



Time for Pentecost

Truth about the feast of weeks

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The Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America (ELCA) suggest that Christians should celebrate Pentecost exactly seven weeks after Easter Sunday. Lutheran churches commemorate the day through special prayers and adorning their sanctuary with bright red colored vestments, signifying the fiery tongues of Acts 2. Pentecost, or Whitsunday, is considered to be the birth of the church as it was on this day that the Holy Spirit filled those gathered in the upper room.

The *Holman Bible Dictionary*, a Baptist publication, states that “Pentecost is a Jewish festival at which the Holy Spirit came on the early church.” Judaism remembers Pentecost, or “Shavuot in Hebrew, as the exact day that Moses received the first five books of the Bible (called the Torah) on Mount Sinai. Observant Jewish people keep the day holy by attending special worship services, eating dairy products, and conducting an all night vigil dedicated to study. On this night, it is said that the Holy Spirit will visit those waiting in worship to sweeten their tongues.

Celebrating Pentecost was nothing new for the first disciples of the Savior. They had regularly kept the “feast of weeks” in accordance to the Torah. The word “Pentecost” is from the Greek language as “pente” is a reference to a 50 day interval that starts with Passover. In Leviticus chapter 23 Bible believers are instructed to count 50 days until Shavuot. The traditional Jewish calendar starts this counting after the Sabbath day of Passover. This results in Shavuot

occurring exactly fifty days after Passover, which could be on any day of the week. (Some Torah keeping groups wait until the seventh-day Sabbath after Passover to begin counting. This choice results in Pentecost always falling on a Sunday.) “You shall count for yourselves from the day after the Shabbat, from the day when you bring the Omer of the waving seven Shabbats, they shall be complete. Until the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall count, fifty days... You shall have a holy convocation for yourselves on this very day; you shall do no laborious work; it is an eternal decree for all generations,” Leviticus 23:15-16, 21.

At His ascension into heaven, the Savior instructed his disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit. Acts 1 finishes with a small group of believers in the tiny upper room of a house. Then in Acts 2 the counting of 50 days was completed and the day of Pentecost had fully come. One hundred and twenty people were filled with the Spirit and began to speak in diverse tongues. The Bible clearly indicates that this did not take place in the upper room but at the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Acts 2:2, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” The upper room isn’t mentioned. The phrase “house” is an idiomatic expression that indicates the “house of worship” or “temple.” 120 people could not have fit into the tiny attic space of a first century house!

Acts 2 then shows that many people at the temple heard the disciples speak in tongues as 3,000 accepted the Jewish Messiah. Such events taking place at the temple site further validates that Christianity was originally a sect of Judaism and was never intended to become a separate religion.

Since that first century Shavuot, Mainstream Christianity has argued over the validity of tongues and the Pentecostal experience. The ELCA and many in Christendom ignore the correct date and history of Pentecost found in Leviticus 23, Exodus 19, Acts 2, and Deuteronomy 9. To learn more about this and other scriptural holy days visit www.emetministries.com .