

# I Will Answer The Heavens, And They Shall Answer The Earth

By Julia Blum

## The Day of Revelation: Jewish Perspective

<sup>15</sup> *'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. <sup>16</sup> Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.*[\[2\]](#)

This is our Scripture for dating Shavuot – the Feast of Weeks – one of the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals. The Torah doesn't provide a specific date for this Festival, linking its date directly to that of Passover. The word Shavuot means “weeks” and the festival of Shavuot marks the completion of the seven-week counting period between Passover and Shavuot. Today, Shavuot is held on the 6th of Sivan, fifty days after the second day of Passover. It is one of the three major annual feasts in the Biblical calendar.

The Torah readings for this holiday include Exodus 19-20: Moshe's ascent of Mount Sinai, and the Ten Commandments. Why? Not many Christians are aware of the fact that in Jewish tradition, Shavuot came to be understood as commemorating the giving of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. Although there is no explicit reference to that in the Torah, in [Exodus 19:1](#) we read that the Israelites came to the foot of Mount Sinai “*in the third month*”. The third month after the Exodus is Sivan; since this was also the month of Shavuot, the rabbis deduced that God gave the Torah on Shavuot. Thus, Shavuot became associated with the giving of the Torah, and gradually in Jewish tradition it became the Festival of the Giving of the Torah.

## The Day of Revelation: New Testament Perspective

You probably know that Shavuot and Pentecost are two different names for the same Festival. The Bible says: “*count fifty days*”, which is why, in the New Testament, the name for the holiday is usually translated as “Pentecost”. Therefore, it is against the background of Shavuot that the events of the first two chapters of the book of Acts must be seen. For instance, when in [Acts 1:4](#) Jesus commanded his disciples not to “*depart from Jerusalem,*” we would better understand this command if we remember that Shavuot is one of the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals when all the Jews were supposed to be in Jerusalem: “*Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths.*”[\[3\]](#)

And then we read in Acts 2 that, “*when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.*”[\[4\]](#)

If we remember that, by the first century, Shavuot was already associated with the giving of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai, we would understand that it was certainly no coincidence that the descent of the Spirit is described on the day of Pentecost. Moreover, we would be able to see all these beautiful and profound parallels between God giving His Word and God giving His Spirit. Luke consciously and intentionally describes the events of Acts 2 in terms of a “second Sinai”. The “noise like a violent wind” in Acts 2 certainly echoes the thundering from [Exodus 20:18](#), and the fire of Acts parallels the fire of Exodus. In Midrash *Exodus Rabbah*, we have this commentary on Exodus 20: “One voice was split into seven and they were divided into seventy languages.”[\[5\]](#)

Hillary Le Cornu and Joseph Shulam quote an even more striking sentence from a Midrash: “The voice went out and was divided into seven voices and from seven voices into seventy tongues, so that **all the nations will hear. And every nation heard the voice in its own tongue** and was amazed.”[\[6\]](#) Doesn’t that sound almost like a quotation from the Book of Acts: “*And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed.*” Thus, on both occasions, Shavuot becomes the day when Heaven is opened and God Himself claims His people. Jesus’ command to the Apostles to wait in Jerusalem (in [Acts 1:4](#)) might also be understood as a hint that, as His Word was given on Shavuot, His Spirit will also be given on Shavuot.

### **The Day of Revelation: The Hidden Messiah is revealed!**

We can safely say now that revelation is the main theme of *Shavuot*, **both in the Jewish and in the New Testament tradition**. Not many are aware, however, of the additional revelation that happened on that day. Those of my readers who read my book about the Hidden Messiah[\[7\]](#) might recall that it is here, in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, that the messianic status of Jesus is revealed publicly for the first time. The contrast with His hiddenness in the gospels is dramatic. No words can better describe this abrupt change in the atmosphere from Luke’s Gospel to Acts, than the verse from Luke himself: “*What you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops*”.

As against the hidden/concealed/only “*in the ear*” revealed secret of the messianic identity of Jesus in the Gospel, here in Acts 2, on the Day of Pentecost, we hear an open proclamation of his Messiahship—for the very first time. In his first public speech, Peter proclaims loudly (almost literally ‘*on the housetops*’), that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah: “*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.*” The secret, esoteric knowledge of the Gospel all of a sudden becomes a widely broadcast message in Acts; the secret of Jesus’ messiahship is revealed – and it also happens on Shavuot, along with two other profound events.