

THE HOLY SPIRIT POURED OUT*

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He showed Himself to His disciples as eternally alive in a glorified resurrection body. Then, before ascending to heaven, Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit before they did anything in His name. Even though He had already commanded them to GO into all nations to make disciples, He first told them to WAIT until the Holy Spirit had been poured out. The Holy Spirit is of supreme significance to God's plan for our redemption through His Son.

PROPHETIC FORESHADOWS

Jesus was crucified on the day of Passover, the exact anniversary of the day that God had delivered Israel from four hundred years of slavery. In the first Passover, the Israelites slaughtered an unblemished male lamb and painted its blood on their doorposts so that the destroyer could not touch them. (See Exodus 12.) These events were a picture of Jesus, the eternal Lamb of God, whose blood was shed so that by His blood, we who believe Him are set free from slavery to sin and death. When Jesus was crucified, He was slaughtered as the eternal Passover Lamb to take away the sins of the world. (See John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:8-19; 1 Corinthians 5:7.)

On the third day after the original Passover, early in the morning, the waters of the Red Sea were rolled away and the Israelites walked through the Red Sea on dry ground. Their enemies, Pharaoh and the world's most powerful army, were overcome and the Israelites rejoiced and worshipped God. (See Exodus 14-15.) Every year after this on the third day after Passover, early in the morning, the appointed priest would wave the first sheaf of the spring harvest in an observance of the Feast of First Fruits. (See Leviticus 23:9-14.) This was typically a bundle of grain from the first and best portion as a representation of dedicating the whole harvest to the Lord, even though the full harvest was still yet to come.

These events were a picture of Christ's resurrection. It was early in the morning on the third day after His crucifixion that the stone of His tomb was rolled away and Jesus walked out in a resurrection body of eternal life! He had defeated the evil one, overcome death, and triumphed over the enemies of mankind. He became the wave offering of the First Fruits of resurrection harvest – the first and best portion – wholly dedicated to God in anticipation of the harvest yet to come. We who believe are that harvest and we will be resurrected when He returns.

*1 Corinthians 15:23 NLT: But there is an order to this resurrection: **Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.***

All of this is to say that the events of the Old Testament, particularly the Feasts of the Lord, serve as prophetic foreshadows of the work of Christ. (See Leviticus 23; Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 8:5, 10:1.) Three of these Feasts were fulfilled through Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which we are discussing in this unit. Here is a chart of them:

Nation of Israel	Feast of God	Fulfilled in Christ
Passover	Passover	Crucifixion
Red Sea Crossing	Feast of First Fruits	Resurrection
Law Given at Sinai	Feast of Weeks	Pentecost

THE FIFTIETH DAY

In the original Passover, on the fiftieth day after the Israelites had walked through the Red Sea, God met with His people in power and with fire at Mount Sinai and gave them the Ten Commandments. (See Exodus 19:1-16.) On the fiftieth day after leaving Egypt, God descended on the mountain in a great pillar of fire with billowing smoke, thunder which shook the earth, and a great trumpet blast. All of the Israelites standing at the base of the mountain trembled at the power of their God.

*Exodus 19:16-19: **There was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 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, and the whole mountain trembled violently. As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.***

At Sinai, God spoke to His people and the fiery finger of God wrote His Laws on tablets of stone. (See Exodus 31:18.) To commemorate this event every year on the anniversary of God's powerful Sinai visitation, all Israelite men were required to gather in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks. This is a holy day for worshipping the Lord and rejoicing in the abundance of the Promised Land and another offering of the First Fruits is brought before the Lord. Everyone is included in this feast, even foreigners, and the poor are remembered with mercy and grace. (See Deuteronomy 16:1-17; Leviticus 23:15-22.)

These events were a picture of the work of Jesus. On the fiftieth day after His resurrection, Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit to His disciples. The day is now known as Pentecost, which literally means fiftieth day.

PENTECOST OUTPOURING

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days and then, He ascended to heaven. Before He left, He told them to wait in Jerusalem for power from heaven which He would send soon.

*Acts 1:3-5: After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "**Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**"*

*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.**"*

120 disciples of the risen Lord Jesus waited for Him to send the Holy Spirit so that they could be empowered for their global assignment of proclaiming His Kingdom. They devoted themselves to prayer while they waited for the Lord to pour out the Holy Spirit. They gathered together every day at the Temple to praise God and they stayed at night in an upper room nearby in Jerusalem.

*Luke 24:49-53: **I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.**" When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. **And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.***

*Acts 1:12-15: Then the apostles **returned to Jerusalem** from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, **they went upstairs to the room where they were staying.** Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They **all joined together constantly in prayer,** along with the*

women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers... among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty.)

These 120 disciples waited in prayer and rejoicing in Jerusalem for ten days after Jesus ascension. Then, the fiftieth day arrived – the day of Pentecost.

Because it was required for all Jewish men to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Weeks, the city was packed. Jewish men from all the nations of the world were gathered in Jerusalem and were heading to the Temple to celebrate the feast to the Lord.

*Acts 2:5: Now there were staying in Jerusalem **God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.***

The disciples of Jesus were gathered together at the Temple, as per was their usual routine. They were most likely at the main entrance of the Temple near the Southern Steps. Then suddenly, a mighty wind blew through the place and the followers of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 2:1-4: **When the day of Pentecost came**, they [120 disciples of Christ] were all together in one place. Suddenly **a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house** where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

On the exact anniversary of the day God had descended to His people in a consuming fire at Mount Sinai, the fire power of God descended into the hearts of Christ's disciples in Jerusalem. The gigantic fire which was on top of Mount Sinai was now divided into smaller segments and rested upon each of them. At Sinai, the fiery finger of God which had written the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone but now at Pentecost, God wrote His laws on hearts of stone and transformed them into hearts of flesh. (See Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26-27; Jeremiah 24:7.)

NOT DRUNK - WITNESSES

At Sinai, as the trumpet sound grew and Moses spoke to God, the Hebrew word used to describe that God "answered" is a word that means "to testify, speak, or respond as a witness." You could say that God testified with His own voice to His people about Himself and His requirements for them to remain in relationship with Him. This testimony was given to all the Israelites and the mixed multitude that had come out of Egypt with them. (See Exodus 12:38.)

At Pentecost, as soon as the Holy Spirit was poured out, the 120 disciples of Jesus were supernaturally empowered by God and began to testify as witnesses about the wonders of God and faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, the disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit to supernaturally declare the works of God in every language under heaven, which they did not otherwise know how to speak. You could say that God testified by His Spirit through the voices of those who believed Jesus. Because of this, all the Jewish people who had gathered together in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks could hear the testimony about Jesus in their own language, in addition to whoever else was in Jerusalem at that time.

Needless to say, onlookers were perplexed by this and wondered, "What can this mean?" Some even concluded that Christ's disciples must be drunk. (See Acts 2:6-13.) But Peter stood up to explain what was happening and, filled with the Holy Spirit, gave an inspired and empowered proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He explained that what the people in Jerusalem were witnessing with their own eyes and ears was the fulfillment of the promises that God made to the Jewish people centuries before.

*Acts 2:14-21: 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. **These people are not drunk**, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is **what was spoken by the prophet Joel**: '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. Even on my **servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days**, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before **the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord**. And **everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**' (Quoting Joel 2:28-32.)*

Peter went on to tell the crowd about how Jesus had come and had been confirmed by God with miracles and wonders only to be crucified in fulfillment of the Scriptures of the Suffering Servant but how God had raised Jesus from the dead to everlasting life in fulfillment of the Scriptures of His chosen one not being trapped in the decay of death! Peter assured them that what they heard was God's confirmation of Jesus as the Messiah of Israel and Savior of mankind through the fulfillment of even more Scriptures pertaining to God's plan of redemption.

*Acts 2:32-33: **God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.***

At Peter's anointed proclamation, those who heard were cut to the heart and asked what they needed to do to be saved. Peter instructed them to repent and be baptized to have their sins forgiven so that they could also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Right then and there, three thousand people gave their lives to Jesus Christ and were baptized in the pools at the Southern Steps where the ritual baths for cleansing before entering the Temple area were located (the ruins of which are still there today.)

*Acts 2:37-41: When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "**Brothers, what shall we do?**" 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 whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." **Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.***

At Sinai, God had given His Law and three thousand people died. (See Exodus 32:28.) At Pentecost, God poured out His Spirit, and three thousand people were brought into everlasting life! The old has passed and the new has come. The old gave commands leading to condemnation and death, the new gives empowerment from the Spirit for a righteous and holy life!

*2Corinthians 3:6-9: He has made us competent as **ministers of a new covenant**--not of the letter but of the Spirit; **for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ...If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!***

INCLUSION IN THE OUTPOURING

Once the Holy Spirit was poured out to the initial believers in Jerusalem, they continued to testify of God's grace and goodness through Jesus. As they proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth, events similar to the original outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred in various places to demonstrate without a doubt that God included Samaritans, Gentiles, and disciples of John the Baptist who believed Jesus. (See Acts 2-Jews; Acts 8-Samaritans; Acts 10-11-Gentiles; Acts 19-disciples of John the Baptist.) Just like the Feast of Weeks included foreigners and remembrance of the poor, all types of people are able to participate in God's gift of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus.

Of course, this also served to fulfill the promises and prophecies (of which there are many) of the Messiah of Israel who would save not only Israel but the Gentiles as well. For example:

Isaiah 42:6: "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will **make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,**

Isaiah 49:6: he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. **I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."**

However, sharing the Gospel of the Jewish Messiah with Gentiles was extremely controversial at that time. In fact, it was bizarre and offensive for God to break through the cultural barriers in order to include Gentiles in salvation through Christ. This is part of why God's initial outpourings of the Holy Spirit were so powerful. It was undeniable that salvation through Jesus Christ was available to anyone from any nation, tribe, or tongue who placed their faith in Jesus for salvation. (See Revelation 5:9.)

Even today, when we place our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit marks us with the seal of God for our inclusion in the promise of Abraham, and gives us a deposit guaranteeing our inclusion in the heavenly inheritance, no matter what nation or ethnicity we may originate from.

*Ephesians 1:13: And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, **you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,***

*2Corinthians 1:21-22: Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. **He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.***

*2Corinthians 5:5: Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has **given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.***

*Galatians 3:14: He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come **to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.***

Sometimes, we have powerful experiences when the Holy Spirit first comes into our lives, almost as if God is granting us our own little Pentecost outpouring. However, we do not always feel the Holy Spirit so powerfully and we can't base our faith in Jesus on what we feel or don't feel. Let's keep it simple. If you believe Jesus Christ is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead, then you received the Holy Spirit when you believed. (See Ephesians 1:13.) If you do not believe Jesus, then you do not have the Holy Spirit in you, and you do not belong to Christ. (See Romans 8:9.) (Note: We will discuss the various functions of the Holy Spirit in later chapters.)

Therefore, if you want more of the Holy Spirit, ask for more, and commit to living your life by following His direction, allowing the power of God to help you carry out His work as His witness who brings Him glory.

*Luke 11:9-13: **So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.** For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!***