

PENTECOST - THE BEGINNING OF A CHURCH
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
June 12, 2011

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS - THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1996

**“TORAH TRADITION - JEWISH TEENS LEARN CANTILLATION, A
TECHNIQUE FOR CHANTING THE VERSE OF THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS OF
THE BIBLE”**

... chantillation, the centuries-old tradition of chanting the Torah before the congregation. The musical inflections lend a delicate beauty to the Hebrew of the first five books of the Bible.

On Saturday, ... about 100 ... young people will be honored at a ceremony at Shearith Israel in North Dallas. Over the past 4 years, the teenagers have collectively chanted 5,845 verses, the number of verses contained in the Torah.

The timing of the ceremony is ... significant because Saturday will be the second day of Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks, which commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

Rather than memorize verses, the teenagers study the system of musical notations associated with the Torah.

In practice, the Torah reader has the aid of a text with vowels, punctuation marks and musical notations. But the verses on the actual Torah scroll, painstakingly inscribed by expert calligraphers, have none of these, only the consonants. Cantillation helps the Torah reader judge where the punctuation marks are in the reading.

**THE JEWISH PRIMER - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON JEWISH FAITH
AND CULTURE BY RABBI DR. SHMUEL HIMELSTEIN**

Before reviewing the Q&A from this book, I want to remind you that modern orthodox Jews are following the Pharisees whom Jesus taught were following and teaching the “traditions of man”. Sadducees stuck more closely to the original teaching of the Torah as do we. However, we vary from the Sadducees, too.

- A. WHAT IS THE FESTIVAL OF SHAVUOT?
- B. Shavuot, which in Hebrew means “weeks,” is the festival which celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. It was on this day that God gave the Torah to Israel. During the Temple period, it was also the occasion when the first fruits were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate the new crop.
- A. WHAT OTHER NAMES DOES THE FESTIVAL HAVE?
- B. Shavuot is also known as Hag Matan Torateinu - the “Festival of the Giving of our Torah,” and as Hag ha-Bikkurim - the “Festival of the First Fruits.”

- A.** WHY IS THE FESTIVAL CALLED SHAVUOT - “WEEKS”?
- B.** Although the Torah uses only the name, “The Festival of the First Fruits,” it has been known throughout history as Shavuot because of the seven full weeks that must be counted between the second day of Passover and this festival.
- Q.** ARE THERE ANY OTHER VIEWS OF THE DATE OF THE SHAVUOT FESTIVAL? (other than Sivan 6)
- R.** ... there were deviant groups that interpreted the words literally. According to the view held, for example, by the Sadducees, the counting of the seven weeks begins on the evening after the first Sabbath following the first day of Passover. Thus the seven weeks always end on a Saturday and Shavuot is always on a Sunday.... the small Samaritan community celebrates Shavuot according to this calendar.
- Q.** WHAT SPECIAL CUSTOMS ARE THERE ON SHAVUOT?
1. The synagogue and the home are decorated with greenery
 - a. the earth is judged for the coming year as to its fruit production
 - a. one should pray for a good year
 - b. greenery reminds us of Mount Sinai in the middle of the desert, yet which had grass for the flocks to graze
 - c. it reminds us that the first fruits that were brought to the Temple on that day with great pomp and ceremony
 2. Many religious people spend the entire night ... of Shavuot studying the Torah
 - a. ... many of the Israelites ... went to sleep ... and Moses had to wake them to receive the Torah
 3. It is customary to eat dairy food during some of the meals of Shavuot.
 4. The Book of Ruth is read before the reading of the Torah
 - a. Ruth was the symbol of lovingkindness for her mother-in-law, forsaking her own country and people to go with her
 - b. the story of Ruth takes place at the time of the wheat harvest
 - c. the book is read to show us that the written Torah and the oral law are all a single organic whole, ... one cannot separate one from the other.
Deuteronomy 23.4 “An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord” ... Ruth, as a Moabite, was forbidden to marry Boaz, and there should be no Davidic dynasty. The oral law, though, stresses that the law applies to “a Moabite, but not a Moabitess,; and that a Moabite woman may marry a Jew.
 - d. King David, her descendant, was both born and died (on Shavuot)

The Beginnings and History of Shavuot

Shavuot = Hebrew for “weeks” or “day of firstfruits”
 Pentekostos = Greek for “fiftieth”

Leviticus 23

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- 15 'And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.
- 16 'Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.
 - 17-20 Sacrifices
- 21 'And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.
- 22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God."
 - Commentator: "This rule is appropriate for a harvest festival. In all Israel's life, the poor in Israel were helped and protected. Christians should ... have a similar attitude toward the unfortunate in our day. ... It is obvious that in a time of famine, emergency, or tragedy, no Christian should withhold his means if he is able to help. ... The law on gleaning with mention also of the treatments of vineyards is stated in ..."
 - **Leviticus 19:**
 - 9 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.
 - 10 'And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God.
 - **Deuteronomy 24:**
 - 19 "When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.
 - 20 "When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.
 - 21 "When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.
 - The stranger is not likely to be an Israelite
 - 22 "And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.
 - This is a provision for feeding the underprivileged
 - Sojourners were expected to take part

- This is also a fore-shadow that Gentiles will partake of the Word of God in the future – will be “grafted in” as Paul puts it in *Romans 11*

Deuteronomy 16

- 8 "Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a sacred assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it.
- 9 "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.
- 10 "Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.
- 11 "You shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide.
- 12 "And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Customs and historical events related with this date.

- The date:
 - The festival celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai
 - The occasion when the first fruits were brought to Jerusalem to celebrate the new crop
 - Much debate concerning the date
 - Sivan 6 - start counting on the day after the first high Sabbath after Passover
 - Monday - count fifty days from the first regular Sabbath after Passover, but don't include the first day
 - Sunday - count fifty days from the first regular Sabbath after Passover, including the first day
 - However, the Year of Jubilee is also the 50th year and it follows the 49th year
 - *Leviticus 25:*
 - 10 'And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.
 - 11 'That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine.
 - To me, this is the parallel in the Bible that solidifies and supports the true date being a Sunday
 - It is the one holiday that many Christians do observe

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FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
June 12, 2011

- In England, it used to be a national holiday called Whitsunday, or White Sunday
 - Custom was to wear white after baptism
- Date that King David was born and died
- Date tied to Passover:
 - On Passover, the Israelites were granted their physical freedom
 - They were still “enslaved” to their passions
 - On Shavuot, they received the Torah – the tools to master their passions and drives
 - On Pentecost, the Christians received the Holy Spirit – the tool to master our passions and desires
- Customs:
 - Eat dairy food
 - Read the Book of Ruth (took place during the wheat harvest)
 - There was a famine in Judah
 - Elimelech moved his family to Moab
 - He died leaving his wife, Naomi, and two sons alone in a foreign land
 - One of the sons married a Moabite named Ruth
 - When Naomi returned home after both sons had died, Ruth chose to go with her
 - **Ruth 1:**
 - 16 - For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.
 - 17 Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me.
 - Boaz, a relative of Elimelech, became enamored of Ruth
 - Naomi had to sell Elimelech’s property in order to survive
 - Boaz bought the land, redeemed Naomi and Ruth, then took Ruth as his wife
 - Boaz’s willingness to pay the complete price for the redemption foreshadowed Christ’s full payment for our salvation
 - Boaz and Ruth had a son – Obed
 - Obed was the father of Jesse – the father of David

The Beginnings and History of the Christian Church

John 14

- 25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.
- 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

- 27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 16

- 1 "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.
- 2 "They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.
- 3 "And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.
- 4 "But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.
- 5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'
- 6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.
- 7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.
- 8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
- 9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me;
- 10 "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;
- 11 "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.
- 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
- 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.
- 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.
 - They were told to expect the Holy Spirit and told what it would do
- 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Luke 24

- 36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."
- 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.
- 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"
- 39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."
- 40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.
- 41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

PENTECOST - THE BEGINNING OF A CHURCH
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
June 12, 2011

- 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.
- 43 And He took it and ate in their presence.
- 44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."
- 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.
- 46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,
- 47 "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- 48 "And you are witnesses of these things.
- 49 "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Acts 2

- 1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
 - The disciples were joined by Jews from many locations
- 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
 - The sound was not a wind, but LIKE a wind
- 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.
 - The tongues were not fire, but LIKE fire
 - Luke had difficulty describing the Holy Spirit's presence
- 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
 - They spoke in 15 languages in all
 - The speakers did not know the languages, but later we are told that the audience understood them well
- 5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.
- 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.
- 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"
- 8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"
 - The languages were known to the listeners
 - It was not an unintelligible sound
- 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

- 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,
- 11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."
- 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"
- 13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."
- 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.
- 15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.
 - 9:00 am was the third hour of the day
- 16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:
 - 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.
 - The "last days" are those between this Pentecost, the receipt of the Holy Spirit, and the 2nd coming of Christ
 - 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.
 - 19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
 - 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
 - 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'
- 22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know--
- 23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;
- 24 "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.
 - 25 "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
 - 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
 - 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
 - 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'
- 29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

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- David is NOT in heaven
- 30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,
- 31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.
- 32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.
- 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.
- 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: "The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,
- 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.""
- 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
- 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
 - The reality of the recent events hit them hard
 - The Greek word used here indicates "deep anxiety"
- 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - Repent
 - Be baptized
 - Receive the Holy Spirit
 - Some people have done these 3 steps in variant sequences
- 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."
- 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."
- 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.
 - These were the firstfruits of Christ's followers
 - Jesus was the first of the firstfruits
 - The firstfruits are symbolic of those who will be in the 1st resurrection

From "The Trial and Testimony of the Early Church":

- Had no building for meetings
- Had no hymnals
- Had no musical instruments
- Had no pastor

- Had no baptistery
- Had no ushers
- Had no choir
- Had no New Testament

The Beginnings and History of the Fairview TX Church of God

- Today is our 665th meeting
- Our first meeting:
 - April 13, 1996
 - 3 attendees - Nita, Wayne and Frances
 - Bible Study “Division in the Church” - a study of 1st Corinthians
- Our second meeting:
 - April 27, 1996
 - Same 3 attendees
 - Bible Study “Searching for the Will of God”
- Attendance:
 - Sadie Bender started May 2, 1996
 - June Beaver started October 26, 1996 after the Feast
 - 1996 average = 3.9
 - 1999 average = 8.4
 - 2003 average = 10.9
 - 2010 average = 18.4
- 243 different people have attended with us
 - Some have died
 - Some have moved away
 - Some were “kicking the tires”
 - Some attend infrequently
 - All are welcome

Happy Birthday! Let's have a birthday party – at Guy Harvey's!