



Amherst Community
BRETHREN IN CHRIST CHURCH
Spring Equinox, March 21, 2010

How Jesus Knew

GOD'S COSMIC CALENDER	
<p style="text-align: center;">SPRING (VERNAL) EQUINOX</p> <p>On March 21, Day and Night are each 12 hours long in the Northern Hemisphere. From this date on until Sept. 23, daylight is longer than night.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUMMER SOLSTICE</p> <p>June 21 is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. After this date, daylight begins to decrease.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FALL EQUINOX</p> <p>On Sept. 23, Day and Night are each 12 hours long. After this date, daylight is less than night until the following Spring Equinox on March 21.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WINTER SOLSTICE</p> <p>Dec. 22 is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. After this day, daylight begins to increase until June 21, the longest day of the year.</p>
<p>HALLOWEEN (SAMHEIM AND/OR ALL SAINTS DAY)</p> <p>Oct. 31 - Nov. 1 is the <i>exact midpoint</i> between the Fall Equinox and the Winter Solstice. The Celtic Druids thus considered this time to be the beginning of the <i>season of Death</i> (Winter), which they celebrated on the day they called Samheim (<i>pronounced Soven</i>). In 842 AD/CE, Catholic Christians attempted to replace the Druid emphasis on Death by renaming Nov. 1 <i>All Saints Day</i>, on which they rejoiced in Christ's and the Christian's Victory over death (1 Cor. 15). Oct. 31 thus came to be called <i>All Hallows Eve</i> (Holy Eve), eventually pronounced as <i>Halloween</i>.</p>	

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GOD'S SACRED CALENDER:

**HOW JESUS FULFILLED THE THREE FEASTS OF THE OLDER COVENANT
SO WE COULD EXPERIENCE THE NEW COVENANT EXCHANGE OF LIFE**

FEASTS	OLDER TESTAMENT MEANING	NEW COVENANT, EXCHANGED LIFE FULFILLMENT IN JESUS
<p align="center">Passover</p>	<p align="center">Leviticus 23:5-8</p> <p align="center">Celebration of God liberating Israel from slavery in Egypt into their new life of freedom (Ex 12:1-14; Num. 9:1-14; 28:16; Deut. 16:1-7)</p>	<p align="center">1 Corinthians 5:7-8</p> <p align="center">Jesus, by His death, became our <i>Passover Lamb</i>, the ultimate Life God uses to liberate humanity from slavery to sin into the newness of Christ's Life. (John 1:29; Revelation 5 Matt. 26:17; Mark 14:12-26; John 2:13; 11:55; Hebrews 11:28)</p>
<p align="center">First Fruits</p>	<p align="center">Leviticus 23:9-14</p> <p align="center">Spring harvest celebration of the <i>first fruits or first life</i> of spring, the basis of hope for the complete harvest of fall.</p>	<p align="center">1 Corinthians 15</p> <p align="center">Jesus, by His Resurrection from the Dead, became the <i>Firstfruits</i> of all who will be resurrected later by faith in Him (Romans 8 :23; 1 Corinthians 15 :20-23)</p>
<p align="center">Asip, or Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost</p>	<p align="center">Leviticus 23:15-21</p> <p align="center">Fall Harvest celebration of God who provides food for spiritual life (The Law, the Words of God) and food for physical life (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12).</p>	<p align="center">Acts 2</p> <p align="center">The beginning of God's spiritual <i>Ingathering and Harvest</i> of all who believe in Jesus. The <i>New Covenant</i>, and The Holy Spirit living the <i>Exchanged Life</i> inside each believer <i>replaces</i> the Older Covenant of Law. New Covenant believers are now <i>empowered by the exchange of Life with Christ</i> to help gather in <i>The Harvest</i> of everyone that eventually receives <i>Jesus, The Word of Life</i> (Luke 24: 45-49; Acts 1:1-8; 2 Corinthians 3)</p>



HOW JESUS KNEW THAT GOD WOULD FULFILL THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN “A FEW DAYS”

After Jesus’ resurrection, Jesus spent **40 days** with His friends in His resurrection body (Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15). Jesus knew he had already fulfilled the first feast *Passover* by His death and the second feast of *First Fruits* by His resurrection.

Jesus knew that on the 50th day after Jesus fulfilled *Firstfruits* by His Resurrection that the third feast of Leviticus 23, the feast of *Weeks or Pentecost*, would also be fulfilled. Jesus not only knew the Scriptures, He could count days. Therefore, Jesus confidently predicted to His friends that *in a few days* God would give the Holy Spirit to them (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5).

Jesus knew he had spent 40 days with them after *First Fruits*. Thus, *Jesus simply counted the days remaining to Pentecost* and thus knew and predicted that in just a few days (about 10), God would fulfill the promise God made in Joel 2 by sending the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost (John 14:16; Joel 2:28-29).

Therefore, the Holy Spirit did not come on Pentecost (Acts 2) *because* they waited or prayed for Him to come. Instead, they waited and prayed *because Jesus told them to*, because Jesus knew that God had determined and predicted that the Holy Spirit would come on that day in fulfillment of God’s plan recorded in Leviticus 23 and the previous fulfillments by Jesus of *Passover and First Fruits*.

Before this first Pentecost of the Christian era, Jesus’ disciples lived in a *transitional* period similar to the Older Testament era. Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was *with them or on them* but not *living permanently within them* (compare John 7:37-39 with John 14:16-17). All references in the Gospels that describe the disciples *receiving* the Holy Spirit, such as John 21:21-23 and Matthew 10:1, should be understood as *partial and first-stage experiences* that would be completely fulfilled in the then future day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was then *with them and on them* but not living permanently within them during this transitional period (examine together carefully John 7:37-39 with John 14:16-17).

This transitional phase ended forever on the first Christian Pentecost. On that day, the Holy Spirit fulfilled what Jesus promised in John 7:37-39. Luke describes in Acts 2 the initial and full *Baptism of, by and in* the Holy Spirit. This experience represents a new era in God’s relationship with humanity, with God now living *permanently within and forever inside* of people that believe in Jesus (John 14:15-17; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30).



SOME WORDS ABOUT EXCHANGING LIFE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AT THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

In the Older Testament, God instructed Israel to celebrate three annual *feasts*. First, *Passover* celebrated God setting the Jewish people free from slavery in Egypt and giving them hope of a *new life* of freedom. Second, *First Fruits* celebrated the first emergence of *life* in the spring, the spring vegetables. These early vegetables were the promise of a full harvest in the fall. Third, *Pentecost* was to be celebrated exactly *fifty* days after the feast of *First Fruits*. The name of this third feast in Hebrew is *Asip*, meaning *ingathering, harvest*.¹ The name of the feast in Greek is *Pentekostos*, meaning *fiftieth*,² because it fell fifty days after the feast of *First Fruits*. *Pentecost (or Asip)* is referred to in the Older Testament at Exodus 23:14-16, Exodus 34:22-23, Leviticus 23:15-21, Numbers 28:16-31, Deuteronomy 16:9-12 and 2 Chronicles 8:12-13.

Pentecost became a time for *renewing* the Law Covenant each year it was celebrated. This was because Moses began receiving the Law on Mt. Sinai 50 days after the initial *First Fruits* feast. Pentecost thus became an annual celebration of Moses receiving the Law *and* a celebration of the ingathering of the wheat harvest in late May-June.³ Because of these two themes (spiritual and physical provision), Pentecost is somewhat like the American holiday *Thanksgiving*. Pentecost was a feast dedicated to joyfully giving thanks and recognition to God the provider of all good things. God provides spiritual food in The Law of God via Moses (Deuteronomy 8:3) and physical food (Psalm 104). Each time Israel celebrated Pentecost, they were really giving thanks to God who gives spiritual and physical *life* to all.

Acts 2 records what happened *exactly fifty days* after the resurrection of Jesus.

1. Jesus' death was the fulfillment of feast 1, *Passover* (Lev. 23:5-8, 1 Cor. 5:7-8, see chart).
2. Jesus' resurrection was the fulfillment of feast 2, *First Fruits* (Lev. 23:9-14, I Cor. 15:20-23, see chart).
3. Jesus' promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit corresponds to The *Feast of Weeks* or *Pentecost*, precisely 50 days after Jesus' *Firstfruits Resurrection*, fulfilled as described in Acts 2 (Lev. 23:15-22; Joel 2:28).

At the Pentecost described in Acts 2, for the first time in history, the Holy Spirit came to live inside humans in a new and unique manner. Jesus had told them this when Jesus predicted to them that the Holy Spirit, Who had been *with* them and *on* them, would after Pentecost live *in* them *forever, or on a permanent basis* (See John 14:16-17).

The Pentecost experience of Acts 2 also represents the formal beginning of the *New Covenant* in fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34. The Holy Spirit, writing the New Covenant on the *interior tablets of people's hearts*, became the new Source and Director of spiritual life and replaced the Older Covenant Law that had been written on *exterior tablets of stone*. We have to realize that we cannot think of the New Covenant in the same way we did about the Older Covenant. The Older Covenant was *613 commandments* (not just 10) that God *commanded those in that covenant to keep or live up to or do* in their own power. Perhaps we can begin to understand the *difference* between Covenants Older and New by using an analogy with modern computer terms. The Holy Spirit gives us a *new heart* or *upgraded hard drive* when we enter the New Covenant by faith in Jesus. Then, the Holy Spirit *writes on this upgraded hard drive new lines of instruction of supernatural power and agape love* (Romans 5:5-8; 2 Cor. 3). Then, because The Holy Spirit has installed *supernatural New Code Instructions, programming and power in our upgraded hard drives*, people can allow this New Covenant relationship with the Holy Spirit to *run the programs of their lives*.⁴

Enabled by the *exchange of life* that happened when God the Holy Spirit began to live inside of them and speak through them, the testimony of Jesus through them resulted in a great *spiritual harvest*, as *about 3000 people were added to their number* (Acts 2:41; 1 Peter 1:10-12). See Table above for how Jesus fulfilled the Jewish Feasts.

¹ F. Brown, et al, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the OT* (Oxford: Clarendon), 63; R. L. Harris, et al., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody), 60-61.

² E. Lohse, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), VI, 44-52; W. E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of the New Testament* (McLean: MacDonald), 854.

³ H. E. Dosker, "Pentecost," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Eds. J. Orr, and others (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), IV, 2318-2319; E. D. Isaacs, "Feasts," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, II, 1103-1104.

⁴ This analogy was given to Pastor Kevin Rohr in June of 2006 and shared with John David Geib.