

HOLY SPIRIT OUTPOURING KICKSTARTS THE REVOLUTION FOR JESUS CHRIST !

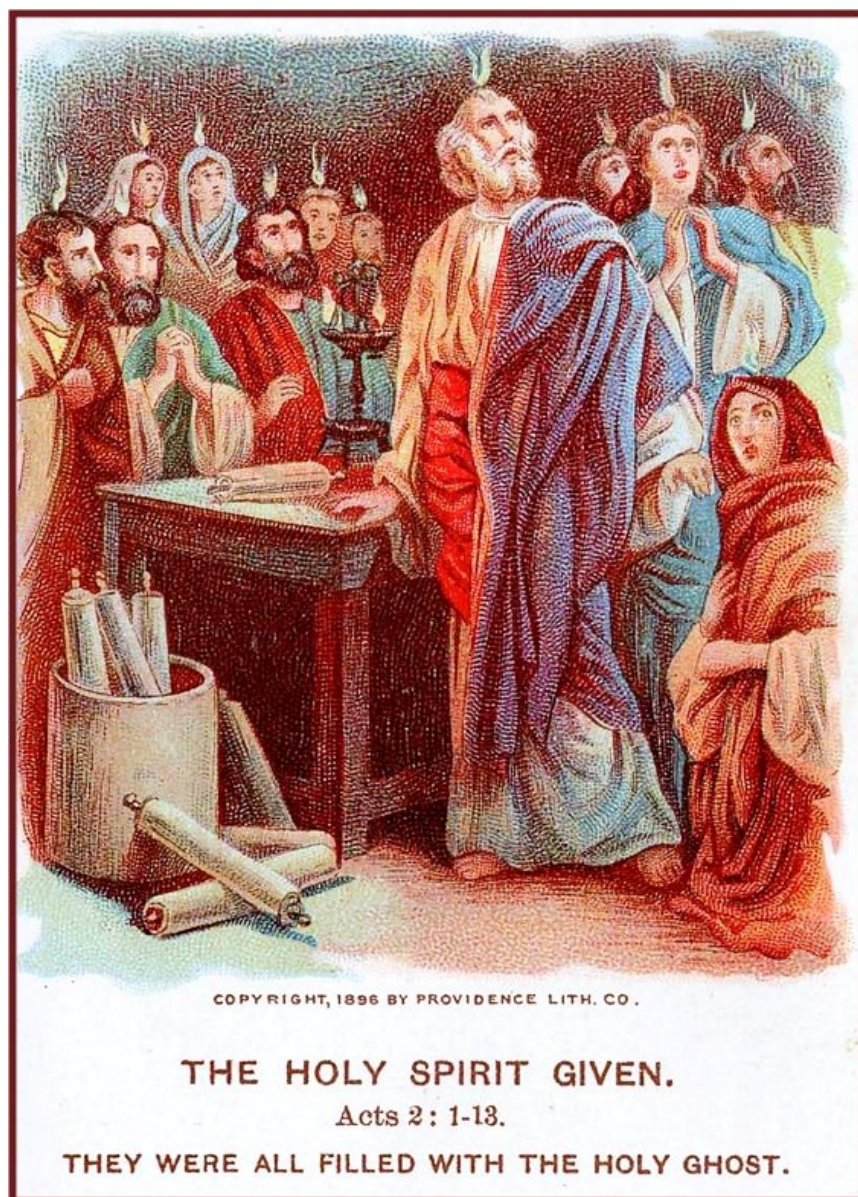
V 1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

“Pentecost.” means 50th and was used to denote the harvest feast that came 50 days after the Jewish Passover feast. It was also called the Feast of the Firstfruits, or Feast of the First Harvest that came in May/June. This was certainly a well-chosen day for the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit after Christ’s final departure. . . and for the great harvest of souls that came as a result.

The three main feasts important enough for which Jews in distant lands would make pilgrimages to Jerusalem were the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover), Feast of the Firstfruits (or Spring Harvest), and Feast of Ingathering (Autumn Harvest).

“With one accord in one place.” Unity was essential; it creates a wide opening for the blessing of God to pour through.

V 2-4 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.



Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

These verses describe the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised, an event that catapulted the Apostles and the Early Church into the forefront of the revolutionary movement that Jesus Himself had begun during His time on earth.

Before this time, the presence of God (known as the “Shekinah glory”) could be sensed physically only in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. But here in this outpouring of the Spirit, each person there was a “temple” in whom God’s presence could be seen and felt. *“You are the temple of God and. . . the Spirit of God dwells in you.”* (1Corinthians 3:16) What the “rushing mighty wind” and the “divided tongues of fire” were like we can only guess, but to be sure, it must have been an unforgettable and ecstatic experience for the disciples.

V 5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

“Devout men, from every nation.” Jews on pilgrimage from other lands. To have voyaged so far and for such a length of time shows that most of these visitors must have been quite “devout” - sincere in their faith and practice of Judaism. In those days it was a much bigger sacrifice than it is nowadays to travel long distances.

V 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

“And when this sound occurred.” Apparently, the “sound from heaven” in verse 2 “of a rushing mighty wind” could be heard outside. Then, as the disciples themselves started speaking, the people heard them in their own languages.

V 7-8 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?”

And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?

Galilean Jews spoke with their own peculiar accent and were considered unsophisticated and uneducated compared to the Judean Jews, and certainly not able to speak the foreign languages of the more cosmopolitan Jews of other nations. All the more miraculous!

◇ Is the gift of tongues really supernatural?

Some say, “They weren’t really speaking in anything supernatural; these were all languages that these boys knew!” Why

were they amazed and did they all marvel, if it was obvious that they already knew those languages? It was obviously a miracle... [from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

◇ Cooperating with the Spirit World

The movement of the Spirit wasn't the only factor in the success of the expansion of the Early Church; the disciples had to do their part as well. The anointing gave them the power to witness, but to use that power they had to leave the room in which they were hiding, they had to preach boldly in the street and from house to house. They had to get into motion and take action. Once they did, the power of the Holy Spirit was made manifest; miracles happened and the Lord brought about wonderful opportunities for them to witness, win, and train.

It's a bit like that verse, "*Faith without works is dead*" (James 2:20).

[from publication of the *Jesus Revolution* era, December 2009]

V 9-11 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs, - we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Parthians, Medes, Elamites - region of Iran nowadays.

Mesopotamia - Babylon (descendants of the Captivity Jews who stayed in Babylon), now the nation of Iraq.

Judea - all the region once controlled by David and Solomon including Syria.

Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia - districts in Asia Minor (now Turkey).

Egypt - many Jews had settled in Alexandria during the days of the Greek empire.

Libya, Cyrene - nations west of Egypt.

Rome - Apparently, the Jews there had been active in making "*proselytes*" (converts to Judaism).

Cretans - from the island of Crete.

Arabs - Jews who lived south of Damascus (northern part of modern Saudi Arabia).



Jews from Surrounding Nations in the Roman Empire

◇ What does it Mean by the “Gift of Tongues”?

How amazing that the disciples were able to speak in so many different languages. And we may wonder, how did God pull that off anyway? Did He do it all Himself through the Holy Spirit? Or is it possible that He assigned others to do the job: various angels, or guiding spirits and individuals who had died and were now living in the heavenly realm (or spiritual dimension as we might think of it).

From a CEO’s perspective, that would be considered an efficient use of personnel to do it that way. And if anybody’s a good CEO, God should be. So maybe that’s how He did it. Who knows? Why not send the people who knew those languages to go and speak through the disciples who, by this time after seven days “*in prayer and supplication*”, were yielded channels - not only to the Holy Spirit, but also to the good spirits of departed saints and angels who were working under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

V 12-13 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying one to another,

“Whatever could this mean?”

Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

“Others mocking.” Perhaps the crowd’s mocking was the spark that triggered impulsive, fiery Peter to stand up and deliver a no-holds-barred speech that propelled the Early Church off to a flying start in those days right after Jesus’ Resurrection and Ascension.

“New wine.” Strong drink.

V 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

“Raised his voice.” Before the days of microphones and speaker amplifiers, anyone speaking to a crowd would have to shout quite loudly.

V 15 “For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

“Third hour” - 9 a.m. People don’t normally drink until evening time.

V 16-21 “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

***‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,
Your old men shall dream dreams.
And on my menservants and on my maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
And they shall prophesy.
I will show wonders in heaven above
And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
And it shall come to pass***

***That whoever calls on the name of the Lord
Shall be saved.'***

Peter quotes an Old Testament passage (Joel 2:28-32), a good starting point for his Jewish audience. It strengthened their faith to recognize this strange outburst of Holy Spirit power as a fulfillment of the Scriptures. Verses 17-18 about the gifts of the Spirit are followed by verses 19-20 about their Messiah's second coming.

It is no surprise then that these gifts of the Spirit, so strongly manifested in the Early Church, have re-appeared from time to time throughout the course of history; and we can expect that, during the final years before Christ's return, even greater manifestations of spiritual power will emerge.

"The Last Days." The Apostle Peter was well aware that the age of the End Time (the *"last days"*) had begun, as evidenced in his epistle: ***"He (Christ) indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." "But the end of all things is at hand."*** (1Peter 1:20, 4:7)

V 22-23 ***"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know -***

"Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

"A man attested by God." The many supernatural signs and miracles that Jesus was able to perform were God's seal of validity and proof to the fact that Jesus really was the Messiah.

"The determined purpose and foreknowledge of God." Just because Jesus' death was pre-determined doesn't absolve those who caused it. It was still their personal choice: ***"you. . . by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death."***

V 24 ***"whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."***

“Not possible.” God’s divine power, purpose, and plan could not allow Jesus to be held by ***“the pains of death”***. Hebrews 2:14 states, ***“As the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.”***

God’s whole purpose was to demonstrate through Christ His love towards mankind. Part of that included destroying the Devil’s ***“power of death”***. Jesus said once, ***“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”*** (John 11:25)

V 25-28 “For David says concerning Him:

***‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence’.***

Peter quotes Psalm 16:8-11 about David’s rejoicing because ***“You will not leave my soul in Hades”***, and also because ***“Your Holy One”*** (Jesus) would not ***“see corruption”*** (referring to the Resurrection).

“Hades.” Strictly speaking, this term did not refer to the place where the worst of the worst go for punishment (the *Lake of Fire*), but simply the ***“place of the dead”***. However, this does not mean it’s a place where one would want to go. When the terms *Sheol* and *Hades* appear (in the Old and New Testament respectively), they were generally understood to refer to a gloomy, unhappy existence in the Afterlife.

As Jesus points out in the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Luke 16:19-31) and in his word to the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:43), the unrighteous dead get sent to *Hades*, and the righteous dead are sent to *Paradise*. However, before Jesus came, few people (such as certain men of faith like King David) could be certain or optimistic about what their fate would be in the Afterlife.

Refer to Hezekiah's lament in Isaiah 38: *"Never again will I see my friends or be with those who live in this world... the dead cannot praise you... Those who go down to the grave can no longer hope in your faithfulness. Only the living can praise you as I do today."* (38:11,18-19 - NLT)

V 29-31 *"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.*

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne,

"He, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Verse 30 more or less quotes Psalm 132:11, and verse 31 quotes Psalm 16:10. These Old Testament verses predicted the Resurrection, which Peter is now telling them had been fulfilled in Jesus.

"His tomb is with us." A reminder to Jews that David's body had not been raised, so he could not have fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 16 about the Resurrection. It seems Peter had to explain exactly how these Old Testament Scriptures were meant to be applied - not to the old king David, but to the Messiah. The passage in Psalm 16:10 clearly states, *"Nor will You allow Your Holy One (the Messiah) to see corruption,"* and this was fulfilled in the death of Jesus, not that of David.

It is quite natural for societies to revere their ancestors, and often this can transform into a form of ancestor-worship, which in this case seems to have led to some misunderstanding of the old Scriptures about David and his descendant the Messiah. So, to counteract any such confused thinking, Peter says *"let me speak freely to you"* and makes it clear to the people that they are to worship Jesus the Messiah, not the highly revered king David of old, whom some, apparently, mistook to be the *"Holy One"* spoken of in this 1,000 year old prophecy. The "David" of the past was only a prophet whose job was to lay in advance the foundation for Christ's first coming.

V 32-33 *"This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.*

"Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having

received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

“This Jesus.” Peter makes the connection clear that the prophecy he just quoted was fulfilled in Jesus. He was the One who was *“raised up”*, not King David. He was the One whose *“soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.”*

That doesn't mean that David's soul was *“left in Hades”*. Psalm 16:10 states clearly enough that David would be raised from *“Sheol”* (Old Testament word for “Hades”) to dwell in heavenly places. Other examples are Moses and Elijah whom Peter, James, and John saw on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Matthew 17:1-9)

There is much we don't understand about the spirit world and the celestial dimension, and it is presumptuous for us, from our earthly perspective, to make too many definite conclusions about how God runs things in the Afterlife. It is enough for us to know that He loves us and will reward us for whatever good we have managed to bring about during our earthly lives.

“Being exalted to the right hand of God... He poured out this.” The outpouring of the Holy Ghost, which Jesus had promised, was a further sign of His Resurrection, and also of the power He was now wielding from the Heavenly Realm.

V 34-35 “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

***‘The LORD said to my Lord,
Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’***

Refers to Psalm 110:1. Again it is a reminder that this prophecy of the Resurrection and Ascension was not talking about David. David said, *“my Lord”* (referring to Jesus) was raised up by God the Father (*“the LORD”*).

V 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Since it was a message he may have figured was likely to reverberate

throughout the nation, Peter addresses *“all the house of Israel”*, not just the local crowd in front of him. *“Lord and Christ.”* Both God and Messiah. (“Christ” is the Greek word for the Hebrew word “Messiah”.)

V 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

“Cut to the heart.” They came under intense spiritual conviction once Peter’s words made them realize that their own nation had killed the Messiah, their long-foretold Savior and “Anointed One”.

V 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

“Repent.” Involves more than fearing God’s judgment (as in the days of the laws of Moses). The Lord wants our love, not just a dutiful master-servant relationship. To repent means to want to turn away from wrongdoing, not just from fear of the consequences or willingness to bow to the authority of Christ. Although these are helpful motives, the best kind of repentance or turning away from evil arises out of one’s love for Christ, our Savior.

“Be baptized.” Baptism was the recognized sign of the inward change. *“For the remission...”* - or better, “because of the remission...” The baptism doesn’t take away your sins. It’s because you’ve repented and been forgiven that you get baptized. *“Remission”* means “forgiveness” or “pardon”.

From this passage we can understand that Salvation (forgiveness of sins) and Repentance (turning away from wrongdoing, going in a new and positive direction) are inextricably bound up together and cannot be separated.

V 39 “For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

“All who are afar off.” The *“promise”* of salvation was meant for the whole world. However, it hadn’t really dawned on the disciples yet that

God would call the Gentiles also to be inheritors of the “*promise*”. For now they still clung to the view that salvation belonged only to the Jews “*who are afar off*”.

V 40-41 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

“*Those who gladly received his word.*” Implies that some did not like to hear it. A few years later, after the new Christians had been forced to flee under persecution, Jerusalem went right back to her old ways, and the apostle Paul, who wanted to evangelize there, was warned not to by the Lord: “*get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.*” (22:18)

◇ What was the most important thing that happened that day? It was not just the pouring out of the Spirit, but it was what? You’ll find it in the 41st verse of the 2nd chapter. Read it! (“*Then they that gladly received His Word were baptised: and the same day there were added unto them about 3,000 souls.*”). . .

The greatest, most important thing that happened that morning was not the outpouring of the power, and a lot of people babbling in tongues! It was not all that prayer, but it was the end result! - What they accomplished, as an absolutely inalterable effect of that prayer and that praise and that outpouring and that power! That was the final aim and goal of the whole affair, as far as God was concerned! - Souls saved!

To give the early Christian church a real send-off and to get’m really rolling, He let’m preach a couple of sermons that got about 8,000 souls saved!. . .

[from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

V 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

◇ The 42nd verse tells us what the four necessary things for new Christians are: “*Doctrine*”-good teaching. . . “*Fellowship*”. . . You live together for several months, then you really know what

fellowship is: a bunch of fellows in the same ship! Then you know what *“breaking bread”* is! You know what it is to share your food, your material blessings. And 4th, *“prayer”*. What were the results? *“Fear, wonders, signs”* (2:43)... [from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

V 43 Then fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

“Fear came upon every soul.” Christ’s mission, which a few days earlier, looked as if it had collapsed in shame and defeat at the Crucifixion, had suddenly re-gained the awe and respect that it had while Jesus was alive.

“Wonders.” Miracles that cause amazement. *“Signs.”* Point to the power of God behind miracles.

V 44-45 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

God’s economic plan for the Early Church - sharing the wealth - which can still work today.

◇ *“And all that believed were together, and had all things common”* - they shared all things! That sounds like Communism! The only time when true communism can ever exist is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in love and patience with each other - where you’re willing to give the food out of your mouth so that they can eat too! *“And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”*

“From each according to his ability, unto each according to his need!” - Karl Marx’s theory! I’ll tell you where the Devil got it - right out of the Bible! He’d just as soon have people live up to the Christian principles, as long as they kick God out and make the Devil their god! If he can evolve a system which will sound like brotherly love, sharing all things, working together and dying for a cause - like Communism - as long as they leave Jesus out, why, he’s happy!

[from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

V 46-47 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Food for Thought: Can you receive the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues?

(Comment: Somebody told me that every place it mentions receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts, it talks about them receiving the gift of tongues.) No! You'd better read the Book of Acts instead of depending on others! . . . [Too often Christians] go by what somebody told them, instead of reading it for themselves! Of the five initial baptisms, which they go by, in only three out of the five is tongues mentioned!

Jesus said, "*Ye shall receive power!*" I don't care whether you receive tongues, or what you receive, as long as you. . . get enough power to make you blast off your launch pad and get out and do something for Christ. . .

People can get a long ways from the truth when they don't follow the Word! Jesus said the Holy Spirit was power for witnessing!. . .

[from lecture delivered during the *Jesus Revolution* era, 1967]

(Continue to ACTS, chapter 3)