

## Acts Ch 2:1-13

“Seeker or Scoffer”

The events covered Acts Ch 1 beginning with vs 12 through the 1<sup>st</sup> vs of ch 2 serves as a 10-day preparation period for a party. A birthday party that is, in that Acts ch 2 essentially unveils to us the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit is poured out in accordance with Jesus' word regarding the Promise of the Father and just like that the church is born and begins to get active in the world in taking the gospel to Jerusalem just as Jesus had commanded.

We left off last time just prior to the outpouring of the Spirit with Peter suggesting that Judas be replaced so that the 12 might be a complete unit once again just as the Lord had originally appointed them. So they grabbed a couple of guys that met his suggested criteria and they cast their lots and the lots fell on a man by the name of Matthias of whom we never hear from or see again. and Because of that along with some other things many think (myself included) that Matthias may've drawn the shortest straw, but that he wasn't God's choice. #1 This is the last time you'll ever see the casting of lots in the scriptures, after the outpouring of God's Spirit it never happens again, because He is the One who is to lead us and guide us, coordinate our decisions and delegate our way. You remember there in Acts 13 when some prophets and teachers were assembled together in the church in Antioch that we read, *“As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”* Acts 13:2 The Holy Spirit was leading them speaking to them, showing them what to do, they were “led of the Spirit” they didn't cast lots or draw straws. That's simply not a NT concept, nor is fleecing, we're to lead our lives in tune with the Spirit of God as by the Word of God and trust Him to guide the details of our lives.

So I'm of the persuasion that Peter got out just a little ahead of the Lord on that one and that the Lord's choice was the apostle Paul. The Holy Spirit stating in Gal ch 1, *“Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),”* Gal 1:1 The point being that it was the God Head personally who appointed Paul as an apostle. Now again those who say that Matthias is the man will point out the fact that there's several of the apostles that you never hear from again but that doesn't mean they weren't apostles. and That's true, and which ever way you're personally persuaded is fine with me, we'll just have to wait until we get to Heaven for you to see that I was right, and that's no problem, I respect you're right to be wrong.

But they've been in this interim period of waiting, the Lord was with them for 40 days after the resurrection, He told them then to wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father which, He said, would take place not many days from that point. Now because the bible specifies the fact that it was Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out we know that the “not many days” that Jesus spoke of turned out to be 10 days in specific. Hence the 10-day preparation for this birthday party where the church is brought into fruition before our very eyes here in Acts ch 2 has been taking place.

The way this chapter sort of lays out is Vs 1-4 “The Holy Spirit’s Coming”, Vs 5-13 “The Crowd’s Confusion”, Vs 14-36 We’ll generalize as “Peter’s Clarification”, Vs 37 “The Crowd’s Consternation” Vs 38-40 “Peter’s Exhortation” Vs 41 “The Response Of Salvation” and Vs 42-47 “Luke’s Explanation Of The Operations Of The Early Church.”

#### Vs1-4

Just like that we have the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth (as it were) of the church. 30 seconds earlier the church didn’t exist, and now the church exists. and The fact that the bible points out that the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost shows us a couple of things.

Just to bring you up to speed incase you’re not familiar with what the Day of Pentecost exactly was, Pentecost was a feast day, and just like Passover was a feast day, so Pentecost was a feast day as well. and The reason that we know that it was 10 days after the ascension that the Holy Spirit was poured out is because “Pentecost” literally means “50<sup>th</sup>” and it took place 50 days after The Passover. They were to count 7 Sabbaths after Passover beginning with the next day. Or to understand it another way, they were to count beginning on Sunday 50 days, which would bring them to Pentecost. Now Jesus’ resurrection took place on the Sunday after Passover. He was with them 40 days, then having ascended, and reading that the Holy Spirit was poured out on Pentecost we know that it was only 10 days after the ascension on a Sunday that the church was birthed by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

But it also shows us that this day of 1<sup>st</sup> fruits whereby they would offer the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of the wheat harvest also typified the birth of the church. Passover showed us Christ’s death, the Feast of First Fruits spoke of His resurrection, but then the Feast of Pentecost, 50 days later also known as the *day* of 1<sup>st</sup> fruits, offering the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of the wheat harvest, not the barley harvest, spoke of the birth of the church. You see at the *Feast* of 1<sup>st</sup> fruits they would make unleavened bread to offer to the Lord (amongst other things), but leaven in scripture is always a type of what? Sin, and Jesus, the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of the resurrection was with out sin.

But regarding Pentecost we read, “*Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.*” Lev 23:16-17 What’s going on? Why the leaven? Why 2 loaves? Because if the type were to be fulfilled accurately the church would be comprised of *both* Jew and Gentile, and the church (though covered in the righteousness of Christ) still very much has the presence of sin with in it. It’s not until we see Him face to face that we will be like Him for then we will see Him as He is, but until then we’ll wrestle with the sin nature.

Remember Jesus said, “*The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.*” Matt 13:33 Speaking of the fact that even though the church is the bride of Christ there would still be corruption and sin permeating like leaven in the church.

It’s a simple indisputable fact; of which I suppose married couples are the most aware. I often find myself telling couples that come to me, married, or about to be married, “Any time you get 2 sinners together, it’s inevitable that eventually there’ll be a problem.” Now in Christ we have the solution, and as long as everyone is willing/able to adhere to the Word of God things can be worked out, but you need to know going into this thing that it won’t always be smooth sailing, because there’s still leaven in your measure of meal. The bible says, “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*” 1 John 1:8 Which is why we need so desperately to cling to Christ and be open and honest *with* Him, confessing our sins *to* Him that He might cleanse us of all unrighteous, that we might find grace to help us in time of need.

But all this to say that the Holy Spirit’s coming on Pentecost reveals to us how God’s plan of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the subsequent birth of the church was foreshadowed even back in the giving of the law with regards to the feasts. Passover, 1<sup>st</sup> fruits, 50 days later, Pentecost, the death of Christ (God’s Passover Lamb), the resurrection of Christ, 50 days later, the birth of the church. A day of 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of a multiplied harvest that God would begin to reap via the gospel.

So the 1<sup>st</sup> thing we note about vs 1 is that the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, it was a day of *celebration*, and we note how it also serves as an *illustration* of God’s plan with regard to the birth of the church, comprised of 2-leavened loaves, both Jew and Gentile.

Which (by the way) qualifies everyone that exists on the topside of the earth for entrance into the Kingdom of God. If you are a Jew, or you are a Gentile (which you are either one or the other) you qualify for entrance into Kingdom of God. “Well, but you don’t know the places I’ve been, the things I’ve done.” I don’t have to, God knows, He’s very aware of the leaven in your life, illustrated it, spoke of it, and died for it, and He’ll receive you unto Himself if you’ll but offer your life up to Him through Christ. “For God so loved the *world*, (Jew and Gentile alike) that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever would simply believe on Him would never perish but have everlasting life.” God didn’t send His Son to condemn you, but that you through Him might be saved.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing we note here in vs 1 (and I don’t want to overly emphasize it with regard to the Spirit’s coming) but its worth drawing your attention to and that is the fact that, “...they were all with one accord.” This is a phrase that we see over and over again throughout the book of Acts and so often its in relationship to an awesome work that God was about to do, or some move of the Spirit that was profound. We’ll see it again in vs 46 of this ch, as the Lord was working through the people adding to the church such as were being saved.

Again in Ch 4 as they were seeking the Lord for boldness, they were there with one accord, praying and crying out to God and the earth began to shake and they were filled with boldness and spoke the word of God with out reserve.

Again I want to be careful not to leave the impression that the Holy Spirit wouldn't have come if they weren't seeing everything eye to eye that day because God had ordained this day. But I will say that there's something about unity in the body of Christ that releases a sweet anointing of the Spirit of God. and I try to speak to our mission's teams when we go various places about that fact. That regardless of what differences we may have personally, there's a bigger picture here, and its essential that we be of one accord, with one mind and one heart as a team together to see people saved, or encouraged, built up or drawn nearer *to* and strengthen *in* Christ while we're together. Because division, discord, and contention can quench the Spirit, God hates discord. We read in the Proverbs, "*These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.*" Prov 6:16-19 But unity invites God's anointing. Leave the book of Acts turn quickly to Ps 133 (read).

What's oil a picture of in Scripture? The Holy Spirit, and the anointing thereof; notice that the unity of the brethren is like precious oil covering the body from head to toe, dripping from the beard, running down the edge of the garments, just covering the whole body, it commands blessing and life, God honors unity. Not uniformity, conforming to anything for the sake of getting along, but true unity centered in His Word, and His will done His way. That's also why I exhort those who serve here to crucify the flesh when they walk through these doors, because we're not here for ourselves, we're here for others. We don't want to encumber God's Spirit through our contentions, but we want to invite God's Spirit through unity to anoint and bless our time together.

How important to be of like mind, having one heart, and one spirit before God. The bible says, "*Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Rom 15:5-6 God gets no glory out of disunity and gossip, we want one mind, and one mouth bringing glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ Again, Phil 2:1-3 "*Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*"

God's Word exhorts us to stand united in Christ, not divided over our own carnal issues, they were all with one accord, in one place, sharing the same heart, the same love for God, the same trust in His Promise, the power of the resurrected Christ bonding them together, and what happened?

Vs2

Couple of things to note, #1 It was a *sound* from heaven *as of* a rushing mighty wind, it was not literally a rushing might wind. It wasn't like windows flew open, their hair was whipping all around and they were all being pinned to the walls. It sounded like a tornadic event, but it wasn't.

2<sup>ndly</sup> the usage of this word "wind" should trigger a prior conversation that we've studied between Jesus and a certain Nicodemus. Remember when Nick came to Jesus by night and was beating around the bush, and Jesus said, "Look Nick, lets get to the heart of this thing, no one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven unless they're born again." and Nick says, "Well, how can a man enter his mothers womb again when he's old?" Jesus is all, "Are you the teacher of Israel and you're not tracking with Me? I'm not talking about physical birth but spiritual, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." and Jesus said, "*Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.*" John 3:7-8

We discovered there that play on words that Jesus was making with regard to the wind and the Spirit, because in the Greek it's the same word, "Pneuma" and we've spoken of the fact of Jesus breathing on His disciples and saying "Receive the Holy Spirit" the breath of life from the mouth of God. and This is all sort of correlating and culminating here where they're hearing this sound of this awesome rushing "wind" or in other words they're in essence being tuned into the out pouring of God's Spirit, and it fills the whole house.

Notice they were sitting, God's no respecter of postures, you can receive the Holy Spirit sitting down, standing up, hands raised, arms folded, it doesn't matter. It seems like people are always trying to box God in to a certain formula. and If God responded to you once when you did a certain thing and certain way, it seems like we always try to emulate that again so that God will move in like manner again. But God's not bound by certain postures, or phrases, or time frames anything else. We so often think God pays closer attention to us when we pray for long periods of time rather than a short prayer, as though the strength of our prayer lies in the length of our prayer. Jesus said, "*...when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.*" Matt 6:7 and I'm not trying to deter or discourage lengthy times spent with the Lord in prayer, but don't think that it gains you special standing in the eyes of God. When by His sovereignty He chooses to move in a certain manner, He'll move in a certain manner. and Until then lets not deceive ourselves into thinking we'll get better spiritual reception by holding up our antennas or anything else. They were just sitting there, and God decided to move.

Vs3

Again take note of the fact that it wasn't literal fire, but it had the likeness of fire, the phrase "as of fire" is key there. and The phrase "divided tongues" or "cloven tongues" is a bit misleading. It makes you think of forked tongues of fire flickering above these guys' heads like little Indian feathers or something. (At least it makes me think of that) but its not saying that the tongues were forked, or split, it's saying that tongues divided out from this single unit of fire like substance that rested upon each of them. So that there was a single unit there that they were all beholding, like the pillar of fire that led the children of Israel by night throughout the wilderness wanderings (and Of course fire is often closely associated with the presence of God in the scriptures, the burning bush, the fire of Mt Horeb that God spoke forth from, again the pillar of fire by night etc) and then it divided or dispersed out, rationed out in individual portions upon each of them.

But fire also carries a couple of other connotations with it biblically; it speaks of purification, burning away the chaff, or the refining of fine metals. Melting it down purifying the gold, bringing the dross to the surface to be disposed of that what's pure might remain. and Surely it's the work of the Holy Spirit not only as it pertains to salvation but also sanctification, refining us purifying us, not only is the Holy Spirit the agent of power in our lives but also purity. Another thing fire speaks of at times in the OT is the pleasure of God and His acceptance regarding a certain sacrifice, as the people would offer a sacrifice and God would sanction that sacrifice by sending fire from Heaven to consume it. and We see sort of a picture here of God sending as it were a fire from Heaven to alight upon and consume in acceptance these who have presented themselves to Him as living sacrifices, their reasonable service (Rom 12:1.)

Vs4

One thing that we need to see here is that before we can be filled we need to recognize that we're empty. These disciples were gathered for prayer, in obedience to Jesus because like Peter they realized that they didn't have the resources in and of themselves to do what needed to be done, they were empty of those resources and needed to receive them as by the Holy Spirit. They knew their reliance upon the Lord if they were to fulfill the Lord's commission to them. So to with you and with me, it won't be by our power, or our might but by the power of the Holy Spirit that God does a work in and through our lives.

As the Spirit moved upon them, and gave them the unction to speak out, they began to speak, or make utterance in other tongues, or to understand that another way. They began to speak in languages that they had never acquired naturally. and The gift of tongues becomes a sensitive subject and the object of much debate in the church today, and we won't ignore that subject as we go through this, but for now, suffice it to say the Spirit came upon them, and they began to speak forth in languages they'd never learned. They weren't out of control, it wasn't a mad house, when Peter begins to speak to the crowd here in a moment, they all zip their lips and the Holy Spirit ministers to the people in a common language.

Is tongues the evidence of the Holy Spirit? That's not what the bible teaches, its one of the gifts of the Spirit, but not the evidence of the Spirit, and again these are all topics we'll brush along the way.

Vs5-11

Since it was the Feast of Pentecost there were hundreds of thousands if not millions of Jews from all over the known world in Jerusalem, many of them no doubt stayed over from Passover rather than commuting this overwhelming distance twice in less than 2 months.

Whether it was the sound of the Holy Spirit being poured out, or the sound of all these people speaking in tongues that stirred them to gather around, either way what was happening caught people's attention. and It would seem as though the disciples had made their way at some point into the Temple Court Yards from the upper room or were perhaps on balconies or whatever because there was a massive crowd beginning to gather around. and Though there was a common language of Greek, or Aramaic, what blew them away is that these guys were speaking the language of their home towns from these various places in the world that the disciples had never been. As a matter of fact they were noted as being from Galilee because they were known for being linguistically challenged. As though they were from Alabama, or Georgia or something, they just didn't enunciate or speak real proper and they were known for that. That's why the crowd notes where they're from in vs 7 and is just perpetually increasingly blown out in vs 8 that they were speaking their language so perfectly. The word language in vs 8 is literally "dialect."

So that not only were they speaking English (type of a thing) but perfect "Queen's English" they were enunciating perfectly. I was blown away by one of our translators in Russia because I thought she was from Britain somewhere and knew how to speak Russian. But when she told me that she was Russian and that she'd learned English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language I was blown out. She spoke sickeningly perfect English, had the propa accent and everything. and That's what these guys were doing with respect to all these nationalities listed in vs 9-11.

Notice in vs 11 where they say, "... we hear them speaking... the wonderful works of God." They weren't preaching *to* the people, they were speaking the wonderful works of God, and these people *overheard* their praises to, and adorations of God, and came running to check it out. and When Peter begins to address them, they'll all shut up. They weren't preaching the gospel, they were praising the Lord, and that's what tongues are, praise and thanksgiving to God. Prophecy speaks to man, tongues speaks to God (and perhaps we'll touch that a bit next week as well.)

There are those who see in this a reversal of the tower of Babel, a lifting so to speak of the curse, so that at Babel the nations were confused and segregated. But at Pentecost, the nations were gathered, were hearing clearly the wonderful works of God. Kind of pointing to the fact that there's no true unity apart from Christ, man's work scatters, God's work gathers. and Though through the sin and rebellion of man there was separation, segregation, and isolation, there is unification in Christ. and In Him every tribe, and tongue and nation can come together and be reconciled to God. "*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*" Gal 3:27-28

### Vs12-13

Isn't interesting that when the Holy Spirit was poured out that there were some who just said, "Ah their drunk" when the bible says, "*...do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*" Eph 5:18 They couldn't be more contrary, yet there were those seeking to make the comparison. Yet the scripture gives no claim to legitimacy for them to even say that, they weren't out of control, the fruit of the Spirit is *self control* (Gal 5:22-23) they weren't stumbling around, they weren't slurred in their speech speaking gibberish, to the contrary they were speaking very articulately even down to the individual dialects in peoples particular areas of the country.

But in every crowd you'll have legitimate seekers, "Whatever could this mean?" and Condescending scoffers, "They're just drunk!" Which are you? Are you legitimately open to God speaking to your heart, or are you all, "These people are out of their minds." God wants to speak to you fresh right where you're at, to open up the windows of heaven and pour out His Spirit upon you that you might be filled, or as it could even be rendered *soaked* and overflowing with who He is. But you've got to realize your emptiness *apart* from Him and be willing to open your heart and your life *up to* Him. Do yourself a favor, don't be a scoffer, be a seeker, because if you seek the Lord with all your heart, He will be found by you. (Jer 29:13-14)

I trust that if you're here today it's because you're open to seeking out the Lord, or perhaps letting the Lord seek you out. God desires to reveal Himself to you and forgive you of all your sin. It doesn't matter who you are, where you've been what you've done. God sees the leaven in your life, He's willing to robe you in the righteousness of Christ, Jesus shed His blood that you might know forgiveness. Let me encourage you not to scoff His sacrifice, seek His forgiveness, and receive Him today. and He'll cleanse your sin that's like scarlet and make you white like snow.