

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 6: ACTS 2:1-13 | FEBRUARY 24, 2019

INTRODUCTORY NOTES ABOUT PENTECOST

- Pentecost is related to the Kingdom, not to the church.
 - The “Body of Christ” is the mystery, not the indwelling or baptism of the Spirit.
 - Pentecost was a Jewish feast day. It finds fulfillment in Christ but is not replaced in the church.
 - No Jewish holiday becomes a Christian holiday.
 - All Jewish holidays are *types* with Christ or the work of Christ as the *antitype*.
 - Christ was the *First fruits* and Israel & Judah are the *Pentecost* offering. Leviticus 23:9-17
 - The church could not begin (nor be revealed) until the Kingdom had been offered and rejected.
 - All people had to be “shut up in disobedience” before God could “show mercy to all.” Romans 11:28-32.
 - Pentecost was the beginning of the Jewish nation being “shut up in disobedience.”
 - When Israel would be temporarily cast away, then the “reconciliation of the world” could take place. Romans 11:15.
 - Only by the removal of Israel could “the world” be made a recipient of God’s grace through Jesus Christ.
 - Only by the removal of the church can Israel be the recipient of God’s promises to Abraham.
 - The Kingdom could not be offered—
 - Until there were 12 apostles ready to reign
 - Until the King has been rejected, crucified, and raised again
 - Until the Holy Spirit had been given to empower the proclamation of the Kingdom.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST | ACTS 2:1-13

- Verse 1 –
 - The **day of Pentecost** was the 50th day after the first day of the week after Passover, and is instructed in Leviticus 23:15-16. This day was **fully come** only after seven sabbaths had passed, not counting the sabbath immediately following Passover, but only those after the *feast of first fruits*, which was always on a Sunday.
 - They were **with one accord in one place**.
 - Acts 1:13 says that they were in an **upper room** when they chose Matthias. Here, however, we are *not* told they are in the upper room.
 - The only insight to the place is in verse 2, where we are told that it was a **house**. Since few houses (then or now) would hold **about an hundred and twenty** (see Acts 1:15), it could be that only the 12 were present in this house (though the traditional view says 120).
 - There are three text-based arguments for *only 12* present:
 - Few houses hold 120 (seated, not standing - v. 2).
 - Everyone in the house were **Galileans** (v. 7)
 - Verse 14 speaks of 12.
 - The argument cannot fully be solved, but one should read the text for what it says, not what we have been told that it says.
- Verses 2-3 –

- These two verses give the physical description of the event, the next verse will give the spiritual description.
- The word **cloven** is διαμερίζω [diamerizo], which is *dia* (through) and *meros* (part). It means *divided or split*. The word **cloven** is the past-participle of *cleave*. An interesting bit of trivia from the English language: in Old English *cleave* meant "to separate," while in Middle English (the time of the KJV), *cleave* had come to mean the exact opposite (as in Genesis 2:24). However, the past-participle retained its connection to the original meaning.
- Verse 4 –
 - While we know that this event was both prophesied (see vv. 16-17) and phenomenal, we are not fully able to understand what it means to be **filled with the Holy Ghost**, at least from this passage alone.
 - We are able to tell that an additional occurrence, which is fully related, is that they **began to speak with other tongues**.
 - In context, this is *other human languages* and not a spiritual language (as in 1 Cor. 14).
 - Almost all of Christendom has *interpreted* this verse to be *the birth of the church*. However, the keen student will note that such a conclusion would not be clearly drawn *from* this text (exegesis) but read *into* the text (eisegesis).
 - Making theological conclusions (using the whole of Scripture) is not prohibited, but we should *always* hold those conclusions as *doctrine* and not Biblical revelation.
 - Since this study is "God's revelation of transition," it is of utmost importance that we reserve judgment, awaiting evidence for the beginning of the age of grace (i.e.: *the church*)
- Verse 5 –
 - Notice that the emphasis is on the **Jews, devout men**. Thus far in Acts, we have no gentiles.
 - These **Jews** were men who had come **out of every nation under heaven** but were now **dwelling at Jerusalem**.
 - Though we are not told the reason for their move, a study of the historical context would reveal that Jews of the diaspora (which began with the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 723 BC) had moved back to Jerusalem because of messianic expectation related to Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks (Dan. 9:24-27). One example would be Simeon (Lk 2:25).
 - These Jews were **out of every nation**. The word **nation** is *ethnos*, which will often be translated *gentiles*. The translation here reminds us that this is a Greek word which always requires careful interpretation because it is a word that can describe *Jews* or *gentiles*.
- Verses 6-11 –
 - What happened was **noised abroad**. The term has nothing to do with the modern sense of abroad. The sense is of a *rumor* which is known by all.
 - The **multitude** is of the Jews spoken of in v. 5.
 - The crowd was **amazed and marveled** because all of those filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking in other tongues were **Galileans** but each of the men were hearing in their native tongue.
 - Note that everyone was of the Jewish faith, either naturally born or **proselytes** (v. 10)
- Verses 12-13 –
 - There were two responses: **doubt** and **mocking**.
 - These are the two common responses to what God is doing.
 - The word **doubt** implies being *perplexed* more than being skeptical.
 - Those who rejected this as a work of God altogether were **mocking** the men, accusing them of being drunk (a state which does not explain the matters at hand, but which deflects the need to deal with the matters at hand).