



SERMON NOTES

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Title: Pentecost (Acts 2)

#4 in the Series on the Acts of the Apostles

1. Scripture teaches that the Jewish feasts are a shadow of things to come; Col. 2:16-17, *"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."*
 - a. Four important feasts:
 - i. Passover (*Pesach*) on 14 Nisan (cf. Lev. 23:4-5, Ex. 12:1-4)
 1. Historical – Commemorates Israel's deliverance out of Egypt with Moses and their salvation by the blood of a lamb without blemish.
 2. Christ – Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples and was crucified as the "Lamb of God." (cf. Jn. 1:29, Luke 22:20)
 3. Facts – The Passover lamb must be without blemish; the cup of the Lord's Supper would have been the 3rd cup of redemption within the Passover meal.
 - ii. Unleavened Bread (*Hag HaMatzot*) on 15-21 Nisan (cf. Lev. 23:6-8, Ex. 12:15-20)
 1. Historical – Mentioned as separate feast in Lev. 23, but today these 3 are celebrated together. The houses would be searched for any leaven, symbolically remove any hypocrisy or wickedness.
 2. Christ – Leaven was a symbol of sin; *matzah* means "without sin." Jesus said He was the "Bread of Life" and the "bread that came down from heaven." (cf. Jn. 6:32, 35, 41, 48) Scripture also teaches that by His stripes we are healed, referring to the *matzah* served during the Passover meal. (cf. Is. 53:5)
 3. Facts – Matzah is made with flour & water only; it is striped & pierced during baking.
 - iii. First-fruits (*Yom HaBikkurim*) on 16 Nisan (cf. Lev. 23:9-14)
 1. Historical – Offering of the first ripe fruit / barley as an act of dedicating the harvest to the Lord.
 2. Christ – Jesus' resurrection is an image of firstfruits, His resurrection is the promise of the future resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:23, *"Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming."*
 3. Facts – On this day, the manna stopped when Israel entered Canaan & Queen Esther risked her life.
 - iv. Pentecost (*Shavuot*) on 6 Sivan (cf. Lev. 23:15-22)
 1. Historical – Feast of Weeks or Harvest. It is also believed God gave the 10 Commandments at this time.

2. Christ – Jesus commanded His disciples to await the Holy Spirit; 3,000 were baptized. Fulfillment of the promise in Jer. 31:33, *"I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*
3. Facts – Celebrated 50 days after Passover, thus Pentecost.
 - b. Pentecost is generally considered the birth of the Church, which falls on a Sunday like Easter.
2. The mindset of the disciples has moved from being defeated to expectation. After 40 days of time with Jesus post-resurrection, they then spent a week waiting. They were together in unity; Acts 1:14, *"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."* And Acts 2:1, *"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."*
 - a. Selecting a new apostle to be one of the 12 (cf. Acts 1:15-26);
 - b. A mixed group of men & women of 120 forming a new community (cf. Acts 1:14);
 - c. They were expectantly waiting in prayer (cf. Acts 2:1)
3. The arrival of the Holy Spirit; Acts 2:2-4, *"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."*
 - a. Imagery and reflection:
 - i. Ezek. 37:9-14, *"Also He said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.' So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army. Then He said to me, 'Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it,' says the LORD.'"*
 - ii. Ex. 3:2 9-10, *"And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed... behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."*
 - iii. Ex. 19:18, *"Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly."*
 - b. The tongue; Acts 2:5-8, *"And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were*

confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one 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?" ~17 nations represented.

- i. Similar to the miracle at the Tower of Babel but in deliberate contrast; one was being built to honor Man the other to honor Christ. Gen. 11:7-8, "*Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*" So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city."
- ii. James 3:8, "*But no man can tame the tongue.*"
- iii. Speaking in tongues is not proof of holiness (*cf.* 1 Cor. 12 & 14)
- iv. Speaking in tongues had arrested the attention of the crowd but not their conviction that comes with Peter's sermon.
- v. Quick (re)view of speaking in tongues or *glossolalia*:
 1. One study examined the influence of the charismatic movement on 3,120 Anglican churches in rural and urban communities. Throughout all these environments the charismatic movement is associated with positive signs of church growth.
 2. Another study of 1,276 clergy working in the Church of England, after controlling for age and personality, found that charismatic clergy record higher levels of job satisfaction in comparison with clergy not influenced by the charismatic movement.
 3. In another study they found that those attracted to the Pentecostal and charismatic movements have a disposition to utilize thinking for making decisions and organizing their lives.
 4. Glossolalia was reported by those who practiced it to be a frequent, usually daily occurrence, more likely to happen out of religious settings than in them. It was reported to be more likely while driving, relaxing or engaged in domestic activities (thus in relatively private settings), than in explicitly religious contexts or activities. Typically the emotions reported are positive, calm ones, or sometimes "no particular" emotions. Glossolalia was described as a spiritually helpful part of daily life, and as a (powerful) form of prayer. This "profile" of glossolalia is surprising; challenging the general view of glossolalia by those had not practiced glossolalia. Non-glossolalics believed that glossolalia occurs less than daily, and that it normally occurs in religious settings and while engaged in religious activities, that it is accompanied by high-arousal, usually positive emotions (ecstasy and the like), and that its salient social meanings and functions are in promoting unity among church members....
 5. Nightline News video
 6. In the University SPECT study, it is interesting to note that the frontal lobes showed decreased perfusion during glossolalia, but this is consistent with the subjects' description of a lack of intentional control over the performance of glossolalia... We have previously argued, and found, decreased activity in the SPL (superior parietal lobe) during meditation (Buddhist monks and Catholic nuns) in which there is a described loss of the

sense of self. However, glossolalia was not associated with a loss of the sense of self and there were no significant decreases in the SPL... That there were changes in several brain structures suggests that there is complex brain activity during this unusual practice.

- c. God is pouring His Spirit upon the common man, not just prophets, kings or priests; not just men. Num. 11:29, *"Oh, that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"*
 - d. Jerusalem was filled with devout pilgrims when God chose to come upon them at this time.
 - i. Devout men are found in every nation;
 - ii. Devout men are in the path of Heaven's revelations;
 - iii. Devout men are often perplexed at divine dealings
4. The results of His coming
- a. Amazement and mocking
 - b. Boldness in preaching the Word; highlights of Peter's sermon
 - i. Peter stood up and drew attention to himself (v. 14);
 - ii. Peter explains that this miracle was fulfillment of a promise & prophecy (v. 16);
 - 1. The events of the day were not a complete fulfillment of the Joel prophecy, just the beginning until the end of an age (sun, moon, etc.) Joel 2:28-32, *"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars 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. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls."*
 - 2. Note that the dispensation of the Spirit upon all flesh belongs to all the days of the New Testament until the end times, not as rain drops but as streams *"poured out."* Jn. 7:38, *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*
 - iii. Peter explains that everything that happened to Jesus was under God's control. His plans were never disrupted by the Roman government or the Jewish officials. This was especially comforting to those facing oppression during the time of the early Christian church. Similar to the story of Joseph. (cf. Gen. 45:4-5, 50:17-21, *"And Joseph said to his brothers, 'Please come near to me.' So they came near. Then he said: 'I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life... Thus you shall say to Joseph: 'I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you.' ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.'" And Joseph wept*

when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."

- iv. Peter testifies that death could not hold onto Jesus; Acts 2:24
- v. Peter uses many OT passages and prophecies to demonstrate that Jesus is both *Kurios* and *Christos*; the first Christian apology; Acts 2:36
- vi. Listeners are now cut to the quick because they do not want to be listed with the enemies of the Messiah (v. 35) Giving of the Law (*cf.* Ex. 32:28) resulted in 3,000 deaths, giving of the HS resulted in 3,000 new births.
 - 1. Stock market bull; Mt. 6:24-33, *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*
- c. Upon hearing Peter's sermon, the people were cut to the quick and asked "what then shall we do?" Peter's answer was four-fold...
 - i. Repent is a change in a life's direction, not just a mental change of attitude or a feeling of remorse; to actually turn away from a sinful and godless life takes more than human power, which is why it is listed as a gift of God (*cf.* 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25)
 - ii. Believe in Jesus as Lord and Christ
 - iii. For John the Baptist, baptism was an expression of repentance. Baptism in the name of Jesus represents an "allegiance to Jesus" as Lord
 - iv. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.