

A STUDY OF ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 2

Two weeks ago we were not able to complete Acts 1 but what was left was so small that O felt we could go to chapter 2. Whatever is left in Chapter can be read or studied individually. Today we are going to be considering Chapter 2 which to me actually spells the beginning of the work of the disciples.

The Day of Pentecost (2:1)

The day called "Pentecost" is named after the Greek word *pentekostos*, which means "fiftieth." It was also popularly called "The festival of First Harvest" It was the only Old Testament festival determined by counting and one of the three main festivals in the Bible. It happened 50 days after the Passover and 10 days after the ascension. **Duet 16:16.**

Origin of the Pentecost: **Leviticus 23:11-12.** Pentecost was observed in ancient Israel on the 50th day after the Passover.

Some called it the Feast of Weeks since seven weeks elapsed between the day of the first grain offering and the beginning of Pentecost. **Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:9-12.**

Pentecost was sometimes called the Feast of the Harvest and Day of First Fruits **Exodus 23:16; Numbers 28:26.**

Pentecost has also come to signify for Jews the commemoration of the giving of the Law at Sinai fifty days after the Exodus Passover. For Luke this, too, would be seen as having a Christian fulfilment in the giving of the Spirit fifty days after the Christian Exodus Passover, the Crucifixion and Resurrection. [E. William Neil, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), page 72].]

What is the significance of the passover to the believer? To the believers, it became a replacement of the law. **Romans 8:1-2. Romans 3:21. Romans 5:5.**

What is the effect of unity seeing in the move of God seeing that the disciples were in one place? **Psalm 133:1.** Think of the possible effect if the disciples were disunited at this time and were scattered all over.

A sound like a violent wind (2:2-3) (Pneuma) Greek, Ruach –Hebrew and tongues of fire

The wind and fire had been used in the past to signify the presence of God. Thus it was quite easy for the disciples to identify with what was happening. . **John 3:8, Eze 13:13, Exodus 20:18. Exodus 3:2-5, Exodus 13:21-22; 14:24; 19:18; 24:17; Deut 4:12, 24, 33; 5:4; 10:4.** The spectacular event also attracted people. No wonder people think that miracles must be accomplished by some spectacle.

John the Baptist also mentioned this **Luke 3:16** and the fulfilment of the words of Prophet Joel. **Joel 2:28-29**

Filled with the Holy Spirit (2:4)

At various times in the Bible, we have witnessed the performance of the Holy Spirit. However this is the first time we are seeing Him take over people in this dimension. Is it not interesting that no one was segregated when the Holy Spirit descended on them? Everyone was touched by the same spirit.

Peter did not have a fuller measure than any of the others. Does this show some signs of equality in the church? "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit" (2:4). It was a new beginning for the church. What do you think would have happened if one has slipped out? **Discuss this in view of people that love to play truancy when it comes to worship**

Speaking in various languages (2:4, 6-12)

The time of the Pentecost was very unique as a festival was supposed to be going on and so lots of Jews were in town either as returnees or visitors. **Why do you think God chose that time?** The Jews had a common language which was Aramaic. This is the same language that Jesus spoke. Why do you think the Holy Spirit choose to reach the individuals in their local languages? **Mark 15:38, Hebrew 10:19-20, Rom 5:1-2.** The idea of speaking in tongues has confused many people and has been the source of division among many bible believing people. Some have said that because the languages spoken were understood by those present, every tongue must be understood by men **(Discuss)**

Mockery of Christians (2:13-39)

Mockery of spiritual exercise is not a new trend in the kingdom. As the disciples began to speak, not everyone in the crowd was impressed by the miracles and signs. Luke tells us, "Some...made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine'" (2:13). **How are Christians misunderstood or mocked in our days?**

Where did the courage of peter come from? Is this the same Peter of Matthew 26:72-74.

Examine the tactics in Peter's message.

- Told them the truth about what they did when they crucified Jesus.
- He introduced David which will make every Jew want to listen.
- Referred to existing texts and explained them.
- He pointed them out to obvious miracles done by Jesus.
- Peter did not end his message with high level fluency but He made an alter call.

If you noticed any other trend please discuss.

The will of God:

Peter explained that the death of Jesus was God's deliberate plan.

Peter maintains that what might have appeared to be the weakness of God — Jesus' crucifixion — took place according to "God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge" **Acts 2:23.**

Have you had an unpleasant experience that actually turned out to be God's plan? Rom 8:28

The call to repent (2:37-38)

What do you think the people heard that result in such tremendous repentance? Why is such repentance slow today?

The importance of baptism (2:38)

Peter also speaks of an important act that is associated with receiving the empowering Holy Spirit. That was water baptism, which is an external token of belief in Jesus as Savior. Peter urges his audience to be baptized, and he promises them the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:38). Throughout Acts, when people express faith in Jesus, they are then baptized.

Baptism in water continued to be the visible sign by which those who believed the gospel, repented of their sins, and acknowledged Jesus as Lord were publicly incorporated into the Spirit-baptized fellowship of the new people of God. [Bruce, 70.]

The Jews were already familiar with baptism as a ritual required for people who wanted to have their sins forgiven. John the Baptist baptized people who repented **Matthew 3:6, 11, 15, Luke 3:7,16.** But, beginning at Pentecost, there are two new features about baptism. First, it is administered in Jesus' name. It requires faith in Jesus as Savior. Second, it is associated with the Holy Spirit.

Fellowship of believers (2:42-43)

The early church devoted themselves to the **apostles' teaching, were in fellowship with each other, ate together, and prayed Acts 2:42.** Knowing that herein lies the strength of the early church, let's examine briefly each of these characteristics.

Having all things in common (2:44-45)

What is the difference between communism and what the believers were practicing?

Where were the meetings taking place and why have modern Christians focused on grandeur buildings? **Acts 2:46**

CONCLUSION:

Acts 2 sums up the core of the beginning of the church, the power to begin and to be propelled in to the ministry was evident in the narration of Acts. The boldness and confidence of Peter to address the situation is very commendable.

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