

PROMISE FULFILLED - ACTS 1:16-2:4

Years ago, *while on vacation in Monterey, California*, my family and I had the privilege of staying at the *famed Pebble Beach Golf Resort* – *not because we could afford it, but because we had an advantage!* A dear friend of ours was a manager there and had the authority to provide us a room, but not just any room, the governor's suite!

I remember being a little paranoid about staying there. I thought at any moment someone would knock on the door and inform us we had no right to be there! But no one ever came. So, we started enjoying the amenities. We fully enjoyed the advantage our friend provided for us!

(John 16:7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. As with our friend years ago, *Jesus, by His authority*, has granted His followers an advantage in this disadvantaged, *rebellious, world!*

However, many believers falsely believe they are at a disadvantage! **Paul, however, believed he had an advantage! (Philippians 4:13) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Do you? We have an advantage because the promise has been fulfilled!** In our text, the disciples are waiting in Jerusalem, *per the Lord's command*, for the promise every believer now possess. While waiting, Peter addresses the vacancy *among the apostles*, left by Judas Iscariot. **Read: (v.15-20).** Judas' betrayal had been prophesied in the Psalms by King David; **Psalm 69:25; 109:8, (v.20).** Also, in Psalm 41: **(Psalm 41:9) Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.**

(v.18) Peter gives a graphic description of Judas' death. **Matthew 27:5** tells us Judas hanged himself; here Peter seems to contradict Matthew. A possible explanation is Judas hanged himself over a cliff and the rope or branch of the tree broke causing his body to fall to the rocks below!

Peter *also* alludes to Judas purchasing a field with the blood money he received for *betraying* Christ – **thirty pieces of silver**. The prophecy of Judas' paid betrayal is found in **Zechariah 11:12, 13.** **Thirty pieces of silver** was the value assessed for a slave (servant). In **Exodus 21:32** - The Law of Moses basically reads, If an ox, gores a male or female servant, the owner of the ox shall pay that servant's

master thirty pieces of silver for the servant! **Jesus was nothing more to Judas than a means to an end, his own fleshly gratification!** **Lesson:** If Jesus is nothing more than a *means to an end*, then our allegiance (devotion) to Christ will always be for sale!

Judas did not purchase the field directly. **Matthew 27** tells us Judas tried to return the money to the priest, but they could not accept it because it was considered “blood money” – **Numbers 35:31, 32**. In frustration, Judas throws the money down in the temple then goes out and hangs himself! The priest, *unable to accept the money*, bought a field with it – the same field Judas’ body was found in; his death was widely known (**v.19**).

(v.21-26) Two candidates are selected to replace Judas Iscariot. The qualifications for these candidates was twofold: **(1) They had to have been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry (v.21, 22a).** **(2) They had to be a witness of Christ’s resurrection. (v.22b).** They covered the decision with prayer and cast lots; *probably the two names were written on small stones and placed in a bag.* **Notice:** there was no dissension, because they *firmly* believed the decision was from God! **A great lesson for us!**

Now we come to CHAPTER 2:1-4 – the advantage, the Holy Spirit, Jesus spoke of is given! Pentecost is a Jewish *wheat harvest* celebration. **Pentecost literally means fifty days.** There are fifty days between the Passover celebration and Pentecost. The number of days which Christ told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem may have been a total of seven days. Given the fact that three days passed before His resurrection, and for forty days He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, it was a total of forty-three days.

If Christ ascended on the forty-third day, the time the disciples waited in Jerusalem would have been seven days before Pentecost. In Hebrew **seven – perfection, fullness, abundance, rest, and completion. Other scholars argue they could have waited as long as ten days. **For the remainder of our time I’d like us to focus on the reason for our advantage, in Christ!****

First, we have an advantage because of Who the Holy Spirit is. **The Holy Spirit is God! The third person of the trinity. Person, not an “it” or a “force.” Scripture declares (**Ephesians 4:30**), **“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit.”** You cannot grieve a**

“force” or an “it!” (1 John 5:7) **For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.**

As vapor, ice, and water are the same, yet appear in different forms, so is the **trinity of God! One God but three coeternal persons; consubstantial (of the same substance).** Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent – characteristics only assigned to God! The Holy Spirit is our advantage!

The **Spirit is Omnipotent – All powerful.** Jesus said, Acts 1:8. **“Power” to transform - 1 Samuel 10:6. When the Spirit came upon King Saul, he became another man! - “Power” to perform – Zechariah 4:6 - “Not by might nor by power...”** The advantage we have is our reliance upon His ability, His *limitless power*, rather than our insufficiency. **(Ephesians 3:20, 21) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.**

Secondly, the **Spirit is Omniscient – All knowing.** (1 Corinthians 2:10) **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.** He knows what we need and how to provide it in a way that Christ is glorified! He knows the way when there seems to be no way! **(Isaiah 43:16) Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea And a path through the mighty waters.**

God made a way for the children of Israel in the Red Sea, and by His Spirit He will make a way for us, guiding us through the sea of our trials. We can trust the Spirit, for He knows the **“end from the beginning!”** (Isaiah 46:10). **We have an advantage as we journey through this life; we are never lost if led by the Spirit!**

Lastly, the **Spirit is Omnipresent – Ever-present.** In a world plagued by *loneliness, abandonment, betrayal, etc.*, we have an advantage! *Wherever we are, emotionally, physically, mentally, spiritually, we are never alone!* There is no long-distance relationship with God! **The Holy Spirit has come that we might experience for ourselves “Emmanuel!” – God with us!**

He is our *advantage, a present help* in real-time, **Psalm 46:1**, and a **present joy!** David declared: “In Your presence is the fullness of joy and at Your right-hand

pleasures forevermore!" **Psalm 16:11**. It's an inescapable presence! "...if I make my bed in hell..." (Psalm 139:8). Thus, we are never without an advantage!

APPLICATION: Here are seven works *assigned* to the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer: **(1) To baptize us in Christ. Acts 1:5. (2) Glorify Christ. John 16:13, 14. "Not speak on His own authority...but will glorify Me!" (3) Sanctify us. 1 Peter 1:2 – "Sanctification of the Spirit for obedience..." (4) To convict the world. John 16:8-11. Of sin, righteousness and judgment.**

(5) Fellowship. Philippians 2:1. "Fellowship in the Spirit." (6) To liberate us. 2 Corinthians 3:17. – "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty!" (7) To equip us for battle. Micah 3:8. "But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin." (8) Love. (Romans 5:5) Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

CONCLUSION: The promise has been given; the question remains: What have we done with it? **(Matthew 7:11-12) If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!** There's one baptism, but many infillings (Acts 2/4). John 3 – "*must be born again,*" by the Spirit!