

Sports & Rec Plus  
THE BOOK OF ACTS  
Lesson 3: The Coming of the Holy Spirit  
Acts 2:1-21 (NIV®)  
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**The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

*2* <sup>1</sup>When the day of Pentecost came; they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

<sup>5</sup>Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. <sup>7</sup>Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?” <sup>8</sup>Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? <sup>9</sup>Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome <sup>11</sup>(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” <sup>12</sup>Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

<sup>13</sup>Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

**Peter Addresses the Crowd**

<sup>14</sup>Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. <sup>15</sup>These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup>No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

*<sup>17</sup>In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.*

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams.*

*<sup>18</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.*

*<sup>19</sup>I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

*<sup>20</sup>The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood  
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

*<sup>21</sup>And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

**Rick. Verses 1-13 The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

**INTRODUCTION**

Peter proclaimed and showed that all that was said in the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah was being fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Peter and those with him were seized by the Holy Spirit. They were now beginning to understand the Old Testament—even what had happened to

Judas—as all being part of God's plan and it was being fulfilled throughout both the Old and New Testaments through Jesus Christ and into all the world and throughout all eternity.

It was not the resurrection, the coming of the Holy Spirit, but their understanding the Old Testament that caused them to become excited and courageous and go to the ends of the world proclaiming Jesus as the risen Messiah and Lord. (They now saw Jesus as the center of everything.)

Go to Luke 24:13, 15, 27, and 32, to the two men on the road to Emmaus being joined by Jesus and they are explaining and exclaiming, “*Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?*” Jesus explained to them the Old Testament from beginning to end and beyond. This opened them up.

Here in the beginning of Acts chapter 2 we see:

1. The descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, verses 1-4.
2. The various speculations among the people that were met in Jerusalem from all parts of the world, verses 5-13.
3. The sermon which Peter preached wherein he shows that the pouring out of the Spirit was the accomplishment of an Old Testament promise verses 14-21.
4. This was a confirmation of Christ being the Messiah verses 22-32, and
5. That it was a fruit and evidence of His ascension into heaven verse 33-36.
6. The effect of this sermon was the conversion of many to faith in Christ versus 37-41, and
7. The imminent piety and charity of those early Christians, verses 42-47.

### **The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost**

**2:1 When the day of Pentecost.** “Pentecost” means “fiftieth” and refers to the festival of weeks (Exodus 34: 22-23) or Harvest (Leviticus 23:16), which was celebrated 50 days after Passover in May/June (Leviticus 23:15-22).

It was one of three annual festivals for which the nation was to come to Jerusalem—The Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering— (Exodus 23:14-19).

At Pentecost, an offering of first fruits was made (Leviticus 23:20).

The Holy Spirit came on this day as the first fruits of the believer’s inheritance, (2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:11,14; and Ephesians 1:11-14).

Those gathered into the church then were also the first fruits of the full harvest of all believers to come after.

**came,** The time had come.

**they were all together in one place. In one place.** The upstairs room mentioned in Acts 1:13.

**2:2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind** Here we “see” (hear) the first of two similes describing God’s action in the sending of the Holy Spirit.

Wind is used frequently in the Bible as a picture of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 37:4-10; John 3:8). It was **a sound like the blowing of a violent wind.** It was similar too, but not exactly the same.

(The sound sounded like the blowing of a violent wind, but it was not exactly like the sound of a blowing violent wind.)

**came from heaven.** It came from heaven means it came from God.

**and filled the whole house where they were sitting.** and it filled the whole house where they were. God's work is always complete. It filled all the house, not a partial filling.

**2:3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire** This is the second simile describing the coming of the Holy Spirit. This too was similar too, but not exactly the same. (Its appearance was like tongues of fire, but it was not exactly like tongues of fire.)

A NOTE ON SIMILES: Many times, in trying to explain the actions of God, we use similes (or at times metaphors) because our words are inadequate to fully explain God and what He does. This is not doubting God it is simply to show that our—and all—language is incapable of fully comprehending and/or grasping and explaining the meaning of what God did in a or all particular instance(s) or situation(s).

**that separated and came to rest on each of them.** This is the best description of what they saw. They are describing heavenly things with earthly languages. (This is similar to anthropomorphic language.)

**2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and** At this point they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The disciples probably could not comprehend the significance of the Spirit's arrival without the Lord illustrating to them what was occurring with a visible phenomenon.

**began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.** Here we see God giving the apostles what they needed in order to proclaim the Good News of Jesus to the ends of the earth—an ability to speak in other languages—the language barrier, was an insuperable obstacle to overcome. But notice, this ability was not only an ability to speak in the language of those present from the other countries, but for those from the other countries, to hear the words of the Apostles in their own language (see verse 2:6, 8, 11).

This miracle was not only a miracle of the Apostles speaking other languages, but for those from other countries hearing in their own language. It was also a miracle of hearing.

**2:5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.** God-fearing is a technical term used by Jews to refer to Gentiles who had abandoned their pagan religion in favor of worshipping Jehovah God. Such a person, while following the ethics of the Old Testament, had not become a full proselyte to Judaism through circumcision. Soon, Cornelius was to receive the saving knowledge of God in Christ.

**2:6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.** This was a miracle of hearing and speaking. (See notes on Acts 2:4.)

**2:7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?"** The Galileans were inhabitants of the mostly rural area of northern Israel around the sea of Galilee. Galilean Jews spoke with a distinct regional accent and were considered to be unsophisticated and uneducated by the southern Judean Jews. When the Galileans were seen to be speaking so many different languages, the Judean Jews were astonished.

**2:8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?** They heard them speak in each of their own native languages—which meant the languages were known languages.

**2:9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,**

**2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome**

**2:11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!**” The listing of specific countries and ethnic groups proves that these utterances were known human languages. (This covers Acts 2:7-11.)

We see here the beginning of the carrying out of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

**2:9 Parthians** - They lived in what today is modern Iran.

**Medes** - In Daniel's time, they ruled with the Persians but had settled in Parthia.

**Elamites** - They were from the southwestern part of the Parthian empire.

**Mesopotamia** - This means “between the rivers” (the Tigris and the Euphrates). Many Jews still lived there, descendants of those who were in captivity and who never returned to the land of Israel.

**Judea**- All the region once controlled by David and Solomon, including Syria.

**Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia** - These five were districts in Asia Minor, in what is now Turkey.

**Egypt** - many Jews lived there, especially in the city of Alexandria. The nation then covered the same general area as modern Egypt.

**Libya near Cyrene** - These districts were West of Egypt, along the north African coast.

**visitors from Rome** - Rome, the capital of the empire, had a sizable Jewish population, dating from the second century B.C.

**2:11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism)** - the Jews living in Rome were especially active in seeking converts to Judaism.

**Cretans** - Residents of the island of Crete, off the southern coast of Greece.

**Arabs** - Jews who lived South of Damascus, among the Nabatean Arabs.

**we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!** As the believers were speaking, each traveler in the crowd recognized the language or dialect from his own country. Even though all these people had come to Jerusalem, the Christians in Jerusalem understood that it was their responsibility to not only tell these travelers about Jesus but also to go out into the rest of the world and tell them about Jesus too. They were not exempt from worldwide evangelism simply because these people had come to them.

We must never say that the world is coming to us, so we do not need to go out—to the ends of the earth—and tell them about Jesus—but to just wait here and they will come to us. Not at all, Jesus said for us to go (See the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20). So, we must do what Jesus said to do while at the same time evangelize those who are here and coming here. We go out because Jesus, in the Great Commission, said to “Go.” He said it so we must do it.

**2:12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”** Since they did not understand what was happening, they began to search for meaning in all that was taking place.

**2:13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”** Not sure what to make of this, they, the unsaved folks in the city, began to make fun of them. This is what people often do in such situations.

The power of the Holy Spirit is not making people speak in a strange tongue, jump up and down or fall on the ground—being slain in the spirit. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are:

1.) *Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*  
Galatians 5:22-23.

2.) He gives you power to preach and proclaim the Word of God. Nowhere in the Bible do we see that the Holy Spirit ever lifts Himself up, it is always Jesus He lifts up.

It was not the resurrection that gave them power, it was the Holy Spirit, who came on Pentecost, who gave them power.

*Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people, Psalms 96:3.*

### **Rod. Verses 14-21 Peter Addresses the Crowd**

Now Peter is going to address the crowd of people outside who have witnessed this miraculous event of languages.

**14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven** Peter is obviously the leader. Remember this impetuous man who often spoke or acted before he thought with his brain. Sometimes what he said or did was good, sometimes not so good. Some examples:

1. You are the Christ (not fully realizing what he said)
2. I will never deny you (within hours he has denied Jesus three times)
3. Pulls out his knife and cuts off the ear of the High Priest's servant (like his little sword is going to stop 500 heavily armed men)

This same man is now the leader of this band of men and women who will be used by God to change the world. Within a short time, thousands of people will trust Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior as the Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Trinity, works through them all.

By standing up, he is showing everyone there that he is not drunk. He is standing upright without swaying and his speech is clear without slurring. And he had total control of his mind and all his faculties. One minute he is speaking in various languages which would have seemed to those who didn't understand the foreign language that he was just babbling; to the next where he is addressing the crowd with full control of senses.

**raised his voice and addressed the crowd** Peter's personality had the ability to get people's attention. People like Peter command the room when they speak. They know just how much volume to speak to attract attention, yet not so much that it causes people to turn away.

**“Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem,** Peter begins by saying **Fellow Jews**. He is relating himself to them. People with things in common are drawn to each other. I believe Peter's words were not his own but were directed by the Holy Spirit. I know from personal experience that there have been times when I was sharing the Bible that I said something was profound. What I said was not in my strength, but it had to be the Lord. The very first thing Peter

says is to put the people at ease so that they will listen to him. And there is nothing greater to put people at ease than to let them know that you share the same heritage. Jews were proud of who they were, where they came from, and where they lived as he added, **and all of you who live in Jerusalem.**

**let me explain this to you, listen carefully to what I say.** He is going to tell them about the wonderful news that the gift of God has come and is available to all men as was promised hundreds of years earlier.

<sup>15</sup> **These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!** It was assumed that all this babbling was because these people were all drunk. Yet if they had even thought for a minute, they would quickly have realized that they weren't babbling like an intoxicated person but were speaking rationally in over a dozen languages. It just seemed like babbling since they were all talking at once. Now Peter is going to give the reason why there is so much commotion at nine in the morning.

<sup>16</sup> **No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:** Joel was a prophet who was called by God to deliver a message of warning and repentance to the southern kingdom of Judea after the nation was divided. Here Peter quotes the prophet from Joel 2:28-32 where we see the old prophecy teaching about spiritual restoration through the divine outpouring of His Spirit fulfilled. Let's look at each verse.

<sup>17</sup> **In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.** This verse begins by saying that the Spirit of God would be poured out on all people. In the past, the Spirit of God only came upon a few people. The Spirit should be in them a Spirit of prophecy; by the Spirit they should be enabled to foretell things to come, and to *preach the gospel to every creature*. This power shall be given without distinction of sex—now only *your sons*, but *your daughters shall prophesy*; without distinction of age—both *your young men and your old men shall see visions, and dream dreams*, and in them receive divine revelations, to be communicated to the church; and without distinction of outward condition As Christians, the moment we get saved we are sealed with the Spirit to abide with us until God takes us to heaven.

<sup>18</sup> **Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.** Even the lowest of society would receive the Spirit of God. Galatians 5:28-29 says, *"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* Now, every believer would be equally blessed by God with His Spirit. No longer would anyone need a priest or intercessor between themselves and God. Now each of us can go as the writer of Hebrews said in 4:16 *"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."* Through Christ we can now confidently and without fear enter into the presence of God because the old covenant has been fulfilled by Christ. It means that we come before God not with arrogance, but with humility knowing with confidence that He welcomes us as His child giving us mercy and grace. This outpouring is given to every believer no matter his or her place in society whether you are a king, a pauper, or someone in between.

**19 I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.** Here is a picture of judgment to come. As we read throughout the New Testament, we read about judgments found in the Gospels and especially in Revelation during the great tribulation. As believers, we should anxiously await that glorious day when Christ will rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lord from His throne.

**21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**” This is one of the most powerful verses in the Bible. This is the verse of life itself. The gift of salvation of God has been bestowed upon mankind. In Romans 10:13 Paul reiterates this message of hope, *“for, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Romans 10:9-10 tell us how this wonderful and free gift of God given, *“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.”* Salvation, freely given to whomever puts their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and second person of the Holy Trinity who died on the cross for their sins. Verse 21 in our passage today is the greatest words of hope that have ever been written. **And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**”

Let's close in prayer.