

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

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PENTECOST

By: C. D. Cole

Acts is to the gospels what fruit is to the tree. In the gospels we have the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying; in Acts we have it bringing forth fruit. In the gospels we see the sufferings of our Lord; in Acts we see the beginning of the glory that should follow. I Peter 1:11, *“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”*

In the gospels we have Jesus in His humiliation; in Acts we see Him in His exaltation. In the gospels He is on the cross; in Acts He is on the throne. In the gospels we see Him led and supported by the Holy Spirit; in Acts he is sending forth the Holy Spirit and thus endowing His church with power for conquest. In the gospels we see the church purchased with His own blood; in Acts we see the church in actual existence; first among the Jews, and next among the surrounding Gentiles – sweeping militantly from Jerusalem to Rome. What better evidence that Christianity is a world-wide missionary religion?

Acts is the historical book of the New Testament. Luke writes as a historian, not as a theologian. In Acts we have the first chapter in church history. Luther thought Luke wrote to vindicate the doctrine of justification by faith. Others have thought he wrote to vindicate Paul in his fight with the Judaiz-

ers. The book is not altogether without doctrinal value, but Luke wrote simply to record the happenings of that early period of church history (32 years).

Acts is also introduction to the epistles and gives help in understanding them.

THE CHURCH * Pentecost

This teaching will have its center in Pentecost. Pentecost in Old Testament history was one of the three annual feasts of Jews. It came fifty days after the Passover, commemorating two events: completion of the grain harvest and giving of the law at Sinai. In Christianity, it was a historical event.

The Lord was no longer on earth. His resurrection had been fully established. During these days he had appeared no less than ten times to individuals and groups. Five hundred saw him at once.

Acts 1:13-15, *“And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)” This is the last mention of Mary in the New Testament and here she is joining in prayer to her exalted Saviour. Alford: *“No basis, even in tradition, for the assumption of Mary to heaven without dying.”*

WHAT THEY DID

They prayed. Must have been praying for the Holy Spirit since that is what they were waiting for. This is also called the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Matthew 3:11, *“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost...”* Acts 1:5 *“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”*

Peter preached, he called attention to the fall of Judas who had been one of the apostles. Acts 1:15,16 *“...Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said...Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.”* Psalm 41:9 is a prediction of his fall. *“Yea, mine own*

Pentecost in Old Testament history was one of the three annual feasts of Jews. It came fifty days

familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."

Acts 1:20, *"For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take."* He quotes Psalm 69:25, *"Let their habitation be desolate..."* and Psalm 109:8, *"Let his days be few; and let another take his office."* In proof that they should choose a successor to Judas.

He gave qualifications of an apostle. Acts 1:21,22, *"Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."*

They chose a successor to Judas. Verses 23-26, *"And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."* Prophesied in the Old Testament; Proverbs 16:33, *"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."*

There are those who think that the whole procedure of those days was out of order and contrary to the will of God. Those who take this view think of Peter as the successor to Judas. But Peter was a special apostle to the Gentiles. He was an apostle in his own right. The original twelve were chosen by Christ while on earth; Paul was chosen by Christ in heaven.

PHENOMENON

The day of Pentecost. The Lord had said, *"...not many days hence."* It was only ten days from the time he ascended. There were two groups of people; one large, the other small. Jerusalem was overflowing with Jews from all parts of the world who had come to attend the feast of Pentecost. Then there was the small group of one hundred twenty waiting.

Acts 2:1-11, *"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."*

Note: The coming of the Holy Spirit was accredited with visual signs; eyes, ears and mouth. Weymouth: *"There can be little doubt that Luke means to record a supernatural endowment of speaking in unlearned languages. But he must be in error when he goes on to say that such a psychological miracle*

was unparalleled and unnecessary, and no trace of it in the later record, and that the reference in I Corinthians 14 would appear to have been some form of ecstatic utterance." Acts 10:46, *"For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God..."* Acts 19:6, *"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."*

EXCITEMENT – EXPLANATION

The excitement and attempted explanation. The noise attracted a large crowd. When they arrived they heard the one hundred twenty speaking in various languages; languages they could understand regardless of their native tongue. When the crowd observed that all speaking were Galileans who could be understood by those from any part of the country, they were amazed and began to ask questions.

Who are these people? Are they not all Galileans?

What is meant by this? What does this strange phenomenon mean? What is the significance of all this?

They soon had an answer. You can never raise a question but that somebody will come forward with an answer. Acts 2:12,13, *"And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine."* They are drunk.

Peter refutes the charge of drunkenness with this word, verses 14, 16, *"But Peter, standing up with eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;"* Joel 2:28-29, *"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters*

shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

With this explanation Peter launches into his sermon: Acts 2:22-36, *"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,*

Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Peter says the Jews had crucified Christ in fulfillment of prophecy and God had raised him up and exalted him. He quotes David in Psalm 16:8-10, *"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* David was speaking of someone whose soul would not be left in Sheol and whose body would not stay in the grave to see corruption. Peter reminds them that David could not have been speaking of himself, for he was dead and all knew his tomb was still in their midst. David was speaking as a prophet. He had a promise from God that one of his descendents would sit upon his throne, and seeing this he was speaking about the resurrection of Christ. Jesus of Nazareth fulfils this prophecy. Acts 2:32, *"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."*

Verse 34, He reminds them, *"For David is not ascended into the heavens..."* then quotes Psalm 110:1, *"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand..."*

Peter presses his point home in verse 36, *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

Peter insisted that what you see and hear today is proof of the resurrection of Jesus. You claim these men are drunk; I claim they are filled with the Holy Spirit. And it all means that Jesus has been raised up and exalted at God's right hand and has shed forth this which ye see and hear.

THE CROWD

Have you ever tried to visualize that crowd? I have. I wonder who was there? I wonder if Caiphas was there, and Annas? I wonder if the maid who frightened Peter so badly was there. If so, she saw a different man. I wonder if the soldiers who nailed him to the cross were there? I wonder if the servant of the high priest, kinsman to the man whose ear Peter cut off was there? I wonder if Pilate was there? I know one who was not there – Judas.

THE EFFECT OF PETER'S SERMON

This sermon hit its mark. It brought conviction. Verse 37-38, *"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ..."*

TRUE PROMISES

*God has not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our life through;
God has not promised
Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.*

*But God has promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor,
Light for the way;
Grace for the trials,
HELP FROM ABOVE,
Unfailing sympathy,
Undying love.*

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