



Week 8: The Spirit at Pentecost

Quick Review

- Jesus told his disciples it would be to their advantage that he goes away, so that the Father could send them another Advocate
- Under the power of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 9:14), he quoted scripture and fulfilled prophecy amidst his agonizing death
- Jesus yielded his [S]pirit at this death, trusting the outcome to the Father
- After the resurrection, Jesus breathed on his disciples and gave them the Holy Spirit
- He promised to be with them always – through the presence of the Spirit
- He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them

Awaiting the Promised Advocate

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37-39)

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Rather than a direct quote, Jesus may be synthesizing numerous passages here, such as: Psa. 78:15-16; Prov. 4:23, 5:15; Isa. 44:3, 55:1, 58:11; Eze. 47:1, Joel 3:18; Zech. 13:1, 14:8

He split rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock and caused waters to flow down like rivers. (Psa. 78:15-16)

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. (Pro. 4:23)

And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. (Isa. 58:11)

On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. (Zech. 14:8)

- This 'living water' is the Spirit, or the ministry or the power of the Spirit
- The Spirit had not yet been poured out during the lifetime and ministry of Jesus
- Only after his glorification—his resurrection and/or ascension—was the Spirit poured out

To open the book of Acts, the author Luke gives a summary account of Jesus' ascension:

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "You heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. (Acts 1:1-9)

- So the disciples are waiting in Jerusalem for the promised Advocate, the Holy Spirit
- Jesus told them they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit
- That the Holy Spirit would come upon them
- That they would receive power
- And that they would serve as his witnesses

Perhaps the Old Testament prophecies about the Spirit came to their minds as they waited

Old Testament Prophecies Concerning the Outpouring of the Spirit

Joel [c. 835-800 BC]

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, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. (Joel 2:28-29)

Isaiah [c. 740-680 BC]

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. (Isa. 44:3) See also Isa. 32:15

And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, declares the Lord. And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord: My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children's offspring, says the Lord, from this time forth and forevermore. (Isa. 59:20-21)

Ezekiel [c. 590-570 BC]

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Eze. 36:26-27)

Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land. I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore. And I will not hide my face anymore from them, when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord God. (Eze. 39:29)

And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord. (Eze. 37:13-14)

Zechariah [c. 520-470 BC]

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. (Zech. 12:10)

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Some themes from these passages:

- The Spirit to be poured out on 'all flesh' – sons and daughters, old and young, even servants
- There would be prophecies, visions, and dreams
- Associated with the blessing—grace and mercy, like water poured on dry ground
- Accompanied by the Redeemer, the one whom they have pierced
- Associated with the Lord's covenant
- The Spirit would be 'upon them' and 'within them'
- God's words would not depart from their mouths, from that time and forevermore
- He would cause them to walk in his statutes and obey his rules
- God will assemble them from exile and place them in their own land
- God would open the graves and raise them from the graves

The Day of Pentecost

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:1-4)

- Many of those ancient prophecies were being fulfilled!
- Peter (empowered by the Holy Spirit) connects the event directly with Joel's prophecy

Important Question: Are there two 'baptisms' of the Holy Spirit?

- Jesus breathed on them and gave them the Holy Spirit in John 20:22
- A month and a half later the Holy Spirit comes upon them in Acts 2:4
- There may be a difference between the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit and the 'filling' or 'rushing upon' of the Holy Spirit
- The first is the seal of redemption; the second is for power for ministry!
- But remember, this is a unique time in history, and we shouldn't necessarily expect these events to unfold the same way for us

Now, the disciples came together on the day of Pentecost. But what did Pentecost mean to these Jewish devotees?

The 'Old' Pentecost – The Feast of Weeks

Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, "When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it... You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the Lord." (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16)

You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses you. (Deut. 9:9-10)

- Pentecost (from Greek *pentekoste*, meaning "50th day") is the Jewish Feast of Weeks, called *Shavuot* in Hebrew
- Occurs exactly 50 days after the end of Passover observance
- Second of the three High Feasts, closely associated with the harvest
- Commemorates establishment of the Law and the Covenant at Sinai (Exo. Ch. 19-24)

And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. Then the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice. And he declared to you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments, and he wrote them on two tablets of stone. And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess. (Deut. 4:9-14)

- Of course, the Old Testament Prophets also prophesied about a New Covenant:

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer. 31:31-34)

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- This echoes Isaiah 59:21:

And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord: My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring...

- Zechariah predicted that God's blessings associated with the covenant—being counted among his own people—will extend to Gentiles:

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. (Zech. 2:10-11)

The 'New' Pentecost Echoes and Fulfills the 'Old'

- The 'Old' Pentecost marked the giving of the Law and the establishment of the Covenant
- Many New Testament passages are illuminated by this understanding of Pentecost

John answered them all, saying, I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. (Luke 3:16)

And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Cor. 3:3-6)

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Eph. 1:13-14)

Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. (Heb. 9:15)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us... so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith. (Gal. 3: 13-14)

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Summary of Parallels Between the 'Old' and 'New' Pentecost:

"Old" Pentecost	"New" Pentecost
50 days after Passover season (Lev. 15-16)	50 days after resurrection (Acts 2:1)
Giving of the Law (Exo. 24:12)	Giving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4)
Written on stone tablets (Exo. 31:18)	Written on hearts (2. Cor. 3:3, cf. Jer. 31:33)
Inauguration of the Old Covenant (Exo. 24:6-8, Deut. 4:13)	Inauguration of the New Covenant (Heb. 9:15, cf. Matt. 26:27-28)
Accompanied by fire (Exo. 19:18, 24:17)	Accompanied by fire (Acts 2:3)
Given to Hebrews stewarding the Tabernacle (Deut. 4:1)	Given to all believers of all people groups (Acts 10:45, Gal. 3:14, 1 Cor. 12:13)

As partakers in the New Covenant,
Baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire,
Let's depend on the Holy Spirit
To follow God's laws written on our hearts,
As members of his body of all believers
And temples of the Holy Spirit

Next: *The Spirit and the Early Church*