirit**, which occurred at **Pentecost for special work, with being filled with the Spirit of God** (what every Christian has more and more).

c. Take time to remember your resurrection from the dead – this great work of the Holy Spirit.

d. Then take the message of the resurrection, with the help of the Holy Spirit, so others can hear the Gospel and let it sink into their hearts so they can have new life. You must sow the seed for life to come.

How the Offering was done

10 "Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the **tribute of a freewill offering from your hand**, which you shall give **as the LORD your God blesses you.**

1. God required the Jews keep the Feast of Weeks by bringing a freewill offering to the tabernacle for the use of the priests, the Levites, and the poor.

A Jew brought an **omer, a sheaf, about 2.3 liters (American), 9.5 cups, of their grain** along with **2 loaves of bread**, to the tabernacle. Leviticus 23:15.

Deuteronomy 16:16 "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of

Tabernacles; and **they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.**

2. The priests waved the loaves (as a wave offering) and received the gifts of the firstfruits.

Leviticus 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. ²⁰ 'The **priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD...**

3. Every man had to bring this freewill offering himself; he was not allowed to do it by proxy.

He couldn't say he was busy and use a servant to do it.

4. Each man had to bring proportionately to what God had blessed him with.

It was like a tribute to God who graciously provided for man. **So as man was blessed, man had to give.** If more were given, more was expected. If less were given, less was expected.

5. Lesson:

a. Let your offerings – your material and spiritual offerings- be free from compulsion! Let it flow as God has blessed you. Remember the needy brothers and sisters who are suffering all over the world. And remember those who suffering from a lack of spiritual food! Be a blessings.

b. There is personal involvement required to serve the Lord. Your parents can't please God for you. Your wife must not assume your duties – like teaching your children. You have to do it yourself. Bring your wife and children to worship!

Why the Offering was done

11 "You shall **rejoice** before the LORD your God, **you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow** who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. 12 "And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

1. God wanted the whole nation to stop in the middle of their harvest and rejoice in his bountiful provision for them.

Deuteronomy 8:3 "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

God knew how easy it would have been for the Jews to get distracted work after they settled in Canaan and started to see the richness and the abundant produce. They would easily be enamored with the **food rather than the Father!**

2. God wanted to see how much they loved and trusted him.

Celebrating the Feast of Pentecost (Firstfruits) was a **test of their faith!** **In the middle of harvest, when the crops were coming in, the busiest time for the harvesters, God told them to stop. God wanted them to trust that he would provide and sustain their lives even if they lost a day.**

3. God wanted the whole nation rejoice in this feast – every man, woman, son, daughter, male servant, female servant, local Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows.

Deuteronomy 16:14 "And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, who are within your gates.

Since everyone was blessed, everyone had to rejoice.

The children, the servants, and converts had to be **taught to rejoice** – rejoice in the Lord!

4. God wanted the nation to reflect on what he did for them in the past and in the present so their joy would be greater.

God rescued them from **slavery and shortage** in Egypt, entered into covenant with them, gave them freedom in the Promised Land, and **blessed the labor of their hands with food in abundance.** It was all God's work! They had no credit for their riches.

5. God wanted the nation to be a blessing to the poor and the priests, so they shared their wealth.

Deuteronomy 14:29 "And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, **may come and eat and be satisfied,** that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

6. God wanted the nation to think of the future when the Holy Spirit would come and give new spiritual life to the church and bring new spiritual life to all the nations of the earth.

The Holy Spirit came 50 days after the Lord's resurrection. Jesus went up after 40 days and 10 days later, the Holy Spirit came. Then the church gathered and waited, not for physical food, but spiritual food.

Acts 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

The Lord then brought great joy...and power...to the people to go out and finish the ingathering.

Acts 1:8 "But you shall **receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall **be witnesses** to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and **to the end of the earth.**"

In particular, the church would testify that new life came through Jesus who was raised to new life! This is the basis of spiritual life!

Acts 1:22 "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

6. Lessons:

a. Remember what the Lord has done for you and then take time whenever something good happens to give God thanks. When you get home from work or get out from your car, say, "Thank you, Lord." When you finish an exam, say, "Thank you." And remember the greatest thing that has happened: You were saved and freed from your chains like the Jews were from Egypt. Say, "Thank you."

b. Remember, then rejoice in the Lord when he blesses you with provisions, with health, or with growth in grace. (If those under the law were commanded to rejoice, all the more those who are under grace must rejoice!) So sing a song of praise to him. You don't have to bring a bread offering to rejoice. **But bring an offering of praise!** Sing out the honor of his name.

c. Think how the wicked boast in themselves and all they achieve...every academic degree they achieve...every new promotion they get...every exotic vacation they take... They give no credit to God for their skill, their wisdom, or their money. They think they are the source of their success so they never take time to stop and rejoice in what God does. They do this because they don't understand the resurrection. Jesus was raised so you get new life!

d. Ask the Lord for his Holy Spirit to strengthen your soul (provision) so you could go out and harvest the world for Jesus – complete the ingathering.

Conclusion:

The Feast of the Firstfruits was beautiful in its time, but it was only a shadow of things to come. Fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, Pentecost happened. The Holy Spirit, who had given life to every believer, then equipped believer with various measures of his blessings to live and to share life with others – to bring in the great harvest.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Are you rejoicing and thanking God you have new life in Jesus? Though you were dead, the Holy Spirit worked to give you life and sustains you. You live because Jesus was sown in the grave but raised up to new life.

3. Are you sharing that joy with others – your brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ? Take time each Lord's Day, and even during the week, to celebrate God's goodness with each other.

2. Are you asking God for his Holy Spirit to fill you more and more with all his wonderful gifts and graces so you can plant more seeds and reap a greater harvest for Jesus? You should be. Every spiritually healthy child will reproduce...or at least try to!

Finally, you are lifeless without the working of the Holy Spirit. If you realize your soul is dead, you need to ask God to give you new life. He will, if you ask for it on account of the work of Jesus on the cross for sinners.