

"The Birth of the Church"

Acts 2

Part 2

Introduction: Last week in our study of Acts we covered a great deal of information and for that reason I want to back up and look a little closer at some of what we considered last week.

I. The Details of the Birth of the Church

In Acts 2 we looked at the birth of the church. Now there are some who do not believe this chapter and the events here are the birth of the church. Some people will teach that the church began with the Apostle Paul. These would be ultradispensationalists. There are several of these churches in our area. There are others who believe the church existed in the Old Testament and that it began with Abraham. These would be people who are followers of Covenant Theology. To see when exactly the church began there is a verse that we can examine.

1 Corinthians 12:13

¹³ For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

If we can determine when the events of this verse began then we can determine when the church was born.

Notice Acts 2:1-4

We see here that the believers were filled with the Holy Ghost, but we are not told of any baptism. So these four verses do not help us out. But there are some verses that will.

Matthew 3:11

¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Here we see that the Spirit baptism was something that was yet future in John the Baptist day. Now let us notice what Luke wrote.

Acts 1:4-5

⁴ And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

⁵ For John truly baptized with water; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.**

Here in verse 5 we see that Spirit baptism would happen sometime in the future after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Matthew's writing and Luke's writing both tell us that the church did not begin with Abraham. The church did not exist in the Old Testament because it would not be born until after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now let us notice another passage.

Acts 11:4, 15-16

⁴ But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, **as on us at the beginning.**

¹⁶ Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.**

Here in these verses Peter tells us and his audience that Jesus Words were fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. Therefore, we can conclude that the church began in ACTS 2. Not in the Old Testament and not with the Apostle Paul. There is another verse that tells us that the church would be yet future in Jesus' day.

Matthew 16:18

¹⁸ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will** build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The word "I will" are in the future tense which means it had not yet happened when Jesus spoke these Words.

II. Details of the Spirit Baptism

Notice Acts 2:1-4

Again I remind you that we are not told of any baptism that happened on the Day of Pentecost but looking at other verses we know that it did happen. But the question is, "What are the details of what happened?"

Let us look at the

Matthew 3:4, 7, 11

⁴ *And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.*

⁷ *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*

¹¹ *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:*

We need to notice this verse very closely. John's baptism was with water. Jesus' baptism was a spiritual baptism, and it would be with the Holy Spirit. The baptism by fire is for unbelievers. The point I want you to see is that it is not the Spirit who is baptizing but it is Jesus. This is to be applied to Acts 1:5.

Acts 1:5

⁵ *For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized [by Jesus] with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

The same is true for Acts 11:16

Acts 11:16

¹⁶ *Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized [by Jesus] with the Holy Ghost.*

Now when we look at 1 Corinthians 12:13 it appears as though there is another baptism.

1 Corinthians 12:13

¹³ *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

This verse has led many to believe that when we are saved, we are baptized BY the Spirit into the body of Jesus Christ. But that is a misunderstanding. Let me show you how the verse is to be understood.

¹³ For by [WITH] one Spirit are we all baptized [BY JESUS] into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the "instrument" by which Jesus places us into His body. This is the fulfillment of Mark 1:8.

Mark 1:8

⁸ I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you **with** the Holy Ghost.

If someone would insist that in 1 Corinthians 12:13 the Holy Spirit is the Baptizer, they are then saying there are two baptisms in the New Testament. This would then contradict the Scriptures.

Ephesians 4:5

⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

⁵ One Lord, one faith, **one baptism.**

III. Details on the Gift of Tongues

Notice Acts 2:4-6, 11

Last week we looked briefly how the believers were given the ability to speak in other languages. The message they shared was on the works of God. I want to raise a question here and then give you an answer. Why were these believers given the gift of tongues? This was a way to communicate the Gospel to many who were in Jerusalem for Pentecost. But there was something else here. If we look at Acts 2:5 we are told specifically that there were Jews from every nation in Jerusalem. Now let us notice the purpose of the gift of tongues.

1 Corinthians 14:21-22

²¹ In the law it is written, **With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.**

²² Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, **but to them that believe not:** but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

1 Corinthians 14:21 is a reference to Isaiah 28 where God gave a warning to Israel.

Isaiah 28:9-11

⁹ *Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

¹⁰ *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:*

¹¹ *For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.*

God had sent Isaiah to warn the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The words of verse 9-10 here in Isaiah 28 are probably from the priests and the prophets as they mocked Isaiah. They refused to listen to the warning he was giving them from God. Therefore, in verse 11 God announced that since they would not listen to Isaiah, He would send people that would speak a different language and judgment would come through them. These would be the Assyrians who would soon descend upon Isarel and conquer them.

This very same thought is carried into 1 Corinthians 14. Let us notice the verses again.

1 Corinthians 14:21-22

²¹ *In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.*

²² *Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

Just as the people of Israel in the day of Isaiah would not listen to God's Word so the people of Jesus day would not believe He was the Messiah. They rejected His Words and His works. They chose rather to crucify Him instead of accepting Him as their Messiah.

Mark 15:8-13

⁸ *And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.*

⁹ *But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*

¹⁰ *For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.*

¹¹ *But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.*

¹² *And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?*

¹³ And they cried out again, Crucify him.

Because they would not believe the Words of Jesus, God would bring judgment upon the Jews from a people that spoke a different language. This would be from the Romans in AD 70 when they would conquer Jerusalem and destroy the Temple and slaughter many people. Each time the gift of tongues was exercised there would have been Jews present and each time it was a warning to the unbelieving Jews.

Getting back to Acts 2, the tongues/languages spoken were a warning to all the Jews who would hear. When they heard, it should have taken their mind back to Isaiah and brought them to repentance. Some did repent and turn to Jesus, but many persecuted the Jews as they did Jesus.

Conclusion/Application:

God was faithful in warning the Jews concerning the coming judgment. He did so to the world in Noah's day also through the preaching of Noah. He was faithful in sending the prophets to warn the Jews of the Babylonian captivity also. He never brings a judgment without first warning those upon who it will fall. Today there are warnings from God through many faithful pastors of a coming judgment. It is known as the Tribulation, Jacob's Trouble, and the Kingdom of the Anti-Christ. It is fast approaching which means the rapture is also. Let us allow the Word of God to wash over us and thoroughly cleanse us so that we shall be found prepared when the Bride Groom returns.