



GOD'S 50-DAY
RECIPE *to* CHANGE
the WORLD



GARY HARGRAVE



PENTECOST (SHAVUOT) HOLDS GREAT SIGNIFICANCE FOR US AS CHRISTIANS. WE READ IN ACTS 2 THAT ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST, THE CHURCH (EKKLESIA) WAS BORN.

Pesach (the Passover) is when the children of Israel were miraculously delivered from their bondage in Egypt and the day that Christ died on the cross for all the sins of humanity. Then, starting the day after Pesach, the children of Israel observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. During this time, the priest waved a sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest before the Lord (Leviticus 23:5–11). Seven weeks later is what we call Pentecost. On this fiftieth day, the children of Israel would take the ripening grain, grind it into fine flour, and bake it into two leavened loaves of bread. Later we will talk about the deep work God did in the disciples of Yeshua (Jesus) to create them into two loaves of bread for the world. See the important details here regarding the background of these biblical feasts, how they are interrelated and discover the deep meaning of the ground grain and the loaves of bread.

Many Christians today celebrate Pentecost Sunday as a special observance fifty days after Resurrection Sunday (Easter Sunday). This practice of counting fifty days follows the biblical pattern. At Pesach (the Feast of Passover), Yeshua was crucified and then resurrected during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Fifty days after His resurrection, during Shavuot (Pentecost) in Jerusalem, His *ekklesia*, the Church, was formed. Pesach and Shavuot therefore hold deep meaning for us. Moreover, the fifty-day period between these two days also has deep meaning and significance.

Rather than being two separate events, Pesach and Shavuot are connected. They are part of the time known as the Feast of First Fruits and Feast of Weeks, which totaled fifty days (Exodus 34:22, Leviticus 23:16, Numbers 28:26). During this feast, individual grains



of the harvest were gathered, ground into flour, and baked with leaven into loaves of bread (Leviticus 23:17). The disciples of Yeshua experienced a fulfillment of this feast. At the beginning of the fifty days, they were separate and scattered, like individual grains of wheat (Matthew 26:31). By Shavuot (Pentecost), they had been brought together and transformed into a unified body, like the two loaves of bread, that manifested Christ's power to the world (Acts 2:1–4).

PENTECOST—A DEEPER CONNECTION

The Feast of Weeks is an integral part of Shavuot. Yet we can miss its significance if we have the belief that the Christian celebration of Pentecost is about the Church and therefore separate from the Jewish observance. We need to lay aside this concept. The account in Acts 2 describes the Day of Pentecost and the beginning of the Church as being entirely Jewish. According to Acts 2:1, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred when the Day of Pentecost had come, or “was being fulfilled.” For whom did this fulfillment happen? Clearly, the people upon whom the outpouring of the Holy Spirit came, just as Joel prophesied (Acts 2:16–17), were Jews. About 120 Jews who were followers of Yeshua were there, and the entire city of Jerusalem was filled with the Jewish people who had come to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. God poured out His Spirit on them, and 3,000 Jewish believers were added to the *ekklesia* (Acts 2:1–4; 38–41). Later there were 5,000 more who believed (Acts 4:4).

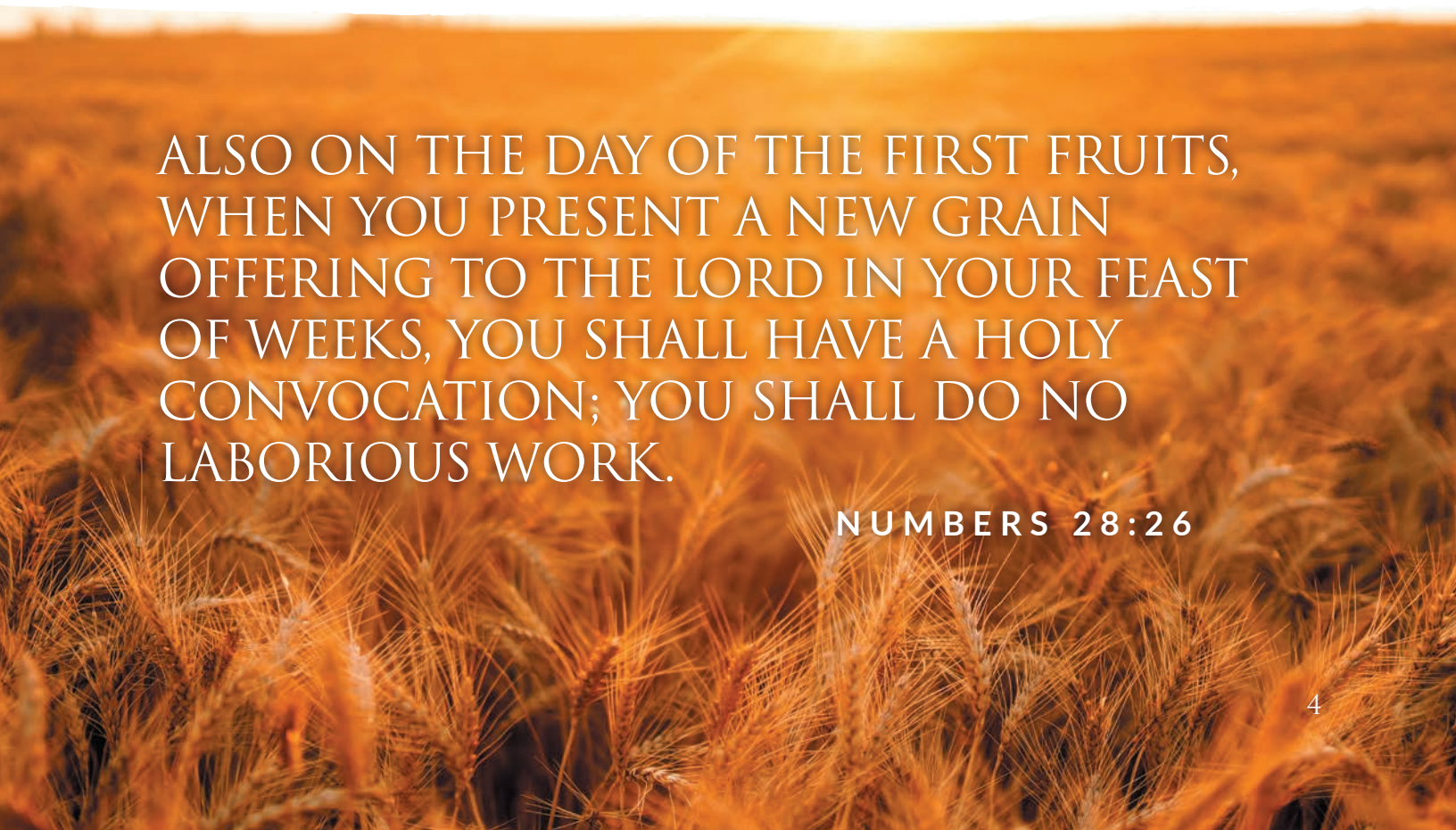
Some scholars estimate that at one time as much as half of Jerusalem believed that Yeshua was the Messiah (Acts 21:20). Maybe those estimates are high, but there were thousands of Jews who were in the assembly, the *ekklesia*, of believers. These Jewish believers had no reason to think of Pentecost as an event that was separate from the feasts ordained by the Lord. The apostle Paul, after establishing many churches that included Gentiles, followed the command of the Lord to appear before Him at this appointed time (Exodus 23:14–17).

Acts 20:16 records that he was in a hurry to be in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. In Paul's thinking, Pentecost was not an isolated event God used to create Christianity as a separate entity from Judaism.

The separation of Christianity from the Jews occurred later in the history of the Church. For centuries, many Gentile Christians continued to observe the Passover on the 14th of Nisan according to the Jewish calendar. Because other Christians celebrated the Passover on different dates and there were contentious disagreements, the Council at Nicaea in A.D. 325 determined to resolve the issue. It decreed that the Christian observance of Passover (Pascha, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Pesach) should not be on the same date as the Jewish observance. The result is our modern-day Easter Sunday, which was intended to never occur on the Passover. This means that the Christian observance of Pentecost is no longer counted fifty days from Passover, but fifty days from Easter Sunday.

PENTECOST—CULMINATION OF THE FIRST FRUITS

As something disconnected from the biblical feasts, this exercise of counting fifty days would seem to have little meaning for us. However, it should have tremendous meaning. Pentecost is the culmination of the first fruits celebration. The children of Israel were



ALSO ON THE DAY OF THE FIRST FRUITS,
WHEN YOU PRESENT A NEW GRAIN
OFFERING TO THE LORD IN YOUR FEAST
OF WEEKS, YOU SHALL HAVE A HOLY
CONVOCATION; YOU SHALL DO NO
LABORIOUS WORK.

NUMBERS 28:26



not commanded to observe only two days, Passover and Pentecost, which are separate from each other. They were commanded to observe a seven-week period known as the Feast of Weeks (Numbers 28:26). This feast, as with all the feasts ordered by the Lord, holds deep meaning and significance for us who believe that Yeshua is *ha Mashiach* (the Messiah), both for Jews and for Gentiles. To skip over this feast is to miss the importance it has for us. The scriptural observance of the first fruits and the Feast of Weeks celebrates the resurrection of Christ and shows us the deep significance of His resurrection in the formation of His *ekklesia*, the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22–23).

When the apostle Paul used the term “first fruits” in his writings, he was referring to the day when the priest waved a sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest before the Lord (Leviticus 23:9–11). Let’s read a couple of verses from 1 Corinthians.

BUT NOW CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE FIRST FRUITS OF THOSE WHO ARE ASLEEP ... BUT EACH IN HIS OWN ORDER: CHRIST THE FIRST FRUITS, AFTER THAT THOSE WHO ARE CHRIST’S AT HIS COMING.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:20, 23

Here we see the fulfillment of Christ who is the first fruits of the resurrection. In fact, the priest could have stood in the Temple waving the sheaf of the first fruits at the time Yeshua was resurrected. Just as the waving of the first fruits marks the beginning of a process leading to Pentecost, the resurrection of Yeshua was the beginning of a process in the disciples preparing them for Pentecost. The Gospels do not end with the resurrection

of Yeshua. He continued to work with His disciples after the resurrection (Luke 24:13–49; John 21:4–23; Acts 1:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:5–7). Then, after His ascension, the disciples continued the deep preparation of heart that saw them coming together with one mind (Acts 1:9–14).

Immediately following the Passover, the disciples were not of one mind. Their world had come apart after the crucifixion of Yeshua. They had denied Him at the crucifixion. They were scattered and went back to fishing (Matthew 26:56; 70–75; John 21:3). They returned to their old way of life. They were like individual, unconnected grains of wheat, not useful to the Lord at that point. Have you ever tried to take a mouthful of hard grain off a stalk of wheat and chew it? It is not usable in that form. Something needs to happen to it. During the Feast of Weeks, the new grains of the harvest were gathered, ground to fine flour, and produced into loaves of bread. Now, the grain was usable; it was edible. That is exactly what happened to the disciples during this time. The devastation they experienced was the grinding process that refined them and enabled them to relate as one mind.

They experienced the process of being ground to fine flour and made into something more than they could be as individuals. When they stood together on the Day of Pentecost God said, “I have taken mankind and now I can use them. Now I can break them and pass them out to the world. Now the Body of Christ is edible.”





I DO NOT ASK ON BEHALF OF THESE ALONE, BUT FOR THOSE ALSO WHO BELIEVE IN ME THROUGH THEIR WORD; THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE; EVEN AS YOU, FATHER, ARE IN ME AND I IN YOU, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE IN US, SO THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT YOU SENT ME.

JOHN 17:20-21

We see that the creation of the Church on the Day of Pentecost did not happen independently of the preparation the disciples experienced. This preparation was essential to what happened at Pentecost, not separate from it. When Yeshua prayed to the Father before He was crucified, He made it clear that something had to be worked in the disciples for the world to believe in Him.

The disciples experienced a fulfillment of this prayer when they were united in one mind before the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:14).

In the time between Passover and Pentecost, they had come into a oneness together. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was in response to that oneness (Acts 2:1-4). What happened to them on the Day of Pentecost was the release of the power. They received what had been promised, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and they were endued with power (Luke 24:49). They were filled with the Word. They began to speak. They began to minister. They began to move in miracles. They did not experience the Day of Pentecost and say, "Now we can finally be one, just as Yeshua prayed. Let's see if we can begin relating together." They were already relating as one mind before the Day of Pentecost.

THE GLORY WHICH YOU HAVE GIVEN ME I HAVE GIVEN TO THEM, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, JUST AS WE ARE ONE; I IN THEM AND YOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE PERFECTED IN UNITY, SO THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT YOU SENT ME, AND LOVED THEM, EVEN AS YOU HAVE LOVED ME.

JOHN 17:22 - 23

They had become the loaves that were waved before God. They had become the leavened loaves of pure grain that had been ground to fine flour and produced into something that God could use.

We should observe the Passover and Pentecost with a new understanding of what God wants to do in us and through us. Notice that Yeshua's prayer to the Father included us (John 17:20). He was not praying for the disciples alone, but for all who would believe in Him through their words.

It is easy to say that what happened to the disciples does not apply to us. Yet today, we are the Church. Today, we are the Body of Christ. God wants us to be something to the world today. Yeshua's prayer that we be one applies to us today. We are to be the loaves of bread that God uses to feed the world.



I DO NOT ASK ON BEHALF OF THESE ALONE, BUT FOR THOSE ALSO WHO BELIEVE IN ME THROUGH THEIR WORD...

JOHN 17:20



PERFECTED FOR HIS PURPOSE

The glory that we have in Christ makes us one in Him and enables our perfection. The two loaves are significant, because the number two speaks symbolically of Christ manifesting in His Body (John 6:33–35; 1 Corinthians 10:16). In Jewish thought, the two loaves of bread represent Torah—both the Written and Oral Torah. As we know from the parable of Yeshua, the Kingdom of God is like leaven put into the flour until it leavens the whole loaf (Matthew 13:33). So, we have the picture that our separateness is ground out of us, Christ is placed in us and we become perfect loaves of bread that God can use for His purpose.

We are not perfect when the sheaf of the first fruits is waved before the Lord, but we have taken the first step. When we receive Christ as individuals, He indwells us, and God sets us in the Body of Christ as it pleases Him (1 Corinthians 12:18). Here is where our perfection happens.

Our faith in the process is to willingly let go of everything that separates and isolates us from one another. It is the Word of Yeshua that we be one so that the world can believe in Him and we can be perfected in unity. It is not something we produce by our own efforts.

We simply say by faith, “If Yeshua said that I am one with you, then I am one with you. If Yeshua said that you are one with me, then you are one with me. In our relating together as believers in Christ, as His sons and daughters, we will be perfected.”

**All Scripture references are taken from the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB95).*

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel and the lands of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God*, and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

Gary and his family reside in Hawaii.

For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish roots of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes:

- **Feed the poor** and break the cycle of poverty in Israel
- **Support the orphans and widows** of fallen Israeli soldiers
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism**
- **Build bridges** between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research
- Support archaeology and **preservation of the biblical City of David**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors**
- **Help persecuted Jews** around the world return to Israel and start new lives
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and **help create "The Gospel Trail" between Nazareth and Capernaum**

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