

Fifty Days that changed the World: from Passover to Pentecost
The Power and Significance of Pentecost
Prepared by Bob Young

Introduction

- The Jewish flavors of Pentecost
- Pentecost: a time of prayer, celebrated as a time of the giving of the law? (from Temple fall onward?)
- Pentecost: Acts 2—the Hub of the Bible

Definitions

- Feast of weeks (Ex. 34:32; Dt. 16:10)
- Feast of the harvest/ingathering/reaping, completion of grain harvest (Ex. 23:16)
- Feast of first fruits, day of the first fruits (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Num. 28:26; Lev. 23:17)
- Pentecost

OT backgrounds and understandings

- Agricultural and historical; middle of three annual Jewish harvest festivals
- Coming of the word of the Lord
- The 3000 parallel: 3000 slain when Moses came down from the Mount (Ex. 32). The law could condemn but not justify.
- Ex 19:1 chronology; parallel with wind, fire, voices (Heb. 12:18-19)
- 2 Chronicles 8:13

The feast—observation and commemoration

- Men attended (Dt. 16:16-17)
- Free will offering, day of offerings (Dt. 16:10; Lev. 23:17-20)
- No laborious work (Num. 23:26)
- Deliverance from Egypt remembered (Dt. 16:11-12)
- Thanksgiving for the harvest (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Num. 28:26)
- Remembrance of giving of the law (Pesahim 68b)

OT Prophecies of the day

- Ezek 36, put my spirit in you
- Jer 31, put my law in minds and write on hearts
- Joel 2

What happened at the Acts 2 Pentecost?

Textual

- Emphasis on international nature of crowd gathered, universalism as Lucan theme.
- The three signs represent the new era of the Spirit (John the Baptist had referenced wind (Spirit) and fire (Lk. 3:16). Power-wind, purity-fire, universality-tongues.
- The work of the Spirit under the new covenant transcends barriers—racial, national, linguistic (reversal of Babel).
- Pentecost was always a day of joy. See references to joy in Acts 2.
- Pentecost was a day of “brotherhood and happiness as each shared with the other in festal eating and all rejoiced...”
- Pentecost was a day of rejoicing in that deliverance from Egyptian bondage was recalled. Likewise, Pentecost was a day of deliverance for souls in the New Testament.

Observations

- The first fruits and lasting impact of God's resurrection power and promise became evident
- The full harvest of Christ's work as Lamb of God are reaped
- The Old Law given at Mt. Sinai is replaced by the New Law given from spiritual Mt. Zion
- The full extent of the law written on hearts is confirmed by God's actual presence within human hearts through his Holy Spirit
- The first fruits of the gospel harvest are gathered and offered to God

Outcomes of Pentecost—the significance of what occurred

- Lucan theology of the Spirit