

**A WALK TO THE CROSS (And Beyond)**  
**THE DAY OF PENTECOST**  
*The Coming Of The Holy Spirit*  
**Acts 2:1-13**

The *second chapter* of Acts marks a *turning point* in the *history of God's kingdom*. A new phase of His *redemptive plan* begins to *unfold* as the *Church is born*.

- In *chapter 1*...the disciples were to **wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit**. In *chapter 2*...**He comes**.
- In *chapter 1*...the disciples were **equipped**. In *chapter 2*...they are **empowered**.
- In *chapter 1*...they were to **stay local**. In *chapter 2*...they were **sent forth**.
- In *chapter 1*...the **Savior ascended**. In *chapter 2*...the **Holy Spirit descended**.

The *promises* of the Lord Jesus Christ given in *chapter 1* (**vs. 5, 8**) come to *fulfillment*, as the believers gathered in the upper room receive the wonderful *promise* of the Father.

God's *eternal redemptive plan* began to unfold in human history all the way back in the **Garden of Eden** after man *sinned*. In **Genesis**, He *promised a savior*...One who would one day *redeem* the human race from the *effects of that sin* and *reconcile them* back to God. The unfolding of that plan continued throughout the *patriarchal age*...past the giving of the *Mosaic Law*...to a small hill outside **Jerusalem** called *Calvary*. There the *incarnate Son of God* gave His life *for the sins of the world*. After *rising victorious* over *sin* and *death*...He promised to *send the Holy Spirit* to *indwell* believers. As we have seen, that *event...out of necessity*...had to wait until Jesus' *ascension* to the Father (**John 7:37-39**).

*“But 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 go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me.”*

~John 16:7-10

Even though *the assembling of the redeemed* in God's kingdom has continued since the Fall...*the coming of the Holy Spirit marks the beginning* of the unique **Church Age**. The fact that there would be *an intervening age between the two advents of Messiah* wasn't foreseen in the Old Testament. Nor was the *unity of Jews and Gentiles into one body*. Paul called that concept a *mystery* (**Ephesians 3:3-10**).

*“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

~Galatians 3:28

The word **church** comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means *called out ones*. The **Church** is...

- The **bride of Christ**.
- The **branches of the Vine**.
- The **flock of the Good Shepherd**.
- The **kingdom of God's Son**.
- **God's household**.
- His **adopted children**.
- A **temple of the Holy Spirit**...of which, Jesus Christ is the **cornerstone**.
- Uniquely...the **body of Christ**. His *hands*, His *feet*, His *voice*.

*“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.”*

~I Corinthians 12:12-14

With the *coming* of the **Holy Spirit**...we see the *birth* of the **Church**. This *birth* occurs on the **Day of Pentecost**.

### **I. THE EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT’S COMING: (vs. 1-4)**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place (vs. 1)...Undoubtedly they were still in the *upper room* as described in Acts 1:13. It was located just *inside the Eastern Gate*, probably *in close proximity of the temple*.

**Day of Pentecost**...also known as the **Feast of Weeks** (Exodus 34:22-23) or the **Feast of Harvest** (Exodus 23:16). **Pentecost** means *fifty*...so it was celebrated *fifty days* after **Passover**. It also celebrated the *giving of the Law* to **Moses**.

It should be noted that the **Spirit** wasn’t persuaded into coming because the believers *prayed* or *met certain spiritual requirements*. The **Spirit** descended because of the *sovereign timing* of God.

**And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting (vs. 2)...**

**Suddenly**...emphasizes the *element of surprise*. Even though the *apostles* and the other *believers* that were gathered together with them in the *upper room* knew that

the **Spirit’s coming** was *imminent* (Acts 1:5)...they were nevertheless, still caught by *surprise*.

And by the way...the same can be said of His *second coming*. We will know from the *signs* that His coming is *imminent*...but He will still *come unexpectedly* like a *thief in the night* (I Thessalonians 5:2; Matthew 24:44).

**And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them (vs. 3)**...Even with the promise of the Spirit’s coming, those gathered in the *upper room* could not have expected the *dramatic signs* that accompanied His coming.

**A violent rushing wind**...In both **Hebrew** and **Greek** (*pneuma*), the words for **wind** and **spirit** are *the same*.

**Tongues as of fire**...a picture of a *complete* and *consuming refinement*. Several times in Scripture God has presented Himself in the form of *flames* and *fire*:

- **Genesis 15:17**...when the covenant was made with **Abraham**.
- **Exodus 3:2-6**...through the burning bush when **Moses** was called to lead **Israel** out of **Egyptian** bondage.
- **Exodus 13:21-22**...as the **Israelites** left **Egypt**, God led them in a pillar of cloud by day...and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light.
- **Exodus 19:18**...on **Mt. Sinai** when the **Ten Commandments** were given to **Moses**.
- **Exodus 40:38**...when God filled the tabernacle with His glory.
- **Matthew 3:11** and **Luke 3:16**...when **John the Baptist** illustrated what the baptism of the Holy Spirit would be like.

**Wind...**describes the *power* of the **Holy Spirit**. **Fire...** describes the *refining* and *purifying* work of the **Holy Spirit**.

**And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance (vs. 4)...**

The *distinction* between being **baptized with the Spirit** and being **filled with the Spirit** needs to be noted.

**Baptism of the Holy Spirit...**occurs *only once*...at the moment of *salvation* (**Romans 6:3-6; I Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 2:12**). It's the *sovereign, single, unrepeatable act* on God's part *when He brings us* to be part of *the body of Christ*.

*“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”*

~Galatians 3:26-27

**Filled with the Holy Spirit...**This is *an experience that should be*, and *needs to be, continuous* though out the life of a believer.

While there is *no command* in Scripture to be **baptized with the Spirit**, believers *are commanded* to be **filled with the Spirit**.

*“...be filled with the Spirit.”*

~Ephesians 5:18b

The *grammatical construction* of that verse indicates that believers are to be *continuously*...being **filled with the Spirit**.

To be **filled with the Spirit**...one must first *empty themselves*...which involves *confession of sin* and *dying to self, self-will, and selfishness*. To be **filled with the Spirit** is to *consciously be aware*...and *live knowing that God is present (Immanuel)*...and to *have a mind saturated* with the Word of God.

- **Peter** was *initially filled with the Spirit* on the **Day of Pentecost**. He was again *filled* in **Acts 4:8**.
- Many of the same people **filled with the Spirit** here in **Acts 2** were *filled* again in **Acts 4:31**.
- **Acts 6:5** describes **Stephen** as a man **full of faith and the Holy Spirit**...yet in **Acts 7:55**, it records his being *filled* again.
- **Paul** was **filled with the Spirit** in **Acts 9:17** and again in **Acts 13:9**.

**And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance...**There has been much dispute over the years as to what it meant **to speak with other tongues**. But it's *not ambiguous* what this verse states. The **tongues** spoken on the **Day of Pentecost** were *known languages*...languages that the people hearing them speak *understood*.

*Scripture* also *gives the purpose* for them speaking in **tongues** on the **Day of Pentecost**. The *purpose* of the *gift of languages* was *not for the edification of believers*... they were *a sign for unbelievers*...specifically, *a sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel* (**I Corinthians 14:21-22**).

## II. THE EFFECT OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING: (vs. 5-11)

**Pentecost** was one of the *three major feasts* of the *Jewish calendar*...and *all Hebrew males* were expected to *celebrate* them in **Jerusalem**.

Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven (vs. 5)...Living in Jerusalem means that *they were staying there...dwelling there*. Those who went to the trouble to make the *pilgrimage* were obviously devout men.

From every nation under heaven...means *from many lands*...it describes people *from all the nations where Jews had been dispersed*.

And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language (vs. 6)... When they heard the sound of a violent rushing wind... they were drawn to the *proximity* of the *upper room*.

They were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. What amazed them the most was that all those who were speaking were **Galileans**. And it was *shocking* to those *sophisticated Jews*, because they viewed *Galileans* as *ignorant* and *uneducated*.

They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? (vs. 7-8)...The sight of the supposedly *ignorant* and *uneducated Galileans* speaking so many *different languages* caused the astonished crowd to exclaim...**how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?**

The fact that this *miraculous communication* was done in *known languages*...and was *not some ecstatic utterance or speech*...becomes clear as the list of the *specific heart languages* are *enumerated*.

Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God (vs. 9-11)...

- **Parthians**...lived in what is *modern Iran*. They had *never been conquered* by the **Romans** and *remained* their *bitter enemies*.
- **Medes**...they were *partners* with the **Persians** in **Daniel’s** time. Now, they were *part of the Parthian Empire*.
- **Elamites**...lived in what is now *southwestern Iran*. They too were *part of the Parthian Empire*.
- **Residents of Mesopotamia**...**Mesopotamia** means *between the rivers*. They lived between *the two great rivers*...the **Tigris** and the **Euphrates**. Great numbers of **Israelites had been deported** to that region by the **Assyrians** and **Babylonians**...and not all had returned to **Palestine**.
- **Judea**...refers to *all the region* once controlled by **David** and **Solomon**.
- **Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia**...were *all regions* in **Asia Minor**...and they had a *large Jewish population*.
- **Egypt**...especially the *city of Alexandria* also had a *large Jewish population*. It was in the *city of Alexandria* that the **Septuagint**, the *Greek translation of the Old Testament*, was produced.
- **The districts of Libya around Cyrene**...was *west* of **Egypt** on the *African coast* of the **Mediterranean Sea**.



- **Rome, both Jews and proselytes**...that there were **Jews** in **Rome**, as well as **Gentile proselytes**, is obvious from the **Emperor Claudius's expulsion** of them some years later (**Acts 18:2**).
- **Cretans**...were from the island of **Crete**, off the *southern coast* of **Greece**.
- **Arabs**...were **Jews** living *south of Damascus* (**Galatians 1:17**).

We hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God...The Spirit now *convinc*es them that these believers in Jesus Christ were *devoted to praising* the one true God.

### III. THE EXPLANATION OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING: (vs. 12-13)

As is regularly the case when *God's truth* is presented... some in the crowd will *accept it*...others will *reject it*.

And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" (vs. 12)...They would soon *understand* when Peter *proclaimed the Gospel* in his sermon (vs. 14-ff).

But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine." (vs. 13)...This response was just like the Pharisees who had *heard Jesus* and *saw His numerous miracles* yet, still concluded that *He was of the devil* (**Matthew 12:24-ff**).

These *scoffers rejected the evidence* that this was *a work of God*. Instead, they proposed that the **apostles** were **full of sweet wine**. They tried to explain away the *miracle* of those gathered in the upper room *speaking in everyone's heart language* as them being *drunk*.

Tragically...their *skepticism* would grow into a *full-fledged opposition* to the Gospel...as well as, to those who proclaimed the Gospel (**Acts 4:1-22**; **Acts 5:17-18, 40**; **Acts 7:58-60**).

### LESSONS WE CAN LEARN:

- The Holy Spirit is a **PERSON**...the **THIRD PERSON** of the Trinity...God's third manifestation of Himself to man.
- It's important to know and understand the difference between the **BAPTISM** of the Holy Spirit and **BEING FILLED** with the Holy Spirit.
- The power that a believer has to overcome temptation and sin in order to live the victorious Christian life, comes from Christ **IN US**...the **INDWELLING** of the Holy Spirit.
- No amount of opposition has been able to stop the **WORK OF GOD** that began at Pentecost.

## ACTS 2:1-13

**1** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. **5** Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. **6** And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. **7** They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” **12** And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” **13** But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.”