



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

Acts 2

Acts: The Revolution Empowered, Part 1

It is 24 May AD 33, Pentecost, the second annual harvest festival, 50 days after Passover. The 11 disciples and other followers of Jesus, numbering 120 men and women, were, in obedience to Jesus (Acts 1:4), waiting in Jerusalem for Jesus to fulfill His promise concerning the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit Comes, 2:1-13

The Spirit "fills" the believers in the "Upper Room," 2:1-4

The Spirit's coming fulfilled the promises of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36:22-32 and Joel 2:28-32. God kept His word; He always fulfills His promises. Jesus told Nicodemus that the Spirit is like a wind (John 3:8) and here He came "like a mighty rushing wind;" the wind can be felt but not explained. This was unmistakable power! Furthermore, "the divided tongues as of fire" were not literal flames of fire over each one's heads. This too is a simile, depicting the penetrating presence of God, for in the Old Testament fire was identified with God's purity, His holiness and consuming presence (see Exodus 3:2; 13:21; 19:18; Isaiah 4:5 and Ezekiel 1:4). The result was those in that room "were filled with the Holy Spirit." The term "fill" is an incredibly important term of the New Covenant: It signifies being under His control utilizing thereby His power (see Ephesians 5:18). This "filling" enabled them to "speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." The term "tongue" is glossa, which must be connected with 2:6 and 2:8 where the term "language" (dialektos) is used. As the Spirit enabled them, they spoke the different languages of the Jewish diaspora (see 2:8-10).

The Gospel reached the Diaspora Jews in Jerusalem gathered for the feast days of Pentecost, 2:5-13

The list of the Jews of the Diaspora in 2:8-11 naturally leads to observations about the geographical and ethnic expanse of the Jewish Diaspora and thereby the Gospel:

1. The locales indicate the scope of the Jewish Diaspora. People from these nations returned to dwell in Jerusalem as an international gathering for Jews.
2. The list suggests the Gospel's universal scope.
3. The list suggests that Rome does not have the universal claim it thinks it has at this time.
4. The list mixes peoples (Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Romans, Cretans, and Arabians) with lands (Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya).
5. The list moves from east to west.

The Gospel demanded a response, 2:6-7, 12-13

As the Diaspora Jews heard the Gospel message in their own language, Luke recorded a variety of responses:

1. Terms such as “bewildered,” “confused,” “astonished” and “amazed” demonstrated the inexplicable nature of supernatural power. Human words could not explain what they saw and what they heard—the unfathomable proclamation of the Gospel in their own languages (v. 8).
2. Some did scorn the “Galileans” who were speaking these various languages: “They are not educated. How can they speak the languages of the Diaspora?”
3. The Diaspora Jews asked, “What might this be?” They recognized something supernatural had occurred; how do we explain this (v. 12)? Others, who maintained the response of scorn and scoffing, declared, “They are drunk!” (v. 13)

As the Gospel was proclaimed in the multiple languages of the 1st century, the curse of Babel (Genesis 11) was reversed. God’s redemptive plan was slowly neutralizing the curse of human sin.

Conclusions:

1. As the fulfillment of Scripture, the pouring out of the Spirit meant that the culmination of God’s redemptive plan had arrived—the New Covenant.
2. That Jesus sent the Spirit, as He promised, confirmed that He had been vindicated by His resurrection and ascension and was now enthroned as Lord and Messiah at the right hand of the Father.
3. Jesus’ resurrection, ascension and the pouring out of the Spirit all demonstrated God’s sovereignty over human history. God is moving history toward the fulfillment of His plan and His purpose.

As you pray this week, ask God to help you apply this message to your life. Use these questions as a guide for application:

1. Ephesians 5:18 makes clear that the Spirit’s “filling” is for all believers. It is an act of daily faith and trust in God, allowing Him to control you? Are you experiencing the filling of the Spirit?
2. God keeps His promises. How important is this fact to your faith and trust in Him? Make a list of the promises God has made to you. Read it frequently.
3. God’s sovereignty is an important theme of Acts 2. Why is this such an important attribute of our God? Why is it personally important to you?

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