

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-14a, 22-32

On last week we talked about the women who came to the tomb with fear, found it empty, obeyed the angel's instructions and were rewarded by meeting the Risen Lord. In our scripture today it is 49 days later. The followers of Jesus were together having a prayer meeting when suddenly the Spirit came and the people heard the sound of rushing wind and saw tongues of fire. The Spirit filled the believers, and then spoke as they praised God in various languages. The Spirit empowered Peter to preach.

The Spirit came (**vv. 2–3**). The Holy Spirit had been active prior to Pentecost and had worked in Creation (Gen. 1:1–2), in Old Testament history (Jud. 6:34; 1 Sam. 16:13), and in the life and ministry of Jesus (Luke 1:30–37; 4:1, 14; Acts 10:38). However, now there would be two changes: the Spirit would dwell in people and not just come on them, and His presence would be permanent, not temporary (John 14:16–17). The indwelling Spirit could not have come sooner, because it was essential that Jesus die, be raised from the dead, and return to heaven before the indwelling Spirit could be given (John 7:37–39; 16:7ff).

Three signs accompanied the coming of the Spirit: the sound of a rushing wind, tongues of fire, and the believers praising God in various languages.

The Spirit filled (**v. 4**). The filling of the Spirit gave them power for witness and service (Acts 1:8). We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), because we need God's power constantly if we are to serve God effectively. The fullness of the Spirit means that our bodies belong to God. This fullness is repeated as we trust God for new power to witness.

The Spirit spoke (**vv. 5–13**). Did you notice that the believers were praising God, not preaching the Gospel, and that they used known languages, not an

“unknown tongue” (Acts 2:6, 8). Luke named fifteen different geographical locations and clearly stated that the citizens of those places heard Peter and the others declare God’s wonderful works in languages they could understand.

God gave this gift of tongues to let the people know that the Gospel was for the whole world. God wants to speak to every person in his or her own language and give the saving message of salvation in Jesus Christ. The emphasis in the Book of Acts is on worldwide evangelization; “unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). “The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions,” said Henry Martyn, “and the nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we must become.”

Apparently the sound of the wind drew the people to where the believers were gathered, but it was the praise by the believers that really captured their attention. The careless listeners mocked and accused the believers of being drunk, but others were sincerely concerned to find out what was going on. The people were perplexed (Acts 2:6), amazed (Acts 2:7, 12), and they marveled (Acts 2:7).

It is interesting that the mockers should accuse the believers of being drunk, for wine is associated with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Paul relates the two in contrast, for when a man is filled with strong drink, he loses control of himself and ends up being ashamed; but when a person is filled with the Spirit, he has self-control and glorifies God. Strong drink can bring a temporary exhilaration, but the Spirit gives a deep satisfaction and a lasting joy.¹

I am amazed what different people the Disciples became when the Holy Spirit came. Remember the group that argued over who would be greatest in the Kingdom of God? Remember those guys who ran for their lives when Jesus was arrested? Remember those folks who would not believe the women’s report until they went to the tomb and later met the Risen Christ for themselves? It was these

¹Wiersbe, Warren W.: *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Victor Books, 1996, c1989, S. Ac 2:2

same people that received power and boldness when the Holy Spirit came! Peter was the one that preached that first Gospel sermon and demonstrated from Jesus life and ministry, along with proof from the Scriptures from the statements of David that Jesus was the Messiah who had died, but whom God had raised from the dead to be Christ and Lord.

What happened? How did this change come about? The difference was the coming of the Holy Spirit. But was it just for them. Peter and Paul gave instructions that with the coming of the Holy Spirit, at our baptism, we are given gifts to help the church become mature. Have you discovered your spiritual gifts yet, so that you know your place of service? The scriptures tell us there are many gifts but it is the one Holy Spirit that gives the gifts. Is your gift preaching like Peter; hospitality like Martha; helping; healing; mercy; giving; teaching; encouraging? You have gifts, they have not gone out of style. They are among us to help the church function and grow spiritually. Last week we witnessed the royal wedding, and did you notice as soon as they were married they were given places of services. It is the same with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has come, the power is here, let us step out boldly and praise and serve God!