

Introduction: The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) was the final and biggest, fullest, most grandiose and joyful of the four spring feasts in the worship calendar of the Israelites. *** The feasts started with Passover on the evening of the first full moon of spring, the season of the first harvest in the middle-East. It was followed by seven days of eating Unleavened Bread, with special holy days on the first and seventh days, when no work was done. On the day after the Sabbath (the first day of the week) during this first week of harvest, each Israelite family brought a sheaf of grain from the First-fruits of the ground to the priest to wave before Yahweh. (We know now that The Savior Messiah was the first-fruits from the grave, when He rose from the dead in the early morning of the day after the Sabbath!) Then, after seven full weeks from this day after the Sabbath was the feast of Weeks, which Greek speaking Jews called Pentecost (the Greek number for how many days are in seven weeks plus one, to get back to the first day of the week: $7 \times 7 + 1 = 50$). *** Here is how Israel worshipped Yahweh on The Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). First they brought loaves of bread baked with the new grain to Him as an offering. Then they made a burnt offering of total consecration to Him with seven male lambs a year old without blemish, one bull and two rams. Next they brought one male goat for a sin offering. And, they brought two male lambs for a peace offering. For the benediction the priest reminded Yahweh's people to leave enough gleanings from their harvest to feed the poor and alien sojourners. (*Leviticus 23:1-22*) *** This is the rich worship feast on which The Father and Jesus chose to give The Holy Spirit to people from all nations who will turn from themselves and their ways to God and His ways in humble, surrendered, obedient faith in God's Son, The Savior. *** First, Jesus is THE Bread of Life. Then, He puts sinners on the path of total (seven-fold) holiness and consecration to God as He forgives the sins of all who turn to Him ... He gives both peace with God AND peace with people. Finally, The Holy Spirit is so infinite and abundant that He fills all people: poor and rich, and of all nations of the earth.

I. Having been made right with God by faith, we boast because His LOVE has been poured out in us by The Holy Spirit. (Verses 1-5)

A. Having been made right by faith, we have peace with God through The Lord, being brought by faith to the grace of the hope of the glory of God. (*Verses 1-2*)

1. So, having been made right by faith, we are having peace towards God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Verse 1*)

Made right: All of us are born without the ability to be right, or to do right. We can only be made right by the gift of faith The Lord gives from His work as The Son of Man on earth.

Peace toward God: Faith both makes a person right and gives that person peace in God's presence.

2. Through The Lord we have also been brought by The Faith into this grace in which we still stand. (*Verse 2a-b*)

This grace: 'This grace' is that which we are given by God through The Faith IN The Lord Savior King which we have been brought to have by Him.

3. And, we are always boasting upon the hope of the glory of God. (*Verse 2c*)

Boast: The word boast also means exult and rejoice. All who have been made right and have peace by God's grace by faith can't help but rejoice, exult and boast to others about what God has done for them.

Glory: Without The Lord Jesus Christ, we all continuously fall short of God's glory. But, IN Christ by grace by faith we have the hope of attaining to His glory, as The Savior we are IN attains His glory.

THE God: Let us never forget, there is only One God, THE God who reveals Himself in The Bible.

B. We also boast in tribulations which work out in us perseverance, perfect character and hope because God's LOVE has been poured out in our hearts through The Holy Spirit given to us. (*Verses 3-5*)

1. We also boast in tribulations, knowing it works out perseverance. (*Verse 3*)

Tribulations: These are pressures and afflictions which lead to great distress, including persecution.

One of today's tribulations is COVID-19 that makes people we love sick and threatens them with death.

Perseverance: But IF we are having The Faith IN The Savior, tribulations will work out perseverance and endurance in the face of them, SO we will boast even in the midst of the corona virus pandemic.

2. Perseverance works out proven character and hope. (*Verse 4*)

Proven character: This proven character came out of suffering, poverty and tribulation of the churches in Macedonia, to generate in them an extreme and liberal giving to their suffering brothers in Jerusalem beyond their ability, all because of God's indescribable gift! (*2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:12-15*)

3. Hope arising from proven character does not disappoint us because God's LOVE has been poured out in us. (*Verse 5a*)

God's LOVE: God's LOVE is more powerful and perfect than human love. His LOVE changes the character of our lives and gives us lives that are eternal, full and fruitful. (*John 3:16-21; 10:1-18; 15:5-17*)

4. God's LOVE is poured in our hearts through The Holy Spirit, Who has been given to us. (*Verse 5b*)

Hearts: Our hearts are at the center of our being. We are commanded to love Yahweh with all our hearts ... We can only do this when He pours out His LOVE into our hearts.

The Holy Spirit given: God's LOVE is poured out into our hearts by faith by The Holy Spirit.

God pours His LOVE into faithful people by The Holy Spirit

II. Christ died for us while we were still sinners to prove God's LOVE for us and reconcile us to Him. (Verses 6-11)

A. While we were still being helpless and ungodly sinners, Christ died for us to always prove God's LOVE for us. (*Verses 6-8*)

1. Because while we were still helpless, according to the season, He died for the ungodly. (*Verse 6*)

Time season: Christ died in the appropriate season of time. He did everything at the proper time for its fulfillment. (*Mark 1:14-15; John 17:1-5; Galatians 4:1-7; Ephesians 1:3-14*)

2. The best men are not willing to die for a 'good' or even 'righteous' man. (*Verse 7*)
Supreme sacrifice for another human: We all know that not every person is worth dying for; but, worse yet, because of our own sinful falling short, our death would not be effective for anyone.
3. But God proves His LOVE toward us, that while still being sinners, Christ died for us. (*Verse 8*)
'Stand with' proof: The word proof is 'standing with'. Commitment always requires 'standing with'.
God's LOVE: This is God's amazing LOVE. His Son 'stood with' people the whole time He was tortured and then died on The Cross for us. By His 'standing with' people LOVE, all people who turn from themselves to Him in surrendered, obedient faith are forgiven and get to enjoy God's strong, life-giving, life-changing LOVE. Because of Christ's Resurrection all who die with Him to their sins will live with Him in His resurrected life. (*Philippians 3:7-11*)
Helpless, ungodly, sinners: The people Christ LOVED enough to die for fall into three weak and powerless categories: helpless, ungodly and sinners. Let us thank Him for His gift of The Holy Spirit Who convicts us to know The Righteous One was judged in our place to make us righteous by faith.

God pours His LOVE into faithful people by The Holy Spirit

- B. Much more, having been made right with God by His Blood, we are saved from wrath; and, having been reconciled to God, we boast in God through The Lord, through whom we have reconciliation which we have now received. (*Verses 9-11*)
 1. So, much more, having now been made right in His Blood, we will be saved through Him from wrath. (*Verse 9*)
Made right: So, being made right gives us salvation, which is more than peace with God.
Christ's Blood: We have been made right with God through The Blood (Death) of Christ.
Wrath: And we have been saved from the wrath. The wrath we all need to fear, and be saved from, is the wrath God rightly unleashes on those who willfully sin against Him. This is made clearer in what comes next.
 2. Because if being enemies, we were reconciled to The God through the death of His Son. (*Verse 10a*)
Reconciled to God: Here is the amazing grace and salvation God has offered to us in His Son: He has reconciled through the death of His Son not 'good' or 'righteous' men, but enemies like us!

Enemies of God are reconciled through the death of His Son

3. Much more having been reconciled in the blood of His death, we will be saved in His life. (*Verse 10b*)
Much more will we be saved: We are saved in the life of His Son because Christ The King returned to His Father and they sent The Holy Spirit to convince of both of our sin AND of the act of Christ's LOVE when He BOTH gave us His life AND was raised to life for us, so we may be saved IN Him.
4. But we also boast in The God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom now, the reconciliation we have received. (*Verse 11*)
Boast: Because of the work of the promised Holy Spirit in our hearts, when we could be fearful, like everyone in the world, of things we do not understand, we are not. Instead we boast by faith that in The God we will not fear anything because His perfect LOVE casts out fear. (*1 John 4:16-18*) Nothing can prevent us from accomplishing all God has planned for us to do in His Perfect Will!
Grace of reconciliation received: Grace is the gift of The Holy Spirit, who poured out God's LOVE in our hearts by The Faith of Christ our Savior. We have been reconciled to God by His amazing gifts of Jesus and The Holy Spirit, by grace, by faith. Praise God because ***God pours His LOVE into faithful people by The Holy Spirit***

Conclusion: All who have been made right with God by faith have peace with God through The Lord Jesus and boast in the hope of the glory of God. And they boast in tribulations because The LOVE of God has been poured into their hearts by The Holy Spirit given to them. All this is because, while they were still sinners and enemies of God, He proved His LOVE to them. His Son died for them to reconcile them to Himself. And this sacrificial act of LOVE results in their boasting in the reconciliation they have received. And, they boast in God's LOVE by The Holy Spirit they have received.

God pours His LOVE into faithful people by The Holy Spirit