

What does it truly mean to be “Pentecostal”?

([Acts 2](#)) 5783 B”H

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Infilling. Indwelling. Whatever you’d like to call it, you need it! We all do.

The infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Often called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the infilling, indwelling presence of the Third Person of the Trinity is the [Promise from the Father](#), a gift that all believers may receive!

[“Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Luke 24:49](#)



Pentecostal Christianity

Despite the fact that the largest organized evangelical Christian fellowship in the world ([the Assemblies of God](#)) just so happens to be Pentecostal in belief and practice, most Americans do not know very much about Pentecostal Christianity.

Globally, here are the number of adherents in some of the largest and most well-known classical Pentecostal movements or denominations:

[Assemblies of God: 85 million](#)

[Pentecostal Holiness: 4 million](#)

[Church of God \(Cleveland\): 7 million](#)

[Church of God in Christ: 3 million](#)

These particular denominations are **Trinitarian** with **sound doctrine**. Pentecostal fellowships in general, but particularly the Assemblies of God, have always emphasized global missions.

The fruit of that determined investment are these combined 99 million+ members around the world. This is proof that Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered evangelism is effective!

“Send it on down, LORD, let the Holy Ghost come on down.”
Hosanna Music

The Erroneous Jesus-only doctrine

The [United Pentecostal](#) (UPCI) Oneness denomination is growing, currently with 5 million members, but this group **denies** the Triune nature of God. In most cities, UPCI churches are known as “The Pentecostals of . . .” leading many to believe all Pentecostals share this type of erroneous doctrine. The UPCI teaches what is termed, “apostolic doctrine.” This is a doctrinal problem that new leaders need to be able to confront and correct with love because it is more than just a semantic issue. These churches are often known as “Jesus-only” churches because they do not baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but rather in the Name of Jesus, only.

The UPCI teaches that women must have uncut hair, may not wear makeup, and that men should not wear shorts. I applaud their efforts to emphasize modesty, but I do believe they have gone a bit too far.

Because of outward appearance (particularly of UPCI women), many people in the United States have equated *all Pentecostals* with this type of legalism.

But the reality is, being **Pentecostal is about what the Holy Spirit has done on the *inside***, and yes, our outward appearance should reflect holiness, but in a balanced way, not infringing on personal freedom. I personally **choose** to wear skirts and dresses, but **I am not required to do so** by the organization with which I am affiliated.

What makes a person “Pentecostal?”

We need to reclaim the term “Pentecostal” for all who are [genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit.](#)

Clothing or hairstyle does not make a person “Pentecostal.”

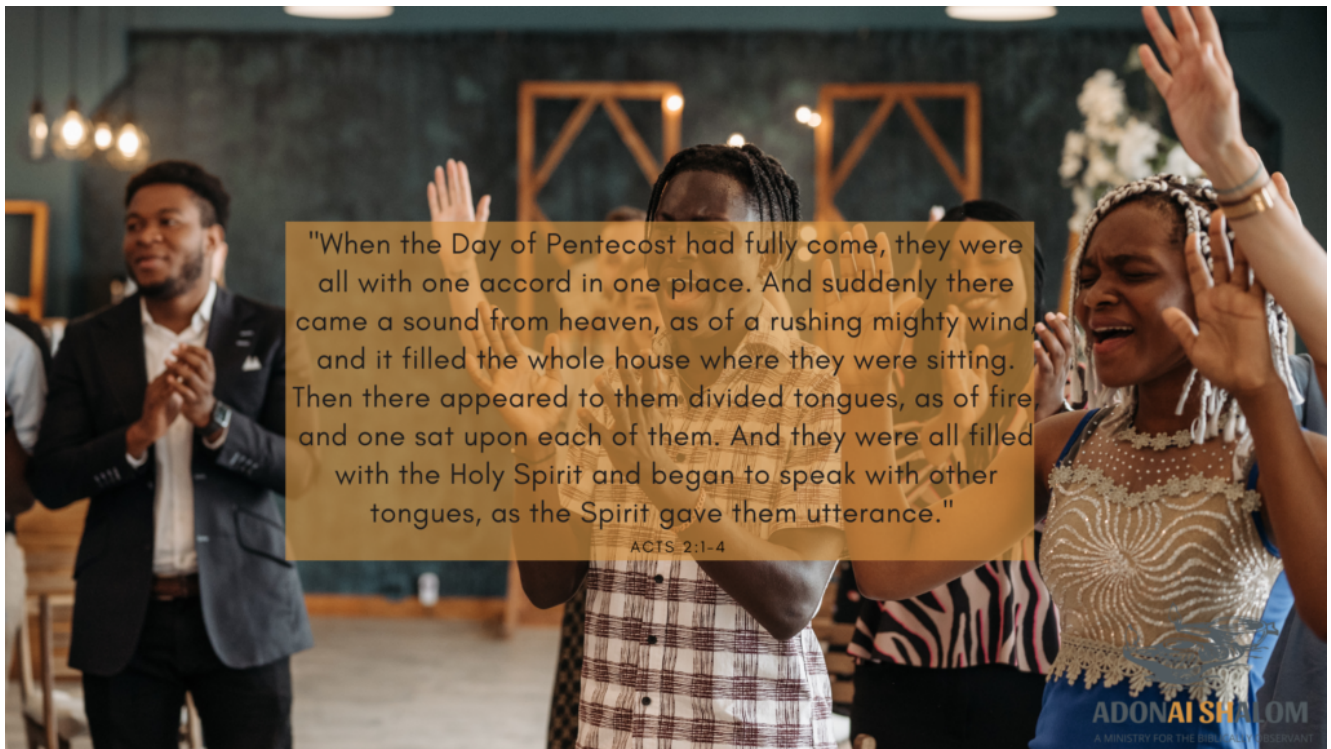
Nor does emotionalism. Sometimes Pentecostals have a reputation for being expressive or “too” emotional. God has given us emotions and there are appropriate moments even in the context of a worship service when emotion can and should be expressed and even encouraged! But emotion for the sake of a show or drawing attention to oneself... that is not what makes a person a “Pentecostal.” A true Pentecostal person has a healthy understanding of how God ministers to our emotions.

The Spirit of the LORD makes a person [“Pentecostal.”](#)

Power from on high makes a person “Pentecostal.”

Being filled with the Holy Spirit (with evidence) (more on that later), makes a person truly “Pentecostal.”

[“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2:1-4, NKJV](#)



The Full Gospel

Notice that [Acts 2:1](#) says “When the Day of Pentecost had **fully** come” (*emphasis added*)

The [Day of Pentecost](#) was actually the [Feast of Shavu’ot](#), that had been celebrated for years. It’s just that this time, in Acts, God was going to do something so much greater. If you are interested in learning about the [Feast of Shavu’ot](#) and the [Biblical Spring Feasts](#), click [here](#) for my [post](#) that goes more in-depth on that particular subject.

When I usually read this, I focus on the fact that the Jewish Feast day had come, but let’s look at the important adverb there: fully.

The Feast day had **fully** come. It was the precise day . . . but also: this was a day of fulfillment. The Day prophesied by the Prophet [Joel](#) had **fully come** – the LORD was going to even more **fully** work in the lives of His people.

[“And it shall come to pass afterward
That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;](#)

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your old men shall dream dreams,
Your young men shall see visions.
And also on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

Joel 2:28-30, NKJV

There is a fullness to the Gospel. Never again shall you hunger or thirst for Living Water because that Living Water will come to you and indwell you.

The **Full** Gospel is that which the Pentecostal communities proclaim: that the Gospel didn't end at the Resurrection! There was more yet to come! The LORD would unite His people through the power of the Holy Spirit and dwell **inside** of them.

Prior to the Pentecostal outpouring of Acts 2, the Spirit of the LORD came upon God's servants, but only for a certain moment or occasion, for a certain purpose. After Acts 2, the Spirit of the LORD would dwell within those who are called by His Name. Hallelujah!

Pentecostalism is about receiving all that the LORD has for you

I love how God does things holistically.

We find this to be true throughout the Bible. For example, a Biblical term, “*shalom*,” meaning “peace,” is more than a simple “peace” that we understand in our English language today. The Hebrew “*shalom*” that the Bible talks about is holistic – an all-encompassing wholeness that only the Prince of Shalom could bring.

So God doesn't just deal with one part of us – its not just “accept Jesus in your heart” and that's it. Our heart is vitally important and so is our soul and spirit, but also this

physical body we are living in right now.

The LORD of All wants you to have a relationship with Him that includes aspects that are very experiential. Being baptized in water is a *physical* symbol of your dying to your sin and rising with Him to new life. Being baptized in the Holy Spirit is also physical! Your physical *body* will feel the glorious spiritual effects – you will be filled with a uncontainable joy and your tongue will speak praises to God with amazing fluidity.

Yes, God can use people who have not (yet!) received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But He can use you for so much more greatness if you receive the awesome gift He has for you. He wants so much for you – don't limit your experience with the LORD because of your preconceived notions of what it might mean to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Don't fear! The LORD designed all of this so beautifully. Receive what He offers you!

What is the Biblical Evidence of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

The Biblical Evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is often called the ["Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit."](#)

["And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."](#)
[Acts 2:4, NKJV, emphasis added](#)



"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
and began to speak with other tongues,
as the Spirit gave them utterance."

ACTS 2:4


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The people were ALL filled with the Holy Spirit (all of them – there were no exceptions or exemptions. No one was left out. The LORD blessed those who had gathered in the Upper Room to wait for the Promise of the Father by pouring out His Spirit upon every.single.one.

The Biblical pattern is this: when people are filled with the Holy Spirit **then** they begin to speak with other tongues as given by the Holy Spirit.

Speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

But some churches don't "believe" in speaking in tongues.

Some even preach against the practice, saying that this occurred only on that particular Pentecost Day.

But read your Bible carefully!

No where does the Word of God suggest that people stopped receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, so certainly He continues to fill His people!

Most people who claim not to believe in the Holy Spirit baptism are people who have actually prayed and asked God for it, but did not (yet!) receive it. They conclude that because they have not received it, then it must not exist. A very poor conclusion indeed.

Some people are quite nervous or frightened about the whole idea of speaking in tongues. I know I wasn't raised around that and I didn't quite understand what it was all about until I received the blessed outpouring. The Bible tells us to not be afraid! Seek Him with your whole heart and He will fill you!

Speaking in tongues will give you a holy boldness to share the Good News with others and will help your prayer life tremendously! If you want to be able to pray effectively and with power, you need the baptism of the Holy Ghost!

“Pentecostal” or “Spirit-filled?”

Being “Pentecostal” is fairly synonymous with being “Spirit-filled.”

It has become more widely accepted and more popular to be “Spirit-filled,” perhaps because this term carries less baggage as I explained with the Trinitarian vs. Oneness doctrinal controversies.

“Spirit-filled” carries its own set of issues at times because some of the new age movements (I may be harsh, but I call it “charismatic witchcraft”) are also comfortable calling themselves Spirit-filled and this causes confusion and division *within* the Pentecostal movement.

Both terms are appropriate. It is just important to know to what exactly you are referring!

Pentecostal and Spirit-filled worship services are vibrant and full of life! If you've never visited a Pentecostal church, I

encourage you to find one to visit in your area! Expect to see people raising their hands in praise and worship and plenty of music and prayer!

Pentecost Sunday (*The Feast of Weeks/The Feast of Shavu'ot*)

This Sunday, followers of our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) from around the world will celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday (*Shavu'ot*). I encourage you to go beyond a once-a-year celebration.

Know this: the Holy Spirit can endue you with Pentecostal power, a gift you may enjoy every single day of the year. If you don't receive the initial physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit right away, do not get discouraged. It will happen in God's perfect timing.

Pray today that the Holy Spirit will baptize you in His Holy Fire!

Are you seeking the Holy Spirit baptism? I'd love to pray for you. Leave a comment below!

The Biblical Spring Feasts

Parashat Emor ([V'yikra/Leviticus 21-24](#))

**Are you familiar with the
springtime Biblical feasts?**

[Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of First](#)

[Fruits, and the Feast of Weeks](#) are special days outlined in the Bible.

Each of the Biblical Spring Feasts can also be called by its Hebrew term:

The Feast of Passover = Pesach

The Feast of Unleavened Bread = Chag HaMatzot

The Feast of First Fruits = Yom HaBikkurim

The Feast of Weeks = Shavu'ot

Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) fulfilled the prophetic meaning of each of these Biblical spring feasts (*moedim*).

The Spring Biblical Feasts

The Feast of Passover = Pesach

The Feast of Unleavened Bread = Chag HaMatzot

The Feast of First Fruits = Yom HaBikkurim

The Feast of Weeks = Shavu'ot



Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Perhaps your church has held a Passover Seder meal or you have tasted matzah bread at some point in your life.

Passover is so clearly mentioned in the Gospels and we know the Lamb of God came to take away the sin of the world, so most Christians have at least a basic understanding of what the Passover feast is all about. The amazing Truth of Redemption.

However, most do not realize that Passover leads right into the 7 day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

It is also common for many believers to admit they do not know much about the Feast of First Fruits or the Feast of Weeks.

No worries.

I can help you sort this out.

Before we go any further, let me reassure you, you do not need to be "Jewish" in order to celebrate the "Jewish" feasts.

Followers of Messiah, whether native Israeli or grafted-in, are now part of Israel.

Together, truly a nation under God. Israel's history is our history. We do not compete with Israel, we do not supersede or replace Israel: we *are* Israel. We have been united by the blood of the Lamb and saved by His unfailing grace.

More and more Christians are learning about our Father's established feasts!

He has prepared a banquet before you and you don't have to wait until you get to heaven to feast and celebrate with Him.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

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The Feast of Firstfruits

The Feast of First Fruits is about harvest. The LORD established it so that the people would bring the first and the best of their harvest. It was a feast day for this expression of worship. ([Leviticus 23:9-14](#))

So what does this mean for us today? Most of us are not farmers. It seems a bit challenging to fully understand agriculturally-centric feasts, but we can understand the simple Gospel teaching that spiritually-speaking, the fields are white and ready for harvest ([John 4:35](#)).

This Biblical feast illustrates the victory of the Gospel in the most powerful and marvelous way possible.

You see, Passover is about freedom from death and bondage. The Feast of Unleavened Bread reminds us that He was buried and in that tomb. The Feast of Firstfruits is about the **Resurrection!**

"But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."
1 Corinthians 15:20



Messiah Yeshua was the **first of the harvest** – raised into His glorified, resurrected body. If you read about what was involved with the celebration of First Fruits, you will learn that a sheaf had to be waved before the LORD back and forth.

Waving the sheaf surely seems to represent the **movement of the wind through the crops.**

A mighty rushing wind.

The power of the Holy Spirit (Ruach haKodesh) breathing new life!

The Spirit of the LORD stirring up salvation!

We know that in the last days, the harvest will include people from the east and west, north and south.

So back and forth the wave offering was made: prophesying the harvest of the latter days and prophesying the Truth of Resurrection Day!

The Feast of Firstfruits is the Celebration of Resurrection Day!



The One whom God has sent
speaks the words of God,
for God gives the Ruach
without limit.

JOHN 3:34



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“The One whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Ruach (Holy Spirit) without limit.” John 3:34

The Feast of Weeks

Speaking of the awesome power of the Holy Spirit, [Acts 2:1](#) begins “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come”

The Day of Pentecost as a holy day *wasn't* something new.

Bible translators chose to translate the Hebraic term, "Shavu'ot," with the Greek term "Pentecost."

Ironically, there are language barriers

It is debatable as to whether those who translated were legitimately trying to help readers understand the Hebrew here or whether they were trying to obstruct it (sadly, it is plausible). Preference for Greek terms in translation led to a loss of the original meanings and intent and propelled the wide separation between the early Messianic movements and later church movements.

Before you start thinking I'm anti-Pentecost, hold it right there.

I love Pentecost. I am an ordained Pentecostal pastor. Yet, using solely the term "Pentecost" actually obscures the fullness of the meaning of the Scriptures here!

We need to become more aware of the deficiencies caused by language. (This is nothing new to us Spirit-filled believers. We know language barriers have been overcome by the amazing infilling power of the Holy Spirit!). The limitations of our vocabulary lead to *slight* discrepancies in doctrine and practice which *over time* can become *huge* discrepancies.

For example: I don't know any Christians who say, "Happy Shavu'ot Sunday!"

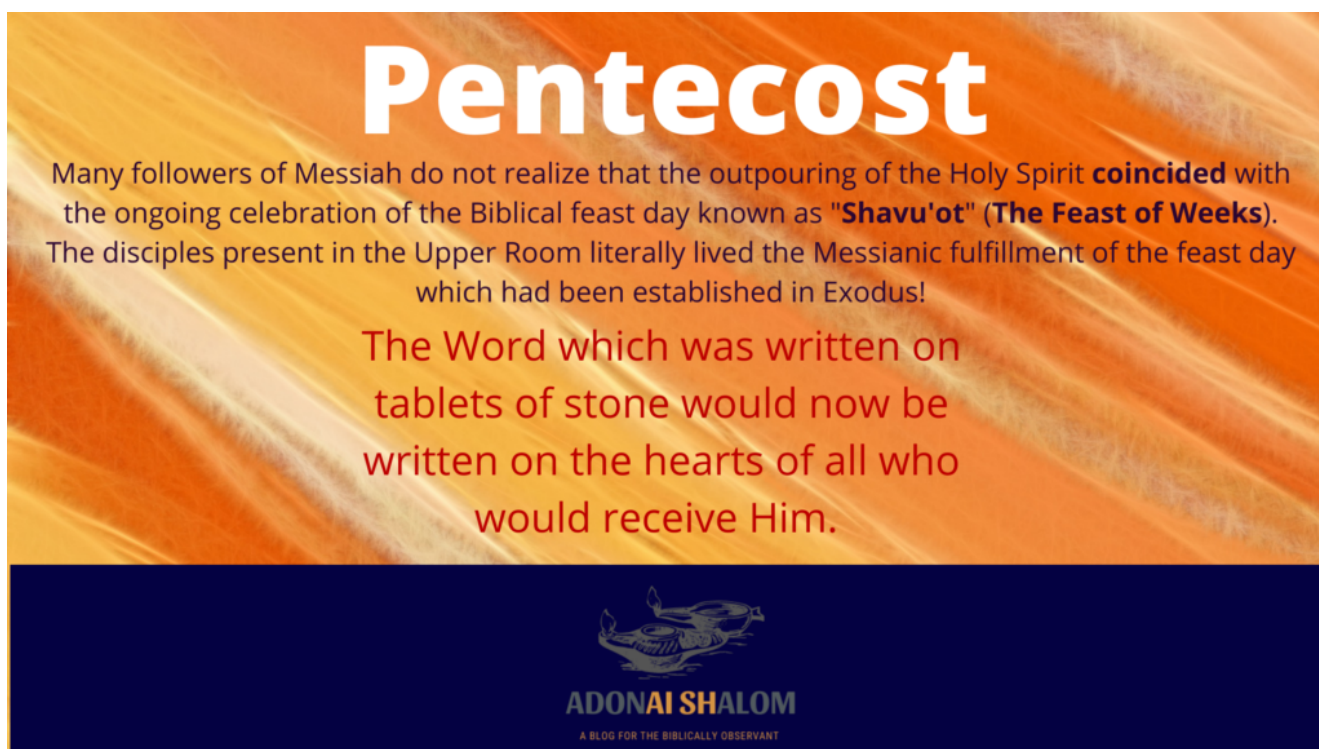
It's always "Pentecost Sunday" in our vocabulary! And that is ok, in the sense that this is how we understand a word in *our language*.

But, we are missing half of the meaning!

We know the Holy Spirit came down. However, many do not realize that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit *coincided* with the ongoing celebration of the Biblical feast day. The

disciples present in the Upper Room literally lived the Messianic fulfillment of the feast day.

The reality is, Shavu'ot (i.e. Pentecost) has been celebrated since the days of Exodus!



Pentecost

Many followers of Messiah do not realize that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit **coincided** with the ongoing celebration of the Biblical feast day known as "**Shavu'ot**" (**The Feast of Weeks**). The disciples present in the Upper Room literally lived the Messianic fulfillment of the feast day which had been established in Exodus!

The Word which was written on tablets of stone would now be written on the hearts of all who would receive Him.

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[Exodus 34:22](#) says "You are to observe the Feast of *Shavuot*, which is the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, as well as the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year."

It became traditional to celebrate the giving of the *Torah* on Shavu'ot. As you can see, **the Word which was written on tablets of stone would now be written on the hearts** of all who would receive Him. Now we also celebrate the giving of the *Holy Spirit* on Shavu'ot! The LORD never leaves us without instruction and never leaves us comfortless.

The Messianic significance of the omer count

Beginning at the Feast of First Fruits, a special omer count was to begin every year. This was a measurement used for dry

goods. Each day, for 50 consecutive days after First Fruits, the day's omer was to be counted. This had gone on for generations prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day we know as Pentecost.

The word, "Pentecost," is highly appropriate here because it was exactly 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits (Resurrection Day) when the Holy Spirit fell upon the gathered, praying believers and endued them with power from on high.

When the LORD Yeshua (Jesus) walked on this earth, He came to fulfill the prophecies, not to abolish them. He promised that He would send another Comforter ([John 14:16, KJV](#)) and that is exactly what He did. Every single action He took and Word He spoke correlated with His mission and He never contradicted Himself.

All of the Biblical Feast Days were established *before* God sent His Son. Today we are just focusing on the spring feasts, but each Biblical feast day is a part of the divinely orchestrated plan to show us the way of salvation. (If you are interested in the fall feasts, those include what is known as [Yom Teruah \(aka Rosh Hashanah\)](#), [Yom Kippur](#), and [Sukkot \(the Feast of Tabernacles\)](#)).

What shall we do?

On that same Shavu'ot day, Peter preached a Spirit-empowered sermon that resulted in 3,000 immersion baptisms.

When people felt convicted of their need for repentance, they asked, ["Fellow brethren, what shall we do?" Acts 2:37](#) (*emphasis added*)

["Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Messiah Yeshua for the removal of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Ruach ha-Kodesh. For the](#)

promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far away—as many as ADONAI our God calls to Himself.”

With many other words he warned them and kept urging them, saying, “Save yourselves from this twisted generation!” Acts 2:38-40

The question posed by the crowd should be the same question we still ask.

What shall we do?

And the exhortation of Peter continues to direct us:

1. Repent
2. Be immersed (baptized) in water
3. Receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit
4. Be saved from this twisted generation

Our journey of faith doesn't end when we are baptized in water. We must seek the infilling of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us for the task of ministry.

How can we be saved from this “twisted” (some translations read, “perverted”) generation?

By doing things God's way, not our way.

That includes surrendering our manmade traditions.

THE BIBLICAL SPRING FEASTS ARE ABOUT DOING THINGS
GOD'S WAY, NOT OUR WAY.

Learn about why you might consider
trading in man's holidays for God's holy days.



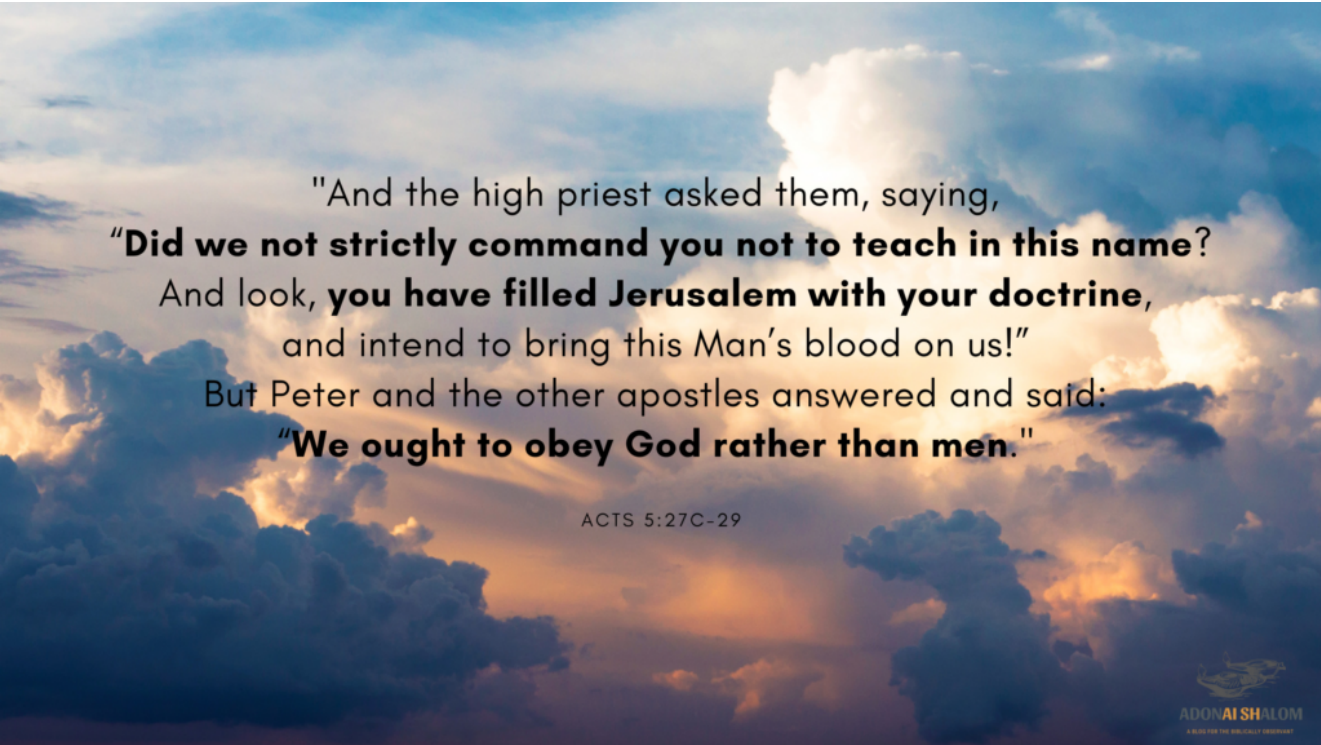
The Biblical Spring Feasts are about doing things God's way, not our way. Learn about why you might consider trading in man's holidays for God's holy days.

By [Acts chapter 5](#), there was so much going on in the way of outreach and missions that the Jewish authorities became very upset. Miraculous healings, supernatural deliverances, prison doors being opened . . .

[“And the high priest asked them, saying, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?”](#)

[And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!”](#)

[But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:27c-29 \(emphases added\)](#)



"And the high priest asked them, saying,
"Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?"
And look, **you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine,**
and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"
But Peter and the other apostles answered and said:
"We ought to obey God rather than men."

ACTS 5:27C-29



Obey God rather than men

This verse isn't a license to stop listening to the wise people that God has placed in your path. Heed godly counsel. Submit to righteous authority.

But carefully *discern* what is truly godly.

If we are to obey God rather than men, let me ask you this question today.

Why continue with manmade festivities?

Why not celebrate the LORD in the way the LORD established?

Why allow the world to creep in to our faith practices?

What do the Springtime Biblical Feasts represent?



What do the Springtime Biblical Feasts represent?



Passover & the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Messiah Yeshua was mocked, beaten, wounded, crucified, died and was buried in the grave for us

The Feast of First Fruits

Messiah Yeshua defeated death and was resurrected in power and victory so that we, too, may live

The Feast of Weeks

The Holy Spirit of Messiah Yeshua has empowered believers for ministry. The Torah given at Sinai is now written on our hearts rather than on tablets of stone



Easter, Eostre, and Ishtar

It is no secret that the word Easter has been derived from several pagan sources. Do we really need to “Christianize” these false gods?

Look at the linguistics.

We get the term, “Easter” from Eostre, an English goddess, who is likely the same personage as Ishtar, the Babylonian fertility goddess. It is no surprise then, that we see the reappropriation of fertility symbols such as eggs and rabbits in Easter celebrations.

What, then, shall we do?

Obey God rather than men!

Our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) died to **free us from idolatry** and sin.

We need to reject the pagan practices that have managed to invade our celebrations of our Savior’s Resurrection.

Resurrection Day exists in Scripture as the Fulfillment of the Feast of First Fruits. **We *should* celebration Resurrection Day!** But we really don't need "Easter."

Consider celebrating each of the Biblical spring feasts. Consider trading in man's Lent for God's *teshuvah* (time of repentance). Trade in man's Easter for *Yom HaBikkurim* (the Feast of First Fruits). In the fall and winter, (I know this one will be controversial) trade in man's Christmas for the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), the most amazing celebration of the Word being made flesh and coming to dwell with us! If you decide to truly follow **what Scripture says** rather than what the majority of tradition has **invented**, you will gain so much!

If following the LORD at His Word is important to you, please comment below! If you have questions about the Biblical spring Feasts we would love to help you! And most importantly, if you have questions about the Messiah, please let us know and we would love to share the Good News with you. Please subscribe so you don't miss any new posts! Shalom!

Related items you may enjoy:

Hoshiana!

You may recognize the word, "Hoshana."

We get the term "Hosanna" from this, a pleading for the Holy One to "please save." It has an emphatic tone in Hebrew: "Save now!"

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