



## **“Do We Need Another Pentecost?”**

### **‘Jesus Saves’ Series**

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Our scripture reading for today will come from **Acts 2**. We’ve just begun a new series in **the book of Acts** that focuses on the conversion of people to Christ. The message of the apostles as they began in, and eventually went forth from, Jerusalem was that Jesus now reigns and Jesus saves. *Jesus saves!* is the title of our series. The apostles carried this gospel first throughout Jerusalem, then throughout Judea, Samaria, and ultimately, the entire world. As they preached and men and women became convinced and convicted that Jesus was who the apostles preached that He was, they responded by asking the apostles and those who preached what they must do. That question was the subject of our study last week. We saw how the apostle Peter answered that question at the very beginning of the Christian age, and how he and the other apostles answered it when others asked it throughout their ministry.

Today, we will begin looking at specific episodes recorded in **the book of Acts** and the circumstances that led people to hear the gospel, and how those who received the gospel favorably responded to the apostle’s preaching. I want us to learn many things from these examples, but in keeping to the point of our series, I want you to carefully notice the contrast between what the apostles preached and how the people responded to their preaching, and on the other hand what people are often told today by those who profess to preach the gospel. I want you to be listening very carefully to that as we go through our lesson.

We’ll begin at the beginning; that is, the Day of Pentecost, which took place after the Lord completed His earthly ministry, commissioned His apostles, and just ten days after He ascended back to heaven. The Lord had instructed the apostles to wait in the city of Jerusalem for the promise of the Father and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. With this power would come the commencement of the kingdom of Christ on earth. Great things would happen that day marking the beginning of the reign of Christ and the work of God’s plan of salvation in the lives of men and women.

**Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had 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 the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”**

The prolific Bible teacher and author James D. Bales called **Acts 2** ‘the hub of the Bible’ because of the significance of this Day of Pentecost relating to the plans and eternal purposes of God. The salvation long promised and anticipated since the fall of man in the beginning of time is now fully realized and offered to the world through Christ. Great things indeed happened on the Day of Pentecost that marked the greatest change in the history of the world. Not only the commencement of the gospel age, but also the glorious and triumphant reign of King Jesus. What transpired that day, what it meant then and what it means to us today is truly remarkable.

Not only do some claim to replicate the incredible experiences of the Day of Pentecost, but some tell us that what the church needs today is to have another Pentecost. Is that true? Well, I have a different perspective on that, and I hope you will stay with me for our study. We’re going to see what the Day of Pentecost was all about, why the things that happened did, and how those events should apply to us today.

As we come to our first conversion account in **the book of Acts**, the question arises, do we today need another Pentecost? The Day of Pentecost recorded in **Acts 2** was indeed a great day for the church and in the history of the world. The church of Christ was established that day when the apostles were set forth to the world as the representatives of King Jesus, and it was on this day when Peter fulfilled the promise of Christ in **Matthew 16:18-19** and used the gospel keys of the kingdom, opening the gates for men and women to come inside and become its citizens and Christ’s subjects. The Day of Pentecost had great significance to the Jews and was, consequently, the perfect day for all of these things to come to pass. The perfect day for Christ’s kingdom on this earth to be made manifest to the world.

The word *Pentecost* in Greek means *fiftieth* and it signifies fifty days after the Passover Sabbath. It was one of three primary feasts that the Jews observed throughout the year. There was the feast of unleavened bread (which we know as the Passover), the feast of weeks (which is the same as Pentecost), and the feast of tabernacles. The feast of unleavened bread took place at the time of Passover, and coinciding with Passover, the Jews’ harvest season was ready to begin. As it commenced, you may recall there was an annual wave offering specified in the Old Testament that the priests would perform. The very first sheaves that were gathered were taken by the priests on the first day of the week after the Passover and were ceremoniously waved before the Lord.

Now, that was not just ceremony and it was certainly no accident. It was planned by God that way because it so happened that on the very day that the priest would wave the firstfruits of the harvest this particular year, Jesus our Lord rose from the dead. Paul would later refer to Him as *the firstfruits of all who sleep* (**I Corinthians 15:20**). It’s a fulfillment of that Old Testament picture. Just as Jesus fulfilled the prophetic picture of the Passover lamb by being our Passover, He also fulfilled the symbolic picture of the wave offering that occurred only days later when He arose from the dead on the first day of the week following the Passover.

That’s a beautiful picture, and this is where Pentecost comes in because seven weeks later, or fifty days following the Passover Sabbath, in celebration of the harvest, the Jews would then observe the feast of

weeks or the Day of Pentecost. You might say it was a thanksgiving celebration for the harvest that God had granted them. So, it was fitting that on that day, there would be the first great harvest of souls into the kingdom of Christ when the tremendous events of **Acts 2** took place, when the gospel was preached and the church was established, and the first men and women were saved after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But there was not only a symbolic purpose behind the timing of these events, but a practical purpose as well. Of the three feast times of the year when the Jews would travel to Jerusalem, the feast of weeks perhaps drew the greatest crowds because of the time of year it was, allowing more to make the trip. On the Day of Pentecost, Jerusalem would be flooded with people not only from Israel, but from all over the world where Jews happened to be living at the time.

**Acts 2:5 “And there were dwelling (or staying) in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.”**

So, you can see that it was a perfect day for God to demonstrate the things that He did through the things that took place, and it was a perfect day for the apostles to first proclaim their testimony of the risen and glorified Christ to the world, beginning with the Jewish nation. The large numbers of people from all over the world from the very beginning gave the gospel message a tremendous platform from which to begin its spread throughout the earth. The promises that Jesus made to the apostles were that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit, that He would build His church, and that His kingdom reign would commence. All of those came to pass on this day. It was truly the beginning of the gospel age or the Christian age, the church age. Jesus told the disciples that in their lifetimes, they would see the kingdom of God come with power (**Mark 9:1**). Strangely today, some are still waiting for the kingdom to come, but Jesus says that would happen in the lifetime of the apostles. This power with which the kingdom would come is a reference to what happened on the Day of Pentecost. It’s a reference to the outpouring of power and the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus would administer to these men as was foretold by John in **Matthew 3:11**.

Shortly before ascending back to the Father in heaven, Jesus commissioned those apostles to preach the gospel, which included the forgiveness of sins. They were going to preach that message beginning in Jerusalem, and you remember it was even prophesied back in the Old Testament in **Isaiah 2:1-4** that when the Lord would set up His house here upon this earth, when He would establish the church, the law would go forth *from Jerusalem*. So, Jesus commissions His apostles beginning there at Jerusalem to preach the gospel including the remission of sins.

**Luke 24:46-49 “Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”**

They would see the kingdom come with power in the city of Jerusalem just after Jesus ascended back to heaven, in just a matter of days. Jesus tells them to wait there and they will receive *the Promise of the Father* and *be endued with power from heaven*. This power would stand as a witness to the truth of their testimony that Christ had risen and was now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, reigning as King. God was not expecting people to just accept the testimony of the apostles as they proclaimed it,

but He manifested His power upon these men in order that people would know that God was in them and that they were speaking the things of God.

All of that sets the stage for what occurs in the first few verses of **Acts 2**.

**Acts 2:1-4** “When the Day of Pentecost had 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 the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Those words alone paint quite a thrilling picture. It was doubtless an incredible thing for the apostles to experience this, and an incredible thing for the people gathered around that day to see. **Verses 5-12** tell us that the men from all of the many nations represented there that day started hearing the apostles speak the wonderful works of God in the languages of the lands they were from. After those tongues of fire sat upon the apostles and they were endued with this power, they began to speak in these various languages and those present heard them in the languages of their own country. This is the miracle of tongues that took place when the apostles were *baptized* (or *overwhelmed* as the word indicates here) with the Holy Spirit. This was not the apostles losing control of themselves or speaking in some unintelligible gibberish; this was simply the miracle of the apostles speaking the truth of God in foreign languages that they themselves did not know. That’s the supernatural element of this: they had never studied those languages. They were supernaturally empowered to speak those languages they had never studied.

**Acts 2:7-8** “Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?”

Notice that what the apostles were speaking were intelligible, earthly languages. When they spoke, these men from other nations heard them speaking in their own languages. What made that a miracle was that these unlearned men (that’s why they pointed out that the apostles were Galileans) were speaking in languages they had not studied. By the way, that’s what *tongues* refers to in the New Testament. Not a string of ecstatic syllables and unintelligible utterances, as some claim and try to demonstrate today. *Tongues* were languages that people from other nations understood. In fact, the word *tongues* is substituted in some places by the word *languages*, as we just read in **verse 8**.

Why did Jesus baptize the apostles in the Holy Spirit, thus providing such a sign? What did this manifestation of power mean? Why did it occur? While it is true that these men heard the wonderful works of God in their own languages and therefore speaking in other languages could allow the apostles to communicate with people from other places, that really wasn’t the main point. The Old Testament predicted to the Jews that the reign of the Messiah would commence with the presence of tongues. Paul connects the prophecy of **Isaiah 28** to the gift of tongues in **I Corinthians 14**, indicating that such would signify to the unbelieving Jews that the kingdom was being taken away from them as national Israel and given to others as a new Israel. That’s what it signified on the Day of Pentecost.

**Isaiah 28:11** “For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people,”  
**I Corinthians 14:21-22** “In the law it is written: “With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me,” says the Lord. Therefore

**tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.”**

So, tongues were meant for a sign. On the Day of Pentecost, it was a sign that the kingdom of Christ had now come and was being given to the new Israel. It occurs again in **Acts 10** at the house of Cornelius, which we will study in future weeks, so that the Jews would believe that the Gentiles had been allowed into the kingdom as well. Keep in mind when you study tongues that they were a sign pertaining to the Jewish people. In **Acts 2**, you have Jews witnessing the sign and in **Acts 10**, the sign was for the benefit of the Jews that they might know that Cornelius and all Gentiles after him had the opportunity to hear and obey the gospel and enter the kingdom. It was a kingdom sign and it certainly got the attention of the Jews gathered on Pentecost in Jerusalem that day and it gave Peter a ready audience to whom he could now offer evidence of the Messiahship of the Christ that they had crucified just over fifty days before. The things that they were now seeing fulfilled were not only the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, but the promises and predictions of Christ Himself. They were ultimately evidence of the fact that Jesus was now reigning at God’s right hand as King, that He was who He claimed to be, and that they could now be admitted into the kingdom that He now possessed. With that, the old national Israel that they had known was fading away and being replaced as God’s kingdom by the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. That’s what it was all about and with this sermon began the fulfilling of the great commission.

Peter begins to preach in **verses 14-36** and show them that what they were seeing was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel.

**Acts 2:17 “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.”**

This obviously refers to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in the early church. *All flesh* doesn’t mean every person on the earth for all time, else everyone on earth even today would possess miraculous powers. It is a limited term specifically referring to the fact that it would be poured out on Jew and Gentile alike, which it was (**Acts 2, Acts 10**). Those gifts were manifest in the early church. Even miraculous powers were diversified throughout the early church. This promise here in **Joel 2** which Peter quotes exclusively refers to those in the early church who would receive power from the Holy Spirit as evidence of the truth.

Peter goes on to use prophetic language referring to the fact that the old Israel would pass away when the new Israel was coming into being, and Joel shows what all of that pointed forward to in **verse 21**.

**Acts 2:21 “And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.”**

You see what this outpouring of the Spirit pointed to? You see what it confirmed? It confirmed the gospel. The truth of Jesus and His present reign. It says as a result of all this that *it would come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved*. We’ve talked about what that phrase means in earlier lessons.

Friends, the things these people witnessed on Pentecost not only fulfilled prophecy, but in so doing, showed the people that God was with and in the apostles, and that their message concerning the Christ

should be received and obeyed. The events of that Pentecost as we now read them in scripture testify to us as well that Christ was in the apostles and the things they spoke were not only true then, but are still true now. You see, it's possible to benefit from, to learn from, and to be a beneficiary of something without being the recipient of something.

On the basis of all that these people have now seen take place, Peter now preaches his powerful sermon in **verses 22-36** about how Jesus is indeed who He claimed to be, that He is the promised Christ, that He has been made Lord of all. That not only did He have His own signs and wonders to attest to His claims, but was also crucified by their own wicked hands, rose again, and is now ascended to David's throne in heaven at the right hand of God, reigning and ruling as King of His kingdom. That's Peter's sermon in a nutshell. The Bible tells us that there was a great reaction to his preaching.

**Acts 2:36-41** **“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”**

On the basis of all the things they saw that day, they then heard the gospel and they were convinced by the preaching of the gospel that Jesus was the Christ. They had a change of mind and a change of heart. They now believed in Him, whereas they did not before. But they weren't yet saved. That's important. They now believed, but they weren't yet saved. They then asked, *What shall we do? Now that we believe, how do we act upon this?* Peter tells them to repent. That means *turn from your sin. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of (or by the authority of) Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Now they didn't argue with that. They didn't hesitate or try to substitute that. They did what Peter said. They gladly received his word and they were baptized that same day—not later, that day—because baptism is for the remission or forgiveness of sins. Upon being baptized for the forgiveness of their sins, upon being saved, they were added to the apostle's number, which Luke identifies in **verse 47** as *the church*.

That's how people were saved then and that's how people are saved now. Sometimes people say that what we need is another Pentecost, but that's not true. Friend, we're not ever going to have another Pentecost any more than we're going to have another incarnation or another Calvary or another Messiah come to earth, die, be buried, and rise again. We've already had Pentecost. What we need to do today is act upon the Pentecost that we've already had. The one that happened 2,000 years ago that marked the coming of the kingdom of heaven. By hearing, believing, and obeying the message that Peter preached that day with such authority that was confirmed with those signs that happened on that day, we too can enter Christ's kingdom, reign with Him, and be members of the church that He established in the city of Jerusalem 2,000 years ago on that day.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was never promised to you or to me; it was promised to the apostles to testify that their words were so, and those words are yet available for you and me to accept and obey today. If you haven't, I hope you will this very day.

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