

**"The Birth of the Church"**

**Acts 2**

**Part 1**

**Introduction:** Tonight in our study of Acts we have come to chapter 2, and it will be in this chapter we find an event that takes place on the Day of Pentecost that will forever change the world. This event will be the beginning of the church. It will be the start of the bride of Jesus Christ that will occupy the earth from Pentecost even to our day. As some have said, "What happened on the Day of Pentecost must be understood as a world changing event." The world would not be the same from this day forward. The Holy Spirit would now indwell believers and change lives to make them more like Jesus Christ. The Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 is like no other.

**I. The Feast**

**Notice Acts 2:1**

To begin with I want us to take some time to understand the Feast of Pentecost and see how it was a picture of the beginning of the church. Each feast had a prophetic meaning.

**Colossians 2:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

<sup>17</sup> **Which are a shadow of things to come;** *but the body is of Christ.*

Israel celebrated seven feasts.

1. The Passover Feast
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread
3. The Feast of Firstfruits
4. The Feast of Pentecost
5. The Feast of Trumpets
6. The Day of Atonement
7. The Feast of Tabernacles.

I am not going to look at each feast, but we do need to consider the Feast of Pentecost.

**Leviticus 23:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:*

<sup>16</sup> *Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.*

The word PENTECOST means "FIFTIETH." This feast took place 50 days after the Feast of First Fruits. Now there is something that was to be done on the fiftieth day that is very significant.

**Leviticus 23:17**

<sup>17</sup> *Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.*

Here we see that they were to bake two loaves of bread WITH fine flour and leaven.

What does this feast picture? This feast is a picture of the church.

It was on the Day of Pentecost that we find the beginning of the church. The two loaves which were to be baked for the Feast of Pentecost picture the two groups of people who make up the church: the Jews and the Gentiles.

**1 Corinthians 12:13**

<sup>13</sup> *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.*

The leaven that was placed in each loaf pictures the sin that still exists in each of us as members of the body of Jesus Christ.

**1 John 1:8**

<sup>8</sup> *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

Now there is still more to see. This Feast of Pentecost could not take place until the Firstfruits offering was accepted by God.

**Leviticus 23:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:*

<sup>11</sup> *And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.*

Once this was accepted by God then the Feast of Pentecost could take place.

This is a picture of how the sacrifice of Jesus Christ had to be accepted by the Father and it is also a picture of how Jesus had to ascend to the Father before the church could ever exist.

**Notice Acts 2:1 again.**

The Feast of Pentecost took place fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it was one of the feasts which all Jewish males were required to attend. There would have been hundreds of thousands of Jews in Jerusalem for this feast.

**Notice Acts 2:5**

Here we see there were Jews from all nations dwelling in Jerusalem.

**Notice Acts 2:2**

Without warning there came a mighty sound from heaven that sounded like a mighty rushing wind and the sound filled the house that they were in. It was not a strong wind that blew through the house, but it sounded like there was a strong wind. This was a supernatural sound. It possibly sounded like the wind of a tornado. What was the purpose for the mighty sound? God could have sent the Spirit to the believers as He does today with no sound. So why the mighty sound?

God was doing something that had never been done before. He was sending His Spirit to indwell the church. He wanted everyone to know this was a special event. This was the beginning of something that had never existed before and that was the bride of Jesus Christ/the church. But it was not just a supernatural sound that announced the coming of the Spirit.

**Notice Acts 2:3**

There was also a supernatural sight. There were cloven tongues that were like fire. This was not real fire, and no one was burned. This verse tells us they were LIKE fire. The cloven tongues sat upon each believer announcing that what was happening was happening to every one of them.

The word "cloven" means "to cleave asunder/divide" and the idea is that when the tongues that were like fire came into the room they divided and came upon each of them.

Today this is not what happens when the Holy Spirit is given to each believer. Immediately when a person is saved today, they are given the Spirit and they are baptized into the body of Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 12:13**

*<sup>13</sup> 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.*

**Romans 8:9**

*<sup>9</sup> But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

**Notice Acts 2:3 again.**

There are those who want to connect this with what John the Baptist said in Matthew 3.

**Matthew 3:11**

*<sup>11</sup> 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:*

John is NOT speaking of the Day of Pentecost when he mentions fire, but he is referencing a judgment that would come on those to whom he was speaking. Let us notice the context.

**Matthew 3:7-12**

*<sup>7</sup> 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?*

*<sup>8</sup> Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:*

*<sup>9</sup> And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*

*<sup>10</sup> And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*<sup>11</sup> 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:*

*<sup>12</sup> Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*

John is looking ahead to the Lake of Fire. This is a warning to those who refuse to repent. I point this out because it is so important to look at the context of the verse in order to understand the proper interpretation. There is yet more here.

**Matthew 3:11**

<sup>11</sup> *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:*

The statement, "HE SHALL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY GHOST" does refer to what would happen on the Day of Pentecost. There are two separate events that are mentioned here. Let me show you how we can know this. Notice the words of Peter:

**Acts 11:15-16**

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

<sup>16</sup> *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.*

**Notice Acts 2:4**

Here we see that the disciples were all "filled with the Spirit." This is something that was different than being baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ. Every believer is baptized by the Spirit, but not every believer is filled with the Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by the Spirit. This is something that the believer is commanded to be.

**Ephesians 5:18**

<sup>18</sup> *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

This is also something that Paul prayed that the believers at Ephesus would experience.

**Ephesians 3:18-20**

<sup>18</sup> *May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;*

<sup>19</sup> *And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

<sup>20</sup> Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Here in verse 20 of Ephesians 3 we actually see what happens when we are filled with the Spirit. The power of God then flows through us, and it is then that Jesus life is manifest in the believer's life. This is bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22-25**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

<sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

<sup>24</sup> And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

<sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

**Notice Acts 2:4 again.**

The manifestation of being filled with the Spirit was that they began to speak in tongues. Now this was not some sort of babbling that no one was able to understand. This was another language that was spoken so that people who spoke another language could understand.

**Notice Acts 2:7-8**

These verses make it very clear that what they heard was Galileans speaking to them in the language which they understood. What were they speaking about?

**Notice Acts 2:9-11**

They spoke of the wonderful works of God.

**Conclusion:**

The "tongues" contained a special message for the Jews which we shall see next week. Today when someone is saved, they are baptized by the Holy Spirit but there is no speaking in tongues, there is no sound of the mighty rushing wind and there are no tongues that look like fire. God did this on the Day of Pentecost because He was announcing that something very special was taking place. Today we know from this text that something special takes place when a sinner gets saved.