

# Pentecost and the Whole House of Israel • What is Shavuot?

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## MAIN VERSES

[Acts 2:1](#) • [Acts 1:3](#) • [Acts 1:6](#) • [Acts 2:5](#) • [Acts 10](#) • [Deuteronomy 16](#) • [Ezekiel 34](#) • [Ezekiel 34:4](#) • [Ezekiel 34:10](#) • [Ezekiel 34:11-16](#) • [Ezekiel 34:16](#) • [Ezekiel 34:23](#) • [Ezekiel 37](#) • [Ezekiel 37:24](#) • [Genesis 1](#) • [Isaiah 11](#) • [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#) • [John 14](#) • [Galatians 5:22-23](#) • [2 Corinthians 3:6](#) • [Zechariah 3](#)

## Pentecost: The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Well, again, Shabbat Shalom, everybody. We are so excited that you're here today, guys. If this is your first time visiting in person or watching online—as we're a community of diverse backgrounds and families and individuals who love the Sabbath and find joy in the entirety of the Bible—but most of all, we're a community that seeks to orbit, first and foremost, the person of Jesus who we call Yeshua. So welcome to Founded in Truth Fellowship.

Pentecost is coming up next week, right? That's the next festival in the religious calendar year in the Torah. And we've all heard of Pentecost, right? Of course we have. Yeah, Acts chapter 2—when the tongues of fire came down. It's June 5th, yeah, in a week or two. I know it's going to be great. We'll do it both. It'll be fun.

When we say Pentecost, typically we think back to Acts chapter 2 and the narrative that Luke is crafting, retelling this amazing event that took place in Jerusalem. The tongues of fire came down upon the followers of Yeshua there. They all spoke in tongues, and everyone who was there—all these people from all over the world—heard their own language being spoken by these Galileans. And that was kind of a jab, the Galileans. Like, of all the people who are going to be used to work in connecting all of these different cultures of Judeans from all over the world, the Galileans, really, them?

The people were shocked. They were amazed. Some of them thought the followers of Jesus were just a bit drunk and acting out. But this was a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the power and authority given through it. This is also the story, the tradition, the roots of the more recent Pentecostal movement, right? It's all orbiting this word.

## Shavuot: An Ancient Celebration

But before this magnificent event took place 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem, long before the followers of Yeshua were gathered into one place, there was another celebration of Pentecost. We find it near the beginning of the Bible in Deuteronomy chapter 16, where three different festivals are laid out and described—three different pilgrimage festivals.

These were three times a year where the Israelites would bring the first fruit offerings to the Lord of their harvest. The first one was around the time of Passover—first fruits. This is when the Israelites would bring the first of their barley harvest in and offer it to God in the spring. And you have the festival of booths or Sukkot or Feast of Tabernacles—everyone's excited about that one. And this is when the fall harvest is brought forth as an offering to the temple, given before God.

And in between these two was a third festival. It took place in the summer. It was known in Hebrew as Shavuot, meaning weeks—like a week but plural. Or in the Greek, Pentecost, meaning 50 days. And the reason it is called this is because Pentecost took place 50 days after the spring festival during Passover week.

And so on the day of first fruits in the spring, you would offer your tithe as the barley harvest in Passover week. And then you would count off seven weeks. Shavuot, weeks. Seven weeks. How many days is seven weeks? 49. And so on the 50th day, Pentecost—that's the Greek word. You would offer the first fruits of the summer harvest, which was likely wheat. So yeah, the day has two names depending on where you want to derive it: Shavuot and Pentecost.

So all of Israel would partake in this pilgrimage. They would all go to Jerusalem, carrying the first of their harvest. And elaborate traditions have been recorded as taking place where families would work to create beautiful baskets, gorgeous baskets that they would put their offerings in and hand over to the priests in the temple. It was a big, big deal.

## A Season of Gratitude

And all of this really orbited gratitude. It was a season of joy. It was Thanksgiving. It was like a mini Sukkot—joy, dancing, gratitude, and a sense of divine shalom.

We have a hard time relating to that nowadays. In an economy where the harvest was your currency—what gave you and your family life—it wasn't always guaranteed that all of the work and effort that you put into the seasonal crops would pan out. Imagine working for months, all

day long, all night long, cultivating the dirt, planting seeds, driving pests away, making your compost in your backyard. No?

Imagine you did all of that and a drought came. No rain. And the crop was lost. It would be like working for six months at your job, day and night, and the CEO comes and tells you, "Our stocks are down and you can't get paid." It's a big deal. It's a huge loss. It threatens everything.

So when you came to these festivals holding the tithe of your bounty, you were ecstatic because God was and is faithful. He sent the rain. This is who you relied on. It is because of his mercy I'm able to feed my family. I'm able to have a home and even be here in the city of gold, Jerusalem, to offer a relatively small portion of my bounty that God gave to me. That was the mindset when you brought your offering. It was a big deal, and the Israelites—Jews later—came from all over the land and the world to attend and pay tribute and give thanks to God.

This is where we get the modern tradition of tithing, right? This is where it comes from. 10% of what we believe God provided is given back. Instead of a temple, we find creative ways to make our offerings and generosity relevant and meaningful. Many people give to the church or congregation that pours back into their lives. Some people give it to outreach ministry. Some people find people in need and give it to them. This is where that tradition is rooted—in these pilgrimage feasts, because it's a symbol of gratitude that is more than simply words.

## From Tabernacle to Temple

And so when Israel was nomadic and went into the land and settled with a tabernacle, eventually, as time went on, they wanted a king placed over them. And their first king was named Saul. I love how everyone, when they're put in this spot, hesitates. I think I know it. It's Saul. Saul. They formed a kingdom, a monarchy. They were now a structured nation that looked like the other nations.

And of course, their first king was named Saul, and he did not do so hot, I don't think, as far as his leadership. So God rose up David, King David, and David became king. And David was a bit of a jerk. I mean, according to the Samuel accounts, I don't think I would tell my son, "This should be your role model. Be like David. This should be your new Yeshua." No.

But David was also said to be a man after God's own heart. Strange language, used when you read the accounts of David in the Samuel accounts, but regardless. David was known for uniting the nation and the tribes together later in his life. He was the one who brought the ark to Jerusalem, and there paved the way to build the temple, a permanent structure to place the throne of God there.

For hundreds of years, the tabernacle had been out in the wilderness of Shiloh. You have a canvas tent out there for 400 years in the hot desert. It doesn't do so well. And so they built permanent walls for the tabernacle and put the same roof over it. Genius.

But David had the vision for the temple. David died. His son Solomon rose up as king. And Solomon went on to build the temple. He's the one who secured the borders of the nation. He built up the greatest military on earth. And as we will see, he became one of the worst tyrants the world had ever seen, as attested by the next generation after him.

## The Divided Kingdom and the Call to Repent

After he died, the nation of 12 tribes fell apart. The monarchy of Israel only lasted three kings. Two nations formed out of that. The northern tribes of Israel and the southern tribes of Israel, also known as Judah.

Both of these new nations, apart from one another, fell into various forms of idolatry. They exploited others, took advantage, used violence to gain power. And in this era, this is where the majority of the Old Testament is either focusing on directly or indirectly. All of the prophets we read are telling Israel and Judah to repent or turn during this time.

Sometimes we forget that this story of Israel going into idolatry after Solomon and then later going into exile is kind of the orbit of the Old Testament story. And so we see these two nations being called by the prophets to turn and repent. And then finally, the sins and transgressions of the people of these two Israelite nations became so great that God allowed the consequences of their actions to take place. Empires grew up around them. First, the Assyrian Empire came in and plundered the northern tribes, took them out of their homes, took them into exile and scattered them all over the world where essentially they disappeared from history.

Not long after this, the great Babylonian Empire came in. Many make the connection that the story of the garden overlays on this incident quite well as depicting an echo. When you read about Daniel in Babylon, that is what is taking place. He is in exile along with the rest of the Jews or Judeans.

During this time, prophets arose in the Bible: Hosea, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Malachi. All of these were exilic prophets carrying a message of repentance as well as a future hope.

## Shepherds of Israel

When we turn to Ezekiel chapter 34, we see God accusing the shepherds of Israel of serving themselves at the expense of the sheep. This shepherd-sheep metaphor is abundant in Ezekiel's text to explain the relationship between Israel's monarchs and God's people.

Historically, the monarchy, the kings, had been corrupt and idolatrous in every single period before the exile in Israel and Judah. They abused their divinely granted authority to become wealthy and comfortable while neglecting and even abusing their own people—specifically the most vulnerable of their people, the orphans and the widows, the hurting and the downtrodden.

And so in [Ezekiel 34:4](#), we see this accusation from God: "The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled over them."

It seems, and we see this across the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, that God does not enjoy people who speak with their mouths that they are righteous and they do good things and they take care of people and they use their power. And power is just the ability to do something. That's all power is. That's the definition of it. They say that they use their power to benefit others and to do the right thing, but with their actual actions, they don't. And many times, they don't. They use their power to inflict harm.

In verse 10, Ezekiel presents a wonderful picture of Yahweh reestablishing himself as Israel's new shepherd, the shepherd king, in verses 11 through 16. The kings of Israel had failed. But Yahweh would not. He vows to rectify all of the harm done to Israel by relocating them from the farthest reaches of the globe to a land abundant in resources.

In verse 16, he keeps repeating this phrase of supernatural highlights or actions that will accompany the full restoration. In verse 16, it says, "I will seek the lost and I will bring back the strayed and I will bind up the injured and I will strengthen the weak. And the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice."

So you see what God is doing. He's accusing Israel: this is what you've done. And you went into exile away from me as a result of your actions. But I'm not done with you yet. You're still not lost. I am going to find you. I'm going to seek you. I'm going to bring you back. I will give you strength. And those who have contributed to the climax of injustice—I will feed them in justice.

Yahweh will get done what all of these leaders, generation after generation, failed to do. And from these verses, it's clear that God himself is going to come and rule over his people. But then you get an interesting statement in verse 23.

## The Answer Is Yes

So during this chapter, we see Yahweh stepping in, saying, "I'm going to rule over you. I'm going to be your shepherd." But here in verse 23, he says it's going to be David.

So will this God of Israel, Yahweh, rule over the people as the divine shepherd-like king? Or will someone from David's family rule over them as a human shepherd king? Is it Yahweh or is it David? Yeah, that's good, isn't it? That's good.

The answer is yes. Ezekiel, like the prophets and psalmists before him, is uniting human royalty with divine control. The human shepherd who leads Israel will be descended from David, but he will wield this type of divine authority in ways that only Yahweh can. I love that.

Here's another promise God gives to his people in exile when they are scattered all over the world because of their sin. In [Ezekiel 37](#)—we love this verse, the valley of dry bones, about the army that has been defeated and now just lies as rotting corpses, restored to life and resurrected.

And at the end of this chapter, it says this in verse 24: "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and carefully keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your ancestors lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever. And David, my servant, will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them. It will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers. I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them. I will be their God and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I, the Lord, make Israel holy when my sanctuary, my place of residence, is truly among them forever."

## Exile and Broken Hope

Imagine being in exile. You've been stripped from your home. Your land has been razed. Your home is destroyed, or someone else is living in it. Everything is taken from you and you're now a captive in a foreign land, likely forced to serve. You are the minority, the bottom of the population.

And here's what the prophet says: It's not going to be like this forever. I'm not going to let this last forever. I am going to send a king, and he will be your shepherd. David, the one who unites the tribes together, the regatherer, is going to come, and I'm going to make my dwelling among you. That's powerful. Talk about hope. Talk about hope.

While Israel was in exile, the prophets gave these promises from God. But after a generation in Babylon, guess what? The Judeans in Babylon were allowed to go back to their land. This is great, right? They were in exile, but now it's as if you guys get to go back to the garden.

So they're returning to the land, returning home to Judah. And this is where the books Ezra and Nehemiah take place in the story. They returned to their land and everything was pillaged. The garden was burned down, if you will. Foreign nomads were tilling their land. This is my land—not anymore.

This is not what was promised by the prophets. The prophets said, "Listen, the desert is going to be made straight so I can go back to the land and go back to be with God. And there's going to be the temple and it's going to be just like the old days."

And they went back home and it wasn't. It wasn't.

## The Long Wait Continues

Where are the promises of the prophets? They were no longer a nation. They were no longer an independent kingdom. They no longer had a king like David who united them.

They rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. They literally tossed together a temple. They didn't have the resources to make the articles. Gold? They don't have gold. So they made a menorah out of tin, doing the best they could to make this makeshift house for God.

Yeah. In the text, it even says they cry out. They say, "We're back at our homeland, but we still feel like slaves." Because they were. Persia was still ruling over them. And after Persia, the Greeks came, and they ruled over Judah. And after the Greeks came, the Romans came and they ruled over Judah.

But these prophecies spoke of a new king that would come. At some point, sometime, somehow a new king is coming. A king like David. The king who would gather all of the tribes, the kingdom of Israel, back together. The king who would reconstitute the kingdom of Israel. The king who would also be a shepherd.

This was still in the mind of the Judeans even after Yeshua's ministry, death, and resurrection.

## Where Is the Kingdom?

We see this in Acts chapter 1. This is Luke's presentation of Yeshua engaging with his disciples before he ascends to heaven. In chapter 1, verse 3:

"After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was actually alive. He appeared to them over a period of 40 days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: Don't leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift that my Father has promised. You've heard me speak about it in the past—it's coming. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Verse 6: Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Okay, Lord, that's great. But Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom of Israel? I mean, the gift's awesome. We'll stay here. Are you going to do the thing, like the big thing, the thing? Are you going to do the thing now? Because you did all the other stuff that was awesome, and you showed us in Scripture where all that's taking place, and you've inaugurated this kind of kingdom of God, but for Israel, the promises have not yet been fulfilled. Are you going to do it? Right? The tribes are still scattered. Are we...?"

That's what they were talking about. All of these prophecies. That's what they were wondering. They're like, okay, you're king. You're the Christ. We get it, right? You've defeated death. This is a big thing. You're the king. The king is here. Where's the kingdom? Shepherd king is here. Where's this? Are you going to do it?

And he said to them, "It's not for you to know the times or dates. The Father has set this by His own authority." How convenient—he doesn't know, or he doesn't want to tell.

But he's trying to refocus. Can you refocus? "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria to the ends of the earth."

## Pentecost and the Nations

So we have this taking place in Zion and then going out into the world—Judea, Samaria, and into the world. And after he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. And he still didn't answer the question. Okay. It says that they and other followers, including Mary, Yeshua's mother, all stuck together during this period of time—Jerusalem, everywhere. And they kind of got together and they formed a replacement for Judas. And this is how the very next scene opens in Acts chapter 2, verse 1. When the day of Pentecost—what's Pentecost mean? Pentecost. When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Here we go. Pentecost. They were in Jerusalem for Pentecost, for Shavuot. And instead of them giving a gift to God, God gives a gift to them, the Holy Spirit. And they begin to

speak in other languages because of its power. Verse 5. Every nation. Because each one heard their own language being spoken.

So right here, I want to show you something that Luke does with the story in his writing. So Luke's telling a story. It's narrative right now, and he's explaining all these things that are happening. God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven, right? Why were God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven here in Jerusalem? Because it's Shavuot. It's one of the pilgrimage feasts. They all come together. Every nation under heaven. He doesn't have to elaborate anymore on where these people are from. He already told us. Every nation under heaven. Luke stops the story and begins to give further details that are even unnecessary to the flow of the story. He's already said every nation under heaven, but here he goes—he wants to drive a point home. So he lists 15 nations where all of these people come from.

So look how he starts—utterly amazed. How are all these people speaking? They're Galileans. Then how is it that they're able to hear us like we're able to hear them in our native tongue? Then Luke starts writing: Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Persia—Phrygia, got it—Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene, visitors from Rome. Just so you guys know, there were Jews and converts to Judaism that came with them. Cretans and Arabs. Then he goes back to the story. We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues. There's a reason why Luke wants to overemphasize nations everywhere, all over the known world.

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "Ah, they've had too much wine." Shavuot, minisakot, I don't know—celebration, bunch of drunks. No, it's just incredible how Luke puts his emphasis here. Luke, of all the New Testament authors, puts great emphasis into crafting the narrative to show a much larger picture, especially here in the book of Acts. Like I said, he went through the effort to name all of these detailed nations. And I find that list interesting because it roughly overlays another list that's found in Isaiah chapter 11, which is about a prophecy of when God is going to bring the kingdom of Israel back together from exile, and it goes and names all the nations where they have been scattered to.

## Every Nation Under Heaven

We have 15 nations, I'd say the known world, of Jews or Jewish converts. And what's so special about that? They don't look like each other. They're from different cultures across the known world. They speak different languages. They have different customs and traditions. Heck, they probably all don't even keep Torah the same. But they've all come together for Shavuot. And

when they arrive, they are greeted with these followers of Jesus that begin to speak to them in their own language. In this moment, the Judeans that had been scattered all over the known world, all nations under heaven, were now connected together again.

But wait, there's supposed to be a king too, right? According to the prophecy, the tribes are brought back together under one king. And so the crowd is like, wow, this is really amazing. Something is happening here, something big. But what is the meaning of all of this? And here's how Peter answers. Verse 22, "Fellow Israelites"—look at that united title, Israelites. Listen to this. And then Peter goes and he quotes David in reinforcing the kingship of Yeshua. He says, God has raised this Yeshua to life, and we're all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, which basically means that he's in the authority of God. He is reigning as king. "Here's your king," is what he's saying.

Peter's speech is explaining that the shepherd king has come, that the blessing that was meant to come through Abraham has come through Yeshua. And the new covenant people prophesied in Jeremiah, the gathering of all the exiles from all nations in Isaiah, and the king that will reign over this reconstituted kingdom of Israel have all manifested here and now. Yeshua is the shepherd king. God rose him from the dead. He sits at the right hand of God, reigning even now. And look at you—coming from all nations. Something big is happening. And here you are today, the disciples of Yeshua, the ambassadors of Yeshua, speaking with you in your own language. Connecting with you. Israel is being connected back together. They're being regathered. The king says, come. The new temple is rising up, a place of God's glory and presence. And it's going to continue to grow until it overtakes the world. That's the prophecy in [Zechariah 3](#). The new Jerusalem, the holy city of God, expanding because it has no walls and it consumes all nations. I don't want to say nuclear blast, but like a holy takeover of the world. Consumes everybody, in a good way.

## Cut to the Heart

Verse 37, when the people heard this—Peter just answered their question, what does this mean? We've all come from all nations, all of these tribes. The Holy Spirit is here. Now we're connecting with these disciples through signs and confirmation. These ambassadors of the king are connecting with us. What's going on? The king is here. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart. They understood. And they said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Like, we now see the prophecies are coming true. We're kind of part of it. Kind of intimidating. Kind of a big deal. Didn't think I would be the one. What do we do now? What do we do to respond to what is happening?

And Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off." It's time to come home into the arms of Yeshua. And that's the thing—on this day, God sent the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit filled the believers there. And it became part of entering into covenant with God.

## What the Holy Spirit Is For

As I know, we know something about the Holy Spirit here. Love the Holy Spirit. It is the greatest gift we could have ever been given. But many times—and if I can be real, authentic believers—many times we don't understand the function and the trajectory of what the Holy Spirit was for and what it does, what the trajectory and the point of the Holy Spirit is going to accomplish. Sometimes, if we're being honest again, we kind of chalk it up to emotions we have. Anyone ever gotten like a gut feeling and weren't really sure if it was a gut feeling or if it was the Holy Spirit? Might be, maybe. Maybe some of you. Not me, ever.

Sometimes we intentionally or unintentionally weaponize the concept of the Holy Spirit to make our opinions or the things that we want to believe overtake everyone else's opinion because ours has the divine label on it. Sometimes we want the Bible to say something that we want it to say, and because we have a passion for our opinion, we'll say something like, "Oh, the Holy Spirit is telling me that's how it's supposed to be interpreted." Dad got silent quick. Sometimes we use it to force others to agree with us. "Well, the Holy Spirit told me to tell you this." And it just happens to be a critical thing, condemnation, something like that. "Yeah, Holy Spirit sent me to tell you that." "Holy Spirit told me you were coming." "I believe the Holy Spirit's telling me this." "Holy Spirit just told me the opposite." These are real conversations some of us can have.

Guys, there is confusion when it comes to the Holy Spirit speaking to us, and I'll admit that. I've been in a place wondering if something is God's will or not. But sometimes, unintentionally or intentionally, we weaponize the Holy Spirit and the reputation of God just to puff ourselves up. And that totally happens. And when that is all the Holy Spirit is, guys, we make it look dumb. We make it look dumb. When that is all the Holy Spirit ever is when it's exposed to the world, through the ambassadors that claim to have it, we make the story of God look foolish because we look foolish as his ambassadors. The Holy Spirit's telling everyone something different.

## In the Beginning

But what can we learn about the Holy Spirit in the Bible? Maybe that can help us get a good foundation for the trajectory and the function of what the Holy Spirit is. Well, where's the first place we see the Spirit of God in the Bible? In the beginning, Genesis chapter 1. Should we start there to try to get an idea? This Genesis chapter 1 creation narrative has a lot of poetry in its prose. It's a beautifully crafted depiction of what God is doing, what he wants to do, and why. And what is the Spirit of God doing? Hovering, or moving, over the chaotic waters of the deep. "Now the earth was formless and void" is just not a satisfying translation at all. It says that the earth was chaotic, desolate, empty. In Hebrew, the author used two words that rhyme and sound really cool.

## The Formless Deep

Tohu vavohu. That's what I imagine when they read this orally, that's what they said, and the land. So we see earth, think land, right? So when they're telling this story, they're not thinking like we think, oh, the earth was formless and void. So we picture ourselves standing on the moon, right? Looking at the blue marble or whatever, and it looks like yogurt. It's formless. No, that was likely not what ancient Israelites heard when this story was orally transmitted or before it was written down. They pictured themselves in the land. The word earth there is land. So you're standing on land, and it is desolate. It's a wasteland. Nothing comes from it. It's nothing. It has no order in it. It's chaos. Tohu v'vohu. The world was formless and empty. And then it says, darkness was over the surface of the deep.

## Wasteland and Chaotic Waters

So in this ancient Near Eastern context, you have two images that are trying to force themselves on another to make this point. You see an empty space. A wasteland, almost like a desert. Nothing grows from it. It's just chaos. Nothing good comes from it. No life can come from it. And then the next line, you have the chaotic waters, the darkness of these deep, deep waters that—I mean, you wouldn't want to live there because nothing good comes from that either. It's kind of a scary place. Nothing, nothing here can thrive. Chaotic waters that are black. And then here we have the Spirit of God moving on top of these waters, moving across them. It's just beautiful.

## Spirit, Wind, Breath

What is a spirit? What is spirit? So it's the Hebrew word ruach, and it could mean spirit, it could mean wind, or it could mean breath, breath. It's kind of what spirit is. It's the vitality, if

you will. I love this because what does God do next? What does God do? He speaks, right? So you have the spirit moving and then God speaks and he says, let there be light and the chaotic darkness will now be brought to order. This spirit is an integral part of the creation that's happening. Spirit brings forth light, separating day and night. These waters are now separated and a space is created within them. Waters are split in half like yum. Space is created kind of like a womb. What does a womb do? Cultivates life.

## Three Realms in Three Days

Waters below, waters above in the account. You have the sky, and the dry land comes forth and vegetation bursts forth on the dry land. The Holy Spirit brings forth life from the darkness. And these three different spaces are created in the first three days through the power of the Holy Spirit and God speaking. And it's fascinating because you got to wonder, who's creating? Then what's the Spirit of God doing?

## The Plurality of God

And so here we are 2,000 years removed from Christianity, and we have concepts that we've concocted and put together logically thinking, oh, and that's why we've come up with something we call the Trinity to help clarify the infinite nature of God in three distinct persons. But even before Christianity, Judaism struggled with this. Who's that? If God is creating, then what's the Spirit doing? I mean, they're the same thing, but here they're distinct. This account and also in [Daniel 7](#). We also have recordings of Judaism kind of struggling to understand this plurality of this divineness. But we have three realms that are being created through the Spirit of God, right?

## Filling the Spaces

And days 4 through 6 are then describing what things are being filled in these spaces. So you have the heavens, and they're filled with the sun, moon, and stars. You have the fish. They go and fill the waters below, and the birds glide next to the waters above. And then day 6, the land is filled with living creatures, right? Here's the thing. What is the Spirit of God responsible for doing? Giving life, giving beauty, and finally, mankind comes forth. Why did mankind come forth? What was the mission? What was the purpose?

## Mankind in God's Image

So that they would be the images of God. They would reign over creation. They would have power, not in a militant, tyrannical way, but as shepherds over creation. Tending to the life that has been brought forth through the Spirit, cultivating goodness, cultivating joy, cultivating peace, and cultivating grace. That's the calling of mankind.

## The Spirit That Brings Life

The first time we see the Holy Spirit in the Bible, it is a Spirit that brings forth the life of creation. And that should impact us when we claim to be partakers of the Holy Spirit of God. Because just like God spoke through the Holy Spirit to bring forth life in Genesis, [John 14](#) says that God is going to send the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name. The Holy Spirit that brings forth life is going to be given as a gift, as a comforter, but this time that life is going to look like Yeshua.

It may be confusing at times to figure out how the Holy Spirit is working in our lives, especially as followers of Yeshua. But here's the thing. Whatever the Holy Spirit does, it will always bring forth life by bringing us back to Yeshua. That's my litmus test. I know that. That's all it can do. That's all it's meant to do is bring forth life.

Fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Things that bring forth life. Things that look like Yeshua. That's what it is. It is the Spirit that brings forth life and power. Power of joy and power of peace, as Paul says. Power. Man, that's a funny word, power. Power simply means to be able to do things, to make things happen, to give life.

## A New Creation Narrative

We are the ambassadors of a new creation narrative, a new creation story. One that starts out more like, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And through him all things were made. Without him nothing was made that has been made. And in him was life. And that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness cannot overcome it.

## Pentecost: Many Nations, One Spirit

You want to know something beautiful about Luke's retelling of what took place when the Holy Spirit came and gave the believers that power? They had Jews from all over the world, as I said. Didn't look alike, didn't act the same, were not wearing the same clothes, they did not speak the same language, they were all from different cultures. And the Holy Spirit connected them

together through the followers of Yeshua. And notice something. God did not bring them back together by forcing them to all speak the same language. He could have forced them all to speak Hebrew because Hebrew is the holy language. But no, he did not force them all to speak the same language. No, the spirit of life saw it fit to reach them in their own language, in their own dialect. None of them needed to change their language to connect with Yeshua. No one needed to change their clothes to connect with Yeshua. No one needed to change the way they looked so they could imitate another Judean from a different part of the world to connect to Yeshua.

The Holy Spirit, Yeshua, God, saw it fit that his kingdom was beautiful the more that people did not look alike, the more diverse, the more variety of culture. This was the multicultural scope of Judeans scattered all over the world. And we know that it also extends outside of Judea, outside of Sumeria, to the entire world, not just with culture, but ethnicity as well. We see that in Acts chapter 10. It keeps moving.

## The Kingdom That Keeps Growing

I believe what took place in Acts chapter 2 was Yeshua's answer to the question that the disciples asked the chapter before. When will you restore the tribes of Israel together, the kingdom of God together again? When will it happen? And here it is. On Pentecost, Judeans from every nation under heaven were called in their language. King David has come. The shepherd king has come. The promised king has come. He lives. Repent and represent it well.

The kingdom of God has not stopped growing since this event took place 2,000 years ago. And it has reached the ends of the earth. The message of hope, grace, forgiveness, and mercy. The hope of love displayed through the cross. And the Spirit of Yeshua has not stopped. Has not stopped.

## The Spirit's Work in Darkness

And so I don't know where you're at today. But I hope that this is a reminder of what the Holy Spirit is known to do. And what the Holy Spirit comes to achieve. The Holy Spirit enters dark, chaotic places and brings forth life. That's the foundation of what we are introduced to the very first time the Spirit of God is shown to us. That is the attribute. However that comes to fruition, through us and through our experiences with God, that's always the MO. Just like Yeshua. This is what God does. The Holy Spirit always leads to life and it always leads us back to Yeshua. The Spirit gives life. [2 Corinthians 3.6](#) says,

So you may be in a place in your life where you empathize with what we just read in [Genesis 1](#). Tohu vavohu. Everybody say it. Tohu vavohu. You almost have a deeper... Tohu vavohu. Maybe you're at a place in your life right now where you empathize with those rhyme words that have such an impact. You empathize with the idea of a desolate wasteland, a watery abyss of chaos. No hope, no order, no life. Darkness.

And I'm here to bear witness today that the Spirit of God is moving on the waters, that the Spirit of God is moving. And it gives light, and it pushes away the darkness, and it pushes away the waters, and it pushes away whatever obstacle that would keep you separate from Him.

And so Pentecost, a time when we as believers commemorate the birth of new creation, the birth of a kingdom, and the power given to us to produce life. And maybe you're not in a place where that seems like a reality today. Maybe there's something in your life keeping you from that reality. Maybe it's a circumstance that seems like darkness and death. Maybe it's a place of uncertainty and confusion. Or maybe it is a sin that you've come to call a pet.

We are given this gift as believers to be our comforter. Allow it to be that and allow it to bring you close to Yeshua. And sometimes we resist the Holy Spirit because it's scary. It's hard to give up control. It's hard to admit you need life. It's hard to admit your life is like a deep, chaotic abyss in [Genesis 1](#). It's hard. And I think many times we find ourselves just like the Jews in [Acts 2](#). The Judeans from every nation under heaven standing there that day, having witnessed and knowing the power and the signs of the Holy Spirit, but then were left sitting there frozen asking, what do we do now? We see it. We know it. There it is. What do we do now?

## Step Into It

And Peter tells them, repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The life-giving spirit that is the same spirit that dwelled in Yeshua, that brought life to him. The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord our God will call. That's what Peter says. So you can stay where you're at, standing there frozen in that moment, having access to the Holy Spirit, having witnessed the Holy Spirit. You can stay where you're at, being a witness of the power, experiencing a connection to God, knowing that the Spirit is real, knowing something big is happening that's changing history, we can stay where we're at or we can step into it. Repent, letting the sins that bind us be forgiven in the name of Yeshua the Messiah. And we can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of the life-giving presence of God within us that equips us with power, with the ability and the authority to do things. For

some of us, we're still standing there before Peter. We know what God can do. Will we be a part of it? And that includes leaning on him and making ourselves vulnerable, daring to participate in this kingdom of this shepherd king.

## Invitation to Prayer

So I invite the worship team to come up. Please stand as we conclude services with a time of meditation, a time of reflection, and a time of worship. Guys, we have a prayer team on either side of the stage that comes up every single week. If you're at a place in your life where you know all too well what *tohu v'vohu* means—you're at a place of struggle, you're at a place of despair and chaos—guys, I invite you to partake in prayer. Maybe you're at a place where you recognize what is in front of you that you need to step over, that you need to repent, that you need to accept this forgiveness so that you can be filled with this power to do something for God's kingdom—the life-giving power of Yeshua—that you would be the full witness of that. Yes, I invite you. I invite you into that.

## Closing Prayer

Alvino Malkinu, our Father, our King, Father, we thank you for this time together that we can reflect on your word, on Shavuot, this time of gratitude for all you've given to us, this time of Pentecost where we reflect on the gift that you gave to us 2,000 years ago, the gift of your spirit that cultivates life, cultivates mercy, cultivates grace, and cultivates your love onto creation. God, that we would once again be reminded of the power that you have given to us and the authority that you have given to us to give joy, to give peace, the authority to claim reconciliation between the world and you, the power to do something and be ambassadors of life that push away darkness. Strengthen us, Father, and remind us of the power that we have so that we can go into the world and do what you've called us to do, to be your images and to use our power to reign in your kingdom. We thank you, Father, in the name of Yeshua, we pray, amen.

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