

- A Study In Acts -

Chapter Two – Coming of Power and the First Gospel Sermon

ACTS 2:1-4:

At the conclusion of the first chapter, all things are now set. The disciples of Jesus have remained in Jerusalem, at His command, and await the promise of the Father, which they had heard from Him (1:4). They have been daily in the temple complex, “**praising and blessing God**” – Luke 24:53.

In this chapter, Luke both dates and shares the events of the beginning!

Text #1:

Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Day of Pentecost – Much speculation has been rendered on how this day was actually figured; however, in simplicity, God's word renders it very easy to figure:

Leviticus 23:15-16 “And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.”

The Sabbath mentioned here in Leviticus is the Passover Sabbath. Thus, to figure “the Pentecost”, is to count seven Sabbaths after that one, and then the day afterward is the Day of Pentecost. By this formula, the Day of Pentecost always falls on the first day of the week. This feast of the Jews was also known as the “Feast of Weeks”; because of the harvest that falls during the interval. Because of this, it was also called, “The Feast of Harvest”. In addition, because of the offering made during this feast, it also bore then name, “The Day of First Fruits”. It was not until the Greek rule of Palestine that the feast became known as Pentecost, or ‘*Pente*’ – fifty, ‘*Coste*’ - feast’.

Luke not only uses the term that is derived from the Greek language that was now universal for trade in the known world and the predominant language of the proselytes, but he also establishes that this day has “**fully come**”. The Jewish day was divided into two equal shifts: the first beginning at sundown. Luke sets that time of this event as the beginning of the second or ending shift, which begins at sunrise.

Note: Since Jesus was among His disciples for forty days being resurrected in their presence (1:3), prior to His ascension, we can deduce that they only waited ten days after His ascension before the promise of the Father would come (50 days to Pentecost, minus the forty days, equals ten days).

They: This is a very important pronoun given by Luke, which is also defining. This pronoun is tied back to the last verse of the previous chapter (remembering that chapters breaks and verses were added at a later date by translators), to the noun “**Apostles**”; that Matthias was added too.

This is confirmed in **Vs. 14**, as it is Peter standing up with the eleven to speak to the crowds; and in addition, the miracles that would be performed would only be accredited to the Apostles (**2:42-43; 5:12**).

Since we also know that the Apostles of Jesus were spending their days in the temple complex (**Luke 24:53**), their unified accord in the house where they were sitting (**vs. 2**) was obviously one of the temple apartments (covered areas). This also answers how the Jews, who were gathered for the feast, were also aware of this event (**Vs. 5-5-7**).

Sat Upon Each of Them: The divided fire-like tongues that appeared above each of the Apostles heads were symbols of the audible tongues in which they would begin to speak (it sounded to those around them as “**a rushing mighty wind**”); and testified to the Apostles among those gathered as being the ones receiving this heavenly power (also remembering that it was only promised to them – **1:4-5**)! This is also testified to by the statement of the crowd concerning them being “**Galileans**” in **Vs.7** (which we know that the Apostles of Jesus were), versus the 120 that were gathered with them for the events concerning the selection of Matthias.

Filled with the Holy Spirit:

Here is the inundation of the Spirit, which Jesus had previously spoken to them concerning in **1:5**, that would come not many days from then. This is the fulfillment of the promise of “**power from on high**” (**Luke 24:49**), the Holy Spirit in “**power**” (**Acts 1:8**); which defines the coming of the Apostolic measure of the Spirit that we have already covered in the last chapter – see:

<http://www.plvcc.org/Acts14-5.htm>

Although there was the sign above each of the Apostles initially, the true demonstration of the receipt of this gift was the actual words of the Apostles in languages other than the ones they would be expected to know. Thus, the outward became a demonstration of the inward receipt of the Spirit.

Tongues: This is a term that has occurred many times in the pages of scripture. It is represented in the Hebrew by the word, ‘*Lason*’, which is translated in English as language, speech or tongue.

Genesis 10:5 “**From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.**”

Genesis 10:20 “**These *were* the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands *and* in their nations.**”

Deuteronomy 28:49 “**The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand**”

Psalms 31:20 “**You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence**

From the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion From the strife of tongues.”

In our text, it is the Greek word, ‘*Glossa*’, which is defined, ‘a tongue as an origin of speech’ (it is also used in – **Acts 19:6; 1 Corinthians 13:1; 14:22** – in a plural form; and **James 1:26; 3:5, 6, 8; 1 John 3:18; Revelation 14:6** – in the singular).

In all cases, it defines languages, dialects, or speech (oral communication), and is never describing babble or random noise. The only cases of confusion as a result of the dialects spoken

by the Apostles came from those who did not speak the dialects. This is why Luke defines for us, all the nations assembled in Jerusalem this day; so we can comprehend that the native tongues spoken by the Apostles as a sign, would not be understood by all (8-11). In **verse 6** of this chapter, Luke takes any doubt concerning the discernment of the dialects spoken by the Apostles, as each **“Heard them speak in his own language”**.

Spirit Gave Them Utterance: Before the Lord's death, as He explained the coming of the Spirit in promise, He told the Apostles that the Spirit would dwell with them and be in them (**John 14:17**), and would teach them all things, remind them of all things, guide them in all truth, and testify of Him (**John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13**).

We are seeing the fulfillment of this very promise as the Spirit is testifying through the Apostles this day by the sign of languages. This will be part of the summary that the Apostles will use at the end of the first sermon they would speak – **2:33**.

All of the circumstances concerning this record are given from the viewpoint of the hearers.

- To those who understood the languages, it was nothing short of supernatural.
- To those who did not understand the language it appeared to be a drunken stupor!

Twelve men, each speaking a uniquely different dialect would be miraculous even to those who routinely learned more than one language. What is uniquely impressive, even before the scoffers would begin to interject themselves, is that all the people assembled there from throughout the world, heard them speak **“The wonderful works of God” (Vs.11)**.

This was to be the fulfillment of everything that Jesus had prepared the Apostles for, so that they could now complete their commission.

Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Next: “Devout Men from Every Nation under Heaven”