

# 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.”

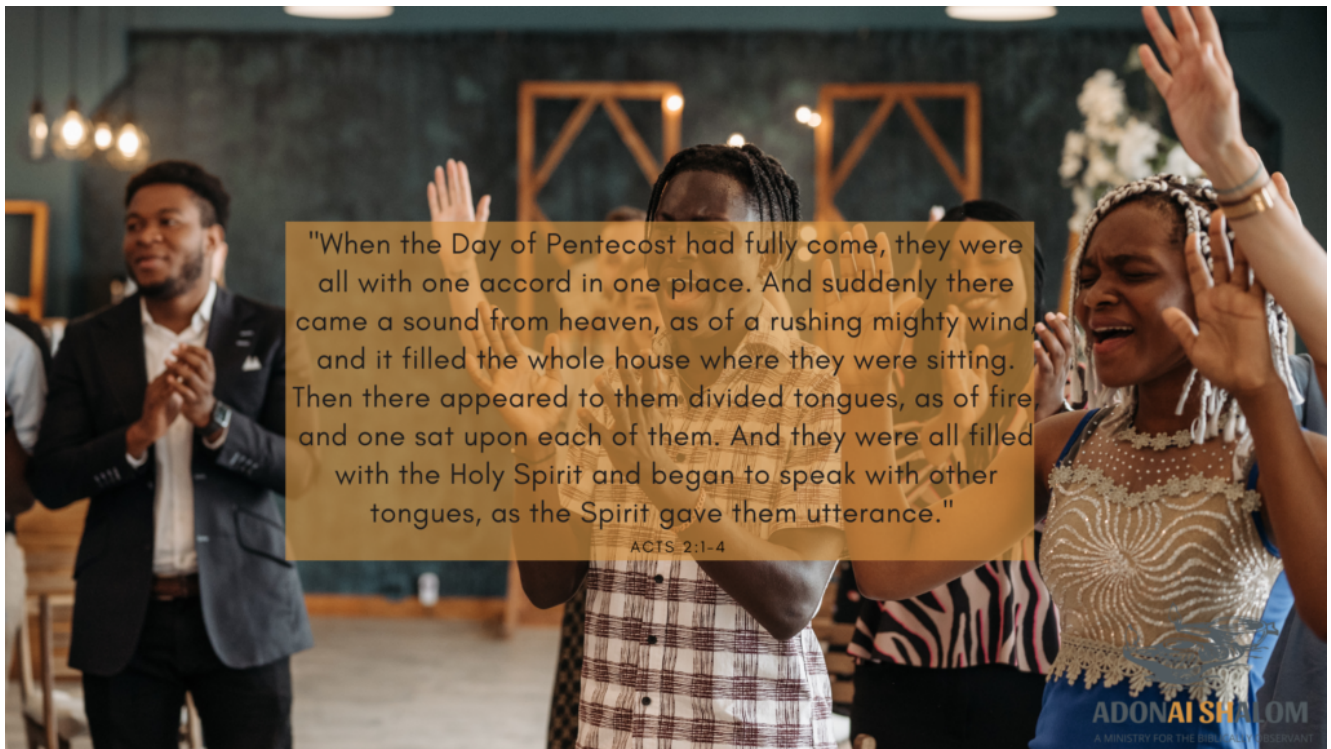
Nor does emotionalism. Sometimes Pentecostals have a reputation for being expressive or “too” emotional. God has given us emotions and there are appropriate moments even in the context of a worship service when emotion can and should be expressed and even encouraged! But emotion for the sake of a show 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](#)



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ACTS 2:1-4

ADONAI SHALOM  
A MINISTRY FOR THE BORN AGAIN

## 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](#)



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!

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## **Why everyone needs the Full Gospel**

**Too many institutions entice young**

# students to look for “truths” rather than the TRUTH

When I was in middle and high school, I was definitely a “seeker.”

I had grown up immersed in pluralism. I had never heard of the “Full Gospel.”

By junior year of high school, encouraged by “pastors” of the United Church of Christ (UCC), (*a sect I now consider heretical*), I had read all sorts of books from so-called “Christian” mysticism. I was particularly interested in such works as *“The Cloud of Unknowing”* and Thomas Merton’s writings recommended to me by the pastors of the church our family attended. I dabbled in Buddhism and other false religions. I was considered “well-rounded.”

In college, I visited a local Hindu temple as well as a mosque outside of Chicago. My friends were also exploring world religions, but the frightening thing is, we were all studying to be “*Christian* pastors.” We weren’t just learning about world religions so that we could properly share the Gospel with the lost, we were learning because we wanted to participate in their practices.

The UCC “associate ministers,” as they were called, (like bishops) were aware that we were learning about Islam and even sat across the table from us during a Ramadan dinner at that mosque that we had all been invited to by an interfaith council. There was no effort on their part to correct our course: all of us who were theology majors were encouraged to explore the commonalities between different faiths. But believe me, we were **never** encouraged to visit an evangelical or Full Gospel church.

When I was in grad school, we were required to read many books that were also rooted in mysticism. I remember observing

(sadly!) that my Divinity School peers were intrigued and absorbing these ideas, likewise encouraged by the seminary's professors. It is no secret that many who enter seminary lose their faith: but the true **tragedy** has to do with the leadership of these institutions who **entice young students to look for "truths" rather than the Truth**. By this time, I had already met my Savior (to the dismay of many of my theologically liberal professors who wished I had retained my interest in ecumenism and interfaith activities).

If you want to read more about my experiences growing up in a universalist environment, check out my post on [Divine Empowerment in an "Inclusive" Age](#).

Many professors have really gotten into using icons (a form of idolatry). Christian schools and churches now incorporate yoga into their programs despite yoga's inherent spiritual connection to Hinduism. I have a missionary friend who is a native of India. She is so dismayed by how many American Christians have accepted and incorporated yoga into their "Christian" practices. She shakes her head and says, "if they only knew . . ."

See, you don't need a whole host of odd rituals or candle lightings or chants. You just need the Full Gospel, brought to you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**I share all this because so many people truly don't know the Gospel, let alone the Full Gospel.**

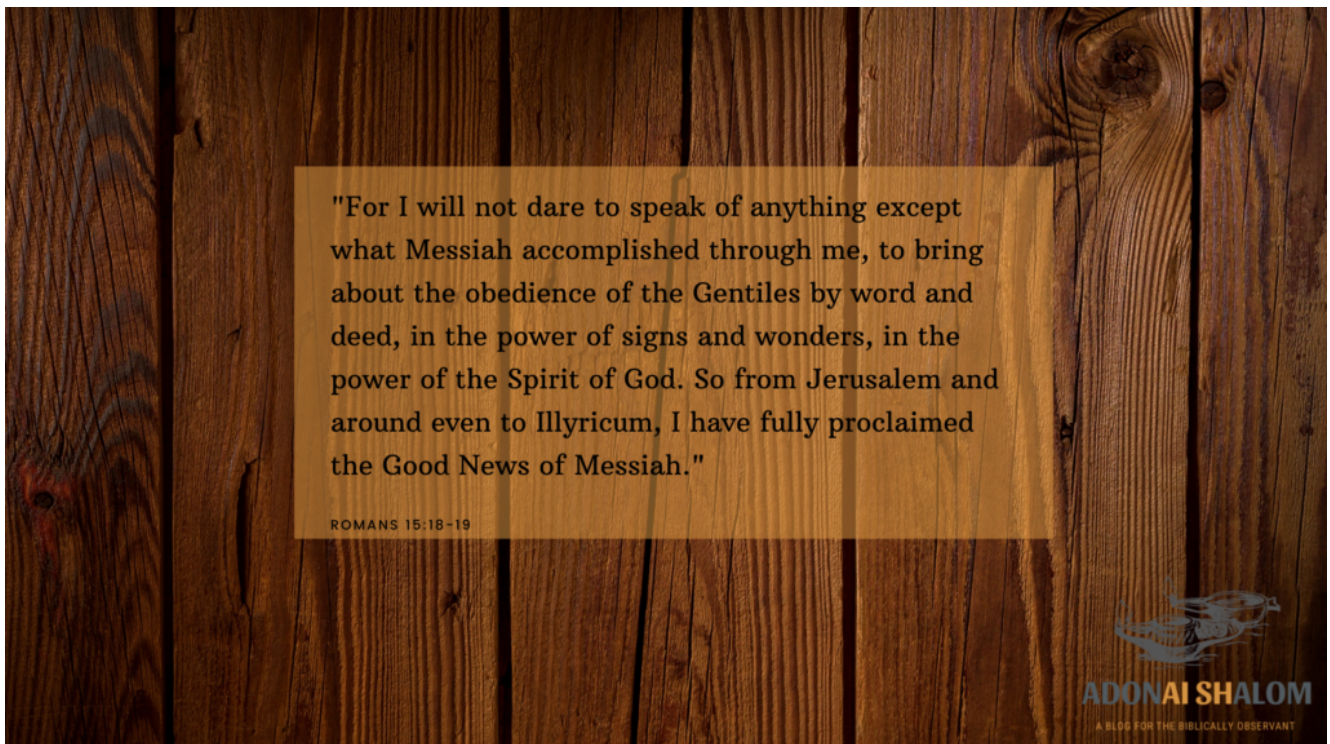
I feel like Peter writes more succinctly than Paul. He writes in a nutshell, the Gospel is:

["He \[Messiah Yeshua/Jesus Christ\] Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we, removed from sins, might live for righteousness. 'By His wounds you were healed.'" 1 Peter 2:24](#)

It is very simple.

You might say Paul was more long-winded:

["For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Messiah accomplished through me, to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem and around even to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Good News of Messiah."](#) Romans 15:18-19



In their own ways; however, both Peter and Paul describe what is termed, the "Full Gospel."

Besides the death and resurrection of our Savior, He also brought healing, signs and wonders. We are saved, and we are healed. We are saved, and we receive the divine infilling of the Holy Spirit, if we will submit to the Holy Spirit's authority.

"Fully" proclaiming the Good News, as Paul writes, is preaching what Messiah Jesus has accomplished (forgiveness of sin through His death on the cross and resurrection) with power. This is the Full Gospel!

# In other words, preaching should be accompanied by signs and wonders – as something normal.

That doesn't mean a worship service should become an entertainment spectacle.

And certainly none of this has to do with “manufactured miracles.”

But it *should be* completely **commonplace** for Gospel preaching to be accompanied by miraculous healings, deliverance, speaking in tongues, etc. The purpose of the spiritual gifts manifesting in power is to essentially give credence to what is preached. That God would heal someone is proof He is living! That God would deliver someone is proof He has power over sin and darkness!

This is the fullness of the Gospel!

A Gospel preached without power isn't the full Gospel. And do you really want to settle for half?

Paul warned Timothy of those who have an [“outward form of godliness but denying its power.” 2 Timothy 3:5b.](#)

This verse speaks to both sides of an issue.

1. There are some followers of our Savior who care so much about their outward looks they forget they are quite rotten in their speech and other aspects of their lives. They deny the power of the Gospel through their pettiness and gossip.
2. Then there are other followers of our Savior who carefully appear to be very godly in their doctrine and behavior, but literally deny the power when they claim that the Holy Spirit isn't working and moving among the body of Messiah as He did in the past. This leads to

anemic doctrine, lacking the vital nutrition of the full understanding of the Gospel.

## **The LORD is still working modern miracles today! Don't be afraid!**

This weekend we celebrate [Shavu'ot](#), also known as Pentecost. A special time to celebrate this Full Gospel I am telling you about!

We rejoice knowing that the same God who gave us His Torah is the same God who gave us His Spirit!

*If you would like to know more in depth about the Messianic and Pentecostal significance of [Shavu'ot/Pentecost](#), check out [my post on the Biblical Spring Feasts!](#)*

Now, let's be realistic.

A lot of people have been trained by our society to be afraid of "Pentecostals."

I know I used to be!

The only reason anyone should be afraid of a Pentecostal is if they don't want any deliverance in their lives.

Because when a true Pentecostal believer prays, you better watch out, the demons flee!

Some Pentecostals or Full Gospel folks might dress a certain way or wear their hair a certain way, and I'm not saying any of that is necessarily bad. But your outward appearance isn't what makes you Pentecostal – its the Holy Spirit within you.

If you have been baptized by the fire from above with the evidence of speaking in tongues, you are Pentecostal. You might attend an Assembly of God church or Church of God (TN), or Pentecostal Holiness, or United Pentecostal. While there

are disagreements among Pentecostal people (just as there are disagreements among any group of people!) about things like Trinitarianism or dress codes, we serve the same Mighty God who has this awesome plan to heal you and deliver you.

When you know that you are saved from your sin, you need to know that you weren't saved just so you'd go to heaven one day.

You were saved so you could start living with the joyous benefits of heaven, starting even now, here on earth.

Life won't be perfect, but you have access to so much divine opportunity to pray and to witness great miracles occur, even now. Heaven will be wonderful, but we don't have to sulk while we bear with the sufferings of this life. We can pray in confidence for the LORD to enable us to live in victory, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

You have the opportunity to be saved – and sanctified! Set free to live in abundant joy and peace. Receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit is described in the Scriptures as a deposit, a seal, so you know without a doubt that you are indeed saved!

## **The Full Gospel is for you!**

If your pastor always stops preaching after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you may need to start asking some good questions about the rest of the New Testament.

Starting in the book of Acts, you will discover how the early believers operated, constantly ministering to others in power. Healings and miracles were part and parcel of the Gospel Truth.

Your faith walk will be greatly enhanced by knowing this powerful Truth, that the Fullness of the Gospel is for everyone, and you are invited to live endued with power from



on high! Whether you are a student or a seasoned believer, don't ever pass up the opportunity to live your life yielded to the Presence of God in your life and the Full Gospel Truth!

## **Why does everyone need the Full Gospel?**

Everyone needs the Full Gospel because everyone needs the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit (*Ruach haKodesh*) will help you when you need to make important decisions. He will lead you closer to the Father. He will help you discern your next steps in life. The Spirit of God (*Ruach Elohim*) will anoint you and bless you. Your prayer life will improve, your worship will be deeper, and your longings will be much more satisfied.

If you have been a Christian for a really long time, but still feel like you're missing out on something, don't turn to mystical and false religions, turn to the Holy Spirit, who will take you to a new level in Him. If you do not yet speak in tongues, don't think of it as something too strange for you. If Paul spoke in tongues, why can't you? Our faith is not of this world, so dive in and allow the Holy Spirit to have His way!

A lot of people won't talk about "speaking in tongues" because our culture has derided people who do as "wackos" and "crazies."

Don't let culture define you nor limit your experiences with God.

Follow the Word of God, and He will provide you the Full Gospel experience that you need.

# **Some great songs for Pentecost/Shavu'ot**

I will leave you with some great praise and worship songs that I love! They are perfect for Pentecost/Shavu'ot, and all year round, too. May they benefit you spiritually as you seek the blessings of the Holy Spirit, our Eternal Comforter! I pray He baptizes you with His Holy Fire, even today! It is an experience that will transform your life!

Holy Spirit, How I love You

Send the Fire

Refiner's Fire

Welcome, Holy Spirit

The Comforter has Come

Bo Ruach Elohim (Come, Spirit of God)

**Please leave a comment or send a message to [adonaishalomusa@gmail.com](mailto:adonaishalomusa@gmail.com). I'd love to hear from you! May you be endued with power from on high!**