

# Shabuot (שבועות) (Pentecost)

**Shabuot (Shavuot)** Pronounced shah boo ot - The Hebrew word for "weeks". Shabuot is also shorthand for the Feast of Weeks (see **Exodus 34:22, Leviticus 23:15-16**) which is called "Pentecost" in Greek. Singular "shabua". Strongs #7620.

Shabuot, also called Pentecost, ("Festival of the Weeks"), second (2nd) of the three (3) Pilgrim Festivals of the Hebrew calendar. It was originally an agricultural festival, marking the beginning of the wheat harvest.

The festival is associated with the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, which is recounted in the Torah readings during the feast. It became customary during Shabuot to study the Torah and to read the Book of Ruth.

Celebration of Shabuot occurs on the 50<sup>th</sup> day, or seven (7) weeks, after the sheaf offering of the harvest celebrated during Pesach (Passover). The feast is therefore also called Pentecost from the Greek pentēkostē ("50th"). Pentecost is the Greek name for Shabuot and literally means "fiftieth day." Just as Pesach (Passover) is observed seven (7) weeks from Shabuot, Christians observe the Pentecost seven (7) weeks after their pagan holiday called Easter.

The Hebrew holiday of Shabuot is often confused with a Christian holiday that happens around the same time of year. But Shabuot is not the Christian Pentecost.

The festival of Shabuot is one of the major Hebrew holidays. The Torah commands us to celebrate this day as a harvest festival, but the day has also become a celebration of when **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) gave the Torah to the Hebrew people.

Shabuot, which comes from the Hebrew meaning "weeks," Also known as the "Feast of the Harvest" celebrates the early barley harvest and the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai.

"Pentecost," which comes from the Greek meaning "fifty," commemorates the descent of the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) on the Apostles and the birth of the early church.

Both Shabuot and Pentecost are celebrated after a count of seven (7) weeks. Shabuot is celebrated Seven (7) Sabbaths after Pesach (Passover), and Pentecost is celebrated seven (7) weeks after Easter. This is not a coincidence. The Greek term "Pentecost" is used by some authors of the Septuagint (an ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible).

Just as Easter is a holiday derived from the Hebrew Pesach (Passover), so too Pentecost is a holiday that is derived from an adaptation of Shabuot. But for more than a thousand years, they have been very different holidays for their respective believers, with different meanings and rituals.

## **What Is Shabuot Really About?**

Shabuot – or "The Feast of Weeks" – is one of the three (3) Scriptural pilgrimage festivals, along with Pesach (Passover) and Sukkot.

The scripture describes the Shabuot festival as an agricultural celebration: the festival of Reaping (**Jeremiah 5:24, Deuteronomy 16:9–11, Isaiah 9:2**). Today, Shabuot is most widely

known as the Hebrew holiday that commemorates the day **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) gave the Torah to the nation of Yasharal (Israel) at Mount Sinai, although Scriptural references to Shabuot refer only to a spring harvest festival.

According to the Torah, it took seven (7) weeks for the Yasharalites (Israelites) to travel from Mitsryim (Egypt) to Mount Sinai. The name Shabuot, means “weeks,” and refers to this seven-week period. Each day is counted, which is known as the Counting of the Omer, or Sefirat HaOmer. In the days of the Temple, the counting marked the seven (7) weeks from the wheat harvest on the spring festival of Pesach (Passover), to the harvesting of barley on Shabuot.

On Pesach (Passover), the people of Yasharal (Israel) were liberated from Mitsryim (Egyptian) slavery; on Shabuot, they were given the Torah and committed themselves to serving **יְהוָה** (Yahuah). While Pesach (Passover) marks their liberation from slavery, Shabuot marks the renewal of their commitment and dedication to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah).

It is this national decision (often referred to as a “marriage” between **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) and the Yasharalites (Israelites) that created the Hebrew people. After accepting the commandments at Sinai, the Hebrew people were no longer just descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now, they became **יְהוָה** (Yahuah)’s chosen people, who had chosen **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) in return, and would study and abide by the guidance and direction of the Torah as part of their service to the Almighty.

### **The Meaning Behind The Names Of Shabuot**

The spring Hebrew feast day of Shavuot has many names and meanings, each of which can teach us something about the nature of the festival. Shabuot is predominately known as the Time of the Giving of the Torah.

### **Festival of Weeks – חג השבועות (Exodus 34:22, Deuteronomy 16:10)**

Shabuot means “weeks” in Hebrew, which is why it is also known as “The Festival of Weeks” in English. The name is derived from the seven (7) weeks of counting from Pesach (Passover) that culminate at the feast of Shabuot.

### **Festival of Reaping – חג הקציר (Exodus 23:16)**

Each of the three (3) pilgrimage festivals marks a new period in the agricultural season:

1. Pesach (Passover), the Spring Festival, which marks the beginning of the new planting season. The basic meaning of the word abib is the stage of growth in grain when the seeds have reached full size but have not yet dried.
2. The Hebrew Harvest Festival of Reaping, is when the first (1st) crop of the season is ready. This happens at the time of Shabuot.
3. The next agricultural step is for all of the crops to be gathered. This happens with the third (3rd) pilgrimage festival, Sukkot, which is also referred to as the Festival of Gathering.

### **Day of the First Fruits – יום הבכורים (Numbers 28:26)**

Yom Habikurim (Day of the First Fruits) comes from ancient times, when people would bring Bikkurim (the first ripe fruits), their first (1st) and best fruits, as an offering to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) in the Qadosh Temple. Bikkurim were brought from the Seven (7) Species for which the land

of Yasharal (Israel) is praised: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates (**Deuteronomy 8:8**).

### **Counting the Omer to Shabuot**

The Torah instructs us to count the weeks between the first (1st) barley harvest and the Feast of Weeks. These seven (7) weeks, known as the Omer, connect the Qadosh days of Pesach (Passover) and Shabuot.

### **Shabuot Torah Reading**

The Book of Ruth, one (1) of the five (5) scrolls of Tanakh is read on Shabuot. The Book of Ruth mostly takes place during the harvest season (**Ruth 1:22**), so we read it on the Harvest of Shabuot.

There are several other reasons why the Book of Ruth is read on Shabuot:

1. King David, Ruth's descendant, was born and died on Shabuot.
2. Ruth was a convert, entering the covenant with אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) of her own accord. The Yasharalites (Israelites) did the same when they entered their covenant with אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah) on Shabuot by receiving the Torah.
3. In the Torah, there is a command stating that no Moabite may marry into אַיָּהוָה (Yahuah)'s nation (**Deuteronomy 23:4**). Ruth was only able to marry Boaz because of the Oral Law's interpretation of that command, which states that this law only applies to the Moabite men. The story of Ruth is told on Shabuot to highlight the necessity of the Torah.

### **What Is the Book of Ruth About?**

During the era of the Judges, there was famine in the land of Yahudah (Judah). An Yasharalite (Israelite) family—Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their sons, Mahlon and Chilion—leave their home in Bethlehem and journey to Moab. Shortly thereafter, Elimelech dies and the sons marry Moabite women. Chilion marries Orpah and Mahlon marries Ruth. Ten (10) years pass, and Mahlon and Chilion die without heirs.

Naomi hears that the famine has ended in Yahudah (Judea) and decides it is time to return home. As she prepares to leave, her daughters-in-law begin to follow, but Naomi tells them to return to their families. Ruth and Orpah cry and protest, telling Naomi they wish to return with her to her people. But Naomi continues to resist, urging her daughters-in-law to go back to their own homes, saying she has nothing left to give them.

Again the two (2) women break down, and Orpah kisses Naomi farewell, but Ruth clings to her mother-in-law. Naomi tries to persuade her to leave, but Ruth is not swayed. She then says her famous lines of loyalty:

“Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your Aluhym my Aluhym” (**Ruth 1:16**).

When Naomi sees how steadfast Ruth is, she consented, and the women return to Bethlehem together.

Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest. Ruth goes to find

sustenance for herself and her mother-in-law, hoping someone will let her gather their leftover grain. The field she finds belongs to Boaz, a close relative of her deceased father-in-law, Elimelech. Boaz asks about the strange woman in his fields and discovers his relation to her. Learning of the great loyalty she has towards Naomi, Boaz shows her special kindness and generosity.

When Ruth returns and tells Naomi all that has transpired, Naomi is thrilled by this coincidence as Boaz is one of Ruth's redeeming kinsmen. This means that because Boaz is a close relative of Elimelech's family, he is obligated by Hebrew customs to marry Mahlon's widow, Ruth, to carry on the family's lineage.

Naomi instructs Ruth to go to Boaz in the middle of the night, uncover his feet, and lie there. Ruth does so and when Boaz wakes up in shock, she tells him who she is and says, "Spread your robe over your handmaid, for you are a redeeming kinsman" (**Ruth 3:9**). Doing so would be considered a formal act of espousal (**Ezekiel 16:8**).

Boaz understands her intent and says that these actions show an even greater loyalty than remaining with Naomi, because now she is demonstrating loyalty to her deceased husband by seeking to perpetuate his legacy.

Although Boaz is a close relative, he tells Ruth that there is another, closer relative who is truly next in line to "redeem" her by Hebrew customs. Boaz tells Ruth he will see if this other man will redeem her, and if not, he will marry her himself.

In the morning, Boaz meets a friend (Ploni Almoni, which is the Hebrew version of John Doe, Joe Schmo, so and so without giving the name of the person) before ten (10) elders to discuss the matter. Ploni Almoni, not wanting to jeopardize his own estate, relinquishes his right of redemption. Boaz was now free to marry Ruth. Ploni, in accordance with the Ancient Hebrew practice, takes off his sandal and hands it to Boaz. Boaz proclaims that he is now acquiring all of Elimelech's estate and acquiring Mahlon's wife to perpetuate Mahlon's name. Boaz and Ruth marry and have a son named Obed. Obed is the father of Jesse, who is the father of King David.

### **Shabuot (Pentecost) Brit Hadashah**

At the end of Luke's gospel there's a wonderful scene in which **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) opens the minds of his disciples to understand the Scriptures, the central message of which was that "the Mashiach should suffer and on the third (3rd) day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations." "You are witnesses of these things," he told them. "And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (**Luke 24: 44–49**).

In Acts chapter 1 Luke summarizes many of the things that he already covered at the end of his gospel account and highlights the fact that after his resurrection **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) presented himself alive to his disciples over a period of forty (40) days, teaching them about the kingdom of **AYAZL** (Yahuah). Then in verse 4 we read, "And while staying with them [**OWYAZL** (Yahusha)] ordered them not to depart from Yarusalym (Jerusalem), but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard from me; for Yohanan (John) baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) not many days from now.'"

The promise of the Father to which **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) referred was that which the Apostle Yohanan (John) had mentioned in chapters 15 and 16 of his gospel concerning the coming of the advocate, our helper our intercessor. This “Ruch (Spirit) of truth,” **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) says, “will bear witness about me.” There are a lot of mistaken assumptions about what the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) does for us today. Many associate his work with ecstatic experiences, emotional comfort, or even supernatural healing, but how often do we associate the role of the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) with leading and guiding us into all truth? (**John 16:13**). How many of us connect the work of the Ruch (Spirit) to Mashiach-centered preaching? Yet, **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) actually said this was what the Ruch (Spirit) would come to do, that he would “bear witness about me” (**John 15:26**). The point is that you know the Ruch (Spirit) is at work, not in places where the Ruch (Spirit) himself is the focus, but rather where Mashiach and his finished work are proclaimed and magnified. This, I believe, is the central point being made in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Shabuot (Pentecost).

In Acts chapter 1, just before the resurrected **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) was taken up into Shamyim (heavens), he told the disciples about the Father's promised gift of the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit), which would soon be given to them. He told them to wait in Yarusalym (Jerusalem) until they received the gift of the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit), which would empower them to go out into the world and be his witnesses.

A few days later, on the Day of Shabuot (Pentecost), the disciples were all together when the sound of a mighty rushing wind came down from Shamyim (heavens), and tongues of fire rested on the believers. Scripture says, "All of them were filled with the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) and began to speak in other tongues as the Ruch (Spirit) enabled them." The believers communicated in languages they had never before spoken. They spoke with Hebrew pilgrims of various languages from all across the Mediterranean world.

The crowds observed this event and heard them speaking in different languages. They were amazed and thought the disciples were drunk on wine. Then Kepha (Peter) got up and preached the Good News of the kingdom and 3000 people accepted the message of **OWYAZL** (Yahusha). That same day they were immersed (baptized) and added to the family of **AYAZL** (Yahuah).

The book of Acts continues to record the miraculous outpouring of the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) that began on the Feast of Shabuot (Pentecost). The Tanakh (OT) feast revealed a shadow of the things to come through **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) HaMashiach. After Moshah (Moses) went up to Mount Sinai, the Word of **AYAZL** (Yahuah) was given to the Yasharalites (Israelites) at Shabuot. When the Hebrews accepted the Turah, they became servants of **AYAZL** (Yahuah). Similarly, after **OWYAZL** (Yahusha) went up to Shamyim (heavens), the Ruch Ah Qudesh (Holy Spirit) was given at Shabuot (Pentecost). When the disciples received the gift, they became witnesses for Mashiach. Hebrews celebrate a joyous harvest on Shabuot, and the body of believers celebrate a harvest of reborn from above souls on Shabuot (Pentecost).

When the Day of Shabuot (Pentecost) came, a prophecy was fulfilled that Yoel had written about hundreds of years earlier, where he wrote “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Ruch (Spirit) on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Ruch (Spirit)” (**Joel 2:28**) and that’s just what

happened here, on the Day of Shabuot (Pentecost).