

## **Pentecost, Acts 2:1-12: The Holy Spirit and His Gifts**

Sermon 19-05-2024.

### **Scene 1: God's Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

**2** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

**5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?' **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?' (Acts 2:1-12 NIV)<sup>i</sup>

### **Introduction to the day of Pentecost...**

#### **1) God presents the first fruit!**

The day of Pentecost began the festival for the first fruits of the wheat harvest being presented to God.

However, on the Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection, it was Father God who presented the first fruit offering to the disciples, beginning the time of a new type of harvest.

The first fruit offering was God's Holy Spirit. He comes in power on the disciples, being both seen via an appearance like tongues of fire, and heard, via the feel of a violent wind and the disciples speaking in the many languages of the people gathered in Jerusalem.

What is this? The crowd expected praise to be uttered in Hebrew or Greek but are amazed to hear praises to God being called out in their own language.

#### **2) ... which cannot be contained,**

This first-fruit to his disciples cannot be contained and is God-directed.

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

(John 3:8 NIV)

#### **3) And is both old and new,**

The festival also marked the anniversary for the law being given to them via Moses at Sinai.

This Pentecost God's Spirit speaks God's truth anew. As the Apostle John later writes in his letters, he was 'not writing a new command, but an old one' which was from the beginning,

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and 'yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.' (1John2:7-8 NIV).

### Scene 1 Summary

- Father God has brought his first fruit, his own spirit, to his people.
- Father God has uttered a new command, yet it was one that was from the beginning, the command of love.
  - Just as the Godhead of Father, Son & Holy Spirit describe the loving relationship of the way God reveals himself and that love was extended to people from creation, through the prophets and directly through Jesus, so too are his disciples to live in an attitude of love.

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." (Heb.37b/8a&15/Ps.95:7b-8a NIV)

"Come, Let us sing for joy to the Lord [...] let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song." (Ps.95:1a&2 NIV)

### Scene 2: God's Promise,

<sup>14</sup> Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. <sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>20</sup> The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

(Acts 2:14-21 NIV)

**"In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit on all people."** (Acts 4:17 / Joel 2:28 NIV)

There are also two elements in the way the prophecy is worded:

**In the last days = now.** From the ascension of Jesus and the day of God sending the first fruit, his Spirit, at Pentecost, the last days have begun.

From that day on God's Spirit will be poured out on all his people. "Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. <sup>18</sup> Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."

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**Not Yet** = The sun has not yet turned to darkness ahead of Jesus' return, described

### **Scene 3: Holy Spirit brings his Gifts,**

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

- To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom,
- to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,
- to another faith by the same Spirit,
- to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,
- to another miraculous powers,
- to another prophecy,
- to another distinguishing between spirits,
- to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,
- and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

<sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. (1Cor.12:4-11 NIV)

### **And there's more...**

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. <sup>28</sup> And God has placed in the church,

- first of all, apostles,
- second prophets,
- third teachers,
- then miracles,
- then gifts of healing,
- of helping,
- of guidance,
- and of different kinds of tongues. (1Cor.12:27-28 NIV)

### **And still more!**

- Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.
- use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.
- If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God.
- If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ (1Pet.4:9-11 NIV)

**Purpose** of the gifts is not about self-edification. (self-improvement/self-importance).

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The job of God's Spirit is to witness to the truth (see John15:26), bring glory to Jesus, to teach and remind disciples of his teaching see (John14:26).

He does this by giving his gifts to his disciples – someone may have a gift of helps, another of hospitality, another of guidance and still another healing or speaking prophetically into someone's life.

Nobody has all the gifts and there is no ranking system for the gifts. Someone who has one or more gifts should not boast and think themselves better than another who has a different gift.

God's gift of the Holy Spirit is to testify about Jesus and build the church, the people of Jesus.

**Q.** From the lists given, what gift or gifts do you most readily identify?

Which gift of gifts would you like to receive or have re-confirmed?

(Prayer)

**Action!** Now, start thinking about how you can start practicing the gift(s). God's spirit will help you learn to do that and commit to being his faithful witness by using the gift(s) he gives.

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<sup>i</sup> All Scripture references are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version, Anglicised Edition (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011).