

SHAVUOT SPECIAL 2020
A Scroll to Scroll Bonus Teaching

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Prayer for Blessing the Scriptures

Barchu et-Yahweh hamvorach
(*Cong.* Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed)
Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed
Baruch ata Yah-weh, Elo-hay-nu Melech Ha-Olam
Asher bachar banu michol ha-ah-meem
Ve-nah-tan lanu et-torah tow
Baruch ata Yah-weh no-tayn ha-Torah (ve'breet chah-dash-ah)

ALL READ IN UNISON IN ENGLISH:

Bless Yahweh, Who is to be blessed
Blessed is Yahweh, Who is to be blessed forever and ever
Blessed are You, Yahweh our Elohim, King of the Universe,
Who chose us from all the peoples and gave to us the Torah
Blessed are you Yahweh, who gave us the Torah (and the Renewed Covenant Scriptures)

A Word of Scripture to Ponder Before We Begin:

[Yeshua] spoke another parable in figure to them and said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. And when the people were asleep, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and left. And when the blades sprang up and bore the fruit, then the tares also appeared. And the servants approached the House of Master YHWH and said to him, 'Behold, you did sow good seed in your field. From where the tares in it are?'

And he said to them, a man who is an enemy did this. His servants said to him, 'Do you desire for us to go pluck them out?' But he said to them, 'No, or else while you are plucking out the tares, you also uproot the wheat with them. **Let both grow together until the harvest, and at that time of the harvest I will say to the reapers to pluck out first the tares and bind them in bundles to be burned, but the wheat gather them into my store houses.**' (Matthew 13:24-30 AENT)

I. Origins of the Feast

“O, if My people had listened to Me, Yisra’el would walk in My ways, “I would subdue their enemies at once, And turn My hand against their adversaries! “Those who hate יהוה would cringe before Him; and their time *of punishment* be forever. “He

would feed them with the finest of wheat; and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.” Psalm 81:13-16, The Scriptures 1998)

- 1) The Hebrew moedim were mostly meant to follow the agricultural cycles of harvests throughout the year. (Barley start = Pesach; barley ends/wheat harvest begins = Shavuot; Grapes = Sukkot.)
- 2) That is why, for example, the old name for Sukkot was “the Feast of Ingathering” (Exodus 34:22) because that was when the final harvest of the year would be “brought in”.
- 3) Another word, a synonym in fact for MOEDIM, is ETH, and we recently saw several examples of this, that I will recap now:

If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, ⁴ then I shall give you rains in their **season/ETH** (בְּעֵתָם), **so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit.** (Leviticus 26:3-4 NAU)

That He will give the **rain for your land in its season/ETH** (מְטַר-אֲרֻצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ), the early and late rain, **that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.** (Deuteronomy 11:14 NAU)

They all wait for You To give them their **food in due season/ETH** (לָתֵת אֲכֻלָּם בְּעֵתוֹ). (Psalm 104:27 NAU)

And here we also see MOED used in the exact same context, proving MOED and ETH are synonyms...

"Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time **and My new wine in its season/ETH** (בְּעֵתוֹ וְתִירוֹשֵׁי בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ וְהִצַּלְתִּי). I will also take away My wool and My flax given to cover her nakedness. "And then I will uncover her lewdness In the sight of her lovers, And no one will rescue her out of My hand. (Hosea 2:9-10 NAU)

The reason this is so important is because it is in Job 38:32 that we are told that the MAZZAROTH (star, stars, or constellations/Zodiac) that bring in the ETH (seasons). Since the MOEDIM are tied inextricably to the ETH they are supposed to occur in (one literally causes the other), there can be no doubt that the stars bring in the MOEDIM too! Shavuot, like Pesach and Sukkot, is first determined by the stars, then the sun, then the moon.

In fact, careful analysis of the Scripture reveals that all twelve of the original Hebrew months have in fact been preserved:

- 1) Abib = ripening (Exodus 13:4, 23:15, 34:18; Deuteronomy 16:1)→1st month, a.k.a. Qetzir ha-Seorim [barley harvest, Ruth 2:23]
- 2) Ziv = splendor of flowers (1 Kings 6:1, 2 Chronicles 3:1-2)→2nd month

- 3) Qetzir Ha-Chittim [wheat harvest, Genesis 30:14, Exodus 34:22, Judges 15:1, Ruth 2:23, 1 Samuel 6:13, 12:17]→3rd month
- 4) Qayitz [summer, Genesis 8:22] and also summer solstice. 4th month
- 5) Tirosh = [new wine, Genesis 27:28,37, more properly rendered in Hosea 2:9] 5th month
- 6) Chom = [heat = Genesis 8:22], 6th month.
- 7) Ethanim = steady flowing of water (1 Kings 8:2)→7th month, also called “seedtime” in Genesis 8:22 which is also the time of fall equinox.
- 8) Bul = flood waters; produce (1 Kings 6:38)→8th month
- 9) Kislev =thickening (of crops) after heavy rains; also related to KESIL (Orion), a constellation that shines a great deal during this month (Ezra 10:9; Nehemiah 1:1; Zechariah 7:1)→9th month.
- 10) Tebeth = muddy season, heavy rains (Ezra 10:9, 16; Esther 2:16)→10th month, also called Choreph = winter (Genesis 8:22, Psalm 74:17), time of winter solstice.
- 11) Shevat (destroying rain, Zechariah 1:7) →11th month
- 12) Adar = darkness, eclipse, the last month of darkness giving way to the season of light (Ezra 6:15; Esther 3:7, 13; 8:12; 9:1,15-21)→12th month, also called Qor [cold =Genesis 8:22, Job 37:9].

These months, or as I sometimes prefer to call them, *seasons of agricultural milestones*, may have several different calendar applications. The first would be as a lunar month, with the understanding that the lunar year will require a 13th intercalary month every 2-3 years on average. For the rabbis, this is done by use of the 19 year Metonic Cycle, which adds a leap month every 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th year. If this were all the rabbis did, their calendar would not be in such disarray. But, with the addition of mathematically averaged months and postponement rules, the entire math architecture has now begun to come undone.

Alternatively, the Eternal Torah Calendar regulates intercalation by always following the natural solar and lunar cycles and calling the New Moon nearest the start of Vernal Equinox as Abib—a much easier system to maintain and it never goes out of date. The point is lunar months can only be intended if they are somehow synchronized to the longer solar year.

- 4) Moving on, in the particular case of Shavuot though, several ancient names have been attached to it:
 - a) Shavuot = Feast of Weeks, NOT “Feast of Sabbaths” for the 7 *tamim* (complete) weeks that must be counted. (More on that later.)
 - b) Asartha = “fifty” in Hebrew, the name given to it by the first century historian Josephus.
 - c) Pentecost = Greek for “fifty”, also mentioned as a name by Josephus and Philo, as well as several times in the book of Acts, even in Aramaic.

When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice, (which weeks contain forty-nine days,) on the fiftieth day, which is Pentecost[Shavuot], but is called by the Hebrews Asartha, which signifies Pentecost, they bring to Elohim a loaf, made of wheat flour, of two tenth deals, with leaven; and for sacrifices they bring two lambs; and when they have only presented them to Elohim, they are made ready for supper for the priests; nor is it permitted to leave anything of them till the day following. (Josephus, Antiquities, 3:252-25).

The solemn assembly on the occasion of the festival of the sheaf having such great privileges, is the prelude to another festival of still greater importance; for from this day the fiftieth day is reckoned, making up the sacred number of seven sevens, with the addition of a unit as a seal to the whole; and this festival, being that of the first fruits of the grain¹, has derived its name of Pentecost from the number of fifty, ('pentecostos').

And on it is the custom to offer up two leavened loaves made of wheat, as a first fruit of the best kind of food made of grain; either because, before the fruit of the year is converted to the use of man, the first produce of the new crop, the first gathered grain that appears is offered as a first fruit, in order that by an insignificant emblem the people may display their grateful disposition. (Philo, The Special Laws, 2:176)

- 5) Shavuot was instituted at Sinai by Moshe as the second of three great feasts that were prophesied to in later ages require all the sons of Israel to appear before Abba YHWH with offerings in Jerusalem. (Passover and Tabernacles are of course the other two.)
- 6) Another important aspect is the feast's proximity to the time the Ten Commandments were first given to Moshe on Mount Sinai:

In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness...So Moshe went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments.

He said to the people, *"Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman."* So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moshe brought the people out of the camp to meet Elohim, and they stood at the

¹ C.D. Yonge translates this Greek word as "corn" but this is reflecting an old English usage that is no longer current today. Today "corn" has a more restrictive meaning in terms of referring to maize, which may have possibly been known in Israel at the time, but this is by no means certain. Old English tended to consider "corn" as part of the overall family of grains or cereals but now it no longer carries that meaning. The better translation here therefore is "grain" and I have changed it accordingly.

foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because YHWH descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.

When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moshe spoke, and Elohim answered him with thunder. *YHWH came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain*; and YHWH called Moshe to the top of the mountain, and Moshe went up. (Exodus 19:1-2; 14-20)

So somewhere in the next 2-3 days if we carefully read the text from here through the end of Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments are first given to Moshe! This is not, at least completely, rabbinic speculation. The timing is very close based on the Scripture. (More specifics later.)

But once we look at how long it takes Moshe to ascend the mountain, get a message, go down and deliver that message and bring himself and Aaron back up the mountain, I think we can see that man of his age and condition would need at least a day or two to do this, so linking this timing to Shavuot is not unreasonable and in any case the third day of the third month, when Abba YHWH comes down to Sinai, is also significant and bears commemoration anyway.

However, after piecing together new data gleaned from the Egyptian pagan calendar as well as fresh insights from Tanakh and Josephus, I concluded that the rabbis were correct. The Ten Commandments were most certainly given on 6 Sivan.

Furthermore, the early church may have also preserved another ancient memory courtesy of the original Nazarenes: In 1447 BCE, the 6th of Sivan was in fact a Sunday (Gregorian: May 12th).

However, in the year that Yeshua died, the Feast of Weeks was NOT on a Sunday, and the timing that it actually was sheds a lot of light on the Oral Law of Yeshua's day and the way the rabbinic schools of Hillel and Shammai really worked. (More on that later!)

II. Requirements of Shavuot

(ISBE) The festival and its ritual were minutely described in this Law. Every male in Israel was on that day required to appear before the Lord at the sanctuary (Ex 34:22,23). It was the first of the two agrarian festivals of Israel and signified the completion of the barley-harvest (Lev 23:15,16; Dt 16:9,10), which had begun at the time of the waving of the first ripe sheaf of the first-fruits (Lev 23:11).

Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, therefore fell on the 50th day after this occurrence. The wheat was then also nearly everywhere harvested (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Nu 28:26—but this is the START, or firstfruits of the wheat harvest, not the end of it; Shavuot though DOES end the BARLEY harvest--AGR), and the general character of the

festival was that of a harvest-home celebration. The day was observed as a Sabbath day, all labor was suspended, and the people appeared before Yahweh to express their gratitude (Lev 23:21; Nu 28:26).

The central feature of the day was the presentation of two loaves of leavened, salted bread unto the Lord (Lev 23:17,20; Ex 34:22; Nu 28:26; Dt 16:10). The size of each loaf was fixed by law. It must contain the tenth of an ephah, about three quarts and a half, of the finest wheat flour of the new harvest (Lev 23:17). Later Jewish writers are very minute in their description of the preparation of these two loaves (Josephus, Ant, III, x, 6). According to the Mishna (Menachoth, xi.4), the length of the loaf was 7 handbreadths, its width 4, its depth 7 fingers. Lev 23:18 describes the additional sacrifices required on this occasion.

It was a festival of good cheer, a day of joy. Free-will offerings were to be made to the Lord (Dt 16:10), and it was to be marked by a liberal spirit toward the Levite, the stranger, and orphans and widows (Dt 16:11,14). Perhaps the command against gleaning harvest-fields has a bearing on this custom (Lev 23:22). –ISBE Bible Encyclopedia

The first sheaf offered at the Passover and the two leavened loaves at Pentecost marked the beginning and ending of the grain harvest and sanctified the interval between as the whole harvest or Pentecostal season. The lesson to Israel was, "YHWH makes peace in your borders, He fills you with the finest of the wheat" (Ps. 147:14). Pentecost commemorated the giving of the law on Sinai (Exo. 12:2,19), the 50th day after the exodus, 50th from "the morrow after the sabbath" (i.e. the first day of holy convocation, 15th Nisan); the day after was more fit for cutting the sheaf, the 16th day.-Fausset's Bible Dictionary

Shavuot Scripture to ponder for this section: He whose winnowing fan is in his hand will cleanse his threshing-floors and the wheat he will gather to his granaries and the chaff he will burn in the fire that does not extinguish. (Matthew 3:12 AENT)

Special Preview #1: Showing the usage of the word TAMIM (complete)

TAMIM can refer to a blameless man, like Noah, in Genesis 6:9. TAMIM can also refer to an animal without blemish which is therefore suitable for sacrificing on the altar (Exodus 12:5). However, the main meaning of TAMIM is to impose completeness on a situation that might otherwise be fragmentary or incomplete:

And for the extreme parts of the Dwelling Place, westward, make six boards, and make two boards for the two back corners of the Dwelling Place. And they are double beneath and similarly they are *complete* to the top, to the one ring. So it is for both of them, they are for the two corners. (Exodus 26:22-24-The Scriptures 1998)

Further, and this is important, **you do not need to use TAMIM if it is established something is automatically completed.** In other words, if something is called complete by another Hebrew word (*kalah, maleh*, etc.), the word *tamim* is never used as a confirming witness. Rather, again, its function is only to bring completeness to something that could potentially be incomplete (Genesis 2:1, 2, 15:16, 29:21, 27, 28; Exodus 5:14, 26:24, 39:32; Leviticus 12:4, 6; Numbers 14:29; Joshua 4:10²; 2 Chronicles 7:11, 8:16, 29:34; Ezra 6:15, 9:1; Nehemiah 6:15; Esther 1:5; 2:12; Job 1:5; Isaiah 10:12; Jeremiah 25:12, 29:10; Lamentations 4:22; Ezekiel 4:6, 8, 5:2, 43:27; Daniel 10:3, 12:7 and many others).

As we will see later, a Sunday start and stop for omer count guarantees completeness of weeks, so TAMIM cannot be referring to that!

Shavuot Scripture to Ponder for this section: But some one of you may say: "How will the dead arise and with what body will they come forth?" Foolish man! The seed which you sow is not resurrected unless it dies.

And that which you sow, **you do not sow the body that is to be, but the naked kernel of wheat or barley, or of the other grains:** And Elohim gives it a body, according to His will; and to each of the grains its natural body. And everybody is not alike; for the body of a man is one thing, and that of a beast is another, and that of a bird is another, and that of a fish is another. And there are bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial (bodies) is one, and that of the terrestrial is another.

And the glory of the sun is one thing, and the glory of the moon is another, and the glory of the stars is another; and one star exceeds another star in glory. So (it is) also with the resurrection of the dead. They are sown in dishonor, they arise in glory: they are sown in weakness, they arise in power: It is sown in an animal body, it arises a spiritual body. For there is a body of the animal life, and there is a body of the spirit.

So also is it written: "Adam, the first man, became a living soul;" the second Adam (became) a resurrecting spirit. And the spiritual was not first, but the animal, and then the spiritual. **The first man was of dust from the earth; the second man was Master YHWH from heaven. As he was of the dust, so also those who are of the dust; and as was he who was from heaven, so also are the heavenly.**

And as we have worn the likeness of him from the dust, so will we wear the likeness of him from heaven. But this I say, my Brothers that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven: neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, Suddenly, as in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar, when it will sound; and the dead will arise, without corruption; and we will be changed.

² In the case of Joshua 4:10 and Lamentations 4:22 and some others, the word *tamim* is present but no other synonyms for that meaning are. In other cases, it's the reverse.

Suddenly, as in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar, when it will sound; and the dead will arise, without corruption; and we will be changed.

For this which is corruptible, is to put on incorruption; and that which dies, will put on immortality. And when that which is corruptible, will put on incorruption, and that which dies, immortality; then will take place the Word that is written, "Death is absorbed in victory." Where is thy sting, O death? And where is thy victory, O Sheol? Now the sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is Torah.

But thanks be to Elohim that gives us the victory, through our Master Yeshua the Mashiyach. In conclusion, my Brothers and my beloved, be steadfast in truth, and not weak willed; but be at all times generous in the work of Master YHWH; seeing you know that your labor is not in vain in Master YHWH. (1 Corinthians 15:35-58 AENT)

END PART 1

PART 2

III. Scripture Readings for Shavuot, Part 1:

- 1) Exodus 19:1-20:23 (emphasize chronological references)
- 2) Numbers 28:26-31

IV. Other Important Tanakh Events Happening at Shavuot

Let us start with this general definition of *chittah*, the Hebrew word for “wheat:”

(1) Heb: *chiTTah*, the specific word for wheat (Gen 30:14; Ex 34:22, etc.), with Grk: *puros* (Judith 3:3; Sirach 39:26); (2) Heb: *bar*, or Heb: *bar* (Jer 23:28; Joel 2:24; Am 5:11; 8:6); in other passages translated "grain" or "corn"; (3) Grk: *sitos* (Mt 3:12; 13:25,29,30; Lk 3:17; 16:7; 22:31, etc.) (for other words translated occasionally "wheat" in the King James Version see CORN; FOOD)): Wheat, usually the bearded variety, is cultivated all over Palestine, though less so than barley. The great plain of the Hauran is a vast expanse of wheat fields in the spring; considerable quantities are exported via Beirut, Haifa, and Gaza. The "wheat harvest" was in olden times one of the regular divisions of the year (Ex 34:22; Jdg 15:1; 1 Sam 12:17); it follows the barley harvest (Ex 9:31,32), occurring in April, May or June, according to the altitude.-International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE, from BibleWorks 10)

Again however, just to be super clear, Shavuot is the END of the barley harvest and the START of the wheat harvest, and this word *chittah* means “wheat, grain” while another separate Hebrew word means “barley”. Therefore, we should look for Tanakh events that happen at the start of the wheat harvest and that time of year will be—whether it is directly called it or not—Shavuot!

Now in the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." But she said to her, "Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? And would you take my son's mandrakes also?" So Rachel said, "Therefore he may lie with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." When Jacob came in from the field in the evening, then Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. Elohim gave heed to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. Then Leah said, "Elohim has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband." So she named him Issachar. (Genesis 30:14-18)

Bad pun but I have to do it anyway—I will have a Reuben on wheat to go please! And this will not be the only link between the wheat harvest and making a love connection, as we will see a bit later. But this next reference about Joseph is literally also of cosmic proportions!

Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. **He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf."** Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." He related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?" His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying *in mind*. (Genesis 37:5-11 NAU)

Joseph's dream is literally set right around Shavuot and here we also see a convergence of astronomy and agriculture. Decoding the dream is easy—there seems almost no disagreement on its meaning from me, the rabbis, Josephus, and Philo—or if there is I simply have not read it.

Our next example proves you can be the strongest man in the world but still not be as strong in everything as you need to be!

But after a while, in the time of wheat harvest, Samson visited his wife with a young goat, and said, "I will go in to my wife in *her* room." But her father did not let him enter. (Judges 15:1 NAU)

Samson here was so busy chasing Philistine *shiksas* (Yiddish for Gentile ladies) that he failed to lead his people in keeping this Great Feast! Instead, his people were avoiding Torah and “doing what was right in their own eyes” (Judges 17:6).

But, maybe if Samson had stuck to Torah instead, he would not have had to “bring down the house”, as they say, with his antics!

However, our next inter-racial romance with wheat went much better:

Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, 'Let me go into the fields and glean ears of wheat³ in the footsteps of some man who will look on me with favor.' She replied, 'Go, daughter.' So she set out and went to glean in the fields behind the reapers. Chance led her to a plot of land belonging to Boaz of Elimelech's clan. Boaz, as it happened, had just come from Bethlehem. 'Yahweh be with you!' he said to the reapers. 'Yahweh bless you!' they replied. Boaz said to a servant of his who was in charge of the reapers, 'To whom does this young woman belong?' And the servant in charge of the reapers replied, 'The girl is the Moabitess, the one who came back with Naomi from the Plains of Moab. She said, "Please let me glean and pick up what falls from the sheaves behind the reapers." Thus she came, and here she stayed, with hardly a rest from morning until now.' Boaz said to Ruth, 'Listen to me, daughter. You must not go gleaning in any other field. You must not go away from here. Stay close to my work-women. Keep your eyes on whatever part of the field they are reaping and follow behind. I have forbidden my men to molest you. And if you are thirsty, go to the pitchers and drink what the servants have drawn.' Ruth fell on her face, prostrated herself and said, 'How have I attracted your favor, for you to notice me, who am only a foreigner?' Boaz replied, 'I have been told all about the way you have behaved to your mother-in-law since your husband's death, and how you left your own father and mother and the land where you were born to come to a people of whom you previously knew nothing. May Yahweh repay you for what you have done, and may you be richly rewarded by Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!' (Ruth 2:2-12 NJB)

Other events happening during the wheat harvest, which includes Shavuot, were:

- 1) The Philistines return the Ark of the Covenant after having it in their country for seven months (1 Samuel 6).
- 2) Samuel chooses the time of the wheat harvest as the occasion in which to step down and have Saul become king (1 Samuel 12).
- 3) Father Yah strikes Judah with famine during the wheat harvest as a sign of judgment (Jeremiah 12).
- 4) And finally, the prophet Joel opens his own book with images of ruined wheat to show Father Yah's wrath:

³ I have altered NJB, as I did Yonge's translation of Philo, to read “grain” rather than “corn”, once again because archaic definitions of “corn” as an umbrella term for “grain” no longer apply in modern English.

Wail like a maiden girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from the House of יהוה. The priests, servants of יהוה, have mourned. The field is ravaged, the ground has mourned, for the grain is ruined, the new wine has dried up, the oil fails. The farmers are ashamed, the vinedressers wail over the wheat and over the barley, for the harvest of the field is destroyed. The vine has dried up, and the fig tree droops, pomegranate, also palm, and apple tree, all the trees of the field are dried up, because joy has dried up among the sons of men. Gird yourselves and lament, you priests. Wail, you attendants of the altar. Come, lie all night in sackcloth, you attendants of my Elohim. For the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your Elohim. (Joel 1:8-13, The Scriptures 1998)

Talk about the power of a whole grain diet!

V. A Scriptural Primer on Shabbat Meanings

It is at this point that we need to look at the actual rules behind the feast. However, our first step to doing so may seem a bit surprising since we will need to define a word that most will think is the easiest of all to understand: Shabbat!

And Elohim blessed the *seventh day* (*yom ha-shvi'i* / יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי) and made it Set-apart, because on that day He *rested* (*shabbat*/ שָׁבַת) from all His work, which Elohim had created and made. Genesis 2:3 (personal translation)

So we see here that *seven* and *rest* are the same word/root in Hebrew! Let us see that again...

Brown Driver Briggs Definition (Shabbat) שָׁבַת [9681] (Hebrew Strong 7673) שָׁבַת:71 vb. cease, desist, rest (As šabātu, prob. *cease, be completed*); Ar. *sabata* cut off, interrupt; שׁ: Gn 2:3 +; 3 pl. שָׁבְתוּ La 5:14, etc; desist from labor, rest: a. c. מן (of god) Gn 2:2, 2:3 (P).

And for the other meaning:

8394 שָׁבַת שָׁבַת (101 ×): cs. שָׁבַת, sf. שָׁבַתוֹ, pl. שָׁבַתוֹת, cs. שָׁבַתָה, sf. שָׁבַתוֹתִי, שָׁבַתְתִּיכֶם; m. & f. (cf. Lv 16₃₁ 22₃₂): — 1. *yôm haššabb't* day of rest, sabbath Ex 20₈; —pl. weeks (i.e. from one sabbath to next) weeks of years = 7 years each. Holladay Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon

Here are some examples:

So the people *rested* (וַיִּשְׁבְּתוּ הָעָם) on the *seventh* (בְּיָוִם הַשְּׁבִיעִי) day. Exodus 16:30
NAU

For six days work may be done, but on the *seventh* day (בְּיָוִם הַשְּׁבִיעִי) you shall have a holy *day*, a *sabbath* (שָׁבַת) of complete *rest* (שָׁבַתוֹן). Exodus 35:2 NAU

So lesson #1 is that *Shabbat* can refer to the root for “seven” as in the seventh day, or to any day of rest, or to both. To see why, we need to look at another Hebrew phrase that has the same “resting” meaning as *Shabbat*.

This phrase is *miqra qodesh* and it appears here in Leviticus...

For six days work may be done, but on the *seventh day* (בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי) there is a *sabbath* (שַׁבָּת) of complete *rest* (שִׁבְתוֹן), a *holy convocation* (מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ). You shall not do any work; it is a *sabbath* (שַׁבָּת). (Leviticus 23:3 NAU)

miqra qodesh refers to Gen 2:3. *miqra* = called out; *qodesh* = Set-apart, so *Shabbat* is called out to be Set-apart!

Father Yah Sets-apart all manner of events: From amongst the days of the week, the seventh day, or *Shabbat*, is made *qodesh*.

From amongst the months of the year, the seventh month, Tishri, is made *qodesh*.

From the years, the seventh year, or Shemittah, is made *qodesh*.

But what many find confusing is the fact that within any given Hebrew year, certain days, whether they fall on the seventh day of the week or not, are considered “rest days, where no work is allowed”, or Shabbats. These times, again called *miqra qodesh* (Set-apart convocations), are High Sabbaths. For example...

On the 15th day of the same (first) month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread... 'On the 1st day you shall have a *holy convocation* (*miqra qodesh*/מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ); you shall not do any laborious work... On the 7th day is a *holy convocation* (*miqra qodesh*/מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ); you shall not do any laborious work.'" (Leviticus 23:5-8 NAU)

So what emerges from this study is the fact that “day of rest” is actually the majority meaning of *Shabbat* and “seven/seventh” is the secondary meaning. It looks like this...

Shabbat = Miqra Qodesh = Day of Rest
Therefore it works the other way: Any day of rest = Shabbat

In other words, the broad category of *Shabbat* indicates a day of rest, but within that broad category, one form of the day of rest is every seventh day of the week! Others are days of the month (Yom Kippur) or year. This is because the first rest day was the seventh day of the week, so “seven” came from the resting, not the other way around! And all that brings us here...

"These are Yahweh's solemn festivals, the sacred assemblies to which you will summon the Israelites on the appointed day: "The 14th day of the 1st month, at twilight, is the Passover of Yahweh; and the 15th day of the same month is the feast of Unleavened Bread for Yahweh. (Leviticus 23:4-6 NJB)

The 15th, as we saw, was called, and defined as a day of rest, a kind of Shabbat. However, from its appearance in 23:6, no other Hebrew calendar date is mentioned. In other words, from 23:6-14, there is no other “Shabbat” occasion mentioned as a day of the week or month, other than the 15th.

So when Leviticus 23:15-16 says the sheaf is waved “on the morrow after the Shabbat”, the “Shabbat” is the 15th and the next day is the 16th, regardless as to what day of the week the 16th falls.

Many though would disagree, claiming the “morrow after the Sabbath” means Sunday, but is this true?

However, before the name or the rules regarding Shavuot are even mentioned directly, the Torah tells us one of the most important events in all history happened at that time: The giving of the Ten Commandments! Here is why:

- Exodus 19:1 tells us the Israelites came to Mount Sinai at the start of the 3rd month, known as Sivan.
- Exodus 19:11-20 tells us that by the 3rd day of Sivan, Father Yah first descended from heaven on to the top of Mount Sinai in fire.
- Exodus 19:21 then has Moshe descend the mount, taking a full day.
- Now at 4 Sivan, it is clear by this point that Moshe has climbed up the mountain once more, because in 19:24 Father Yah commands him to go down again!
- By the time Moshe comes back up the mountain (also 19:24), the 5th of Sivan is ending, so he gets the 10 commandments the next morning.

Adding up all the time, it seems clear the 6th of Sivan is in fact the day the 10 commandments are given. Even alternative theories support this, as “the 3rd day” could be 4 Sivan, 3 days *from* the start of day 1 of that month, in which case 6 Sivan is still probable. And 6 Sivan is, as we just saw, the correct day for Shavuot.

Special Preview #2: Showing the usages of MACHAROTH (the morrow)

We will be going over this key word a bit more later on, but for now I thought it might be helpful to show the differences between MACHAROTH and BOKER. BOKER applies to the daylight portion of the CURRENT Hebrew day, while MACHAROTH applies to the daylight portion of the NEXT Hebrew day.

‘As for the flesh of the slaughtering of his peace offering for thanksgiving, it is eaten the same day it is offered, he does not leave any of it until **morning** (בִּקְרָא) ‘And if the offering he brings is a vow or a voluntary offering, it is eaten the same day that he brings his slaughtering, and what is left of it is eaten the **next day** (מִחֻטָּהּ), but whatever is left of the flesh of the slaughtering on the third day is burned with fire. (Leviticus 7:15-17, also 19:6-The Scriptures 1998)

BOKER does not stand in place of a day but is a moment (dawn) or a short period, while MACHAROTH can stand in the place of YOM in terms of the time from morning to before sunset (1 Samuel 30:17). While BOKER may be used in relation to any day, MACHAROTH is specifically used in the timings of Pesach:

And the children of Yisra'el camped in Gilgal and performed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening on the desert plains of Yeriho. And they ate of the stored grain of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened bread, and roasted grain on this same day. And the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the stored grain of the land. And the children of Yisra'el no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Kena'an that year. (Joshua 5:10-12)

Shavuot Scripture to ponder for this section: And I heard a voice in the midst of the four Creatures, saying: "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three measures of barley for a denarius; and hurt not the oil and the wine." (Revelation 6:6 AENT)

END PART 2

PART 3

VI. Scriptural controversy over the timing of Shavuot

The issue comes down to this: Does the “morrow after the Shabbat” mean the 16th, the day after the Annual Shabbat of 15 Abib, or does it refer to the first day of the week after Passover? Both positions have strong support within the Messianic community, and both have been argued over for a period of many centuries.

But those of you who have been with me for some years now know my position is that the omer count begins on the 16th of Abib and this will bring to Shavuot to hit around the 6th of Sivan barring the occasional back to back 29 or 30 day lunar months of Abib and Iyar. We also have eyewitness testimony from Moshe's successor Joshua—or at least from Joshua's biographer whose book became Scripture—on the proper timing of Shavuot.

First though let us look at what Moshe himself said about the feast:

You will eat no bread, roasted ears of wheat or fresh produce before this day, before making the offering to your Elohim. This is a perpetual law for all your descendants, wherever you live. (Leviticus 23:14)

Here is the Shavuot instruction that I believe many read past. You cannot have roasted ears of wheat or anything of the “new” harvest before the start of the omer count. You can only eat of the old crop and of course you cannot have leavened bread once Pesach starts. Now let us look at what Joshua did regarding this very rule:

The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening, in the plain of Jericho. **On the very next day after the Passover, they ate what the land produced, unleavened bread and parched grain.** (Joshua 5:10-11-NJB)

Therefore, this had to be the start of the omer count the “day after Passover”—meaning the day after 15th, the first day of Unleavened Bread. But if you were wondering how we can know if this was a Sunday or not, the answer is in the next line:

The manna stopped the day after they had eaten the produce of the land.
(Joshua 5:12-NJB)

So now we know that the manna stopped the day after the omer count began—I think this is pretty clear, but please let me know if it isn't, because there is only one day of the week that the manna can stop, even more so considering it is the last time Israel will eat it. Here is the proof:

Now, on the **sixth day** [Friday morning] they collected twice the amount of food: two homer per person, and all the leaders of the community came and told Moses this. **Moses replied, 'This is what Yahweh said, "Tomorrow [Saturday] is a day of complete rest, a Sabbath sacred to Yahweh. Bake what you want to bake, boil what you want to boil; put aside what is left over, to be kept for tomorrow."** So, as Moses ordered, they put it aside for the following day, and its smell was not foul nor were there maggots in it.

'Eat it today,' Moses said, 'for today is a Sabbath for Yahweh; you will find none in the fields today. For six days you will collect it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none.' (Exodus 16:22-26 NJB)

The manna always ceased on Shabbat. Therefore, when combining this information with Joshua 5:10-12 that talks about the manna stopping the day after the omer count began, **that means day 1 of the omer count had to be a Friday, and that is all I need to disprove the start and end of the omer count could only hit on a Sunday!**

Therefore, that is why Josephus, who was an eyewitness to the calendar kept in Israel in the first century said:

But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the 16th day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that day they do not touch them. And while they suppose it proper to honor Elohim, from whom they obtain this plentiful provision, in the first place, they offer the firstfruits of their barley. (Antiquities, 3:250)

Philo also confirms this timing writing during the ministry of Yeshua:

And this feast is begun on the 15th day of the month, in the middle of the month, on the day on which the moon is full of light, in consequence of the providence of Elohim taking care that there shall be no darkness on that day... **There is also a festival on the day of the paschal feast, which succeeds the first day, and this is named the sheaf, from what takes place on it; for the sheaf is brought to the altar as a first fruit both of the country which the nation has received for its own, and also of the whole land; so as to be an offering both for the nation separately**, and also a common one for the whole race of mankind; and so that the people by it worship the living Elohim, both for themselves and for all the rest of mankind, because they have received the fertile earth for their inheritance; for in the country there is no barren soil but even all those parts which appear to be stony and rugged are surrounded with soft veins of great depth, which, by reason of their richness, are very well suited for the production of living things. (The Special Laws, 2:155,162)

And finally, speaking of the same exact calendar Josephus and Philo used, a certain Rabbi from Nazareth who never disagreed once with the timing of a Shabbat or Great Feast said of the Pharisees:

Yeshua then spoke with the crowds and with his disciples. And he said to them, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on the throne of Moshe. Therefore everything that they say to you that you should keep and do. But not according to their deeds, for they talk, but do not. (Matthew 23:1-3-AENT)

So I suppose if Yeshua Ha Mashiyach and Josephus agree with all the teachers who ruled the Torah processes in first century Israel, that must be good enough testimony for me. In fact, I doubt that better testimony on any Biblical matter even exists. And there is this Scripture:

You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the festival rest day, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete weeks. 'You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh weeks; then you shall present a new grain offering to YHWH. (Leviticus 23:15-16)

This verse above is the one everyone "fights" over! As you can see, the sources I have cited so far follow the majority opinion (that I share) that the omer count is fixed to the 16th day of Abib (or Nisan) and counts 7 COMPLETE weeks from that occasion, bringing us to the 50th day for the Feast.

This is true because the 15th of Abib, the first full day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, counts as a Shabbat regardless as to the day of the week that 15th day falls.

However there is another opinion about this, the origins of which came from the Sadducees and Samaritans. These groups believed that the "day after the Sabbath" must be a Sunday, the day after the weekly Shabbat. This opinion has also been somewhat

received in the Hebraic Roots communities as well, in spite of its lack of Scriptural support. (More on this later.)

The problems with this Sunday-only viewpoint are:

- 1) The title of the occasion is not “Feast of Sabbaths” but “Feast of WEEKS” meaning it is the 7 day periods, NOT the Shabbats that must be tamim (complete).
- 2) If the occasion were 100% fixed to the first day of the week after the commencement of Pesach, the text would say so and there would be no confusion.
- 3) The flip side is also true. The very lack of specificity in Leviticus 23:15 is because the day of the 16th of Abib could in fact be any day during the regular week!

VII. Spiritual Politics Behind the Timing Controversy

In 722 BCE, the Assyrians destroyed the Northern Israelite capital at Samaria. As part of their policy, they deported those Jews into Assyria and re-populated the land those Jews left behind with thousands of their own people.

Over time, these Assyrian “carpet-baggers” interbred with the few remaining Northern Israelites still in the land, and the result was a mixture of pagan and Hebrew belief in YHWH. Almost immediately, the Southern Jews recognized this lack of purity and began excluding these people from worship who would later be called “Samaritans”.

The Samaritans had long been in periods of apostasy, even before they were officially recognized as a separate people. Under the evil king Jeroboam and developed later by Ahab, Jezebel and others, the Northern kingdom set up rival shrines and even invented their own feast days and a separate priesthood in flagrant violation of Abba YHWH and His Torah. They also, on purpose, developed their own timings for the moedim, including Shavuot.

Then, after the First Temple was destroyed, Judah went into Babylonian captivity for 70 years. As they began to return even in advance of that deadline (ca. 536 BCE), the Samaritans were eager to help them start rebuilding the Temple again. Judah refused their offer of assistance.

And so, the Samaritans struck back by complaining to the king of Persia that the Jews were exceeding his royal mandate by reinforcing the walls around the entire city, rather than just the Temple as they had been commanded. The Persian king however took the Jews’ side and simply gave them permission to keep doing what they were doing. Later, according to Josephus, the Samaritans tried to influence Alexander the Great to persecute the Jews, but fortunately this plot failed miserably and only served to infuriate Judah to keep them excluded.

It was at this point that the Samaritans decided to reform themselves. Over the next 200 years, they seemed to have purged (or at the very least downplayed) the more pagan-friendly aspects of their faith. Judah apparently took notice and by Yeshua's lifetime had allowed the Samaritans to worship in the Temple, but the privilege was rescinded when the Samaritans attempted to defile the Temple at Passover by tossing corpses inside, and apparently they never were allowed to worship there again prior to the Second Temple being destroyed by Rome in 70 CE.

Throughout this period also, the Samaritans tried to frustrate the Jews from keeping their rightful calendar by lighting fires that signaled the start of the month a day early and trying to push their minority opinions on the moedim onto the rest of the nation.

As it turned out, the Sadducees were more receptive to these calendar ideas than the Pharisees were, but it was the latter group that firmly controlled the calendar in Yeshua's day:

For when [the Sadducees] become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them. (Antiquities 18:17)

And concerning these things it is that great disputes and differences have arisen among them, while the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace favorable to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude on their side. But about these two sects, and that of the Essenes, I have treated (Antiquities 13:298)

On account of which doctrines, [the Pharisees] are able greatly to persuade the body of the people; and whatever they do about divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they perform them according to their direction; insomuch that the cities give great attestations to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also. (Antiquities 18:15)

While Yeshua rebuked both groups on a fairly regular basis, the Sadducees were reviled by him even more because they denied the resurrection of the dead was even possible (Acts 23:8). Obviously, this would put the Sadducees on a collision course not just with Yeshua but the entire Nazarene movement that arose out of him! Additional reasons for hating the Sadducees are found here:

Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord, and regard for the public; but the behavior of the Sadducees one toward another is in some degree wild; and their conduct with those who are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them. (The Jewish War 2:166)

And if that is not bad enough, because they ran the Sanhedrin, the Sadducees were the day to day administrators of Israel that collaborated with the Romans! So here they are fraternizing with the enemy and sharing opinions that the vast majority in Israel rejects!

Once the Temple is destroyed however, so are the Sadducees, and for 700 years their opinions remain dead and buried with them. Then, in 9th century Iraq, a new sect is born. Called the “Karaites”, these Jews resurrected almost all of the minority opinions of the Sadducees, including that of the Aviv calendar and the timing of Shavuot.

The problem was of course they did so at the expense of historical and Scriptural accuracy, acting as if they were right all along and could actually revise and re-write the past, when they were marginalized. It is then from these groups of modern Sadducees that the movement to push Shavuot to only happen on Sunday arose.

END PART 3

PART 4

VIII. Scripture Readings for Shavuot, Part 2: Deuteronomy 15:19-16:17 and Ezekiel 1:1-28; 3:1-2

Shavuot Scripture to ponder for this section: Amen, amen I say to you that a grain of wheat, except it should fall and die on the ground, remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his soul will destroy it, and whoever hates his soul in this world will keep it to life eternal. (Yochanan 12:24-25 AENT)

IX. NT instances of Shavuot

The Feeding of the 4,000 (Matthew 15:30-38; Mark 8:1-10)

This event is placed after the Feeding of the 5,000 but before the Pharisees collect the Temple tax in Matthew 17:24-27. That means after Pesach but before Yom Kippur, or from late April to the end of September, in the year 29.

One of the key details given about the 4000 feast which is different from the 5000 one is that there were specifically seven loaves of bread and a few fish, as opposed to five loaves at the 5000 feast.

However, because Yochanan 6:4 tells us the 5000 feast was near Pesach, there is no real need to delve deeper into that event for timing clues, in which case I believe the five loaves at the 5000 feast represent the five books of Moshe and the two fish represent the witnesses needed to certify it (like the Shema prayer of Deuteronomy 6:4).

In the case of the 4000 feast, the seven loaves are definitely symbolic of the omer count, because only the omer count begins with the baking of barley loaves for First Fruits or Bikkurim (Leviticus 23:17). Each loaf in turn represents a feast and seven of them are also weeks, hence, the Feast of Weeks. However, Torah required all men to be in Jerusalem for this feast and Yeshua is in Galilee, so he would have done his miracle several days before to give himself time to travel 90 miles to Jerusalem.

In this year (29 CE), Shavuot ran from sunset Monday, June 4th to sunset, Tuesday June 5th. I believe Yeshua did this miracle at the start of the last week of the omer count, most likely on Tuesday, May 29th, just before the New Moon of Sivan that hit late that evening (11:26 PM Jerusalem time). This would then allow Yeshua and his apostles Wednesday through Friday to travel to Jerusalem to celebrate Shavuot the next Monday-Tuesday.

If he went after Shabbat, realistically beginning his walking from Galilee on Sunday morning, it would be a very hard journey to reach Jerusalem in time before feast, especially when they also had to get supplies, arrange for lodging, etc. It is possible to do, barely perhaps, but far from practical, bringing us back to May 29th as the most likely date for the miracle.

Of course the Ruach ha Kodesh is thought by many to have come at Shavuot, “when they were assembled as one”—Acts 2:1. Many people also assume this was a Sunday and further think the fact this was on a Sunday, proving the Karaite position, but this is not correct.

In addition to the testimony of Josephus already given, the Mishnah says this:

The House of Shammai say: A peace-offering may be brought without laying the hands on them, but not burnt-offerings. But the House of Hillel say: Both peace-offerings and burnt-offerings may be brought, and also lay the hands on them. **In the case of Pentecost, which falls upon the eve of a Sabbath, the House of Shammai say: The day for sacrificing is after the Sabbath. But the House of Hillel say: There is no day for sacrificing after the Sabbath. Both, however, admit that if it fall upon a Sabbath the day for sacrificing is the day after the Sabbath.** And on that day (which is called the day of sacrificing) a high-priest is not to clothe himself in his costly garments, unless in case of a mourning or of a fast. **The prohibition was in order not to confirm the words of those who say, Pentecost is after the Sabbath (only).** (Hagigah 2:3, Rodkinson Mishnah)

Now Hillel and Shammai were the two most influential rabbis in Israel just before Yeshua was born. Hillel actually died in 10 BCE. Each of these men founded a school that held sway with large numbers of Pharisees, and the Pharisees, as we saw, controlled the calendar.

So here we see both Hillel and Shammai were against fixing Shavuot to Sunday alone and also that both rabbis agreed the sacrificial portion of the day must be moved to Sunday! But the day the disciples were all assembled as on was Saturday, day 51, or the

Shabbat AFTER Shavuot. This is also why the text reads in Aramaic, “and after the days of Shavuot-Pentecost WERE FULFILLED, they all assembled as one” the day after, Saturday (Shabbat) morning.

Acts 20:16/1 Corinthians 16:8: This same occasion is mentioned twice where Rav Shaul had to put his journeys on hold—30 years after the resurrection—to get home in time for Shavuot!

In addition, there is Revelation 14:14-20. Many folks do not realize this is a reference to Shavuot as part of an entire harvest cycle throughout the year as well:

And I looked, and lo, a white cloud; and upon the cloud sat one who was like the Son of man; and on his head was a crown of gold, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. And he thrust his sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.

And another Messenger came out of the temple that is in heaven, also having a sharp sickle. And another Messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire. And he cried with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying: “Thrust in your sickle which is sharp, and gather the clusters of the vineyard of the earth, because the grapes of the earth are ripe.” And the Messenger thrust in his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast (it) into the wine-press of the wrath of the great Elohim. And the wine-press was trodden, up to the horses’ bridles, for a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

The first harvest is clearly the grain, that the Son of man takes the sickle to—or Shavuot. The second harvest is the grapes and wine...the harvest for Sukkot!

X. Shavuot Politics Revisited (Christian Style)!

Let me start out by saying that I completely understand why Christendom would view Shavuot as their spiritual birthday. The Ruach ha Kodesh surely did come down and speak to people in their languages, sending the Message of the Word forward into the nations. Where genuine history in Scripture is respected there is no issue.

However, the Message itself has been grossly misunderstood, and a bad tree produces only bad fruit. Fast forward two millennia and the countless generations of this bad fruit are very evident and have unfortunately become entangled with this Set-Apart day. We need to literally sift the wheat from the chaff (pun intended). There are two streams of spiritual issues that need discussing.

- A) Forming identities around only one Scriptural concept. In other words, Seventh Day Adventists are only concerned about Shabbat but not about parts of the Torah that command kosher eating, circumcision, etc. Baptists talk about immersion only, as if that were all there was to it. And Pentecostals talk about the outpouring of the Ruach and speaking in tongues, but they do not honor even the Set-Apart

occasion they named themselves after! This is spiritual myopia...they have forgotten the words of Ya'akov Ha Tzadik (James the Just) who said, "He who stumbled on a single point of Torah is guilty of breaking all of it...but he who keeps the perfect Torah of liberty, he will be blessed in everything he does." (No wonder Luther hated that Epistle!)

B) Far more problematic however is what is broadly referred to as the Pentecostal movement, although to be fair these highly problematic and un-Scriptural ideas are widespread in other major Protestant denominations as well. This is a classic case of pulling verses out of context and ignoring other verses altogether. It is also NO WAY to honor a Great Feast commanded by Abba YHWH and given by Moshe.

The Great Shavuot Cover-Up: Beyt and Switch Linguistics **(Expanded and Updated)**

All too often people want to avoid work. Often this also means looking to translations which granted, I also provide for the public, but no serious translator would say his or her work was beyond dispute. No serious scholar would only read one version of a passage, especially if it is controversial.

However, when politics are on the line, nuances and painstaking truth are the first casualties in the theological wars we have been exploring together. For example, I have often heard that the LXX (Septuagint, Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) supports Samaritan⁴/Sadducean/Karaite viewpoints so I decided to look at the Greek itself. When I did, I was in for a shock:

¹¹ καὶ ἀνοίσει τὸ δράγμα ἔναντι κυρίου δεκτὸν ὑμῖν τῇ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης ἀνοίσει αὐτὸ ὁ ἱερεὺς (Leviticus 23:11 BGT)

Now, let us go word for word, literal Greek order, and then I will show the final English reading from the most authoritative LXX translator of them all:

And he will offer the sheaf before YHWH (to be) acceptable to you **the morrow (day after)** the first lift up it the priest will.

As I said, that's word for word. Now here is how Lancelot Brenton renders it:

And he shall lift up the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you. **On the morrow of the first day** the priest shall lift it up. (Leviticus 23:11 Brenton, LXE)

⁴ The Samaritan Pentateuch simply reads the same way as the Masoretic Text and leaves the terminology unclear. The same is true of the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, I think a compelling case can be made for the fact that these early yet vague readings that just say "morrow after the Sabbath", and no one is arguing the 15th of Abib is not a Sabbath, are what necessitated the ancient clarifications to underscore what the original meaning was. Therefore, once ancient sources such as LXX, Peshitta Tanakh and Onkelos weigh in, the vague older readings have their meanings fall in line with the slightly later but still very ancient more specific witnesses.

The Septuagint with Apocrypha by Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton (Hendrickson Publishers: 1997 ;originally published by Samuel Bagster and Sons of London (1851), p. 159-160.

So where is the smoking gun here for the LXX for the Karaite cause? In fact, if anything, the reading helps the Hebrew for a few reasons:

- 1) It does not say SHABBAT at all. In fact the last timing reference we have is the 15th day of Abib in Leviticus 23:6. The 15th is surely the first full day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- 2) So the LXX actually comes very close to mentioning the 16th directly without having the SHABBAT create any ambiguity!
- 3) The LXX is also a translation from an even more ancient Hebrew Torah text than the Masoretic standardized texts are.

So to my mind this clearly designates the day after the 15th, that “first day” that fully incorporates the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On the other hand though, I was surprised to hear recently that certain Christian organizations like the Worldwide Church of God have twisted this verse to mean Shavuot must be always the first day after the first day of the week, or Monday! And, as much as I would love to teach Aramaic to these people I am afraid I am going to have to suggest they actually learn Greek first! Here is why that idea of a Monday-only Shavuot is a non-starter:

- 1) It finds absolutely no support in ANY known rabbinic school, including the Karaites and the Samaritans! So not only am I going to try to show these Christian folks how they should know the Biblical NT language they are supposed to be most familiar with, I find myself also awkwardly defending the other schools of thought against these churches as well!
- 2) The last timing reference is to a calendar DAY (the 15th) and not to a day of the week, so the Greek grammar does not attach to a day of the week here.
- 3) To show you why this is important, consider this passage:

^{BYZ} **John 20:1** Τῇ δὲ **μῑ τῶν σαββάτων** Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἔρχεται πρῶτῃ, σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης, εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ βλέπει τὸν λίθον ἡρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου.

Now sometimes this verse confuses people and they think that “sabbaton” must always be a plural. However, Thayer and other leading Greek lexicons say no:

σάββατον, σαββάτου, τό (Hebrew שַׁבָּת), found in the N. T. only in the historical books except twice in Paul's Epistles; *sabbath*; i. e.: the seventh day of each week, which was a sacred festival on which the Israelites were required to abstain from all work (Exo. 20:10; 31:13f; Deut. 5:14); a. **singular** σάββατον and τό σάββατον:

Mark 6:2; (15:42 L Tr); Mark 16:1; John 5:9f, etc.; equivalent to the institution of the sabbath, the law for keeping holy every seventh day of the week: Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:27f; Luke 6:5; λύειν, John 5:18; τηρεῖν, John 9:16; ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ σαββάτου (יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, Exo. 20:8 and often), the day of the sabbath, sabbath-day, Luke 13:16; 14:5; ὁδὸς σαββάτου, *a sabbath-day's journey*, the distance it is lawful to travel on the sabbath-day, i. e. according to the Talmud two thousand cubits or paces, according to Epiphanius (haer. 66, 82) six stadia.

So this is why sabbaton is in many cases actually referring to a singular Shabbat and not “first among the sabbaths” which is an attempt to twist the text in support of minority positions that it does not enjoin.

However, my main point about this phrase *mia ton sabbaton* is the grammatical construct that *mia* (one, first) does not stand alone as a reference to the first day of the week—ever! It is always “first of ____.”

In other words, attempts to say that you could leave the word “first” hanging in a Greek sentence and that it would be understood as referring to Sunday automatically is simply preposterous.

- 4) Just as we saw with the weakness of Sunday only omer count, the Greek here lacks its normal clarity. It is surely ridiculous to suggest that the most efficient way to say “Monday” is “the first day after the first day of the week”! That is exactly how it would have to read for the Worldwide Church of God to be correct. Again, just as I said on the Hebrew side, if Shavuot is fixed exclusively to the same day, why not name the day? Why not simply say, “second day of the week”?

Although, as compelling as all that evidence is, Brenton has another piece of confirming evidence to offer:

And ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, **seven full weeks**: until **the morrow after the last week ye shall number fifty days** and shall bring a new meat-offering to the Lord. (Lev 23:15-16 LXE)

The Septuagint with Apocrypha by Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton (Hendrickson Publishers: 1997; originally published by Samuel Bagster and Sons of London (1851), p. 159-160.

So Brenton clearly understands that the proper rendering is “weeks” and not “sabbaths”, which totally obliterates the other side of this argument.

However, we need to also take a wider view as well. The Septuagint (LXX) is important because it is one witness to a very ancient Hebrew Tanakh that it got translated from. What is generally not well known though is there is another witness to this same Hebrew source text, and it was done in Babylon by Jewish scholars who would later compile the

Talmud. Hiding in this obscure version—not to be confused with Aramaic “targums” that arose later—is a huge secret that can blow the whole linguistic cover up wide open.

Before getting to that however, we should deal with absolute proof that both the LXX and the Aramaic Tanakh (or Peshitta Tanakh as it is also known) are more than 2,000 years old. Put simply, there are many places in both sources that prove they had to come from a time prior to Yeshua’s advent, because there is no way the rabbis in either Babylon or Alexandria would have let those readings stand had they come later.

These proof-texts deal with Yeshua as revealed in Messianic prophecies and also places where the name of Abba YHWH was spelled out, meaning the ban was not absolute at that time. In one key place, Isaiah 7:14, the phrase reads, “behold a virgin will conceive, bear a son and call him Immanuel”. The words in Greek and Aramaic can only mean “virgin”; but after Yeshua’s advent the rabbis tried to change the reading to “young woman” or *almah* in Hebrew, because it offered them a bit more “wiggle room” in their apologetics. Therefore with these words (*parthenos*, *beytolata*) intact, both these translations must come, as the history around each of them by the way attests to, before Yeshua came into the world. Then, being that old, we can now take a look on the Aramaic side and see the secret.

What follows is from Aramaic scholar George M. Lamsa, who is at this moment the only person to have translated the entire Peshitta Tanakh into English. Lamsa writes:

And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD to be accepted for you; **on the morrow** the priest shall wave it. (Leviticus 23:11)

Lamsa, George, M., Holy Bible from the Ancient Near Eastern Text (Harper Collins/A.J. Holman: 1939), p. 143.

The question is, “on the morrow” of what? Notice the word “Shabbat” is missing here? That being the case, I had to be sure Lamsa was correct, so I checked two published versions of the Peshitta Tanakh text and found that, yes indeed, there is no “Shabbat” in that line!⁵ I also checked the definitive electronic transcription of Codex Ambrosianus⁶ which is in Bible Works 10 and found this reading:

ונפרשיה לכפא קדם מריא לקובלא ובתר יומא אחרנא נפרשיה כהנא¹¹

(Lev. 23:11 LPEH)

⁵ These were as follows: Syriac Bible, United Bible Societies (1979), p. 95 and Aramaic Old Testament, commonly known as Peshitta Tanakh, Wipf and Stock Publishers (1954), p. 76.

⁶ Codex Ambrosianus is the textual witness used for Peshitta Tanakh in much the same way that the Leningrad Codex is the main text for the Hebrew Tanakh, though some prefer the more fragmentary Aleppo Codex. In any case, Codex Ambrosianus is dated to about 600 CE as opposed to Leningrad’s 1008 CE, and there are even earlier witnesses to Peshitta Leviticus 23:11—ca. 500 CE—that have the same reading, that being Mss. 14,438.

The underlined phrase reads literally as “and after [the] day following”, and once more “Shabbat” is not there. This reading is confirmed in the manuscript record as well, from about 500 CE onwards.

So, without the “Shabbat” there in this 2,000+ year old version in the sister language to its Hebrew master, the only time reference that “morrow” can be referring to is the 15th day of Abib, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for this is the last time cue mentioned in Leviticus 23:6-7.

From there, when the old Hebrew source gets independently translated again, this time into Greek, that translator decided “first day” was sufficient, perhaps from consulting the Aramaic that validated that a day to week count was not being referenced at all, and in fact it was not.

Testimony from Targum Onkelos

Another ancient resource is the Aramaic Targum known as Onkelos, believed by many rabbis to go back to the first century. It has a truly remarkable reading that is clearly intended to shed a lot of light on this issue. It reads:

And he shall uplift the *omera* before Yahweh⁷ to be accepted for you: **after the day of the festivity (yoma taba)** shall the priest uplift it...And count to you, **after the festival day (yoma taba)**, from the day that you brought the *omera* of the elevation, seven weeks, complete shall they be. (Leviticus 23:11, 15 Onkelos, as translated by J.W. Etheridge and cross-referenced and updated by Andrew Gabriel Roth)

וַיִּרְאֵם יְתָ עֹמְרָא קִדְמָא יוּי לְרַעְוָא לְכוּן מִבְּתַר יוֹמָא טַבָּא יְרִימִינְיָה כְּהֵנָּא: ¹¹

וְתִמְנֹן לְכוּן מִבְּתַר יוֹמָא טַבָּא מִיּוֹם אֵיתוּאִיכוּן יְתָ עֹמְרָא דְאַרְמוּתָא שְׁבַע שְׁבוּעֵן שְׁלֵמֵן יְהוּזִין: ¹⁵

In both key places, Targum Onkelos interprets “morrow of the Shabbat” as *yoma taba*, an Aramaic term that is directly derived from the Hebrew *yom tov*. Meaning literally “the good day” *yom tov* is also a technical term that encompasses both the weekly Shabbat but far more often the annual Shabbats attached to the feasts! In other words, the very presence of this term disproves fixing the start or end of the omer count to Sunday. The image below is from www.hebcal.com:

⁷ Targum Onkelos does a very poor job of hiding the Name, even though that is its stated intention. The transliteration is Yodh-Waw-Yodh (Y-W-Y), and even though there are no vowels—the text was fixed before they were developed—the most natural way to pronounce the consonants is “Yahweh”. As such, Onkelos makes a departure from similar Aramaic literature like the Peshitta Tanakh, which employs “MarYAH” for the Tetragrammaton.

Major holidays

Holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the date specified.

Dates in **bold** are yom tov, so they have similar obligations and restrictions to Shabbat in the sense that normal "work" is forbidden.

Holiday	Dates	Description
Purim	Mar 12 Su	Purim is one of the most joyous and fun holidays on the Jewish calendar
Pesach	Apr 11-12 Tu-W Apr 13-16 Th-Su Apr 17-18 M-Tu	Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread
Shavuot	May 31-Jun 1 W-Th	Festival of Weeks, commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai
Tisra B'Av	Aug 1 Tu	The Ninth of Av, fast commemorating the destruction of the two Temples
Rosh Hashana	Sep 21-22 Th-F	The Jewish New Year
Yom Kippur	Sep 30 Sa	Day of Atonement
Sukkot	Oct 5-6 Th-F Oct 7-11 Sa-W	Feast of Tabernacles
Shmini Atzeret	Oct 12 Th	Eighth Day of Assembly
Simchat Torah	Oct 13 F	Day of Celebrating the Torah
Chanukah	Dec 13-20 W-W	The Jewish festival of rededication, also known as the Festival of Lights

That fact also led the great Aramaic scholar John Wesley Etheridge to translate the term as “after the day of festivity” in 23:11 and “after the festival day” in 23:15, both of which are clearly referring to the day after the 15th of Abib.

So what this shows is that originally ancient sages in both Greek and Aramaic understood the original intentions of the Hebrew in a way that others who came later had forgotten. And the fact remains, there is not a single ancient witness that truly bears testimony in a clear and convincing way that either the omer count or Shavuot is exclusively fixed to a given day of the week, regardless as to which day is chosen to link it to.

XI. Scripture Readings for Shavuot, Part 3:

- 1) Habakkuk 3:1-19
- 2) Acts 2:1-47, 20:13-16

Shavuot Scripture to ponder for this section: And Yeshua said to Shimon, "Shimon, behold Satan wants to sift all of you like wheat. But I have prayed over you that your faith may not weaken. Also in time you will turn and strengthen your brothers."

And Shimon said to him, "My Master, with you I am prepared even for prison or for death."

Yeshua said to him, "I say to you Shimon that the rooster will not crow this day three times until you deny me, that you do not know me!" And he said to them, "When I sent

you without purses and without bags and shoes and did you lack for anything?" They said to him, "Nothing."

He said to them, "From now on he, who has a purse, let him take it. And likewise also a bag. And he, who has no sword, let him sell his garments and buy for himself a sword. For I say to you for also that this that was written is worthy to be fulfilled in me; that I will be numbered with the wicked. For all things that concern me will be filled full with proper understanding."

And they said to him, "Our Master, behold here are two swords." He said to them, "They are sufficient." And he departed and went as he was accustomed to the mountain of the House of Olives, and his disciples also went after him. And when he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he departed from them about a throw of a stone, and he knelt and was praying.

And he said, "Father if you desire you let this cup pass over me, but not my will, rather let yours be done." Then a Messenger appeared to him from Heaven to strengthen him. And while being in fear, he was praying earnestly, and his sweat became like drops of blood. And he fell upon the ground. And he arose from his prayer and came to his disciples and found them while sleeping from sorrow. And he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? You arise and pray or else you enter into temptation." And as he spoke, behold a crowd with the one who is called Yehuda, one of the twelve, came before them. And he drew near to Yeshua and kissed him, for this sign he had given them that "Whomever that I kiss, is he." Yeshua said to him, "Yehuda! You betray the Son of man with a kiss!" (Luke 22:31-48 AENT)

END PART 4

PART 5

The Real Shavuot Miracle and What it Means

First let us turn to the book of Acts:

And after the (fifty) days of Shavuot (Pentecost) were fulfilled, all were assembled as one. All of a sudden there was a sound from heaven like a roaring wind and all that House in which they were sitting was filled. And (it) appeared to them like tongues divided, and fire sat upon every one of them. And all of them were filled with the Ruach haKodesh, and they were compelled to speak in different tongues, just as the Spirit had given them to speak. Now there were men who were living in Urishlim who feared Elohim - Jews from all nations that are under heaven.

And when that sound occurred, all the people gathered and were disturbed because they were hearing each man among them who were speaking in their own language. Now they were astonished, all of them, and wondered while they were

saying one-to-another, “Can’t grasp it!” These, all of them who are speaking, are Galileans. “How do we hear, we each man the tongue in which we were born?” Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and those who dwell in Beth-Nahrin, and Cappadocians, and those from the areas of Pontus, and of Asia. And those from the areas of Phrygia, and of Pamphylia, and of Egypt, and of the areas of Libya that are near to Cyrene, and those who have come from Rome - Jews and proselytes. And those from Crete, and Arabians. “Behold we are hearing from them that they are proclaiming the wonders of Elohim in our language!” (Acts 2:1-11-AENT)

There is NOTHING in Acts that indicates these languages are anything other than the languages of men! No angelic tongues are present here at all. That does not mean there are no other places that may be referring to the heavenly variety because there are, but our first step is to SEPARATE those “angelic” instances from THIS out pouring of the Ruach ha Kodesh.

All too often, Pentecostals and others link the Ruach speaking in the LANGUAGES OF MEN as a dispensation to speak what they think are the languages of angels. Those are two separate things, and in the process they have forgotten something that the rabbis have remembered for them:

The following were the heads of offices in the Sanctuary: Johanan, son of Pinchas, keeper of the seals; A'hia, (superintendent) of drink-offerings; Mathia, son of Samuel, (superintendent) of the casting of lots; Petha'hia, (superintendent) of bird-offerings. Petha'hia is Mordecai, but why do they call him Petha'hia? Because he used to expound and interpret scriptures, and was master of seventy languages (Sheqalim 5:1, Rodkinson Mishnah)

I find it very interesting that at the height of pride for the rabbis in Scripture of their culture and language that they believe the Torah was given in SEVENTY LANGUAGES, ONE FOR EACH ELDER OF ISRAEL (Sotah, 32a)! And when do the rabbis believe the Torah was first given? On Shavuot! So, is it any wonder the events of Acts 2 would happen again at Shavuot???

This is the context that Christendom misses, and the rabbis talk about often. The rabbis call this the “Bat Kol” or daughter voice that speaks inspiration from Abba YHWH to men, but always in their earthly languages.

In terms of angelic languages, we have these warnings in the text:

Follow after love; and be searching for the gifts of the Spirit, and especially, that you may prophesy. For he that speaks in a tongue, speaks not to men, but to Elohim; for no one understands what is said; yet in the spirit, he speaks a mystery. But he that prophesies, speaks to men, for edification, and encouragement, and consolation.. He that speaks in a tongue edifies himself, and he that prophesies, edifies the assembly. Now I would that you all not

spoke with tongues, but rather that you prophesied; for greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks in a tongue, unless he interpret; and if he interpret, he edifies the assembly. (1 Corinthians 14:1-5-AENT)

What we see clearly is that Rav Shaul acknowledges that angelic tongues are POSSIBLE, but again:

- 1) He does NOT link them to Acts 2 events.
- 2) He insists that interpretation be given so that the assembly can be edified, assuming the message is Scriptural. If it is not, one can only assume he would apply the Berean standard per Acts 17.
- 3) He would still rather people prophesied rather than engage in this activity.

This is the PLAIN READING of this part of 1 Corinthians. Let us keep going:

And now, my Brothers, if I should come among you and speak to you in tongues, what should I profit you; unless I should speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophecy, or by doctrine? For even inanimate things that emit sound, whether pipe or harp, if they make no distinction between one sound and another, how will it be known what is sung or what is harped? And if the shofar will give an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for the battle? So likewise if you utter many words in a tongue, and there is no interpretation given, how will it be known what you have said? You will have been as if you spoke into the air. (1 Corinthians 14:6-9-AENT)

In other words, without understanding the SOUNDS (babbling, gibberish-like utterances) are USELESS in and of themselves, and to prove it he gives several examples. From here we continue...

For behold, there are many kinds of tongues in the world; and there is not one of them without meaning. But if I do not know the import of the sound, I will be a barbarian to him that speaks, and the speaker will be a barbarian to me. So also you, since you are searching for the gifts of the Spirit for the edification of the assembly, you seek to excel. And let him that speaks in a tongue, pray that he may interpret. For if I should pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my (spiritual) understanding is without fruits. What then will I do? I will pray with my spirit and will pray with my understanding; and I will sing with my spirit and will sing with my understanding. Otherwise, if you bless in the spirit, how will he that fills the place of one unlearned, say "Amen" on your giving thanks; for he does not know what you say? You bless, indeed, very well; but your neighbor is not edified. (1 Corinthians 14:10-17-AENT)

Again, same point. No usefulness in the ASSEMBLY for tongue speaking WITHOUT interpretation. What Rav Shaul says next has often been twisted to mean its OPPOSITE.

Yes, it is true he says, “I thank Elohim that I speak more in tongues than you do”, but that is because he is ALONE and HAS INTERPRETATION. This is the part the Pentecostals and their ilk totally miss. I will say it again: Rav Shaul is thankful he can speak the tongues ALONE AND WITH INTERPRETATION. That is HIS GIFT, and it not the “gift” being proffered by the Pentecostals! Want proof? Here it is:

I thank Elohim that I speak with tongues more than all of you. But in the assembly, I would rather speak five words with my (spiritual) understanding, that I might instruct others, than a myriad of words in a tongue. (1 Corinthians 14:18-19 AENT)

It is at this point that we come to a main divergence because this is a matter of exceeding authority on the part of the congregants who speak in tongues without interpretation. What happens is this: the person who speaks in tongues then delivers his own “opinion” supposedly based on the language of angels and with no attempt to double check him or her, we have no idea where the message came from, if it is real or if it is really from an angel at all! And if it is from “the other side” then the whole assembly will go astray and rebel against Abba YHWH!

But the most amazing rebuke of the Pentecostal position is still to come. It is here:

If therefore the whole assembly gathers, and they all speak with tongues, and there come in unlearned persons, or those that disbelieve, will they not say: “These people are crazy?” But if you should be all prophesying, and one unlearned or an unbeliever should come among you, he is explored by you all, and rebuked by you all; and the secrets of his heart are laid open (to him): and so he will fall upon his face, and will worship Elohim, and say: “Verily, Elohim is in you.” I therefore say (to you) my Brothers, that when you assemble, whoever of you has a psalm, let him speak; and whoever has a doctrine, and whoever has a revelation, and whoever has a tongue, and whoever has an interpretation. Let them all be for edification. ***And if any speak in a tongue, let two speak or at most, three; and let them speak one by one; and let (some) one interpret.*** (1 Corinthians 14:23-27 AENT)

The reason this is so dangerous, and that interpretation is needed is because while angelic tongues ARE a gift of the Ruach, without interpretation, there is no way to know these are not demons pretending to be angels because we are commanded to TEST THE SPIRITS to see if they are true:

My beloved, do not believe all spirits; but discriminate among spirits whether they are of Elohim: for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this the Spirit of Elohim is known; every spirit that confesses that Yeshua the Mashiyach has come in the flesh is of Elohim. And every spirit which does not confess that Yeshua the Mashiyach has come in the flesh is not of Elohim; but he is of the false Messiah of whom you have heard that he comes and now is he already in the world. (1 Yochanan 4:1-3-AENT)

So how can you test the spirits if you have no interpretation about what they are saying? It is a 50-50 shot after all, don't you want to be SURE? Because if not, the apostle Paul has another warning for you:

You cannot drink the cup of our Master (Yeshua) and the cup of demons; and you cannot be partakers at the table of our Master, and at the table of demons. (1 Corinthians 10:21-AENT)

Now at this point I can imagine some might cry "foul!" because Rav Shaul is talking about eating food sacrificed to idols in the verses immediately previous to this one. To be sure, they are correct, but, what they miss is that 1 Corinthians 10:21 is also a GENERAL WARNING, that you cannot in any way sit at both the table of pagans and the table of Yeshua. That being the case, let us look at how Yeshua, in part at least, defines an attribute or marker of pagan belief:

And when you pray, you should not be chatterers like the pagans, for they hope that by many words they will be heard. Therefore, do not imitate them for your Father knows what need you have before you ask Him. (Matthew 6:7-8-AENT)

Notice please that he is NOT rebuking the Pharisees and their formulaic Hebrew recitation because no matter how fast the Pharisees speak Hebrew, he knows they UNDERSTAND HEBREW. But the PAGANS are the ones who babble without meaning and Yeshua says, "Do NOT be like them!" And all I am saying is, we should take his advice, just a suggestion.

XII. Conclusions.

Shavuot, though perhaps to some seeming like the "forgotten" Great Feast is nevertheless interconnected throughout the entire Scripture, with deep associations with Moshe and Yeshua and the followers who came later. Shavuot has also unfortunately been a focal point for religious hypocrisy and bad politics of the worst kind over the past 3,000 years. All too often the losers in this debate have attempted to rewrite history at the expense of others who are trying as best they can to learn Torah the right way. And the politics of this twisting on the Christian side is just as egregious as anything on the Pharisaic-Rabbinic side, if not MORESO.

Nevertheless, an open and honest exchange on whether to fix the omer counts to 16 Abib or to the first Sunday after Pesach can and should be done. I view this calendar controversy generally as minor compared to other debates such as Lunar Sabbath and the Aviv calendar, which are far more problematic.

And this is why I will always freely and comprehensively discuss all sides of the issue, the timing of Shavuot. These debates, though onerous at times, are healthy for the Body of Mashiyach to have so show how critical getting Yah's timing down really is. As

always though, todah rabba for listening. And whether you have had your Shavuot or will have it...CHAG SAMEYACH!

Final Shavuot Scripture! And he said to his disciples, "Watch out against all greed, because life is not in the abundance of wealth." And he spoke a parable to them, "A certain rich man his land brought many crops to him. And he was reasoning in himself and saying, 'What will I do because I have no place in where I can gather my crops.' And he said, 'I will do this, I will tear down my barns and rebuild and enlarge them and gather in there all my wheat and goods. And I will say to myself, "My soul, you have many goods that are laid up for many years. Relax, eat, drink and be merry.'"

But Elohim said to him, 'Fool! Your soul will be required from you in this night, and these things that you have prepared, who will they be for?' Such is he who lays up treasures for himself and does not abound in Elohim." And he said to his disciples, "Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious about yourselves, what you will eat nor about your bodies what you will wear. For the soul is greater than food, and the body than clothing. (Luke 12:15-23 AENT)

Next week we will be exploring *Behalotekha*, or Numbers, 8:1-12:16. Our Haftorah will be Zechariah 2:14-4:7, and our Renewed Covenant reading will be Hebrews 4:1-16. Stay tuned!

Peace and Blessings!
Andrew Gabriel Roth
May 28th, 2020