

Acts 2:1 ¶ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This chapter opens with a time marker—the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the Feast of Firstfruits, celebrated the initial wheat harvest.

The 120 disciples were of a unified spirit patiently awaiting “the promise of the Father,” the Holy Spirit. I am sure they had planned to celebrate the feast of Pentecost together, but little did they know that this would be the most special Pentecost of their lifetimes.

Suddenly, they heard a sound from heaven like a rushing mighty wind. This makes me think of the sound of the powerful winds of some of the hurricanes I have experienced. The sound filled the house and a phenomena that looked like little tongues of fire appeared that seemed to sit upon each of disciples. (I would assume on top of their heads.) This seemed to be an outward sign that each disciple had been filled with the Holy Spirit to empower him/her to serve God according to His purpose for that individual. This brings to mind the words of John the Baptist.

Luke 3:16 “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire....”

The disciples then began to speak in other languages according to the supernatural enablement of the Spirit. I liked the thought expressed by Adam Clarke: “At the building of Babel the language of the people was confounded; and, in consequence of this, they became scattered over the face of the earth: at this foundation of the Christian Church, the gift of various languages was given to the apostles, that the scattered nations might be gathered; and united under one shepherd and superintendent of all souls.”

Acts 2:5 ¶ And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Acts 2:6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

Acts 2:7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

Acts 2:8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Acts 2:9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

**Acts 2:10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,
Acts 2:11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.**

Luke sets the stage for clear understanding of what is meant by “tongues” by detailing that there were devout Jews from “every nation under heaven” in Jerusalem at this time—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, Asians, Phrygians, Egyptians, Libyans, Cyrenes, and others. According to Josephus, the normal population of Jerusalem was about 150,000. At feast times, however, it would swell to one million plus.

It seems that the powerful sound of the coming of the Holy Spirit had caused a crowd to gather outside the building where the disciples were. The disciples evidently wasted no time in taking advantage of their new gift and began declaring the wonderful works of God—the message of salvation—to the crowd. Those in the crowd were amazed because they were hearing people who were obviously Galileans speaking to them in their native languages. To me this is a double miracle because not only did the Spirit empower the disciples to speak in tongues, He ensured that each disciple was speaking in the native language of the particular individuals to whom he/she was speaking.

Acts 2:12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Acts 2:13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

Acts 2:14 ¶ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all *ye* that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

Acts 2:15 For these are not drunken, as *ye* suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day.

The crowd just didn't understand how this could be happening. Some even thought the disciples were drunk. This accusation had to be from those in the crowd that weren't listening to what was being said. The twelve chosen apostles took a stand of leadership, and Peter spoke out loudly as their representative. What a change from the man that was so fearful of being identified as a follower of Jesus that he denied his relationship to Him three times!

Peter refuted the accusation that the disciples were drunk and pointed out that it was only 9:00 a.m. (the third hour of the day), the hour of prayer.

Acts 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

Acts 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Acts 2:18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Peter goes on to explain this miracle by making application of the words of the

prophet Joel that describe a supernatural outpouring of the Spirit of God upon His people in the context of events of the last days—all the days since the ascension of Jesus until He once again descends to establish His earthly kingdom.

Joel 2:28–29 “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”

To prophesy is to speak God’s word in power, to speak through His inspiration.

Acts 2:19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

Acts 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter continues to quote from Joel.

Joel 2:30–32 “And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered....”

I think it highly probable that Peter fully expected to experience the onset of these wonders from heaven and signs in the earth, etc., as prophesied by Joel. He was preaching the message of salvation and deliverance from sin and, I think, was greatly motivated by his expectation of the return of Jesus to establish His kingdom.

Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Acts 2:24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Peter next directed his message to the people of Israel. He turned the focus of his message to Jesus of Nazareth and identified Him as a man approved by God as evidenced by the miracles, wonders and signs that God performed through Him. He knew that there were many there that were eyewitness to those miracles. I looked at both the Greek and Webster’s to try and distinguish between miracles, wonders and signs.

“miracle” – a wonderful thing; an event or effect contrary to the established constitution and course of things, or a deviation from the known laws of nature; a supernatural event, or one transcending the ordinary laws by which the

universe is governed.

“wonder” – a cause of surprise, amazement, astonishment

“signs” – that which furnishes evidence or proof of something

I think it is significant that Peter made a point of the fact that God performed these actions through Jesus. It is another affirmation that Jesus laid aside His divine attributes when He chose to come to earth as a man and qualify as the perfect sacrifice to atone for the sin of man incurred through the action of Adam. Jesus lived on earth as a sinless man in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit as He victoriously confronted the temptations of sin and remained obedient to the will of the Father. He succeeded where Adam failed.

Philippians 2:5–8 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Hebrews 4:14–15 “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

Peter goes on to clarify that it was this same Jesus that they had killed by crucifixion. However, contrary to what they thought, the crucifixion was a part of God’s plan from the beginning—a plan based on His foreknowledge and omniscience. He formulated His plan by taking into account the choices of sinful men and implementing that plan accordingly.

Jesus was crucified as a man and resurrected to new life as the Son of God in His fullness and over Whom death has no power. This truth is affirmed by the words of the Psalmist, and Peter confidently states that the application was specific to Jesus.

Acts 2:25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

Acts 2:26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

Acts 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Acts 2:28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

Psalms 16:8–11 “I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of

joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

Acts 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

Acts 2:31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Realizing that his audience might reject the application to Jesus, Peter points out that David is dead and buried; in fact, they could even identify his grave. He reminded them that David was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him that one of his descendants would sit on his throne in an eternal kingdom.

1 Chronicles 17:7–12 "Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts... And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever."

The reference to "thine Holy One" (v27) whose body would not decay was a prophecy of the Christ, the Messiah, Who would die but would be resurrected to new life in victory over the grave to assume the throne of David.

Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Acts 2:34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

Acts 2:35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Peter goes on to emphasize that this large group (120) of Jesus' followers could all personally testify as eyewitnesses to the fact that God raised Jesus to new life from the grave. That same Jesus was at that time at the right hand of God and had sent them "the promise of the Holy Ghost" just as He had promised. That the disciples could witness to them in their native languages gave proof to the miraculous empowerment of the Spirit among them.

Peter next quoted from another psalm of David. He explained that David was not at the right hand of YHWH; it was the Messiah Whom David identified as his Lord.

Psalms 110:1 "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Peter goes on to explain that the same Jesus that they had crucified not so long ago is David's Lord, the Messiah, the One at the right hand of God. The writer of the Hebrews affirms Peter's message.

Hebrews 10:9–13 "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

So did the Apostle Paul.

Romans 8:34 "...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Acts 2:37 ¶ Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

It seems that many in the crowd were "pricked in their heart"; they understood that they had crucified their Messiah. The obvious question they had for the Apostles—What can we do? How are we supposed to respond?

Peter doesn't hesitate; he tells them to repent of their sin and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. This would serve as a public testimony to the fact that they had accepted Him as their Messiah. (Christ = Christos in Greek = the Messiah) Guzik makes a good comment on this section: "Baptism made a clear statement. In that day, Jews were not commonly baptized, only Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. For these Jewish men and women to be baptized showed just how strongly they felt they needed Jesus."

Peter went on to promise that those who placed their faith in Jesus would also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the gift of the Spirit is given to every person (since that time) that places his/her faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior—no matter where they live.

Peter also stated that those who receive the Spirit in response to their faith are doing so in response to the call of "the Lord our God." Scripture never contradicts itself, and Peter has already quoted the Prophet Joel in declaring that "whosoever" calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Scripture also declares that God is not willing that any should perish.

Ezekiel 33:11 "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live...."

Peter eventually goes on to affirm this truth in his own epistle.

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

I think the Apostle Paul provides the key in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 8:29–30 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

One's call is based on God's foreknowledge, His omniscience; He knew every person who would choose the gift of saving faith in the Lord Jesus before creation.

Ephesians 1:3–4 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:"

The fact that God chose to give man the freedom of choice in no way detracts from the fact that He is sovereign and totally in control.

Acts 2:40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

I like the translation of the CJB for verse 40: *He pressed his case with many other arguments and kept pleading with them, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation!"*

Luke is informing us that he has given us the main part of Peter's message, not the whole message. The plea for them to save themselves from this perverse generation is a plea for them to repent and place their faith in Jesus as their Savior and avoid the condemnation that comes with rejecting Him.

John 3:17–18 "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

We are told that those who received the truth with pleasure were baptized, and about 3,000 souls were added to the body of believers that day. These are the firstfruits of the harvest of souls for the church that were added on a day also

known as The Festival of the Firstfruits. The following excerpt is from Judaism 101 at www.jewfaq.org.

“Shavu'ot, the Festival of Weeks, is the second of the three major festivals with both historical and agricultural significance (the other two are Passover and Sukkot). Agriculturally, it commemorates the time when the first fruits were harvested and brought to the Temple, and is known as Hag ha-Bikkurim (the Festival of the First Fruits). Historically, it celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, and is also known as Hag Matan Torateinu (the Festival of the Giving of Our Torah).”

Acts 2:42 ¶ And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The response of the new believers was to continue taking steps to grow in their faith. They sought to learn from and fellowship with the apostles, participated in communion, and joined with them in prayer.

It is significant to note that the apostles were recognized as possessing correct doctrine since they were directly taught by Jesus.

Acts 2:43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

As with Jesus, the Spirit empowered the twelve apostles to perform signs and wonders to evidence the truth of their message. Their works were such that they caused the people to fear them. I would assume this to be a reaction of awe among the body of believers and outright fear from those outside the body.

**Acts 2:44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;
Acts 2:45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.**

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

In these early days of the growing body of believers in Jerusalem, they shared all their possessions with one another. They were even willing to sell their possessions to make sure that every person was provided for according to his/her need. They continued to gather daily as a unified group at the temple and went from house to house fellowship with one another and praise God.

The NIV Commentary adds some insight: “As Jews who were Christians and also Christians who were Jews, they not only considered Jerusalem to be their city but continued to regard the temple as their sanctuary and the Law as their law. Evidently they thought of themselves as the faithful remnant within Israel for whose sake all the institutions and customs of the nation existed.”

Luke specifically notes that the way they conducted themselves caused all people to look on them with favor as they observed their unselfish love for one another. Their conduct evidently resulted in others accepting the gift of salvation and being added to the church every day. Note that it is the Lord who grows the church through the ministry of the Holy Spirit through individuals.