

## Acts of the Apostles Bible Study

Acts 2:1-41

### **The Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)**

Pentecost means 50 and takes place 50 days after Passover. It was a Jewish feast celebrating the firstfruits of the wheat harvest and later came to be associated with a remembrance of the Law being given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. But for Christians, Pentecost is remembered each year as the time when God poured out the Holy Spirit upon those who followed Jesus.

The coming of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by "a sound like the blowing of a violent wind" and appeared as "tongues of fire". The natural elements of wind and fire made it possible for them to experience the supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It is significant that the Spirit did not just come to them as a group but "separated and came to rest on each of them". We may live out our faith in community but faith is personal and the Holy Spirit comes to each individual person who receives Jesus as their Savior.

### **The Gospel is Proclaimed (Acts 2:5-35)**

There were two distinct manifestations of the Spirit's presence in their lives. They immediately knew that it was time to begin to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Any hesitation, reluctance or fear was gone. Just as the Spirit was poured out on them, they poured out into the streets of Jerusalem sharing the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. The second manifestation is that they were able to speak in the different languages of the people who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Each person heard the gospel being proclaimed in their own language which demonstrated the universal nature of the gospel. It is for all people!

The people from other lands were amazed to hear the gospel being preached in their own language, but those who lived in Jerusalem were bewildered by all the different languages being spoken at once and mistook it for drunken babbling. Peter stepped forward and told them what was happening and why. The Holy Spirit had come in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy ([Joel 2:28-32](#)) and Jesus' promise to his followers ([Acts 1:4](#)).

After explaining the reason for their behavior, Peter went on to explain that everything that was happening is because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. His death appeared to be an unfortunate act of fate, but was in fact done "by God's set purpose and foreknowledge". And just as his death was part of God's plan, so was his resurrection which had been foretold by King David in [Psalm 16:1-11](#).

### **The Church is Born (Acts 2:36-41)**

Sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is never just for information or inspiration. It is also for the conviction of those who don't know Jesus as their Savior. Peter ends his message with a powerful statement, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you

**crucified, both Lord and Christ.**" His words remind all of us that Jesus did not just die for the sins of the past, or the sins of those who were alive at the time, but the sins of all of us. Our sins put him on the cross. Our sins took his life.

Peter's words struck to the heart of those who heard him. They were convicted of their sins and asked what they needed to do. His response was two-fold: Repent (turn away from your sins) and be baptized (believe, accept and confess Jesus as your Savior). It is the same response we give people today.

This two-fold response brings about a two-fold result: Our sins are forgiven and we also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Just as the various languages spoken by the disciples emphasize the universal nature of the gospel, Peter makes sure they got the message by telling them that God's promise **"is for you and your children and for all who are far off (gentiles) - for all whom the Lord our God will call."** The apostle Paul expressed a similar thought in Ephesians 2:13.

According to Acts 1:15 there were about 120 believers in Jerusalem following Jesus' ascension. By the time the day when God poured out his Spirit ended there were more than 3,000 people who were followers of Jesus. God immediately turned a small band of believers into a church that could have an impact on the world.