

Shavuot - Two Testaments on Two Mountains

A Kingdom of Priests, Set Apart for G-d's Service;
Torah Engrafted - Spirit Empowered

In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt, on the very day, they came to the wilderness of Sinai. After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the desert of Sinai and Israel camped there in the wilderness in front of the mountain. Then Moses went up to G-d and the L-RD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel. You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out all the nations you will be My special treasured possession. Although the whole earth is Mine, you will be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (consecrated, set apart to the service of G-d). These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites. Exodus 19:1-6

A Tale of Two Mountains

G-d brought Israel to Mount Sinai selecting the inaugural Feast of Shavuot as His appointed time to give them the Torah as His Ketubah.¹ About 1500 years later, on another Shavuot [Acts 2:1-4 & 16-21], His faithful followers gathered in the temple on Mount Moriah,² fulfilling the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29, concerning the outpouring of HaRuach HaKodesh (The Holy Spirit) upon His people. This resulted in the engrafting of His Torah upon their hearts [Jeremiah 31:33 & Ezekiel 36:26-27] as He empowered them to become His witnesses [Acts 1:8] and able ministers of the Brit Hadashah (New Covenant) [2 Corinthians 3:6].

On the first mountain He gave Israel His covenant through Moses as an act of betrothal. On the second mountain He wrote that covenant on their hearts as the seal of the eternal union that was theirs as members of the elect remnant Bride of Messiah. This was the predestined purpose of our awesome Abba in Heaven. It is no coincidence that Mount Moriah was the same place where G-d confirmed His covenant with Abraham, to provide him a lamb. He fulfilled that promise on a nearby mount called Golgotha by providing His only begotten Son to die in the place of every human being, redeeming us all from the penalty of our sinful rebellion to G-d.

The Torah reveals to us the righteous requirements of being His chosen covenant people, bearing His holy name before the nations. It reminds us of how holy G-d is and of how much we've all fallen short of His glory. We need His abundant grace and mercy to be close to Him and to become more like Him. This can only happen as we allow HaRuach Elohim (The Spirit of G-d) to write His Torah (teaching, instruction) upon our hearts. This happens more in the ordinary humdrum activities of our everyday lives than in the momentous mountaintop miracles, which we would very much prefer, but are all too few and far between.

Meeting G-d on the Mountains

It came to pass in the morning that there was thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the shofar was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. Now Mount Sinai was covered in smoke, because the L-RD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace and the whole

¹ Ketubah – Keh-too-bah (Hebrew) = A Marriage contract

² Although Christian tradition teaches that the disciples of Y'shua gathered in an upper room on Mt. Zion, it would be more consistent with biblical Jewish tradition for faithful Jews to be worshipping G-d in the Temple on Shavuot.

mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the shofar sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke and G-d answered him by voice. Exodus 19:16-19

The festival of Shavuot had finally arrived; they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributed and resting on each of them. And they were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Now there were staying in Jerusalem religious Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered: they were confused, because each one heard the believers speaking in their own language. Totally amazed they asked, "How is this possible? Aren't all these people who are speaking from the Galilee? How is it that we hear them speaking in our own native languages?"

We are Parthians, Medes, Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judah, Cappodacia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete and Arabia! How is it that we hear them speaking in our own languages about the great things G-d has done?"
Acts 2:1-11

There are several striking similarities between the two Shavuot encounters with G-d on the two mountaintops.

1. On both occasions the Torah was given to G-d's people, but in very different methods. The Torah was given on the first mountain on tablets of stone by the finger of G-d [Exodus 31:18]. On the second mountain, the Torah was written on the fleshly tables of their hearts by the Spirit of G-d [2 Corinthians 3:3].
2. Both of the Shavuot encounters were accompanied by very unusual and extremely powerful phenomena. Do you think G-d was trying to get our attention? Talk about special effects!
3. G-d revealed Himself in a majestic and historic manner, completely altering the way Israel would relate to Him [Deuteronomy 3:24]. The first time *was* for 1500 years and the second time *is* for all eternity.
4. Both Shavuot encounters were accompanied by fire. Everyone saw the fire on the first mountain from a distance, for it was an external national covenant. On the second mountain the experience was meant for each person, as an individual. Now G-d could place His Torah in the heart of each believer and dwell in them as a temple of His holy presence, so the fire was seen upon each of the 120 talmideem (disciples).
5. At the first mountain there was a mixed multitude [Exodus 12:38] that was with them and heard the thunderings (Hebrew - Coal = voices) of G-d. An ancient Midrash (commentary) on this passage suggests that there were 70 voices of G-d so all nations could hear and receive the Torah from G-d. On the second mountain the Spirit gave them other tongues and a mixed multitude that was in Jerusalem for Shavuot heard the wonderful works of G-d in their own tongue!

Two Mountains, One Message

There is continuity in the message of these two different covenants inaugurated on two separate mountains. G-d has always desired the same thing from His people, no matter when they were alive or where they were living. He wants us to know and understand that He loves us unconditionally and completely and wants us to respond to this awesome truth by loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.³

And because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power.
Deuteronomy 4:37 & 7:8

And now Israel, what does the L-RD your G-d require of you, but to revere the L-RD your G-d, to walk in His ways and to love Him, to serve the L-RD your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul. Deuteronomy 10:12

For G-d so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but shall have everlasting life. John 3:16

As the father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. John 15:9-10. *There is a very clear message that G-d has endeavored to impart His love to all humanity and we have been very slow in understanding and thus practicing it.*

G-d has been trying to show us that when His Word abides in us, so does His Spirit. The result being that knowing and experiencing His love will change the way we see ourselves and the world around us. We will begin to love our neighbor as ourselves and love one another as He loved us. The central theme of the Torah is the same as the New Covenant, "Love G-d with all your heart and love others as He has loved you." Matthew 22:37-40

We have all tried to keep the Torah, in one form or another, in our own strength and to the very best of our ability. We strive do this as a testimony to G-d and others of how much we love Him and how serious we are about our faith. Sadly we have all failed miserably in our sincerest attempts of living up to the absolute perfect holiness of Torah.

Our only hope is to completely surrender to G-d, embracing Him as L-RD & Master, and confessing to Him that we have sinned and fallen short of His glory. Unless we allow G-d's Word to abide in us and we also abide in Him, we will never walk in the power of His Spirit or know the fulfillment of His love.

We all need a daily immersion in the Word of G-d and the power of His Spirit, if we ever hope to obey His commandments out of a heart overflowing with His agape' love for our family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers, as well as demonstrating G-d's love to our enemies.

Shavuot means *Weeks* or *Sevens*. It is the culmination of the 49 days of counting the Omer (beginning the day after the Sabbath during the week of Unleavened Bread), a specific measure of barley, from which bread was made as a sacrificial wave offering on the temple altar.

This seems to imply that there is a supernatural connection between Passover and Shavuot. Seven is the number of perfection and completion. Seven times seven indicates the ultimate perfection and completion made available to us by G-d's supernatural intervention.

³ Deuteronomy 6:5 & Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:36-40

On Passover G-d Himself provided *The Lamb* slain from the foundations of the world to provide all humanity with eternal redemption. Shavuot takes our redemption from the future (Heaven) to the present (filling us with G-d's Holy Spirit). Fulfilling the prayer Y'shua taught His talmideem, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, in earth as it is in Heaven." G-d wanted His will of His Kingdom to come into the earth through us, His earthen vessels.

*"For G-d Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shined His light into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of G-d in the face of Y'shua the Messiah. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that this all-surpassing excellence of the power may be from G-d and not from us."*⁴

This perfect fulfillment of all the righteous requirements of Torah has been paid for by our Messiah Himself and then imparted to everyone who believes by the outpouring of HaRuach HaKodesh on the feast of Shavuot. Living within us is the perfect righteousness of the Son of G-d through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

This is the Shekinah (the manifest presence of G-d) that once dwelt in the Holy of Holies, deep within the holy Temple. Now, by the miraculous grace of G-d revealed to us through the New Covenant, we can actually receive that same presence into our own heart, changing our lives forever, for we have become the Temples of the Living G-d.

*"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have received from G-d? You are not your own, for you have been bought at a price (the precious blood of Y'shua). Therefore glorify G-d with your body."*⁵

We are now privileged to enjoy intimate fellowship with G-d as He had originally planned for us to do in the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve walked and talked with G-d in the cool of the day. This is what we were created for and this is what ***the two covenants on two mountains*** testify to.

Our salvation is not just for our own enjoyment. G-d loves the whole world and wants to impact every person on this planet with the message of His amazing love before the end of the world is upon us.

As we read in the Prophet Joel:

"And afterward (after the restoration of physical Israel [1948] and Jerusalem [1967]), I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams; your young men shall see visions. Even on my handmaids and my servants, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

I will show signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood, fire and billows of smoke. The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall be turned to blood, before the great and dreadful Day of the L-RD.

*And everyone who calls on the name of the L-RD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the L-RD has said, among the remnant whom the L-RD shall call."*⁶

We see that G-d wants to pour out His Spirit on all people, Jews & Gentiles, the Young & Old, Men & Women. No one is left out of this awesome opportunity to have G-d's holy presence live within them and empower them to minister the Gospel.

⁴ 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

⁶ Joel 2:28-32

These verses remind us that G-d is going to have great revival amongst the Jewish people in the land of Israel before Messiah returns. His Kingdom come, His will be done; in earth (in us) as it is in Heaven, when Messiah's body will truly be ONE!