

## FINDING YOUR FIRE FOR GOD

ACTS 2: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. 5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." 14 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." (from New International Version)

### **New King James Version**

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

### **New Living Translation**

Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting.

### **What does rushing mighty wind mean?**

The word rushing in the Greek text paints a picture of **something being driven downwards VERY loudly.**

The word mighty in the Greek text is better translated VIOLENT. The word wind in the Greek text describes a wind SO LOUD that everyone instinctively covers their ears because the noise is so overpowering

#### **1) The timing of the wind (The Holy Spirit) was perfect:**

Pentecost was one of the three Jewish festivals in which individuals were to journey to Jerusalem and appear before the Lord at the temple with their gifts and offerings.

Pentecost is from the Greek word meaning 50th. It is referring to the 50th day after the Passover. The Passover was sacrificed on the 14th day of the first month of the year (Abib).

What we read about in Acts 2 occurs when the city is filled with people who will witness first hand, up close and personal the outpouring of the Spirit.

On that day 3000 will be saved and be filled with the Spirit and then return as witnesses throughout the Roman world.

**God's timing is always perfect.**

Some of the 120 wondered why it was necessary to wait in Jerusalem. Jesus didn't explain to them all the whys. He simply told them what to do and they did it and it worked.

Way too many times we reason our way out of a miracle.

Has God told you something to do without filling you in on all the whys and wheres? "The just shall live by faith."

Sometimes we have to simply trust His guidance and see what happens.

**Acts 2:1 says, "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place."**

We're not told specifically whether they were still in the upper room or not. We know that at some point they are in the temple court where Peter preached his sermon. It was also their custom to attend the morning and evening prayer times at the temple.

So, they may have been in the temple court when the Spirit was poured out or they may have been in the upper room and came out to the temple court.

The important thing is this: the day they had been waiting for came! And when it came, they were ready. They were all there together in one place doing exactly what Jesus had told them to do.

**INTERESTING FACTS:** The third day following that sacrifice a sheaf of barley harvest was offered to God. That sheaf was the first fruits of the harvest. When Jesus rose the third day after His crucifixion, 1Cor. 15:20 tells us He was the first fruits of the resurrection. Seven weeks later they offered God two loaves of wheat bread which represented the gathering of the final harvest.[6] That was the Day of Pentecost which was on a Sunday.

Lev 23:15-17 "From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. 16 Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD. 17 From wherever you live, bring two loaves made of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with yeast, as a wave offering of firstfruits to the LORD."

**Why is all that important?** Because the typology teaches us that one of the purposes of Pentecost is about the harvest. Jesus established the connection in Acts 1:8 "But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Note: "Witness " is from the Greek root word 'martyr'. It means a legal or historical spectator who can swear to what he has seen. It is someone who embodies the example of Jesus by being willing to die for what they believe about Him. The apostles fulfilled Jesus' commission; all but John are recorded to have been martyred for their faith.

We should never lose sight of that connection. The Holy Spirit is poured out on the Day of Pentecost for the harvest of souls. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a witness. That's the express purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Jesus introduced us to the third person of the Holy Spirit as a connection. Jesus gives the instruction, Holy Spirit shows us the way and how, when, and where to do it.

**ACTS 2:3 "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them."**

"What seemed to be tongues of fire." Again, this was not actual fire. It was a manifestation of the glory of God. They saw something that looked like a mass of flames appear

over the whole group. Then it broke up and a single tongue that looked like a flame of fire settled on the head of each one of them. The symbolism suggests that they were not only empowered as a group but as individuals as well. One thing we know about fire is this—you can take one flame and start a forest fire with it. Phillip got on fire for God and went to Samaria and got the whole city on fire.

Fire will spread. Each one is empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a witness.

Fire is a common evidence of God's presence in the OT. God met with Moses at the burning bush. He led Israel with a pillar of fire. Elijah went to heaven with a chariot of fire. There were manifestations of fire at Mt. Sinai when the law was given. Listen to the description of what it was like when the law was given at Mt. Sinai, Ex 19:17-19, "Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently, 19 and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him." At Sinai God was signifying that something very important was taking place.

On the Day of Pentecost these signs of fire and wind were doing the same thing. They were powerful attention getters.

### **Do you Remember what God commissioned the nation of Israel to do?**

In Exodus 19:6 God said they were to be a kingdom of priests. They were to represent God to the nations. They were to tell the world about the one true living God. But Israel did not fulfill that calling. Rather than evangelizing the world they became proud, self-righteous and exclusive.

Pentecost is empowerment for evangelism. It is not a badge of spirituality or an ID card for an exclusive religious group.

**Acts 2:4 “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”**

The fact that all of them were filled with the Spirit is significant. In the Old Testament the Spirit of God came upon leaders to enable them to fulfill an office. Elisha received a double portion of the Spirit from Elijah. Aaron was anointed by the Spirit for his priestly duties. David was anointed by the Spirit as king. In the past, special people have received the Spirit but now all are receiving. In fact, Peter brings this out in his sermon.

Quoting Joel 2 he says in Acts 2:17-18 “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. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

Regardless of age, regardless of social status God promises in these last days to pour out His Spirit upon them. Toward the end of this sermon he talks about receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit and says, Acts 2:39, “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

The promise of the Holy Spirit baptism is not just for that generation but for their children and for generations to come. Now look with me at the Reaction to the Spirit by the crowd.

**In Acts 2:5 Luke describes the crowd**

**“Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.”**

It was kind of like saying, “They were there from everywhere.” In verses 9-11 he lists several nations

represented. Parthians are modern Iranians. Mesopotamia is Iraq.[22] Jews from Egypt, Arabia, Rome and several other places are mentioned. What we're seeing is the set-up for the spread of the gospel. The experience these people have on the Day of Pentecost will be carried back to all these places. Which begins the fulfillment of Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

There are two reactions from the crowd.

Some are receptive. They recognize that God is doing something. They don't fully understand what it all means but they are curious and open to God. Verse 12 "Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" When God does something we don't fully understand, let's take that approach. Let's inquire as to what it means. Let's hear Peter out and respond to the Holy Spirit. It is very limiting to reject something God is doing simply because we've never seen it before.

I fully expect God to do some things in this church and city that we've never seen Him do before. It will be consistent with Scripture. But it may look very different than what we've seen before. Be teachable. When Peter gave Scriptural support for what was happening, 3000 of these people received it.

Others were resistant. They pridefully ridiculed what they saw. Acts 2:13 "Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." The Greek indicates they were mocking with gestures as well as with words.

Galileans were considered hillbillies by Hebrew Jews. The fact, that God was using uneducated people—people less esteemed in society may have influenced their attitude. When God chooses a person, He is not looking on outward appearances. He measures a person from the heart.

Every person in that crowd got an opportunity to respond. Every person in that crowd made his or her own decision as to what he or she would do with the opportunity God had placed before them that day. God has designed opportunities for you and me. He manifests Himself in our lives and then calls upon us to respond. I want to be the kind of person who opens up to God and takes advantage of those opportunities. Don't you?

It's amazing to me that people in that crowd could be witnessing one of the greatest events in human history and not even realize it. God was there but part of the crowd discounted it as insignificant—even ridiculed it. Outwardly the whole crowd saw the same thing. But some did not appreciate the value of what was before them.

Symbols of Pentecost: WIND: When the Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples, it arrived with a great wind rushing through the room. The symbol of the wind also represents **the breath of God breathing new life into the Church.**  
**What does wind represent at Pentecost?**

So, what is the significance of all this?

**The WIND will DIRECT YOU: Isaiah 30:31** “Whether you turn to the left or to the right, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, ‘this is the way, walk ye in it’”

He is the voice of direction. He is the wind in our sails that will launch us and propel us.

**John 16:13** “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.



**The WIND will PROTECT YOU: It is a seal** In biblical times, a seal was a guarantee. Ephesians 1:13-14 "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

According to this passage, the seal of the Holy Spirit takes place at the point of salvation. It is a promise or guarantee of the Christian's future, eternal inheritance with Jesus Christ.

The Greek word translated as "seal" is shragizo that means "to set a seal upon, mark with a seal." A seal could be used to guarantee a document or letter (Esther 3:12), indicate ownership (Song of Songs 8:6), or protect against tampering (Matthew 27:66; Revelation 5:1). The Holy Spirit is our seal in every sense of this word.

A), the seal of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life helps to guarantee he or she is a child of God. Romans 8:16 shares, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

B.) the seal of the Holy Spirit serves as a mark that we truly belong to Christ. Romans 8:9-10 teaches, "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness." First Corinthians 6:19-20 also notes, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You

are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."

C.) The seal of the Holy Spirit helps protect against tampering or attack

**3.) The Wind PROPELS YOU:** 14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd. **The light came on and they realized that the Holy Spirit in them was better than Jesus beside them.**

**Then you get gifts within the gift called the fruits of the Spirit.**

**Galations 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law**

Now you are a living, breathing temple where the Holy Spirit of the living God resides! Knowing that this is the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead!

Steven Furtick said, "We can't be arrogant by what we know but humbled by who we know." We can't walk around proud as an elitist to the Christian world as if you arrived! The big difference is you opened a gift that others refuse to.

**4.The WIND IS FOR EVERYONE!:** Galations 3:14 " He redeemed us in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38-39 "Peter replied, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children

and for all who are far off-for all who the Lord our God will call.”