

Introduction

Two highly significant events occurred on Pentecost (Shavuot): the giving of the law (Torah) and the giving of the Spirit. Most Jewish people traditionally consider this Feast of the Lord as the time when Moses received the Ten Commandments, the tablets of the covenant, on Mt. Sinai. It is also traditionally considered by most Christians as the ‘birth of the Church’, the time that God poured out His Holy Spirit upon the apostles. The concepts of law and grace have been long-debated and a resurgence of the controversy is occurring with a renewal of an interest in Torah¹ on the part of many people of God searching for their Jewish-Hebraic roots. I hope and pray that this book will help to clarify these issues rather than further muddy the waters. This one thing I pray, that the Holy Spirit would you keep lies and falsehood far from us. (Prov.30:8) I offer you a Messianic Jewish perspective of these two treasured gifts of the Lord - His Torah and Spirit through this commentary on Pentecost (the Feast of Shavuot).

1 The Torah was according to tradition, given to Israel on Shavuot.

Scriptural Background

God proclaims Shavuot as one of His appointed times (moadim) to celebrate.

“From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks (Shavuot). Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the Lord...On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly and do no regular work. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the Lord your God.” (Lev. 23:15-22)

“You shall count seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain. Then celebrate Shavuot to the Lord your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the Lord your god has given you. And rejoice before the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name—you, your sons and daughter, your menservants and maidservants, the Levites in your towns, and the aliens, the fatherless and the widows living among you. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees.” (Deut. 16:9-12)

What is Torah?

The word *Torah* comes from the roots *yara*, which means to shoot, aim, or point to, and *mora*, meaning teacher. Therefore, the Torah is God's instructions to His people. The teachings within teach us how to live on this earth and point us to eternal life through Yeshua. The Torah, in its strictest sense, includes the five books of Moses: Genesis (B'reisheet), Exodus (Shmot), Leviticus (Vaykira), Numbers (Bamidbar), and Deuteronomy (D'varim). However, Yeshua and Paul both quoted from other books of the Bible and called them Torah (law).

“Yeshua answered them, “Is it not written in your Law (Torah), ‘I said, ‘You are gods’”? (John 10:34)

The quote referred to is found in Psalm 82:6.

In the Law (Torah) it is written:

“With men of other tongue and other lips I will speak to this people...”
(1 Cor. 14:21)

This quote Paul refers to as law is from Isaiah 28:11.

The Tanakh is a Hebrew name for all the books of the Old Testament. It is an acronym: **T-N-KH** which is an abbreviation for: **T**orah, **N**eviim (Prophets) and **K**tuvim (Writings - Psalms, Proverbs, etc).

Observant Orthodox Jews consider another whole compilation of writings as ‘Torah’. These are called the ‘oral law’ and include the Talmud, Mishnah, and Gemorrah, comprised of rabbinical interpretations of scriptures. Many consider the oral law of equal weight and authority as the