

The Day of Pentecost

Text: Acts 2:1-21; 42-47

What is Pentecost? The word Pentecost means fifty. Pente means five. A pentagram often refers to a five-pointed star. The United States Pentagon is made of five sections. Fifty Days after Passover, God gave Moses the Law on Mount Sinai. In Jewish tradition, the Feast of Weeks or *Shavuot* or Pentecost took place 50 days after the Passover. We observe that the Day of Pentecost happened 50 Days after the Resurrection. The Passover when Jesus died was on Friday. When did that change the date of Pentecost (to a Sunday)? Leviticus 23:15, 16 gives us that answer. Jesus was on the earth 40 days. After Christ ascended, there were 10 days until Pentecost. It was called the Feast of Weeks, the day after the seventh Sabbath. God knew His Son would rise the day after the Sabbath. Acts 2:1 speaks of prophetic fulfillment by saying "And when the day of Pentecost was 'fully' come...." The date was assigned by God when the celebration would be held. God, in His foreknowledge timed it perfectly, commemorating an even more important day than the giving of the Law, i.e., the Resurrection of our Lord. This is not coincidental; read Exodus 32:27, 28: "And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." In John 1:17 we read, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Compare Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." When Moses came down from Mount Sinai and saw that many of the commandments were being broken by the Israelites, he ordered death. On the day of Pentecost, the glorious celebration of the accomplishment of the Gospel and the empowering of the church by the Holy Spirit is marked by 3,000 conversions. Under the Law, 3,000 died. Under grace, 3,000 were given eternal life. The Bible says in II Corinthians 3:6, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Compare Romans 7:9-12. Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Law brings death. The Spirit brings life.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME RIGHT ON TIME

Acts 2:1: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come..." God keeps His Word. Jeremiah 1:12: "Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it."

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME LIKE A RUSHING, MIGHTY WIND

ACTS 2:2

The Lord Jesus likened the moving of the Holy Spirit to wind in John 3:8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Just this past Thursday in Houston we recognized what the power of wind can do as windows in downtown skyscrapers were blown out and massive trees were uprooted. On the other hand, wind can provide help beyond human ability. A few years ago, a weather reporter in Los Angeles reported that severe pollution had created a dark unhealthy cloud of smog had settled over the city of Los Angeles. He then said, "It will take the wind from elsewhere to remove this pollution." The coming of the Holy Spirit was a welcome wind, a cleansing wind and an empowering wind.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PRESENCE WAS EVIDENCED BY FIRE

Acts 2:3: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."

God revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush. Exodus 3:2: "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed."

God led the children of Israel by the pillar of fire. Exodus 13:21: "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

The Lord answered Elijah by fire, showing Himself real and all other god's fraudulent. I Kings 18:38, 39: "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

God gave the testimony of Himself in the Tabernacle and the Temple.

Leviticus 6:13: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S OUTPOURING WAS A REVERSAL OF THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

The parallel and contrast is amazing. The people came together to build a tower to Heaven, saying, "...lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:4b). Genesis 11:8: "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city." We see a result of Pentecost in Acts 8:4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." God created different languages that confused, confounded and stopped the building of the tower. Genesis 11:7: "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." The opposite happened at Pentecost. Acts 2:4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:8: "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" Power was going to be near uncontrollable should these heathen people accomplish their purposes. Genesis 11:6: "And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." God's people truly became one on Pentecost. Acts 2:1: "And when the

day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” God came down to Babel and broke the unity of the people, restricting their power. But, on the day of Pentecost, God came down and gave power to His disciples. Matthew 28:18b: “...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”

Matthew 28:20b: “...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT FULLNESS IS TO BE ENJOYED BY ALL OF GOD’S PEOPLE

Acts 2:3: “And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” Acts 2:4A: “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost....” Acts 2:39: “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Moses said in Numbers 11:29: “And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!” Even far back in the Old Testament, Moses’ desire was to see God’s Spirit to be upon all the people.

6. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S COMING USHERED IN THE AGE OF GRACE

ACTS 2:14-41

Acts 2:21: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

7. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S COMING BROUGHT THE AGAPE LOVE TO THE CHURCH

Acts 2:42-47

Romans 5:5: “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

Conclusion:

Let us not view the Day of Pentecost as a one-time event that gave power to 120 in the upper room and then by the end of the day 3,000 were saved and baptized. Let us rather see this as a great and wonderful introduction to what God can do with a handful of disciples at any time, in any place on the earth. Pentecostal power was designed as a continuum that God intends to use until the end of the age.

-Pastor Pope-