

# Acts 02 - Pentecost; Peter's First Sermon; The Early State of the Church

## I. Outreach in Jerusalem (Acts 1:1—7:60)

- (6) Birth of the church on Pentecost (2:1-47)
  - (A) Coming of the Holy Spirit (2:1-12)
    - (a) Miraculous occurrences (2:1-4)
    - (b) The beneficiaries of the miraculous tongues (2:5-12)
  - (B) Peter's sermon (2:13-41)
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    - (b) Peter's defense (2:14-36)
      - (i) Too early for drunkenness (2:14-15)
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        - (a) Christ identified through miracles (2:22)
        - (b) Jewish guilt and God's predetermined plan (2:23)
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      - (c) Jewish reaction (2:37)
      - (d) Peter's exhortation (2:38-40)
      - (e) Jewish reaction (2:41)
    - (C) Activities of the first church (2:42-47)

## Breakdown of Acts 2

1. Acts 2:1-4 - the coming of the Holy Spirit
2. Acts 2:5-8 - the manifestation of the gift of tongues
  - "tongues" = languages; the Holy Spirit's confirmation of His arrival
3. Acts 2:9-12 - those present from the known world
  - See map below
4. Acts 2:13-15 - too early for drinking
  - Peter refutes idea that the manifestation of tongues was the result of drunkenness
  - Unbelief comes up with naturalistic explanations for supernatural events (i.e. Pharisees accused Jesus of miracles with power of Satan)

5. Acts 2:16-21 - manifestations taught in the OT (Joel 2)

- Peter's quote of Joel 2 is not saying that what is happening in Acts 2 is a fulfillment of Joel 2; he's simply using an analogy to say what was happening at that time would be fulfilled sometime in the future
- Peter tells the audience that they should've recognized the sign of tongues, since they were Jews, because God predicted that He would do something similar during the messianic kingdom (Joel 2:28-32)
- What they were seeing was a pattern of God, powered by the Holy Spirit

6. Acts 2:22-35 - Christ was the source of the manifestations, based on OT prophecies

- Acts 2:22 - miracle worker
  - Jesus' first act upon reaching heaven was to pour forth the Holy Spirit upon the Church
  - He worked miracles throughout His ministry, and He continues to do so now
- Acts 2:23 - rejected by Israel
- Acts 2:24-29 - resurrected (Ps 16:8-11)
  - David died and is now in his tomb in Israel, so Ps 16 cannot be about David...it has to be about the Messiah
- Acts 2:30-32 - Davidic descendant (Ps 132:11)
  - Jesus is the Davidic Heir, destined to one day sit on David's Throne
  - Peter is not stating that Jesus is on David's throne now, but the One who Israel rejected and turned over to Rome for execution, was their Messiah
- Acts 2:33-35 - at God's right hand (Ps 110:1)
  - Where is Jesus now? He ascended to heaven, and He's currently at the right hand of the Father

7. Acts 2:36 - conclusion

- The miracles of the Holy Spirit (tongues) are real, and they are coming from the miracle-working Messiah whom you rejected
- These were the first works of Christ's High Priestly ministry

8. Acts 2:37 - conviction

- "pierced to the heart" - many of Peter's audience realized that their nation got it wrong
- The audience (of at least 3,000) asked, What should we do? in response to Peter's message and the conviction of the Holy Spirit

9. Acts 2:38-41 - exhortation

- "Repent" - change notion (mind) - they changed their minds about who they believed Jesus was
- They went from a Christ-rejecting Jew, affiliated with Judaism, to a Christ-accepting Jew, affiliated with this new group called the Church

- All this through a man (Peter) who was unqualified for ministry based on his prior words and actions
- 3,000 people were saved that day, however there were likely over 1M people in Jerusalem during that time

10. Acts 2:42-47 - the first church meeting

- Early activities of the Church...communion, learning apostolic doctrine
- Meetings held in the temple and from house to house

Theme of Acts 2: the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that the Holy Spirit would come after Christ's ascension, and the beginning of the Church Age.

## Acts 2

### (6) Birth of the church on Pentecost (2:1-47)

Acts 2 is a virtual minefield of false doctrine. Just about every false doctrine floating around in the church today resorts to some type of support from a misinterpretation of Acts 2:

- Ultra-dispensationalism (church didn't begin in Acts 2; Peter preached a different gospel in v38)
- Progressive dispensationalism (Kingdom Now theology; Already/Not Yet)
- Social Justice movement
- Church of Christ (water baptism required to be saved)
- Charismatics (disproportionate emphasis placed on signs, wonders, and experiences)

#### (A) Coming of the Holy Spirit (2:1-12)

##### (a) Miraculous occurrences (2:1-4)

1 When the day of **Pentecost** had come, **they were all** together in **one place**.

1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

1 When the day of Pentecost was being celebrated, all of them were together in one place.

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

- Luke introduced the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry with His baptism with the Spirit (Luke 3:21-22); he now paralleled that with the beginning of Jesus' heavenly ministry with the Spirit baptism of His disciples (Acts 2:1-4)

— The same Spirit Who indwelt and empowered Jesus during His earthly ministry would now indwell and empower His believing disciples

— This wasn't true before Pentecost, where the Holy Spirit would often come upon people temporarily to enable them to fulfill special tasks (Judges 13:25; 14:6; 16:20; 1 Sam 16:13-

14; Ezek 3:12,14,24)

- "...Pentecost" - means "fiftieth"; this feast fell on the 50th day after the Feast of Firstfruits (Resurrection Sunday)
- The Feast of Pentecost prophesied the advent of the Church, and the start of the Church occurred on the very day they were celebrating this Feast!
- It was one of the three compulsory feasts at which Jewish males had to be present at the central sanctuary (Ex 34:22-23; Deut 16:16), if they lived within 20 miles of Jerusalem
- "...they were all" - refers specifically to the 12 disciples, not all 120. The nearest antecedent is "the twelve" (1:26); v7 describes them as being "Galileans" (which all 11 apostles were, but all 120 were not); v14 mentions only Peter and the other eleven
- "...one place" - the Upper Room (Cf. 1:13)

2 And suddenly a noise like a **violent rushing wind** came from heaven, and **it** filled the **whole house** where they were sitting.

2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

2 Suddenly, a sound like the roar of a mighty windstorm came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

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

- "...violent rushing wind" - *pneuma*, wind or spirit; the Holy Spirit is often analogized to the wind in the Bible (Cf. John 3:8)

- This wind was much stronger than a normal wind, like a hurricane, so strong that it caused attention throughout the town

- This symbolized the coming of the Holy Spirit in power

- "...it" - the violent rushing wind

- "...whole house" - the Upper Room

- Those in the Upper Room didn't feel something, they heard something, which was *like* the sound of a violent rushing wind. The noise like the wind came from heaven.

3 And tongues *that looked* like fire appeared to them, **distributing themselves**, and a **tongue** rested on each one of them.

3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.

3 They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated, and one rested on each of them.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

- Fire and wind both symbolized the presence of God in the OT (Gen 15:17; Ex 3:2-6; 13:21-22; 19:18; 24:17; 40:38; Cf. Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16)
- The believers present received both an audio (wind) and visual (fire) indication that the Holy Spirit had come
- John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus would baptize His own with "the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Luke 3:16)
- "...distributing themselves" - evidently the fire came in one piece, then separated into individual flames, which resemble tongues of fire
- God could hardly have depicted the distribution of His Spirit to every individual believer more clearly
- The Spirit had in the past abode on the entire nation of Israel corporately, symbolized by the pillar of fire. Now, He abode on each believer individually, as He had on Jesus.
- The fire was obviously not normal fire because it did not burn up what it touched (Cf. Ex 3:2-6)

4 And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to **speak with different tongues**, as the Spirit was giving them *the ability* to speak out.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign languages as the Spirit gave them that ability.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

- "...filled with the Holy Spirit" - separate and distinct from the "baptism of the Holy Spirit"; both occurred on this occasion, although Luke only mentioned filling specifically (see notes below)

— We know baptism of the Spirit took place here because Jesus predicted it would take place "not many days from now" (1:5); later, Peter spoke of it as having taken place on Pentecost (11:15-16)

— The Spirit's baptism occurs once for each believer *at the moment of salvation* (Cf. Acts 11:15-16; Rom 6:3; 1 Cor 12:13; Col 2:12), but the Spirit's filling may occur not only at salvation but also on a number of occasions *after salvation* (Acts 4:8,31; 6:3,5; 7:55; 9:17; 13:9,52).

— Acts 11:15-17 recaps what happened in 1:4

- "...speak with different tongues" - *eterais glossolalia*, after hearing something like wind (v2) and seeing tongues that looked like fire falling on each of the 12 apostles (v3), each of the 12 apostles now experienced speaking in different tongues/languages.

- As these images of tongues that looked like fire appeared and rested on each of the apostles, they began to speak in a language other than their own native language
- "tongues" - *glossa*, where we get the English word "glossary" (vs. *dialektos*, "language" v6); both Greek words refer to a known language, not a babbling of 3-4 syllables over and over again
- "Tongues" - a poor translation of both these Greek words (*glossa* and *dialektos*). It comes from the KJV, which overall is a pretty good translation, but the word "tongue" meant a known language in "Old English" (Cf. Rev 9:11 [KJV]). In normal usage today, it refers more to gibberish or babbling, not a known language. Today's usage/understanding has absolutely no basis in Scripture.
- So when the KJV translators used the word "tongue" at a time when Old English was predominant, it never meant babbling or gibberish; it always meant a known language. This is very evident by the way the KJV translates Rev 9:11.
- Tongues was a gift given by God, not primarily as a special language for worship, but to facilitate the spread of the gospel; it definitely was not as a sign that a believer experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit again.
- It is clear from the context that this sign involved the ability to speak in another language that the speaker previously did not know (Cf. v6,8). Thus, the gift is the speaking in a language that the speaker did not know, but was nonetheless a legitimate language that those who spoke the language could understand.
- The gift of tongues was given primarily for an evidential purpose to authenticate and substantiate a facet of God's truth. It was also valuable as the believers began to carry out the Great Commission, especially in their evangelization of the Jews.
- Why did God work this particular miracle, for people to begin speaking in a known language that they previously did not know? Because tongues are a sign to unbelievers (not believers) (Cf. 1 Cor 14:22).
- God is giving a sign to the unsaved here. God is giving the unbelievers a sign because He is doing something different than what He has been doing for the past 1500 years: He is changing the dispensation (house rules).
- God is changing the dispensation from the Law to the Church, and when God does something of this magnitude, we need a sign that it is really of God. God provided the sign through the miraculous gift of languages (tongues).
- The sign of languages/tongues is God's reversal of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9). At the Tower of Babel, God confused their languages so the builders could not talk to each other and coordinate, and the building stopped. Here, on Pentecost, God unconfused the languages, a good thing, so that the apostles could minister and evangelize to all of the travelers who were in Jerusalem at that time.

- The purpose for the gift of tongues is always distorted by those who shift the emphasis of the gift from an objective sign to a subjective experience. There is no question that the "sign gifts" were edifying in their result, but their purpose was to authenticate new revelation to the Jews (2:22; Mark 16:20; Acts 7:36-39,51; Heb 2:2-4; 1 Cor 14:20-22).
  - Jews were always present when tongues took place in Acts (Acts 2; 10; 19); it is understandable why God-fearing Jews, who the apostles asked to accept new truth in addition to the authenticated OT, would have required a sign. They needed strong proof that God was now giving new revelation that seemed (on the surface) to contradict their Scriptures.
  - God prophesied to the Jews in the OT that He would one day speak to them in a foreign language because they refused to pay attention to Isaiah's words to them in their own language (Is 28:11; Cf. 1 Cor 14:21)
  - God also gave the gift of tongues to rouse the nation of Israel to repentance (1 Cor 14:22-25)
  - One of the purposes of giving the Holy Spirit was authentication: it authenticated that the promise of the Father had now been fulfilled. The coming of the Holy Spirit with the gift of tongues authenticated their calling and message...that they were the apostles they claimed to be.
  - The three results were:
    1. The Jews from the *Diaspora* were able to hear the gospel in their own language (Acts 2:8-11)
    2. They fell under the conviction of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37)
    3. *Three thousand* of them were converted (Acts 2:41)



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*The Book of Acts, 63*



“The word ‘tongues’ means that the apostles began to speak in a language other than their own native tongue. It was a real, known, spoken language with all the rules of grammar, diction, and syntax common to all languages. It was not merely the rapid repetition of three or four syllables that is passed off as tongues today. The source of this gift of languages was the Holy Spirit: *as the Spirit gave them utterance*. In other words, the Holy Spirit provided the gift of tongues or languages, which is one of His spiritual gifts.”

In the Bible, miracles have a tendency to cluster around time periods when God is doing something completely new, either a new dispensation or introducing a paradigm shift to how He relates to mankind (see chart: **Miracle Clusters in Scripture** below). Other than these key time periods, miracles tend to be sporadic, intermittent, and rare. This definitely doesn't mean that God doesn't do miracles today...He obviously does. It's just that in other than these specific six time periods, the miracles are not as frequent. Other than during these times periods, miracles are the exception rather than the rule.

### Miracle Clusters In Scripture

	ERA	AUTHENTICATION
1	Moses	Giving of the Law
2	Joshua	Conquest of the Land
3	Elijah-Elisha	Office of Prophet
4	Christ	Kingdom offer to Israel
5	Apostles	Church
6	Tribulation & Millennium	Kingdom establishment

One of the major paradigm/dispensational shifts beginning in the Church Age is the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Many people don't recognize that the Holy Spirit was active in the OT, but He was.

WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE OT		
	OT/GOSPELS/ACTS 1	ACTS 2/TODAY
<b>External vs. Internal</b>	<b>Upon (1 Sam 16:13)</b>	<b>Within (John 14:17)</b>
<b>Reception of all of the Spirit at the moment of salvation?</b>	<b>Subsequent to salvation (Ex 31:3)</b>	<b>At moment of salvation (Rom 8:9)</b>
<b>How long is the indwelling?</b>	<b>Temporary indwelling (1 Sam 16:14; Ps 51:11)</b>	<b>Permanent indwelling (John 14:16)</b>
<b>Who is indwelt?</b>	<b>Selective indwelling (Joel 2:28)</b>	<b>Universal indwelling (1 Cor 12:13)</b>

### Filling with the Holy Spirit

This was a phenomenon believers experienced periodically in the OT economy (Ex 35:30-34; Num 11:26-29; 1 Sam 10:6,10), as well as the NT. An individual Christian can experience it multiple times. God can fill a person with His Spirit on numerous separate occasions (Cf. Acts 4:8,31; 6:3,5; 7:55; 9:17; 13:9,52).

God has commanded all believers to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18). "Filling" expresses the Holy Spirit's presence and enablement, and results in the Spirit's control and influence of the believer (Eph 5:18). The Spirit controls a believer to the degree that He fills the believer and vice versa. Believers experience Spirit-control to the extent that they yield to His direction.

At Pentecost, the believers present were under the Spirit's control because they were in a proper personal relationship of submission to Him (Cf. 1:14). Elsewhere in Acts, the filling of the Spirit is always connected with the proclamation of the gospel (2:4; 4:8,31; 9:17; 13:9). Those who are "full of the Holy Spirit" are always those who are faithfully fulfilling their anointed task as proclaimers (Acts 6:3,5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:52).

## **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

As Jesus predicted (Acts 1:4-5)

1. Regenerated: "Born Again" (John 3:5)
2. Indwelt by the Spirit (Rom 8:9)
3. Sealed by the Spirit (Eph 1:13-14; 4:30)
4. Baptized of the Spirit
  - Foretold by John the Baptist (Luke 3:16)
  - Foretold by Jesus (Acts 1:5)
  - And ever since (1 Cor 12:13)

The *baptism of the Holy Spirit* is not a command given to us. It is not an experience. It is an act of God whereby the believer in Jesus Christ is indwelt by the Spirit of God, sealed unto the day of redemption, and placed into the Church, the Body of Christ.

The Christian never repeats Spirit baptism. God never commanded Spirit baptism as something we could/should do, and it doesn't occur in degrees. It takes place when a person becomes a Christian (Rom 8:9). However, on Pentecost, the people baptized were already believers. This was also true on three other occasions (8:17; 10:45; 19:6, although the text does not clearly identify John's disciples as believers, they likely were). These were unusual situations, not typical of Spirit baptism today.

## **The Spirit Came**

The Holy Spirit had been active prior to Pentecost and had worked in Creation (Gen 1:1-2), in OT history (Judges 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:

1. The Spirit would dwell *in* people and not just come *upon* them, and His presence would be permanent, not temporary (John 14:16-17).
2. The Spirit could not have come sooner, for it was essential that Jesus die, be raised from the dead, and return to heaven before the Spirit could be given (John 7:37-39; 16:7ff). Remember the Jewish calendar (Lev 23): Passover, Firstfruits, then Pentecost.

INSTANCES OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES IN ACTS				
Reference	Tongues-speakers	Audience	Relation to conversion	Purpose
2:1-4	Jewish believers	Unsaved Jews and Christians	Sometime after conversion	To validate (for Jews) God's working as Joel prophesied
10:44-47	Gentile believers	Jewish believers who doubted God's plan	Immediately after conversion	To validate (for Jews) God's working among Gentiles as He had among Jews
19:1-7	Believers	Jews who needed confirmation of Paul's message	Immediately after conversion	To validate (for Jews) Paul's gospel message

### Six Reasons the Church Began on Day of Pentecost

1. Christ referred to the Church in the future tense (Matt 16:18)
2. Paul referred to the Church as a "mystery" (Eph 3:4-5,9)
3. The Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since Christ became the head of the Church (Eph 5:23) after His Ascension (Eph 1:20-22)
4. The Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:7; 14:26) only came into existence after His Ascension (Eph 4:7-11)
5. The Church existed before Paul's conversion in Acts 9 (Acts 5:11; 8:1,3; Rom 16:7)
6. The Baptizing (joining, uniting, identifying) ministry of the Holy Spirit began in Acts 2 (Cf. 1 Cor 12:13; Acts 1:5; 11:15-16; 2:1-4,37-41)

(b) The beneficiaries of the miraculous tongues (2:5-12)

5 Now there were Jews **residing** in Jerusalem, **devout men** from every nation under heaven.

5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

5 Now devout Jews from every nation on earth were living in Jerusalem.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

- "...residing" - *katoikountes*, suggests permanent residence compared with *epidemeo*, meaning visiting or sojourning
- It was customary for many pious Jews who spent their lives abroad to return to end their days as close to the temple as possible
- "...devout men" - used to describe Simeon (Luke 2:25). Simeon did not know the name Jesus, but he knew a Messiah was coming because he deciphered it from the OT

6 And when **thissound** occurred, the crowd came together and they were bewildered, because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own **language**.

6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.

6 When that sound came, a crowd quickly gathered, startled because each one heard the disciples speaking in his own language.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

- "...this sound" - the sound of the apostles speaking in known languages that they never learned
- "...language" - *dialektos*, a known language, in this case a language that the speaker (apostle) had never learned nor spoken before
- This verse gives us the perfect definition for *dialektos* (and *glossa*, v4) as a known language not known by the person speaking. It was a miracle of God for the apostles to speak in a foreign language, so that those who heard it were bewildered, amazed, and astonished (v6,7).



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*The Book of Acts, 68*



"The reason was that they heard every man speaking his *own language*. The Greek word for 'language' here is *dialektos*, the origin of the English word 'dialect.' It simply means 'language.' It explains what the tongues of verse 4 were: spoken languages with all the rules of grammar, diction, syntax, and all that a language involves. Everyone who was present heard someone speaking in his own native language, the language of the country from which he came."

7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

7 Stunned and amazed, they asked, "All of these people who are speaking are Galileans, aren't they?

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

- The people amazed and astonished here are not amazed and astonished because the apostles were babbling 3-4 syllables over and over again. They were amazed and astonished because they heard Galileans, who didn't know other languages, fluently speak in the hearers native language.

- The reference to Galileans here is relevant, not just because that is where most of the apostles were from, but because Galilean talk was confusing talk, it was known for it's guttural (a sound produced in the throat; harsh-sounding) words, so when you spoke with someone from Galilee, you knew it by the way they spoke (Cf. Matt 26:73; Mark 14:70; Luke 22:59).

8 And how *is it that* we each hear **them** in our own language to which we were born?

8 And how is it that we each hear *them* in our own language to which we were born?

8 So how is it that each one of us hears them speaking in his own native language:

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

- "...we each hear *them* in our own language" - not unknown languages...actual languages spoken by people elsewhere in the world

— The hearers acknowledged that the apostles speaking in the various languages of the hearers was a miracle. They ask this question completely puzzled and amazed at what they are seeing and hearing.

### **Where Did "Tongues" of Gibberish Come From?**

The origin of "speaking in tongues" as it is thought of today is a far cry from what is described in Acts 2. In fact, it has more to do with paganism or non-Christian cults than it does with the Bible.

## Virgil, 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. commenting of the priestess on the Isle of Delos.

“She attained her ecstatic state and speech in a haunted cave where drafts and winds made weird sounds and music. When she became united in spirit with the god Apollo, she began to speak in tongues, sometimes understood, sometimes incoherent.”

Cited by John Miles, *The Subject of Tongues, an Introduction to Christian Doctrine: An Outline Course*, (Grand Rapids; Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, 1974), p. 2.

## National Geographic on the Priestess at Delphi.

“In a trance, perhaps induced by narcotic herbs, she sat on a tripod and raved. Priests enriched themselves by translating her incoherent cries into rhymed prophecies.”

Greece and Rome: Builders of Our World, National Geographic Society, 1968], p. 171.

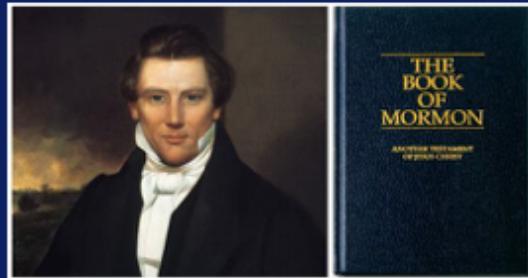
## Chrysostom, a 4th Century Christian on Priestess of Delphi.

“...This same Pythoness then is said to be female, to sit at times upon the tripod of Apollos astride, and thus the evil spirit ascending from beneath and entering the lower part of her body, fills the woman with madness, and she with disheveled hair begins to play the bacchanal and to foam at the mouth, and thus being in frenzy to utter the words of her madness.”

Cited by John Miles, *The Subject of Tongues, an Introduction to Christian Doctrine: An Outline Course*, (Grand Rapids; Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, 1974), p. 2.

## Joseph Smith's Command

**"Arise upon your feet, speak or make some sound, continue to make sounds of some kind, and the Lord will make a language or tongue of it."**



Joseph ~~Dillow~~ Speaking in Tongues (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), p. 173.

## Brigham Young

**"Shouting, jerks, and dancing were common in their services, and Brigham Young not only spoke in unknown tongues but interpreted his messages to his hearers."**



Thomas R. Edgar, Miraculous Gifts, (Neptune, New Jersey, ~~Loizeaux~~ Loizeaux Brothers, 1983), p. 255.

## Tongues and the Unsaved

"Now before you sit down and write me a letter telling me how real your experience with tongues is, let me tell you about mine. I've spoken in tongues on several occasions. I've walked down aisles, I've prayed through at the altar, I've followed the instructions of the spiritual leaders who were telling me how to speak in tongues, and I spoke in tongues. It was very real. It happened. There was nothing unreal about it. But it was not of the Holy Spirit! How do I know? I wasn't even saved at the time. That's how I know. I became convinced by the preaching I heard that I must speak in tongues to be right with God. I was determined to do it, and I did it."

Cited by John Miles, *The Subject of Tongues, an Introduction to Christian Doctrine: An Outline Course*, (Grand Rapids; Grand Rapids School of the Bible and Music, 1974), p. 3.

- 9 Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
- 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
- 9 Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia,
- 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,
- "Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia" - these are people who came from the east, their native tongue was Aramaic, and they were descendants of the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom
- "residents of Mesopotamia" - "between the rivers"; it was the location of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:2); it was the location (Babylon) where Nebuchadnezzar took the southern kingdom into exile (Dan 1:2); it will be the location for the headquarters of the Antichrist (Zech 5:11).
- This shows that there were Jews in Mesopotamia (Babylon), because they came to Pentecost. They were descendants of the Jews who were taken there in the Babylonian Captivity 600 years earlier, and they never left.
- This explains why Peter went to Babylon to preach the gospel (1 Peter 5:13), because that's where many Jews lived during the time of Christ and afterward. (Babylon does not become a "code word" for Rome until the 2nd century.)
- "...Judea" - Galilee and Syria; they spoke Hebrew

- "...Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia" - Asia Minor (modern day Turkey); they spoke Greek

**10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,**

10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

10 Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the district of Libya near Cyrene, Jewish and proselyte visitors from Rome,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

- "Phrygia and Pamphylia" - Asia Minor (modern day Turkey); they spoke Greek

- "...Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene" - North Africa; they spoke Greek

- "...visitors from Rome" - they spoke Latin; this is an explanation for how the church at Rome began; an apostle did not plant the church at Rome, which is why Paul so desperately wanted to get to Rome (Cf. Rom 1:11), to confirm their doctrinal integrity and strengthen the church in their faith

- "...Jews and proselytes" - everyone present was a Jew, either a native Jew (direct descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), or a proselyte (a Gentile who converted to Judaism and is under the Mosaic Law)

**11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty deeds of God."**

11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God."

11 Cretans, and Arabs, listening to them talk in our own languages about the great deeds of God?"

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

- "Cretans" - from the island of Crete; they spoke Greek

- "...Arabs" - they spoke Nabatean or Aramaic

- "...we" - the whole assembled group from all of these various places

- There are 16 nations listed here (v9-11), yet there were more present than are listed

- The group was speaking of the "wonderful works of God." They were praising God! The crowd heard the praise each in their own language.

— This was a reversal of what took place at Babel (Gen 11) and illustrated the human unity that God's unhindered work produces

## THE NATIONS OF PENTECOST ACTS 2:9-11

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### Josephus

*Antiquities, 15.2.2*

“But when Hyrcanus was brought into Parthia the king Phraates treated him after a very gentle manner, as having already learned of what an illustrious family he was; on which account he set him free from his bonds, and gave him a habitation at Babylon, where there were Jews in great numbers. These Jews honored Hyrcanus as their high priest and king, as did all the Jewish nation that dwelt as far as Euphrates; which respect was very much to his satisfaction...”

12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

12 All of them continued to be stunned and puzzled, and they kept asking one another, “What can this mean?”

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

- There were two reactions to the miracle of the apostles speaking in the hearers own language:

1. Verse 12: they accepted the apostles speaking in their own known language as a miracle of God, then they ask "why?" They wanted to know what the purpose was for this miracle that God was doing. These people will comprise Peter's audience for his sermon, and many of them will come to faith in Christ.

2. Verse 13: they were mocking the miracle, thinking that the apostles are drunk. They deny the obvious miracle that they can see with their own eyes, and

— Throughout Acts, we see the division between belief and unbelief . When Paul preaches on Mars Hill in Athens, some sneer, some want more information, and some believe (Cf. 17:31-34).

(B) Peter's sermon (2:13-41)

(a) Charge of drunkenness (2:13)

13 But others were jeering and saying, "They are full of **sweet wine!**"

13 But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine."

13 But others kept saying in derision, "They're drunk on sweet wine!"

**13** Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

- "...sweet wine" - wine that just began the fermenting process; it has a more intoxicating power than wine that is further along in the fermenting process

— So the mockers see the miracle with their own eyes, but in unbelief they attribute it to something else. This is how unbelief explains the supernatural. If your heart has already decided that you are going to reject something, your mind will work overtime to explain it away or denounce it. This is what people do today with creation (Cf. Rom 1:18-20).

— It would make much more sense if the apostles were drunk, that they would make *less* sense in what they were saying. Here, they are obviously making *more* sense, and the people who heard them and didn't have their hearts and minds blinded by unbelief, were amazed, perplexed, and astonished at the words the apostles spoke.

— The point of Peter's sermon, which begins in v14, is to convince the multitude that they are not drunk, and explain to them that what they were seeing was the work of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised many times before He ascended (John 14:16-18; 16:5-7; Luke 11:9-13; 24:49; Acts 1:4-5; 2:33).

— To argue, like Kingdom Now theologians do, that Peter inaugurated the kingdom in Acts 2 misses the entire point of his sermon...the promise of the Holy Spirit that Peter spoke of in v33.

Levitical Feasts (Lev 23)			
Feast	Season	Fulfillment	Rejected
Passover	Spring	John 1:29	John 1:11
Unleavened Bread	Spring	John 6:35	John 6:41
1st fruits	Spring	1 Cor 15:20	Matt 28:11-15
Pentecost	Spring	Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:13
<hr/>			
Trumpets	Fall	New Year	Matt 24:31
Atonement	Fall	Lev 16	<u>Zechariah</u> 12:10
Booths	Fall	Wilderness provision	<u>Zechariah</u> 14:16-18

Pentecost was the fourth/last Spring feast for the Jews. Jesus fulfilled each of the Spring feasts on the Jewish calendar, but the Jews rejected the fulfillment:

- Jesus fulfilled the Passover (John 1:29), but the Jews (nation; religious leadership) rejected His fulfillment (John 1:11).
- Jesus fulfilled the Feast of Unleavened Bread by stating the He was the Bread of Life (John 6:35); the Jews rejected His fulfillment (John 6:41).
- Jesus fulfilled the Feast of Firstfruits (1 Cor 15:20) by rising from the dead, but the Jews rejected His fulfillment by attempting to bribe the Roman guards to say His body was stolen (Matt 28:11-15).
- Jesus fulfilled the Feast of Weeks/Pentecost (Joel 2:28-32). What happened in Acts 2, the speaking of known languages by the apostles, was rejected by the vast majority of Jews (Acts 2:13) by saying the apostles were drunk. A clear miracle took place in their midst, right in front of their face, and they rejected it.

The black line in the above chart represents the long hiatus between the last Spring feast and the first Fall feast (Trumpets). This hiatus represents the Church Age, the long hiatus between Jesus' first and second comings.

This doesn't mean that God is finished with Israel. It means that He has put them in "time out" for a season, during the Church Age, and once the Church "hiatus" is complete, He will turn His attention back to Israel and after the Tribulation period, when a Remnant of Jewish believers will accept Jesus as their Messiah and beg Him to rescue them, He will come again and will at that time fulfill the three Fall feasts.

- Trumpets - Christ will sound the trumpet and gather His elect from the four corners of the earth, back to the Land of Israel (Matt 24:31)
- Atonement - the Remnant will look upon the One whom they pierced and mourn (Zech 12:10); the sins of believing Israel will be forgiven and they will be restored to a right relationship with God through their Messiah, Jesus Christ
- Booths/Tabernacles - Israel will enjoy the messianic kingdom (Zech 14:16-18)

Terry Hulbert, in his doctoral dissertation called the *Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts* does the best, most complete job of documenting how Scripture foretold each of the feasts, and how Jesus has or ultimately will fulfill all of them.



## Terry Hulbert

Terry C. Hulbert, *The Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts*.  
Doctoral Dissertation. Dallas Theological Seminary. 1965. Pages 2, 115-116.

"When God fulfilled the first four feasts, He had provided everything necessary for Israel to enter into literal kingdom blessing-redemption, separation, resurrection, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Israel's rejection of these, however, made a necessary national change of heart before the kingdom could be established...The paschal lamb of God pointed out by John the Baptist was rejected as an imposter. The resurrection of Christ, as it answered to the Feast of First Fruits, was suppressed in its proclamation by the bribe money paid to the sentries...Finally, the coming of the Spirit was rejected at Pentecost as the Jews..."

- "redemption" - Passover
- "separation" - Unleavened Bread
- "resurrection" - Firstfruits
- "presence of the Holy Spirit" - Pentecost



## Terry Hulbert

Terry C. Hulbert, *The Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts.*  
Doctoral Dissertation. Dallas Theological Seminary. 1965. Pages 2, 115-116.

...taunted the apostles with charges of drunkenness. By the time of the close of Acts chapter 2, God had done all He could do for Israel until they repented as a nation. Thus, the significance of Peter's second sermon in Acts 3 was that it re-emphasized the condition of millennial blessing already laid down in the Old Testament, but as yet unfulfilled...Of the upmost importance here is the fact that the shedding of the blood of Christ to take away sin, and with the coming of the Spirit to empower the life of the redeemed, all of the spiritual requirements for the millennial kingdom had been met as far as God was concerned....



## Terry Hulbert

Terry C. Hulbert, *The Eschatological Significance of Israel's Annual Feasts.*  
Doctoral Dissertation. Dallas Theological Seminary. 1965. Pages 2, 115-116.

...But, God's provision could not be operative until man appropriated it. This point cannot be over emphasized, for it is not only the reason for the delay in the fulfillment of the final three feasts, it is the basis for understanding the relationship of the church to the feasts."

- "the relationship of the church to the feasts" - the church is the "black line" in the chart above, the hiatus period between the Spring feasts and the Fall feasts.
  - (b) Peter's defense (2:14-36)
    - (i) Too early for drunkenness (2:14-15)

14 But Peter, taking his stand **with the other eleven**, raised his voice and declared to them: **"Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem,** know this, and pay attention to my words.

**14** But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.

**14** Then Peter stood up among the eleven apostles and raised his voice to address them: "Men of Judea and everyone living in Jerusalem! You must understand something, so pay close attention to my words.

**14** But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

- "...with the *other* eleven" - notice how Matthias has already been merged in with the apostles, going from eleven total to now twelve total

- "...Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem" - there were hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all over the world in Jerusalem, and Peter isn't ignoring them (he's speaking to them as well)

- He directly addresses the "men of Judea" and those "live in Jerusalem" because he's going to accuse them of crucifying their own Messiah

- He's primarily talking to those who were aware and actually saw or heard about the betrayal, trials, turn over to Rome, and crucifixion of Jesus Christ

- Many of the pilgrims were devout men (v5); they understood from Hebrew Bible (the OT) that a Messiah was coming, but because they didn't have electronic communication, they didn't know that He had already come.

**15** For these people are not drunk, as you assume, since it is *only***the third hour** of the day;

**15** For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is *only* the third hour of the day;

**15** These men are not drunk as you suppose, for it's only nine o'clock in the morning.

**15** For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

- "...the third hour" - 9am

- Peter's first argument is that it's just too early for people to be drunk already

#### (ii) Analogy from Joel 2:28-32 (2:16-21)

Peter's second reason for arguing that the apostles were not drunk, but instead their words were a miracle wrought by God, uses Joel 2:28-32 which is a prophecy of how the Holy Spirit will be poured out in the Tribulation and messianic kingdom period, like never before. Peter's point is that the Holy Spirit is doing something right now *very similar* to what was predicted in Joel to happen in the Tribulation and messianic kingdom. However, he stops short of saying that it's a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

16 but **this is what** has been spoken through the prophet Joel:

16 but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

16 Rather, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

— "...this is what" - *touto estin to*, it is this phrase that most commentators use to correlate the events of Acts 2 as a fulfillment of Joel 2

— This is not an identity statement since the antecedent of "this" is a set of events associated with the first Christian Pentecost, not the prophecy itself. The statement really means, "this fulfills what was spoken by the prophet" (Cf. Matt 7:12).

— The phrase *touto estin to* is used elsewhere in the NT to not indicate fulfillment (Cf. 1 Cor 11:24). When we take communion, we understand that the elements *represent* the body and blood of Jesus, but *are not the actual* body and blood of Jesus (Transubstantiation).

— When we take the elements of communion, they are a representation designed to cause remembrance of Jesus' substitutionary atonement for us on the cross

1 Cor 11:24: and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "**This is** [*touto estin to*] **My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.**"

- Those who believe that Joel 2 was partially or completely fulfilled in Acts 2 will quote this verse and say, This can't be an analogy, this has to be a fulfillment of a prophecy because Peter equates the two passages with the phrase "this is what/that"
  - Peter quotes a portion of Joel's prophecy to demonstrate that the work of the Spirit that the audience witnessed was not due to drunkenness, but it was something referred to by Joel
  - This clause does not mean that what Joel predicted in 2:28-32 was *fulfilled* in the events of Pentecost; it simply means that Pentecost *began* what Joel had described.
  - Certainly the outpouring of the Spirit on the 12 Apostles could not in itself fulfill the prediction of such outpouring "upon all flesh," but it was the *beginning* of the fulfillment
  - Peter merely references the Joel passage as support that the Holy Spirit is the cause of the events in Acts 2, just as the Holy Spirit will be the cause of the similar future events described in Joel 2

17 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS WILL PROPHESY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN WILL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN WILL HAVE DREAMS;

17 'And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see

visions, And your old men shall dream dreams;

17 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

- Prior to this prophecy in Joel, the preceding verses (Joel 2:21-27) describe the spiritual blessings Israel will experience (2:28-29)

- "...IN THE LAST DAYS" - Peter inserts this phrase, which isn't found in Joel's prophecy [Note: this should not be capitalized in the NASB20 translation]

— Peter made a significant change in Joel's prophecy as he quoted it from the LXX, and this change supports the view that he was not claiming complete fulfillment

— First, he changed "afterward" (Joel 2:28) to "in the last days." In the context of Joel's prophecy, the time in view is after the judgments of the Great Tribulation and Israel's repentance. Peter interpreted this time as *the last days*.

— Many modern interpreters believe that when Peter said "the last days," he meant the time in which he lived. However, he was not in the Tribulation, thus he looked forward to the last days as being future.

— The "last days" is a phrase that some NT writers used to describe the age in which we live (2 Tim 3:1; Heb 1:2; James 5:3; 1 Peter 1:5,20; 2 Peter 3:3; 1 John 2:18; Jude 18), but in view of what Joel wrote, that cannot be its meaning here.

— In the OT, "the last days" refers to the days *just before the age to come*, namely, just before the age of Messiah's earthly reign. That is what it means here.

- "...I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND" - this was not fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2 because only 3,000 were saved (v41). It was a very limited fulfillment, at best. There were likely over 1M Jews present in Jerusalem at the time, so the Holy Spirit was poured out on only a tiny fraction, so it the Spirit obviously did not penetrate the entire nation of Israel, let alone "all mankind."

— Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans just 37 years later, and left in ruins for centuries, due to Israel's unbelief and lack of repentance

— There were an estimated 1M people in Jerusalem for Pentecost, so only 0.003% of the people in Jerusalem at the time experienced the pouring out of the Holy Spirit

18 AND EVEN ON MY MALE AND FEMALE SERVANTS I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS, **And they will prophesy.**

18 Even on My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit And they shall prophesy.

18 In those days I will even pour out my Spirit on my slaves, men and women alike, and they will prophesy.

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

- Verses 17-18 quote Joel 2:28-29, which is a millennial context...

- "...And they will prophesy" - Peter adds this expression; it is not found in Joel 2:29

— If Peter's intent was to state that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled in Acts 2, either partially or completely, he would not take editorial liberties

19 'AND I WILL DISPLAY WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE.

19 'And I will grant wonders in the sky above And signs on the earth below, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke.

19 I will display wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth below: blood, fire, and clouds of smoke.

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

- Verses 19-21 quote Joel 2:30-31, which is a Tribulation context...

— None of the cosmic signs stated here happened in Acts 2

20 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD COMES.

20 'The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood, Before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come.

20 The sun will become dark, and the moon turn to blood, before the coming of the great and glorious Day of the Lord.

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

- Have any of these events (wonders in the sky, signs on the earth, blood, fire, clouds of smoke, ever occurred? — No.

— This is obviously speaking of very end time events. The Day of Pentecost has been announced. How long does it last? Until the Church is gone.

- If Joel's passage is not being fulfilled at all in Acts 2, why does Peter quote that passage? Because he uses the Joel passage as an analogy. His point is, the Holy Spirit is going to do something to Israel in the distant future, during the Tribulation. Today (Acts 2), the Holy Spirit is doing something similar. This is why the audience couldn't write off the Holy Spirit's work to drunkenness.

— The Joel passage describes the supernatural activity of God's Spirit at work in events surrounding a yet future coming of Christ. Thus, Peter's point is that of similarity or analogy between what the Holy Spirit will do in the future with the nation of Israel and what He was doing in the first century when the church was founded.

21 'AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'

21 'And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

21 Then whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

- Peter stops short from quoting all of Joel 2:32 here; he leaves out: "For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the Lord has said, Even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."

— Joel's prophecy predicts that Jerusalem will get an escape; in fact, it says that the Lord will return to rescue Zion and Jerusalem

— This didn't happen in Acts 2; in fact, Jerusalem was demolished in 70 AD, and the part of Joel's verse that Peter left out did not come to pass before Jerusalem was destroyed

- When you study the context of Joel 2, it is talking about the Tribulation period and the messianic kingdom. When it says "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," it is talking about the call of Israel to their Messiah at the end of the Tribulation (Matt 23:39; Rom 10:9-10), which triggers the Second Coming, and where Jesus rescues the Remnant from the Antichrist. This isn't at all what is happening in Acts 2.

### **Analogical Fulfillment View (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21)**

1. The Holy Spirit was not poured out on "all mankind" (v17)
2. There are a number of predictions in Peter's quotation of Joel 2 that are not found anywhere in Acts 2
  - "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy" (v17)
  - "Your young men shall see visions" (v17)
  - "Old men shall dream dreams" (v17)
  - "Bondslaves, men and women, will have Spirit poured out on them and they shall prophesy" (v17)
  - "Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke" (v19)
  - "The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood" (v20)
3. Events that took place in Acts 2 are not found/predicted in Joel 2
  - Manifestation of languages ("tongues")
4. Different wording in Acts 2

- Peter changes Joel's text; part of it is that Peter may be quoting from the Septuagint (LXX), but it's clear that the language that Peter uses is different than Joel in part of his quotation.
  - "in the last days" (v17) is not found in Joel's prophecy; this phrase was added by Peter
  - "And they will prophesy" (v19) is not found in Joel's prophecy; this phrase was added by Peter
- 5. In his sermon, Peter never claimed that Joel's prophecy was "fulfilled" (*plēroō*); he simply references Joel's prophecy for the sake of similarity
  - Peter obviously knows how to use the word "fulfilled" because he did so in 1:16; so he knows how to use the word when there is a prophetic fulfillment involved. Since Peter doesn't use *plēroō* here, he's likely not referring to any type of fulfillment.
- 6. "This is that/what" (v16)

What Peter is telling his audience by quoting Joel 2 is that you've seen what God is doing here and now ("languages"), and Joel tells us that the Holy Spirit will do something similar (but not identical to what He's doing now) during the Tribulation period and into the messianic kingdom. You ought to be able to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit now, because He's doing something similarly/analogously to what He will do much more fully when Joel's prophecy is fulfilled at the end of the Tribulation and into the kingdom. Other OT prophets, besides Joel, prophesied that God would give His Spirit to individual believers in the future (Is 32:15; 44:3; Ezek 36:27; 37:14; 39:29; Zech 12:10). John the Baptist also predicted the pouring out of God's Spirit on believers (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33).

Kingdom Now theologians somehow interpret Peter's allusion to Joel as the fulfillment of the New Covenant. The New Covenant (Jer 31) is a prophecy for Israel that God was going to change them from the inside out. They believe the New Covenant is being fulfilled in Acts 2, and think this quote from Joel proves that. And since they believe the New Covenant is partially fulfilled in Acts 2, the Davidic Covenant is also being partially fulfilled. See [The Coming Kingdom 63 Is Jesus Reigning from David's Throne? - Part 10 \(Acts 2:16-21\)](#) for details on the Four Views of How Joel 2 was Fulfilled in Acts 2.

Peter uses all of this as evidence that this is not drunkenness, but rather this is the Holy Spirit's work and Peter thought the crowd should've been able to figure out when the Holy Spirit was working (from the OT) and should recognize this as such.

- (iii) Explanation of the source of the Spirit (2:22-35)
  - (a) Christ identified through miracles (2:22)

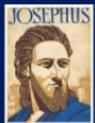
**22** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man attested to you by God with **miracles** and **wonders** and **signs** which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—

**22** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—

**22** "Fellow Israelis, listen to these words: Jesus from Nazareth was a man authenticated to you by God through miracles, wonders, and signs that God performed through him among you, as you yourselves know.

**22** Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

- "Men of Israel" - Peter is not addressing the pilgrims from out of town; he's addressing those who lived in Israel, who knew of or even saw Jesus' many miracles
- "...miracles" - *dynamis*, power
- "...wonders" - *teras*, miracles eliciting awe
- "...signs" - *sēmeion*, miracles of authentication (John 20:30-31)
- Peter brings up Jesus' miracles, wonders, and signs to explain to the crowd that it's not drunkenness, but this miracle they are seeing of "tongues" is because of Jesus
- The same Jesus who walked on the earth with them, healed many, raised some from the dead, who performed many mighty signs and wonders in their midst, but was then betrayed, arrested, convicted, beaten, crucified and buried, then who rose from the dead on the third day, and just ascended back to heaven where He came from, is performing this miracle. He's just doing it from heaven rather than doing it on the earth.



## Josephus

*Antiquities* 18.3.3

"About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Christ. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for the prophets of God had foretold these things and a thousand other marvels about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared."

(b) Jewish guilt and God's predetermined plan (2:23)

23 this Man, delivered over by **thepredeterminedplanandforeknowledgeofGod**, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

23 this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

23 After he was arrested according to the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified this very man and killed him using the hands of lawless men.

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

— "...the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God" – the rejection and death of Christ was part of God's divine plan from the very beginning (Ps 22:16; Is 53:5; Dan 9:26; Zech 12:10)

— Peter very clearly distinguishes counsel or determination, as well as election, from foreknowledge (see notes on 1 Peter 1:2). If foreknowledge = predestination, then Peter's statement here makes no sense as he'd be saying that Jesus was "delivered over by the foreknowledge and foreknowledge of God" which makes no sense.

— This statement reveals that in foretelling future events through His prophets and accomplishing them in history, God takes into account what He by His foreknowledge knows will be the actions and reactions of men.

— He did not *cause* Judas to betray Christ or *cause* the Jews to reject Him or the Romans to crucify Him—or predestinate them to do so. He arranged that these particular

individuals, who He knew would act in that manner, were on the scene at the right time to fulfill His will, though they were unaware that they were fulfilling prophecy.

- The Cross was no accident, but part of God's eternal plan (Cf. 3:18; 4:28; 13:29)
- The unbelieving Jews could not comprehend that God would allow the Messiah to be crucified, a sign of God's curse
- The ultimate cause of Jesus' death was God's plan and foreknowledge, but the secondary cause was the antagonism of godless Jewish and Roman men. In reality, the sin of every human being put Jesus on the Cross.
- "...you" - first century Israel
- You can't use the fact that Peter calls out first century Israel here to justify anti-Semitism. Luke 18:32 says that the Gentiles/Romans are also at fault. And here, you can see that above and outside of it all, Jesus' death was part of God the Father's predetermined plan.
- In addition, no one took Christ's life outside of His own will (John 10:18)
- God is so sovereign that He can take the free will choices of His enemies and use them to carry out His divine plan

(c) Christ's resurrection predicted in Psalm 16:8-11 (2:24-29)

24 But God raised Him from the dead, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

24 But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

24 But God raised him up and put an end to suffering of death, since it was impossible for him to be held by it,

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

- The resurrection of Christ is one of the central doctrines of Christianity
- God, the ultimate Judge, reversed the decision of Jesus' human judges by resurrecting Him. A higher court in heaven overturned the decision of the lower courts on earth.
- God proved all Jesus taught about Himself and Scripture was true by raising Him from the dead
- If Christ did not raise from the dead, then Christians should be pitied above all people (1 Cor 15:xx) and our faith is in vain (worthless) (1 Cor 15:14)
- Jesus staked His whole credibility on the fact that He would rise from the dead, and He pulled it off
- It was impossible for death to hold Jesus because He had committed no sin; He had not earned the wages of sin (Rom 6:23), but He voluntarily took upon Himself the sins of others

25 For David says of Him, 'I SAW THE LORD CONTINUALLY BEFORE ME, BECAUSE HE IS AT MY **RIGHT HAND**, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN.

25 For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken.

25 since David says about him, I always keep my eyes on the Lord, for he is at my right hand so that I cannot be shaken.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

- Peter quoted Ps 16:8-11 (written by David 1000 years before Christ) in v25-28 to prove that David prophesied the Messiah's resurrection in the OT:

- Life: Ps 16:8,9a (Acts 2:26a)
- Death: Ps 16:9b,10 (Acts 2:26b,27)
- Resurrection: Ps 16:11 (Acts 2:28)

- Ps 16 is the clearest prediction of the Messiah's resurrection in the OT. Just as earlier (1:20), Peter saw Jesus' experience fulfilled in David's words

- "...RIGHT HAND" - Peter mentioned that Jesus was now at the "right hand of God"—"in heaven"—4x in this sermon (v25,30,33,34)

— Does not refer to the Throne of David, but to the place of authority, prominence, and privilege (1 Kings 2:19; Ps 45:9; Matt 20:21; Mark 10:37; 14:62; Heb 1:13)

— This was particularly relevant for "all the house of Israel" (v14,22,29)

26 'THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE WAS OVERJOYED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE;

26 'Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope;

26 That is why my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices, yes, even my body still rests securely in hope.

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

- God's presence with David made him happy and hopeful; the fact that Jesus was now at God's right hand made Peter happy and hopeful

27 FOR YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR WILL YOU ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

27 Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or allow your Holy One to experience decay.

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

- This can't be referring to David because they knew where David's tomb was located  
— Since David died, and is still dead today, this passage could not be referring to David. In v31, Peter attributes this prophecy to the resurrection of Christ.

28 'YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.'

28 'You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.'

28 You have made the ways of life known to me, and you will fill me with gladness in your presence.'

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

- David rejoiced that, in spite of his enemies, God would spare his life and enable him to enjoy God's presence in the future  
— Peter interpreted these statements as referring to Jesus entering into new life following His resurrection, and into God's presence following His ascension  
- Peter's point in quoting from Ps 16:8-11 is that this psalm cannot apply to David because he died and his body had undergone corruption  
— Instead of applying to himself, David's words were a prophecy that referred to the Messiah, as well as a description of his own experience  
— So Peter quotes both the Psalms and the Prophets (Joel) to show them that the entire OT pointed to Christ. Peter knew these passages already, but now the Holy Spirit illuminated it to him to show how they pointed to Christ.

Ps 16:8-11:

8 I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.

10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

11 You will make known to me the way of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy;



## Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

*The Book of Acts, 74*



“Either way, this type of quotation would be considered as ‘literal prophecy plus literal fulfillment,’ because in the context of Psalm 16, the psalmist was clearly speaking of the resurrection of the Messiah. Even some rabbis understood this passage to be Messianic. For example, the *Midrash Tehillim* on this verse states, ‘My glory rejoices over King Messiah, who shall rise up out of me (i.e., from David).’”

*m. Tehillim* on Psalm 16:9 as quoted by F. F. Bruce in *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), p. 124.

**29** “**Brothers**, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

**29** “**Brethren**, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

**29** “**Brothers**, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and that his tomb is among us to this day.

**29** Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

– “**Brothers**” – typically when the word “**brethren**” or “**brothers and sisters**” is used in the Bible, it is referring to believers. But that's not the way Peter is using the word here because the people he's preaching to people who are not yet saved.

— It's similar to the way Paul used the term “**brethren**” or “**countrymen**” in Rom 9:3, to indicate that they were of the same nationality/ethnicity as Peter, they were fellow “**countrymen**”

– Peter now gets to the point of why he quoted this psalm: when David wrote Ps 16:8-11, he was not talking about himself because he talked about someone rising from the dead, but David is still dead today, and we know where his tomb is located.

(d) Christ is the Davidic descendent of Psalm 132:11 (2:30-32)

Here is where Peter's quotations from the OT get controversial. Amillennialists and Postmillennialists believe that Jesus right now is in heaven, seated on David's throne,

orchestrating the kingdom on the earth in spiritual form.

30 So because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat **one of his descendants on his throne**,

30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat **one of his descendants on his throne**,

30 Therefore, since he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him with an oath to put one of his descendants on his throne,

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

- Peter summarizes Ps 132:11 in v30 to show that Israel got it wrong in rejecting their Messiah

— The point of v30 is crystal clear if you refer back to v23 and forward to v36

- Kingdom Now theologians love to use this verse to say that God has sworn to one of His descendants with an oath to seat one of His descendants on his throne. They try to connect that with v34-35, which mentions David, to make the case that Jesus is today reigning from David's throne.

— The problem is, this verse is describing that Jesus is the "Heir" to David's throne, not that He is sitting on it today

— See [The Coming Kingdom 57 Is Jesus Reigning on David's Throne? - Part 4 \(Acts 1:6-7; 2:30,34-35\)](#) for details.

- "...one of his descendants" - going back to the Abrahamic Covenant, God promised Abraham three things: Land, Seed, and Blessing

— The Seed promise is further detailed in the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:11-16), where a "descendant" of David will establish his kingdom

— Matthew's Gospel, whose purpose is to show that Jesus was this Descendant referred to in the Davidic Covenant, yet the kingdom that was promised has been postponed (not canceled) because of Israel's rejection of Him.

— So when Peter refers to Ps 132:11 here, he's telling the crowd of Jews that Jesus is that Davidic Descendant that the Davidic Covenant referred to, but you (Israel) rejected Him. He would have set up the Davidic kingdom at that time upon the earth had Israel accepted Him, but because they didn't, the inauguration of the kingdom has been postponed.

— The Bible will frequently reveal people's destiny before that destiny comes to pass, so if v30 is talking about Jesus on David's throne, it doesn't have to necessarily mean that He's on David's throne now; it could mean that He will be on David's throne in the future. This is referred to as the Futuristic Present tense (Cf. John 1:29; Rom 8:29-30; 1 Cor 15:42-44; 2 Peter 3:8; 1 John 2:17; Jude 14; Joshua 6:2).

- The Davidic reign of Christ is so certain that the Holy Spirit uses the present tense to describe it. But if you want to understand where Jesus is now, you have to read v34-35, which says He's at the right hand of the Father "until" the Father makes His enemies His footstool, which has not yet taken place.
- Peter reveals the identity of Christ's role before He actually fulfilled that role. Christ will sit on David's throne, but that doesn't mean He's sitting on David's throne now.
- Similarly, it was a done deal that David would reign for the soon-to-be-deposed Saul as early as his anointing in 1 Sam 16, although David did not actually reign from David's Throne in Jerusalem until much later (2 Sam 2; 5).
- It is already a foregone conclusion that Jesus will reign from David's Throne one day, although His Davidic rule from earthly Jerusalem has not yet begun (Cf. Ps 132:11)
- "...his throne" - David's throne
- The reason why Peter mentions David's throne here is because Jesus is the rightful heir to David's throne. But Peter never says that Jesus is on David's throne now, he just says that Jesus is a heir to it. Being an heir to the throne is completely different than saying that Jesus is currently seated on it.
- Amillennialists, Postmillennialists and Progressive Dispensationalists all teach that Jesus is current sitting on David's throne, and use this verse to argue it, but that's not at all what Peter is saying here.
- Peter is not saying Jesus is on David's throne now, he's saying that Jesus would be seated on David's throne now if Israel had accepted Him instead of rejected Him
- The language that Peter uses here is very similar to the language that John the Baptist used of Jesus in John 1:29: The next day he \*saw Jesus coming to him, and \*said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! He said this before Jesus died on the cross, so Jesus had not yet taken away the sin of the world.
- The death of Christ to take away the sin of the world would not transpire for another 3+ years, yet John the Baptist identifies Jesus based on His destiny. His statement was proleptic (futuristic present tense), which is the same way Peter is using Ps 132:11 here.
- Jesus is not yet reigning on David's throne, but His destiny is to rule the world from David's throne, just like during the time of John the Baptist, Jesus had not yet taken away the sin of the world via the cross, but it was His destiny to do so.

Ps 132:11: The LORD has sworn to David A truth from which He will not turn back: "I will set upon your throne one from the fruit of your body.

Peter gave a tremendous sermon on the Day of Pentecost, as he weaved together a number of OT passages together to explain to them that the Man that the nation of Israel rejected and murdered was the prophesied Messiah of the OT. Then he urged them to change their minds about who Jesus is and trust in Him as Savior.

He urged them to go from being a Christ-rejecting Jew and aligning themselves with Israel, to being a Christ-accepting Jew and aligning themselves with this new entity called the Church. There was no way on earth that Peter, with his words of v30, was going to convince that crowd that Jesus ascended and was at that time sitting on David's Throne without a whole lot more information. They understood from the very beginning that Jesus would one day rule and reign from David's Throne on the earth, from Jerusalem. A Gentile may have fallen for that, because they didn't have the OT background, but the Jews at Pentecost that day never would have.

31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.

31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.

31 he looked ahead and spoke about the resurrection of the Messiah: 'He was not abandoned to Hades, and his flesh did not experience decay.'

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

- Peter reverts back to v27 of his quote of Ps 16:8-11

— So Jesus is the fulfillment of Ps 16:8-11 and Ps 132:11...but He is not a fulfillment of Ps 132:11 in the sense that He is reigning on David's throne today, but in the sense that because of His destiny as the Davidic Descendant, He will do so in the future

32 It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses.

32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

32 "It was this very Jesus whom God raised—and we're all witnesses of that.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

- Peter repeats the fact that Jesus rose from the dead (Cf. v24)

— If there is no bodily resurrection, then Jesus made a false prophecy about Himself and He was never the Messiah

— It's one thing to say I will die and in three days rise again, but it's a completely different thing to pull it off, in perfect harmony with prophecies that were written about you (Cf. Ps 16:8-11) 1000 years in advance

(e) Christ's present session predicted in Psalm 110:1 (2:33-35)

33 Therefore, since He has been **exalted at the right hand of God**, and has received the **promise of the Holy Spirit** from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.

33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

33 He has been exalted to the right hand of God, has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, and has caused you to experience what you are seeing and hearing.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

- Peter now goes on to tell us what Jesus is doing right now, since He is not currently sitting on David's throne

- "...exalted at the right hand of God" - notice that it doesn't say that Jesus was exalted to David's throne

— This exaltation is exactly what Jesus prayed for in John 17:5, to be glorified with the Father, and restored to the glory that He had before the Incarnation. If Jesus is sitting on David's throne today, His prayer here was not answered.

— Multiple passages assert that after the Ascension of Christ, He went back to the Father's right hand, and is seated on His Father's throne (John 17:5; Acts 7:55-56; Rom 8:34; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22; Rev 3:7,21; 5:5; 12:5)

- Jesus is currently engaged in what is called His "Present Session." Jesus has/will function in three offices:

- Prophet: His first coming, where He continued in the same manner as the OT prophets, calling Israel back to the covenant, which is what all the OT prophets did
  - His work in the office of Prophet is outlined in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Priest: Today, in His "Present Session"
  - This ministry is described in Hebrews
- King: beginning at His second coming, and beyond
  - His reign as King is described in the OT prophets, including Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah

— So the reign of Christ now is not the Davidic reign of Christ. This is the difference between non-denominational churches and the big denominations (Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Southern Baptist, Church of Christ, Roman Catholicism, etc. They believe that Jesus is reigning today from David's throne over a "spiritual" kingdom, whereas the Bible is clear that the kingdom has been postponed due to Israel's rejection of their Messiah, and will eventually be inaugurated after Israel accepts her Messiah and calls out to Him to return and rescue them (Matt 23:37-39).

- "...promise of the Holy Spirit" - the first act of Jesus during His "Present Session" was to fulfill His many promises to send the Holy Spirit to indwell all believers, at Pentecost (Cf. John 14:16-18; 16:5-7; Luke 11:9-13; 24:49; Acts 1:4-5).

- This is Peter's point in rehearsing all of this information...the miracle of "tongues" that the people "both saw and heard" was not due to drunkenness, but it was Jesus' first act in His office of Prophet, which fulfilled the many promises He made during His earthly ministry
- Progressive Dispensationalists interpret this verse as Peter saying that Jesus has fulfilled the Davidic reign, that He is now reigning on David's throne. This interpretation misses the entire point of Peter's sermon because they miss the promise that is spoken here in fulfillment is the giving of the Holy Spirit, which was promised in Luke's "prequel."
- Peter next explained that it was Jesus, sitting at God's right hand, who sent the promised Holy Spirit from the Father (John 14:16-17,26; 15:26-27)
- The evidence was the "tongues of fire" and demonstration of tongues speaking that his audience saw and heard
- If Christ inaugurated His Davidic reign at His Ascension, it seems exceedingly strange that His first act as reigning Davidic King was to send the Holy Spirit, something that was never included in the promises of the Davidic Covenant. Instead, His first act as High Priest, which is what He currently is, was to send the Holy Spirit...this makes perfect sense.



## Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 273-74.

“The present ministry of Christ in heaven, known as His session, is far-reaching both in consequence and import. It too, has not been treated even with a passing consideration by Covenant theologians, doubtless due to their inability—because of being confronted with their one covenant theory—to introduce features and ministries which indicate a new divine purpose in the Church and by so much tend to disrupt the unity of a supposed immutable purpose and covenant of God’s. Since, as will be seen, certain vital ministries of Christ in heaven provide completely for the believer’s security, the present session of Christ has been eschewed by Arminians in a manner equally unpardonable. This neglect accounts very well...



## Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 273-74.

...for the emphasis of their pulpit ministrations. The Christian public, because deprived of the knowledge of Christ’s present ministry, are unaware of its vast realities, though they are able from childhood itself to relate the mere historical facts and activities of Christ during His three and one-half years of service on earth. That Christ is doing anything now is not recognized by Christians generally and for this part-truth kind of preaching is wholly responsible. It yet remains true, whether neglected by one or the other kind of theologian, that Christ is now engaged in ministry which determines the service and destiny of all those who have put their trust in Him.”

Dave Anderson is a Progressive Dispensationalist, who believes the kingdom has already come in spiritual form now, and will come in physical form after the Second Coming.



## Dave Anderson

*The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews* (New York: Lang, 2001), 2.

"But clearly Jesus did not set up a natural theocratic kingdom with Himself as the king ruling from Jerusalem on earth before His resurrection. So, what happened to the kingdom He promised? It was postponed, many NT interpreters suggest. . . . But if the premillennial view just espoused is true, that leaves the question concerning the present ministry of Christ. **What is He doing right now?**"

Anderson seems to not have any clue what Jesus is doing right now, in His "Present Session." Essentially, Anderson says that if you don't believe that Jesus is now reigning on David's throne in heaven, you believe He is sitting on His hands doing nothing. See chart below: **Christ's High Priestly Activities in His Present Session.**



## Dave Anderson

*The King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews* (New York: Lang, 2001), 296.

"But classical or revised dispensationalists should also recognize the *already* eschatology of Hebrews. **Christ is not passive on the throne.** He is reigning. He has subjects. And because He is the forerunner, there are many present blessings which belong to the eschatological age which can be enjoyed now because the Davidic Covenant with some of its blessings has been inaugurated."

"Christ is not passive on the throne" - no kidding, He's busy doing many things, but one of those is not ruling the world.

Christ's High Priestly Activities in His Present Session	
<b>1. Sustains creation (Col 1:16-17)</b>	<b>7. Keeps the Saints (John 10:27-29; 1 Peter 1:5)</b>
<b>2. Head over the Church (Eph 1:22-23)</b>	<b>8. Intercedes for the Saints (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25)</b>
<b>3. Groom of the Church (Eph 5:22-33)</b>	<b>9. Advocate for the Saints (Heb 9:24; 1 John 2:1)</b>
<b>4. Building the Church (Matt 16:18; Acts 2:41; 4:4)</b>	<b>10. Restores broken fellowship (1 John 1:9)</b>
<b>5. Bestowal of Spiritual Gifts (Eph 4:7-12)</b>	<b>11. Disciplines His children (Heb 12:5-13)</b>
<b>6. Melchizedekian High Priestly role (Heb 6:20)</b>	<b>12. Indwells His people (John 14:23)</b>

Kingdom Now theologians use Acts 2:30,34-35 to argue that Jesus is currently reigning on David's throne, and a spiritual form of the kingdom has been inaugurated. They believe these verses are air-tight, game-set-match arguments for their interpretation. See [The Coming Kingdom 57 Is Jesus Reigning on David's Throne? - Part 4 \(Acts 1:6-7; 2:30,34-35\)](#) for a refutation of this interpretation.

What is Peter doing in his sermon in Acts 2? He is revealing the identity of Jesus as Israel's Messiah. Jews were gathered on the Day of Pentecost, and Peter's sermon told them that what they just did with Jesus was wrong. They just rejected and murdered their OT Messiah. And Peter uses a number of OT passages to prove his point. He's using the OT because he was speaking to Jews. He's also imploring them to repent, accept Jesus (believe) that He was the Messiah, and identify themselves with the new "Church" that has begun.

### Progressive Dispensationalism

Progressive dispensationalists believe that the Church Age is "phase 1" of the Davidic kingdom, and they believe that Jesus is reigning right now from David's throne in heaven. They don't deny the fact that Jesus will one day reign from David's throne one day upon the earth, but the current activity of Christ is "phase 1" of the Davidic reign. They don't recognize Jesus as sitting at the right hand, as multiple passages tell us, carrying out His duties as Priest, under the order of Melchizedek. They also don't recognize/believe that David's throne is on the earth, not in heaven (1 Kings 2:11-12). David sat on his throne, as

well as Solomon, and every other king in the southern kingdom until Zedekiah, the last king before the Babylonian Captivity.

However, Progressive Dispensationalism (and any other belief that sees Jesus currently reigning from David's throne in heaven) has to change everything we know about the Davidic throne to come up with their belief:

- They must change the place from earth, to heaven
- They must change the people who are ruled from David's throne from Israel to the Gentile-dominated Church
- They must change the fact that the Bible says that Jesus will reign from David's throne over a believing Israel to unbelieving Israel
- They must change the realm of David's throne and Christ's rulership from physical (on earth) to spiritual (in heaven)

Charles Ryrie asked, "If Christ inaugurated His Davidic reign at His Ascension, does it not seem incongruous that His first act as reigning Davidic king was the sending of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), something not included in the promises of the Davidic Covenant?" When you go back and look at the Davidic Covenant, it does not even mention the Holy Spirit. So if Jesus took His seat on David's throne after the ascension, to fulfill the Davidic Covenant, why was His first act as Davidic king to do something that is foreign (not promised in) the Davidic Covenant?



## Zane Hodges

Zane C. Hodges, "A Dispensational Understanding of Acts 2," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, ed. John R. Master Wesley R. Willis, Charles C. Ryrie (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 177.

"Yet even apart from this consideration, Bock misses the point of the quotation from Psalm 110 in Acts 2. As v33 makes clear, the real link is with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is a well-confirmed New Testament teaching that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the *direct consequence* of our Lord's ascension to the Father. According to John's Gospel, the Lord informed the disciples, 'it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him to you' (16:7). Earlier He had also said, 'and I will pray to the Father, and He will give you another helper, that He may abide with you forever' (14:16). Our Lord's return to the Father and His intercession there are necessary to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit..."



## Zane Hodges

Zane C. Hodges, "A Dispensational Understanding of Acts 2," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, ed. John R. Master Wesley R. Willis, Charles C. Ryrie (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 177.

...Thus, in Luke-Acts the gift of the Spirit is termed 'the promise of the Father' for which the disciples must wait until after Jesus' ascension to Heaven (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4). Bock labels Psalm 110 a 'resurrection proof text.' However, it is not an explicit statement of the resurrection since the resurrection is not mentioned in the Psalm. It does prophesy enthronement at God's right hand. **The point of Peter quoting Psalm 110 is simply this: the seated Christ is the source of the Spirit's outpouring. By His intercession He has secured what God the Father promised.** This is precisely what Acts 2:33 states: 'therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you see and hear.'"

Peter quotes Ps 16:8-11 to show that Jesus' resurrection was a fulfillment of prophecy, then he quotes Ps 110:1 to show where Jesus went after His ascension, and to show that He is the source of the Spirit's outpouring. His return to the Father secured what God the Father had promised.

Progressive dispensationalism completely misses the point of this passage. Peter is not saying that the miracles of "tongues" they are seeing means that Jesus inaugurated

"phase 1" of the Davidic kingdom. And Peter's use of these OT passages is really very simple to understand: he is (1) refuting the accusation that the apostles were drunk when they began speaking in known languages, and (2) this miracle of "tongues" is a manifestation of the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made multiple times during His earthly ministry.

34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: '**THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,**

34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,

34 After all, David did not go up to heaven, but he said, 'The Lord told my Lord, "Sit at my right hand,

**34** For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

- Peter quotes Ps 110:1 in v34-35 to show where Jesus went after His ascension: He is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven

— Ps 110:1 is an OT passage that Jesus previously applied to Himself (Matt 22:43-44; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-42). It is the most quoted OT verse in the NT.

— Peter uses this quote to communicate what Jesus was doing at that time, after His ascension. He's not functioning as the Davidic king, but as a High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek.

— Every heretical end times belief looks to Acts 2 for support. Progressive dispensationalists see Peter's quote of Ps 110:1 as showing that Jesus inaugurated "phase 1" of the kingdom program at Pentecost.

— However if this is true, you would expect to find some verbiage or imagery about His coronation in Ps 110, but none is found. Instead what you find in Ps 110 is priestly language.

— It may have been Jesus' use of this passage that enabled His disciples to grasp the significance of His resurrection, and understand the prophecies of the Messiah in the OT

- "THE LORD" - *Yahweh* [YHWH], referring to God the Father

- "...MY LORD" - *Adonai*, Master; a reference to the Messiah (possibly in the immediate context to Solomon)

— David may have composed this psalm at Solomon's coronation as Israel's king

— So the first line of the psalm reads: "YHWH said unto Adonai" - the grammar of the possessive hangs on a single *yot*! (Cf. Matt 5:18)

— Jesus used this quote to totally confuse the Pharisees (Matt 22:41-45)

- "...SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND" - God the Father extended the privilege of serving as His administrator to Messiah (or Solomon), His vice-regent

- “SIT” - Kingdom Now theologians, in trying to prove that Jesus is currently reigning on David’s throne, combine v30 with v34-35. Verse 34-35 talks about Jesus “sitting,” and v30 talks about Jesus being an Heir to David’s Throne, so they take the “Sit” from v34 and combine it with “throne” in v30, to argue that Jesus is on David’s throne today.
- See [The Coming Kingdom 57 Is Jesus Reigning on David's Throne? - Part 4 \(Acts 1:6-7; 2:30,34-35\)](#), [The Coming Kingdom 58 Is Jesus Reigning on David's Throne? - Part 5 \(Acts 2:30,34-35; 3:19-21\)](#), and [The Coming Kingdom 61 Is Jesus Reigning from David's Throne? - Part 8 \(Acts 2:30,34-35\)](#) for a refutation of this interpretation.
- Progressive Dispensationalists like Darrell Bock use a “crucial linking allusion” as license to take the word “sit” in v30 (from Ps 132:11) and the word “sit” from v34 (from Ps 110:1), and state that this “linking allusion” means that Jesus is currently reigning on David’s Throne. See [The Coming Kingdom 61 Is Jesus Reigning from David's Throne? - Part 8 \(Acts 2:30,34-35\)](#) and [Acts 11-12-13 The Beginning of the Church Age - Part 3-4-5 \(Acts 2:34-36\)](#). This theory is completely blown up by Gabriel’s revelation to Mary about the birth of Christ (Luke 1:32-33).
- If Peter is teaching this Jewish audience that Jesus is now reigning on David’s Throne, what he later wrote in his own epistles about the kingdom (1 Peter 1:4-7,13; 2 Peter 1:11,16) makes absolutely no sense.
- This theory is also blown up when you see that v30 and v34 employ different verbs. Progressive Dispensationalists link the two verbs “to seat” (v30) and “Sit” v34), however in v30, the verb “to seat” (*kathizō*) is a transitive verb meaning “to seat or place.” In Greek, a transitive verb takes a direct object. In v34, the verb “Sit” (*Kathēmai*) is an intransitive verb meaning “to sit.” In Greek, an intransitive verb means it does not take a direct object. The verbs are similar, but not the same Greek word. If Luke intended his readers to link them, from two different OT passages, the verbs should be identical.
- “RIGHT HAND” - Christ’s enthronement at the time of His Ascension was not to David’s Throne, but rather was a restoration to the position at His Father’s right hand (Heb 1:3; Acts 7:56), the same position He had given up at the time of the Incarnation (Phil 2:6-8)
- It was for this restoration that Christ prayed to His Father (John 17:5)
- Since Christ had never occupied David’s Throne before the Incarnation, it would have been impossible to restore Him to what He had not occupied previously. He was petitioning the Father to restore Him to His place at the Father’s right hand.

### 35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.”

35 Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

35 until I make your enemies your footstool.”

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

- "UNTIL" - not *while* God makes His enemies His footstool, but "until"; a clear indication that we are not currently in the kingdom. Christ's enemies will (future) be made His footstool someday. This is the point of the Book of Revelation (Rev 6:19).
- Progressive Dispensationalism, amillennialism, and postmillennialism completely ignore this word
- Jesus will "SIT AT [the Father's] RIGHT HAND" and He will stay at the Father's right hand *until* something takes place. Before that thing takes place, Jesus will continue in His High Priestly ministry, according to the order of Melchizedek.
- Once Jesus comes back, He will bind Satan in the abyss for one thousand years, and only once that is done, will this world be fit for God's kingdom. It is at this point that His enemies are a footstool for His feet, and then the Davidic kingdom will be set up.
- "...I" - God the Father
- "...MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL" - "until" God the Father takes the enemies of Jesus and makes them a footstool for His (Jesus') feet, Jesus will remain seated at the right hand of the Father
- Another translation may be: "Messiah, sit beside me and rule for Me, and I will subdue Your enemies."
- Jesus' enemies are not a footstool for His feet today...His enemies are running the entire world. His enemies will be His footstool once Satan is deposed (currently he is only convicted, awaiting sentencing), which will occur after the Second Coming (Cf. Rev 20:1-3).
- Names & Titles Demonstrating Satan's Post-Fall Earthly Authority
  - Prince of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
  - God of this age (2 Cor 4:4)
  - Prince and power of the air (Eph 2:2)
  - Who the believer wrestles with (Eph 6:12)
  - Roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8)
  - Whole world lies in his power (1 John 5:19)
- Since these things are true, it is obvious that Satan is ruling this world, and Jesus' enemies are not yet His footstool
- Until Satan's final sentencing is imposed, Jesus will remain in heaven as High Priest, while seated on the Father's throne at His right hand

### **Satan's Progressive Defeat**

1. Initial eviction from heaven (Is 14:12-15; Ezek 28:12-17)
2. Eden (Gen 3:15)
3. Pre-diluvian world (1 Peter 3:19-20; Cf. Gen 6:1-4)
4. Cross (John 12:31; 16:11; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8)

5. Midpoint of the Tribulation (Rev 12:9)
6. Beginning of the millennium (Rev 20:2-3)
7. End of the millennium (Rev 20:10)

If you want to understand where Jesus is now, the best typology we have on this in the entire Bible is the typology of David & Saul:

	David/Saul	Jesus/Satan
ANOINTED	David (1 Sam 16:13)	Jesus-Ressurection/Ascension (Ps 2:7; 110:1)
RULE	David (2 Sam 2; 5)	Jesus (Rev 20:1-10)
NOW RULING	Saul (1 Sam 16:14)	Satan (Luke 4:5-7)
ILLEGITIMACY	Benjamin (Gen 49:10; 1 Sam 9:21)	Gen 1:26-28; 2:19-20; Dan 1:6-7
FAITH-WALK	David (1 Sam 16:7)	Jesus (Heb 11:6)
MINORITY	David's men (2 Sam 23:8-39)	Narrow road (Matt 7:14)
SIGHT-WALK	Saul (1 Sam 9:2)	Satan (2 Cor 4:18; 1 John 2:15-17)
MAJORITY	Israel	Broad road (Matt 7:13)
McClain, Greatness of the Kingdom, 440		

These verses include four proofs of the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension:

1. The prophecy of Ps 16:8-11 and the presence of David's tomb (Acts 2:25-31)
2. The witnesses of the Resurrection (v32)
3. The supernatural events of Pentecost (v33)
4. The Ascension of David's greater Son (Ps 110:1; Acts 2:34-35)
  - On five occasions in Acts some of the apostles said they were witnesses of the resurrected Christ (Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39-41; 13:30-31). They knew whereof they spoke!

Peter supported truth with facts, eyewitnesses, and Scripture.

If you're going to use Ps 110 to argue that Jesus inaugurated the kingdom and began reigning on David's throne from heaven, where is all the pomp and circumstance or the inauguration ceremony? Ps 110 doesn't prove at all that Jesus is functioning as King right now; it proves that He is functioning as High Priest. This is why Peter quotes it to the Jews in his audience at Pentecost, because this is Jesus' new office. We learn from Acts 2:34-35, with Peter's quote of Ps 110:1, that Jesus is functioning as High Priest today, not Davidic King.

### Christ's Three Offices

1. Prophet — 1st Coming (Matt 4:17)
2. Priest — Present Session (Heb 4:15; 6:20; 7:3; 10:12-13)
3. King — 2nd Coming (Is 9:6-7; Matt 25:31)

The originator of Progressive Dispensationalism, even before Darrell Bock and Craig Blaising, was George Eldon Ladd of Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, CA. Look at the lengths that Ladd has to go through to make Acts 2 say that Jesus is currently sitting on David's throne in heaven:



### George Eldon Ladd

A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 336-37.

“[T]he new redemptive events in the course of *Heilsgeschichte* have compelled Peter to reinterpret the Old Testament. Because of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, Peter transfers the messianic Davidic throne from Jerusalem to God's right hand in heaven. Jesus has now been enthroned as the Davidic Messiah on the throne of David, and is awaiting the final consummation of his messianic reign. This involves a rather radical reinterpretation of Old Testament prophecies, but no more so than the entire reinterpretation of God's redemptive plan by the early church. In fact, it is an essential part of this reinterpretation demanded by the events of redemptive history. Jesus is enthroned as the Messiah.... He must reign until all his enemies are made a stool for his feet.”

“*Heilsgechichte*” - redemptive (salvation) history

- To belief Replacement Theology or Progressive Dispensationalism, you have to believe that the NT has rewritten the OT. You have to take what the Bible says in the OT about Jesus physically reigning from Jerusalem, seated on David's throne, and believe they were lies.



## “Complementary Hermeneutics” in Progressive Dispensationalism

“...the New Testament does introduce change and advance; it does not merely repeat Old Testament revelation. In making complementary additions, however, it does not jettison Old Testament promises. The enhancement is not at the expense of the original promise.”

Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock, “Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church: Assessment and Dialogue,” in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, ed. Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 392–93.

Bock is saying that the NT comes along and adds a "heavenly layer" to the Davidic Covenant that was not a part of the original promise.

Bock essentially says the same thing as G.E. Ladd, but he says it in a more politically correct and sophisticated way. Instead of essentially saying that the NT jettisons the OT, Bock says that the NT expands the OT through "complementary additions" or "enhancements." But don't worry, the earthly millennial kingdom will still be fulfilled in the future.

Bock calls this "complementary hermeneutics" which means the NT didn't erase the OT, it just took the OT promises and expanded them. But the OT part of it will still be fulfilled one day. According to Bock, you cannot believe in Progressive Dispensationalism without buying into "complementary hermeneutics."



## Darrell Bock

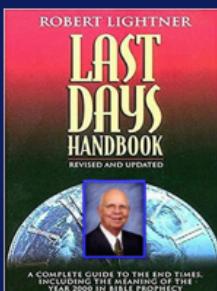
"Evidence from Acts," in *The Coming Millennial Kingdom*, ed. Donald Campbell and Jeffrey Townsend (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 194.

"The Davidic throne and the heavenly throne of Jesus at the right hand of the Father are one and the same."



This is the conclusion that Bock comes to after applying "complementary hermeneutics" to some NT passages, most notably Acts 2:34-35.

## Is Jesus Now Reigning on David's Throne?



"Complementary hermeneutics' must not be confused with the historic orthodox doctrine of progressive revelation. The latter truth means that God revealed His truth gradually, sometimes over a long period of time. What was revealed later never changed the original revelation, however. The meaning and the recipients of the original promise always remain the same."

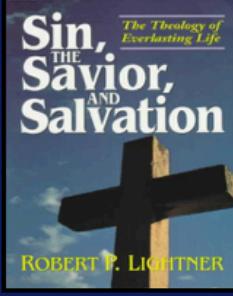
Robert Lightner, *Last Days Handbook* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 210.

Robert Lightner, who was one of the primary voices against Progressive Dispensationalism, clarifies the difference between progressive revelation, a valid biblical concept, and

complementary hermeneutics, which is something made up by Darrell Bock. Never does either later revelation in the OT, or the NT, ever change the original promise...it only adds additional detail and specificity to that promise.



## Is Jesus Now Reigning on David's Throne?



**"So, they have not only changed the people to include the Church, but they have also changed the place where the covenant is to be fulfilled. Now it's not only on earth, but it's also in heaven. The people have changed and the place has changed."**

Robert Lightner, "Progressive Dispensationalism," *Conservative Theological Journal* 4, no. 11 (March 2000): 53–54.

#### (iv) Conclusion (2:36)

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him **both Lord and Christ**—this Jesus whom **you** crucified."

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

36 "Therefore, let all the people of Israel understand beyond a doubt that God made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah!"

**36** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

— This is the climax of Peter's sermon. He has quoted from three different portions of Scripture, and has built this sermon on the Person of Jesus Christ.

— Peter now wraps up his sermon by telling Israel that based on the information that he has given them from the OT, what they had seen in the apostles speaking in known languages, and what they already knew of Jesus during His earthly ministry, they can be "certain" that God has made Him both Lord and Christ/Messiah...and you (Israel) crucified Him.

- After you crucified Him, He rose, He ascended, and now He is the source of these known languages that you hear the apostles speaking
- "...both Lord and Christ" - there many interpretations of this short phrase, with eschatological implications:
  - "Lord" - used to apply to Jesus all that was said of God in the OT
  - It was the main feature of the Church's witness to Gentiles, and was subsequently used by Paul in his epistles to Gentile churches
  - "Christ" - dispensationalists believe this word (also translated "Messiah") means that Jesus was the Davidic Messiah, prophesied in the OT
  - The messiahship of Jesus was the main feature of the church's witness in Jewish circles, signifying His fulfillment of Israel's hopes and the culmination of God's redemptive purpose
  - Progressive dispensationalists and covenant theologians believe that Peter meant not only that Jesus was the Davidic Messiah, but that He also began reigning as the Davidic Messiah at that time. To them, the Davidic messianic kingdom had begun, based on this phrase. Both groups also believe that Jesus' reign as Messiah began during His earthly ministry. They see the Church as the present stage in the progressive unfolding of the messianic kingdom.
  - "...you" - refers to the Jews; it's interesting that in this sermon, to this audience, Peter did not present the Cross as the place where the Sinless Substitute died for the world, but where Israel killed her own Messiah
  - Peter wanted every Israelite to consider the evidence just presented (from the OT!), because it proved "beyond a doubt" [ISV] that Jesus was God's sovereign Ruler (Lord) and anointed Messiah (Christ)

### **Summary of Peter's Sermon**

- Accusation: the apostles are drunk; that's why they are speaking in these other known languages
- Refutation from Peter:
  - v15 - nope, it's too early for that
  - v16-21 (Joel 2) - you should recognize this as a work of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is going to do something very similar/analogous to this at the end of the Tribulation and during the messianic kingdom.
  - v22 - instead, this miracle of "tongues" comes from the miraculous hand of Jesus, whom you saw and heard about doing many miracles while He was on the earth
  - v23 - but you crucified Him
  - v24 - and then He rose from the dead
  - v25-29 (Ps 16:8-11) - by the way, this same Jesus you crucified is going to reign from David's throne over the messianic kingdom one day

- v30-32 (Ps 132:11) - Jesus is the "descendant" that the Davidic Covenant referred to, but you (Israel) rejected Him
- v33 - He has now ascended to the Father, and has in turn poured out the Holy Spirit, which is the source of the miracle of "tongues" that you are seeing
- v34-35 (Ps 110:1) - and in fact, He's going to be there for awhile, until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet

(c) Jewish reaction (2:37)

**37** Now when they heard **this, they were pierced to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "**Brothers, what are we to do?**"

**37** Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

**37** When the crowd that had gathered heard this, they were pierced to the heart. They asked Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

**37** Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

- "...this" - everything Peter just said in v15-35

- "...they" - the Jews in the *diaspora* who had assembled in Jerusalem for Pentecost

- "...pierced to the heart" - convicted, persuaded; in the Upper Room, Jesus predicted that this would happen (John 16:7-11; Cf. Heb 4:12)

— This vividly describes their innermost feelings, their emotional state. Clearly the people were compelled by feelings of remorse to seek an avenue of change. This is why Peter says in v38, "Repent" (change your mind about who Jesus is).

— Peter was not content to just let them feel guilty because feeling guilty in and of itself doesn't save anybody. He communicated to them to allow the guilt they were feeling to manifest itself by repentance (them changing their minds about Jesus, v38).

- The Holy Spirit used Peter's sermon to bring conviction to his hearers, as Jesus had predicted (John 16:8-11)

— He convicted the crowd of the truth of what Peter said and their guilt in rejecting Jesus

— Their question arose in response to this conviction

- "...Brothers, what are we to do?" - demonstrates that these people are not saved (yet).

They are convicted based on what the Holy Spirit has done in their hearts, and now they are asking what they need to do.

— This is a classic work of the Holy Spirit...the Holy Spirit convicts people to a point that they know they need to do something. The Holy Spirit did the same thing with the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30-31).

— Notice that the Holy Spirit doesn't believe for these people, He just brings them to the point that they are convinced that they need to do something

(d) Peter's exhortation (2:38-40)

38 Peter said to them, **"Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

38 Peter answered them, "Every one of you must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the Holy Spirit as a gift.

**38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

- "...Repent" - *metanoeō* = *meta*, change; *noeō*, notion or mind; repentance means "to change your mind"; see [Soteriology 06 - Repentance \(Acts 2:38\)](#).

— The Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and other Early Christian Literature (BAGD) states: *metanoeō* means "to change the mind." It indicates *meta* = "after" and *noeō* = "to grasp or comprehend something on the basis of careful thought, to perceive, think." Thus, it means "to perceive afterwards" or "to change the mind."

— The Theological Dictionary of the NT states: In pre-biblical and extra-biblical usage, both the noun and verb forms bear the sense of "subsequent knowledge." With further development both verb and noun come to mean "change of mind."

— This change of opinion or decision, the alteration in mood or feeling, *is not in any sense ethical, meaning it may be for the bad as well as for the good.*

- When the Bible uses "repentance" in an evangelistic sense, as Peter does here, it is asking an unbeliever to change their mind about whatever is preventing them from trusting Christ alone. In this case, it was for the masses to stop being Christ-rejecting Jews who sided with Israel in rejecting Christ, and change your mind away from the mind of unbelieving Israel, to my (Peter's) message, where Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation.

— Repentance was repeatedly part of the apostles' message in Acts (v38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 10:43; 11:18; 13:24; 17:30; 19:4; 20:21; 26:18,20)

— Repentance does not mean feeling sorry or guilty from our sin (Matt 27:3; Heb 12:17). If this was the case, Peter could've left the Jews in their emotional state in v37 and not urged them to repent in v38. They were already "pierced to the heart" (v37) which meant they were convicted of their unbelief in Jesus as their Messiah and what they did to Him (crucified Him).

— Repentance is also not a turning away from sin (John 4:10,17-19). We do not need to resolve to forsake sin and thrust ourselves at Christ's mercy in order to be saved. Jesus doesn't ask us to clean ourselves up, then come to Him. This is a basic tenet for Reformed

theologians and Lordship Salvation, but is not biblical. Doing this would make salvation based on a work that we do first, which eliminates grace and makes room for boasting.

- For the Greeks, *metanoeō* never suggests an alteration in the total moral attitude, a profound change in life's direction, [or] a conversion which affects the whole conduct.
- The unbeliever has no power to forsake sin (it's impossible). It's only after a believer has the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the other resources God provides, that they can begin to turn from sin (some more quickly than others).
- When repentance is understood in this way, it becomes a synonym for faith instead of an antonym for faith. So when you believe, you also repent, and when you repent, you automatically believe because your mind has been changed regarding Who or what you are trusting in (Luke 5:32; Acts 11:18; compare 10:43 with 11:17-18; compare 13:38-39 with 2:38; 2 Peter 3:9).
- If a person only thinks of repentance as turning from sinful practices (reforming oneself), repentance becomes a good work that a person does. This is not the type of repentance that leads to salvation.
- *A serious Arminian error occurs when repentance is added to faith or believing as a condition of salvation. It is true that repentance can very well be required as a condition of salvation, but then only because the change of mind which...has been involved when turning from every other confidence to the one needful trust in Christ. Such turning cannot be achieved without a change of mind. [Ryrie]*
- The moment you understand repentance and faith to be two different things, you've taught the wrong gospel. It's the same moment you have contradicted ~200 other passages that only require belief for salvation.
- John's Gospel, the only book in the Bible written to unbelievers (John 20:31), for the purpose of evangelizing the unsaved, does not mention the word "repentance" once. Romans, which formulates the complete statement of salvation, does not mention "repentance" in relation to salvation. If repentance was so critical to salvation, as many pastors continually state it is, why is it that the most evangelistic book in the Bible (John's Gospel) uses the word "believe" 99x, but never uses the word "repentance" even one time?
- In contrast to what Lordship Salvation believes, repentance and belief are NOT two separate acts. We must recognize that when the words "believe and repent" are found together, they are never used in a manner that would suggest two separate requirements for salvation. On the contrary, when salvation from eternal condemnation is in view, repent and believe are used as synonyms.
- It is stated by some that repentance is essential to salvation, and that no one can be saved apart from repentance, but repentance is included in believing and cannot be separated from it. When you believe in the biblical sense, you are repenting because your

mind is changing about who Jesus is. You are shifting in your mind away from every confidence that you may have had (self, works, denomination, family tree, nationality). You're shifting your trust away from those things, to Christ. Consequently, you are simultaneously, not separately, repenting (changing your mind).

— When a person trusts Christ, he or she abandons his or her false notions about the Savior and embraces the truth. The truth is that Jesus Christ is God's provision for our eternal salvation. When we rest our confidence in Him and the sufficiency of His work on the Cross for us, God gives us eternal life. This is not just giving mental assent to facts that are true. Saving faith does that, but also places confidence in Christ, rather than in self, for salvation.

— "...each of you" – Peter called for individual repentance (Greek 2nd person plural)

— The Jews, who encompass his entire audience, thought corporately about their responsibilities as God's chosen people, but Peter confronted them with their individual responsibility to believe in Jesus

— "...baptized" – the NT uses the word "baptism" in two ways: Spirit baptism and water baptism. Peter here is referring to water baptism. See note: **Jewish Baptism** below, as well as in 1 Peter 3:21.

— Once these people had "repented" (changed their mind about what national Israel had done: attributing Christ's miracles to Satan, Matt 12:24), and they were full-fledged believers, Peter tells them to be baptized in order to publicly identify themselves with the message of Peter.

— As a first century Jew, the moment you were baptized, you were making a public stand that Israel was wrong in their understanding of Jesus, and Peter has it right

— Our baptism is our "confession" (Cf. Heb 10:23)

— This verse is a major proof text for those who believe that water baptism is essential for salvation ("baptismal regeneration"). However this belief runs into major problems with passages that make the forgiveness of sin, and salvation in general, dependent on nothing but trusting in Christ (Acts 16:31; 10:43; 13:38-39; 26:18; Luke 24:47; John 3:16,36; Rom 4:1-17; 11:6; Gal 3:8-9; Eph 2:8-9).

— Baptism contributes nothing to our justification, which comes from faith alone in Christ alone. So why get baptized? Because it's a step of obedience, you are going public with your faith. It contributes nothing to your justification, but it's essential for your growth in the second tense of your salvation.

— Peter later promised the forgiveness of sins on the basis of faith alone, not baptism (5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18)

— There are almost 200 verses in the NT that deal with how to become a Christian, and all of them make faith in Christ the only condition (see note: **How Complicated is Salvation?** in John 3:16)

- "...in the name of Jesus Christ" - notice Peter's specificity; you can't believe in "God" or believe in "creation" or a "higher power"; Peter is specific that we believe in the "name" of Jesus Christ, and it is in that name that we are baptized/identified (Cf. 4:12).
- In order to be saved, you have to believe/trust in something or Someone. In this case, Peter is specific on who you must believe/trust: the name of Jesus Christ. In 4:12, Peter clarifies that the name of Jesus Christ is the *only* way to be saved and be brought into a right relationship with God.
- "...for" - *eis*, this is maybe the worst English translation in the entire Bible. The way this verse reads in English, it appears to say that a person must be baptized in order to have their sins forgiven.
- The preposition *eis* can be translated either as "for" or "because of" (Cf. "at" in Matt 12:41). If you change the translation of *eis*, the verse reads: "...each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ *because of* the forgiveness of your sins." It changes the entire meaning of the verse, and now the verse harmonizes with clear teaching everywhere else in Scripture. Baptism does not produce forgiveness or the remission of sins, only Jesus can do that.
- If we're baptized "because of" the forgiveness of our sins, it means that baptism is a response to our forgiveness, not a requirement for forgiveness (salvation)
- Peter is not saying that you need to get baptized *in order* to be forgiven, he's saying that you need to get baptized *because* you have been forgiven
- Over and over throughout the NT, people get saved, then they get baptized (Cf. Matt 28:19; Acts 8:12,34-39; 10:42-45; 16:14-15,30-34; 18:8). There is not one example in the NT of someone getting baptized, then getting saved.
- There is also no evidence or example anywhere in the Bible where an infant gets baptized. This is a completely manmade doctrine, which is pulled from Genesis when Abraham was told to circumcise his son on the eighth day.
- If you're interpreting this verse to say that baptism is required to be forgiven, you're interpreting it in such a way that is inconsistent with how every other verse in the Bible deals with baptism. This is one of the ways you know if you've come up with the wrong interpretation of something: if your interpretation contradicts everything else that is said about a topic, your interpretation does not harmonize with what else is said about a topic, chances are you have the wrong interpretation.
- The problem is, to interpret this verse to mean baptism is required for a person to be saved does not harmonize with other salvation passages, either in Acts, the Gospels, or the epistles (Cf. Acts 15:7-8). How you interpret 2:38 has to harmonize with Acts 15:7-8, which demonstrates that Gentiles were saved through grace alone in Christ alone, simply through belief, as were the Jews at Pentecost.
- "...gift of the Holy Spirit" - baptism with the Spirit; the Spirit is the gift

- Peter connected reception of the Spirit with repentance; the Holy Spirit immediately baptized those who repented (11:15); Spirit baptism was never a later “second blessing”
- Note that Peter did not say anything about acknowledging Jesus as Lord, in the sense of surrendering completely to His Lordship, to receive eternal life. He did not mention it because he did not believe it was essential for salvation (i.e. Lordship Salvation).
- This is the favorite verse of Church of Christ and Hyper-Dispensationalists, who come here over and over again to argue that a person must be water baptized to be saved (Church of Christ), or to argue that the church did not begin until Paul (Hyper-Dispensationalists).
- If baptism were required for salvation, Paul makes a very strange statement in 1 Cor 1:13-16 that he was thankful that he did not baptize many people, except for a couple men, and one family. If baptism was indeed required for salvation, that means that all of the people Paul evangelized were never saved because he didn't baptize them.
- Once a person has been saved, Peter says two things happen immediately:
  1. "...forgiveness of your sins" - all of our sins, past, present and future, are forgiven (Ps 103:10-12)
  2. "...you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" - regeneration (the impartation of divine life) (Titus 3:5; Cf. Matt 19:28)
    - The Greek word for regeneration is *palingenesia*, a compound word that means "to begin again"
    - If you don't have the Holy Spirit indwelling you, you are not saved (Rom 8:9)

Notice that the progression in Acts 2:37-38 is expressed by 2 Cor 7:10: “For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation.” From their sorrow the Jews were led to the point of repentance, and being repentant they believed in Christ (v44). Their remorse over the sin of crucifying Christ moved them toward a true repentance which focused on their thinking about Christ.

Simply put, Peter challenged these heart-broken Jews to change their minds and attitudes (repent) about the Messiah, a change that if real, would then lead to their outward identification with Christ through baptism, the natural result of their new spiritual birth.

## **Jewish Baptism**

The reason Peter included “baptism” along with repentance is not to show that baptism is required for salvation. This is further expanded in 1 Peter 3:21 (see notes there). Just as in 1 Peter, which was written to Jewish believers of the *diaspora*, Peter here is speaking to a Jewish audience, instructing them that there were two requirements (for them): repentance (change their mind about who Jesus is) and water baptism (to save them from coming judgment [the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem]).

Repentance saved them spiritually. The believers in Acts had not yet done that (but would shortly); Peter's audience in 1 Peter was already saved. What Peter notes here regarding baptism, and clarifies further in 1 Peter 3:21, is that these believers also needed to be water baptized to be saved physically from the coming 70 AD judgment. It was baptism that would separate them from "that generation" (v40). This is why Peter states in v40 for these unbelieving Jews to "save themselves" [KJV] which obviously cannot refer to justification. Instead, it refers to their physical salvation from the judgment of 70 AD.

39 For **thepromiseis for youand your children** and for **all who are far away**, as many as the Lord our God will **call** to Himself."

39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

39 For this promise belongs to you and your children, as well as to all those who are distant, whom the Lord our God may call to himself."

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

– "...the promise is for you and your children" - this personal gospel that Peter is preaching to the crowd of Jews is not just for them, but it's for their family (children) and also those who are "far off"

– When Paul is asked by the Philippian jailer what he had to do to be saved (16:30-31), Paul told him that he had to believe in the Lord Jesus and he would be saved, "you and your household"

– In other words, the promise is not just for the Philippian jailer to be saved, but the same promise pertains to the jailer's entire household

– "...all who are far away" - refers to Jews in the *diaspora*, who were not in Jerusalem for Pentecost; it also refers to Gentiles, since Paul refers to them as "far away" (Eph 2:17)

– Peter already expressed his belief that Gentiles could be saved (Cf. v21; Joel 2:32); this fact was taught repeatedly in both the OT and NT

– Peter's problem later on involving the salvation of Cornelius was not because he believed Gentiles could not be saved, but rather in the manner by which they became Christians (i.e. not through Judaism, but directly, without becoming Jews first)

– Peter here is promoting the idea of "unlimited atonement"...that the death of Christ is available to every human being who ever lived, as a means of salvation through faith alone/belief. This is the opposite of the Calvinistic view of Limited Atonement, which says that Christ only died for those He elected.

– Biblical support for the doctrine of Unlimited Atonement: John 1:29; 3:16-17; 4:42; 6:51; 12:32,47 • Acts 17:30 • 2 Cor 5:19 • 1 Tim 2:4,6; 4:10 • Titus 2:11 • Heb 2:9 • 2 Peter 2:1 • 1 John 2:2; 4:14

- "...call" - an often misused word/idea that is used as a condition for salvation: the "ABC method": Admit, Believe, Call.
- This idea was introduced by Charles Finney during the Second Great Awakening in America. Finney brought in a framework/methodology for revivalism, meaning that he believed to spark revival you had to induce conversions by any means possible.
- But in this verse, notice that it is God who is doing the calling, not man. Calling on God (confession) is not a condition to salvation. To get this to work, you have to go to dispensationally misapplied passages (Cf. Acts 2:21; Rom 10:9-10).

40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on urging them, saying, **"Be saved from this perverse generation!"**

40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!"

40 Using many different expressions, Peter continued to testify and to plead: "Be saved," he urged them, "from this corrupt generation!"

**40** And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

- This is a narrative parentheses that Luke gives us, letting us know that Peter continued to preach, testifying and urging them to be saved
- So Luke doesn't give us every word Peter said, but Luke gives us the main topic that Peter was touching on...

— "...Be saved" - different than the concept of v38. The concept in v38 is to be saved from the consequences of personal sins, so they wouldn't go to hell; in v40, Peter is talking about these Jews being delivered/rescued from the judgment that will fall upon first century Israel for rejecting their Messiah (Cf. Deut 28:49-50).

- It is a call for a separation from "that generation" through water baptism
- God told Israel all the way back at Mount Sinai that if they were disobedient, a nation from afar would swoop down and destroy them (Cf. Luke 19:41-44)
- Peter is warning these people here of Jerusalem's pending judgment, and instructing them to leave so they wouldn't be caught up in it. He changes the topic from being saved by repenting and accepting Christ (v38) to being saved (delivered) from the pending judgment that will happen upon Jerusalem.

— "...perverse generation" - Peter's telling them to come out of the nation of Israel, because it is under judicial judgment for their rejection of Christ

— Discipline for the nation is on the horizon (in ~37 years, 70 AD), so Peter is urging them to "leave" the nation of Israel, repent (change their mind about who Jesus is), and believe

— This phrase has little meaning unless you understand the offer and rejection of the kingdom, Israel's resulting judicial blindness, and Israel being put back under the curses of

Deut 28 because of their rejection

- Jesus pronounced judgment on the generation of Jews who rejected Him (Matt 21:41-44; 22:7; 23:34-24:2)
  - In view of that prediction, Peter may have had impending judgment in mind while urging his hearers to be saved
  - Jesus' promised judgment fell in 70 AD when Titus invaded Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and scattered the Jews

*This exhortation shows that Peter viewed that generation under the physical, temporal judgment that Jesus had predicted. What Jesus had warned them about earlier (Matt 12:31-32) had now come on them and was inescapable. However, while judgment on the nation was inescapable, individuals could be delivered from it. Peter's answer was, "Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that [because] your sins have been forgiven," that is, they were no longer to participate in the repeated sin of the nation in rejecting Christ.*

*The confession of their faith in Christ and of their identification with him by baptism would demonstrate their separation from the nation. They would be put out of the synagogue and lose all identity in the nation. Thus, by this separation they would individually not undergo the judgment on that generation since they ceased to be a part of it. Baptism did not save them. Only their faith in the One in whose name they were being baptized could do that. But baptism did terminate their identity with the nation so that they could escape its judgment. [Pentecost]*

## Eusebius (260-340 AD)

*Ecclesiastical History, 3.5.3*

"But the people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella. And when those that believed in Christ had come thither from Jerusalem, then, as if the royal city of the Jews and the whole land of Judea were entirely destitute of holy men, the judgment of God at length overtook those who had committed such outrages against Christ and his apostles, and totally destroyed that generation of impious men."

Epiphanius (*De pond. et mens.* 15) also records this flight of the Christians to Pella.)

Eusebius is talking about a well-known prophecy in the early church that the Christians living in Jerusalem needed to get out because judgment was coming. They were to go to Pella (modern day Jordan). If they didn't leave the city, they would be caught up in the cycle of discipline that God promised would happen to a disobedient nation all the way back at Mount Sinai (Deut 28:49-50). About 1M Jews died during the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

(e) Jewish reaction (2:41)

41 So then, those who had **received** his word were **baptized**; and **thatday** there were **added about three thousand souls**.

41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

41 So those who welcomed his message were baptized. That day about 3,000 people were added to their number.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

- "...received" - a synonym for believed (Cf. John 1:12)

- "...baptized" - water baptism, which followed *after* they had "received his word" (were saved)

— There is no passage in the Bible that places water baptism before coming to faith in Christ. On the contrary, the order always found is faith in Christ, then water baptism (Cf.

Matt 28:19; Acts 8:12,34-39; 10:42-45; 16:14-15,30-34; 18:8).

- The only passage that people use, out of context, is Gen 17 with circumcision on the 8th day. This is what people use to argue for the baptism/sprinkling of infants.
  - "...that day" - the Day of Pentecost
  - "...added" - they were added to the remnant of 120 people who were in the Upper Room (Cf. 1:15)
  - "...about" - a rough estimate; we are to take every number in the Bible as an iron clad number, unless we're told not to. In this case, Luke says that there were "about" 3000 converts that day, meaning the actual number could have been a little more or a little less. The 3000 is not an exact number.
  - "...three thousand souls" - more people became Christians on this one day than did so during the entire earthly ministry of Jesus (John 14:12)
- In Matt 16:19, Jesus told Peter that He would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. A key is something that is used to grant entrance into (keys to your house, car, storage locker, etc.). Here, God used Peter to grant entrance into the kingdom to 3,000 people.
- Many people misunderstand this to mean that these 3,000 people entered the kingdom immediately, which is not the case. They entered the church, but their ticket to the future kingdom was punched because of their belief in Jesus Christ.
- Here, Peter leads the first Jews to Christ. In Acts 8, Peter will lead the first Samaritans to Christ; in Acts 10, he will lead the first Gentiles to Christ. In each case, Peter opened the door to salvation for these groups, which allows them future entrance into the coming kingdom.
- At the Giving of the Law, 3,000 were killed (Ex 32); at the Giving of the Spirit 3,000 were given life

### **Transitions Between the Resurrection and 70 AD**

The time between the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD was a transitional period. The tearing of the temple veil when Jesus died (Matt 27:51) symbolized the termination of the old Mosaic order and the beginning of a new order. The new order began when Jesus Christ died. However, it took several decades for God's people to make the transition in their thinking and practice. The Book of Acts documents many of those transitions:

- Ethnically, from dealing primarily with Jews to dealing with both Jew and Gentile without distinction
- God transitioned from dealing with Israel exclusively to dealing with the Church exclusively
- The principle by which God deals with people transitioned from the Law to grace

- Transition from the offer to Israel of an earthly Davidic kingdom to the offer to all men of salvation based on the death and resurrection of the Messiah
- Transition from the prospect of Messiah's coming to the historical fact that He had come
- Transition from the promise that the Spirit would be given to the historical fact that the Spirit had come

These transitions were made positionally in the brief period of time from the death of Christ to the Day of Pentecost. Yet experientially these truths were understood and entered into only over a span of some four decades. The Book of Acts records the positional transition as well as the experiential transition in the development of the theocratic kingdom program.

(C) Activities of the first church (2:42-47)

42 They were **continuallydevotingthemselves** to the **apostles' teaching** and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**.

42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

42 The believers continued to devote themselves to what the apostles were teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to times of prayer.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

- This verse is often used to describe the mission of the Church. See **(2) The Purpose of the Local Church** in [Church: Definition, Purpose, Government, Organization, Leadership, Discipline](#) for a complete list of scriptural purposes of the church.

- "...continually devoting themselves" - *proskartereō*, steadfastly attentive to; to be devoted or constant; a single-minded devotion

— The disciples "devoted" themselves to two activities: (1) the apostles' teaching, and (2) fellowship. The grammar of the Greek distinguishes these two activities from the two activities (breaking bread and prayer) that define fellowship.

— "...apostles' teaching" - doctrine; the first priority of the church is to understand correct doctrine (Cf. Eph 4:11)

— This included the Jewish Scriptures, the teachings of Christ, and the revelations He gave to the apostles from heaven

— This means that the early Church gave priority to the revealed Word of God

— If you don't understand doctrine, you can't understand any of the other priorities of the church. Doctrine is the foundation on which all of the priorities and activities of the church are based.

- In the Upper Room, Jesus told the disciples that if they knew these things (the things He was teaching them), they were blessed if they did them. Notice that they first had to "know" these things (doctrine), then the blessing would come when they "did" them (Cf. John 13:17).
- "...fellowship" - *tekoinōnia*, to develop a community; God designed the Christian life to be lived with other people. If you're a Christian and you have no fellowship with other believers, you're living outside of your design.
- If you have a campfire and you want to extinguish it, the fastest way to do that is to separate the coals from one another. When you do that, they no longer heat each other up, and they go out much faster. It is the same thing with a Christian...if you separate them from other believers, their fire goes out much faster.
- The presence of the article (*te*) indicates that this fellowship was distinctive: it was fellowship within Judaism
- Even though their fellowship included material goods, its primary reference must be to the ideas, attitudes, purposes, mission and activities that the Christians shared
- "...breaking of bread" - communion (Cf. 1 Cor 11:23-26); the purpose of communion is to recognize that the grace and mercy we receive were not free. They were free to us, but God paid a huge price to reconcile us to Him.
- "...prayers" - praising and thanking God, as well as petitioning and interceding for His glory. Prayer moves the hand of God (Cf. James 5:16).

### Priorities of the Local Church (Acts 2:41-47)

1. Doctrine (Acts 2:42)
2. Ordinances (Acts 2:41-42,46)
3. Prayer (Acts 2:42)
4. Evangelism (Acts 2:47)
5. Worship (Acts 2:47)
6. Benevolence (Acts 2:44-45)
7. Fellowship (Acts 2:42,46-47)

See Ecclesiology 39 Activities of the Church (Acts 2:41-47) for details on each of these priorities/activities of the church.

### (B) Miracles (v43)

**43** Everyone kept feeling a **sense of awe**; and many **wonders** and **signs** were taking place **through the apostles**.

**43** Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

43 A sense of fear came over everyone, and many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

— "...a sense of awe" - *phobos*, fear of the Lord (Cf. Prov 1:7); the initial converts developed a fear/respect for the Lord (Eph 5:21; 6:5)

— "...wonders" - *teras*, same word used to describe Jesus' wonders (Cf. v22)

— "...signs" - *semēion*, same word used to describe Jesus' signs (Cf. John 20:30)

— When Jesus was on the earth, He performed both *teras* (wonders) and *semēion* (signs). He continued with these acts after His ascension, but from the Father's right hand in heaven.

— "...through the apostles" - often ignored or misunderstood

— The apostles did many signs and wonders. They, or their delegates (Cf. Stephen, Acts 6:8), were the only ones who performed miracles in Acts. These delegates were appointed by the apostles through the laying on of hands.

— There is no indication or mention anywhere in Acts that any signs or wonders were performed by the believers at large

— The reason why the miracles in the early church were only performed by the apostles (or their hand-selected delegates) is because God built the church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20).

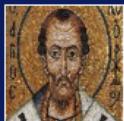
— We see miracle clusters throughout the Bible, including during the early church, because that is how God authenticated the new work He was doing.

— Many early church fathers (Chrysostom, Augustine) and church historians (Philip Schaff) have documented how the miracles that were common at the beginning of the church age began to become more rare as time went on. By the 4th century, they were all but gone (Cf. 2 Tim 4:20).

— The Charismatic movement today, which goes to the Book of Acts for support, argues that if miracles happened in the early church, then we should also be doing the same types of miracles today. Their ecclesiology is more experiential than doctrinal (Cf. 2 Cor 12:12).

## Miracle Clusters In Scripture

#	ERA	AUTHENTICATION
1	<b>Moses</b>	<b>Law</b>
2	<b>Joshua</b>	<b>Conquest</b>
3	<b>Elijah-Elisha</b>	<b>Prophet</b>
4	<b>Christ</b>	<b>Kingdom offer</b>
5	<b>Apostles</b>	<b>Church</b>
6	<b>Tribulation &amp; Millennium</b>	<b>Kingdom establishment</b>

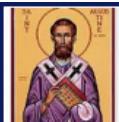


### Chrysostom (A.D. 345–407)

*Patriarch of Constantinople, Chrysostom, Homily 29 on First Corinthians.*

“This whole place is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place. And why do they not happen now? Why look now, the cause too of the obscurity has produced us again another question: namely, why did they then happen, and now do so no more?”

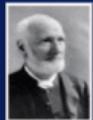
Chrysostom wrote about Corinth, a city full of spiritual gifts and miracles, in the 4th century saying that the miracles that used to be common in Corinth have petered out.



## Augustine (A.D. 354–430)

Bishop of Hippo, *Homily 6:10 on the First Epistle of John.*

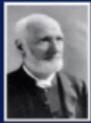
“In the earliest times, the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed: and they spoke with tongues, which they had not learned, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:4 These were signs adapted to the time. For there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues, to show that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away. If then the witness of the presence of the Holy Ghost be not now given through these miracles, by what is it given, by what does one get to know that he has received the Holy Ghost?”



## Philip Schaff

*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, p. 236-37.

“We do not know how long the glossolalia, as thus described by Paul, continued. It passed away gradually with the other extraordinary or strictly supernatural gifts of the apostolic age. It is not mentioned in the Pastoral, nor in the Catholic Epistles. We have but a few allusions to it at the close of the second century. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 1.v.c. 6 § 1,) speaks of ‘many brethren’ whom he heard in the church having the gift of prophecy and of speaking in ‘diverse tongues’ (παντοδαπαῖς γλώσσαις), bringing the hidden things of men (τὰ κρύφια τῶν ἀνθρώπων) to light and expounding the mysteries of God (τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ Θεοῦ). It is not clear whether by the term ‘diverse,’ which does not elsewhere occur, he means a speaking in foreign languages, or in...



## Philip Schaff

*History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, p. 236-37.

...diversities of tongues altogether peculiar, like those meant by Paul." The latter is more probable. Ireaneus himself had to learn the language of Gaul. Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* V. 8; comp. *De Anima*, c. 9) obscurely speaks of the spiritual gifts, including the gift of tongues, as being still manifest among the Montanists to whom he belonged. At the time of Chrysostom it had entirely disappeared; at least he accounts for the obscurity of the gift from our ignorance of the fact. From that time on the glossolalia was usually misunderstood as a miraculous and permanent gift of foreign languages for missionary purposes. But the whole history of missions furnishes no clear example of such a gift for such a purpose."

Schaff wrote *History of the Christian Church*, which is considered the most authoritative work on the history of the church available.

- 44 And all the **believers** were together and had all things in common;
- 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;
- 44 All the believers were united and shared everything with one another.
- 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;
  - "...believers" - demonstrates that "Repent" (v38) and "received" (v41) are synonyms for believing
    - The unity of the first group of believers was an answer to prayer that Jesus prayed in the Upper Room (John 17:30-23)
      - However, the early church never watered down or compromised apostolic doctrine for the sake of unity
      - Jesus' prayer in John 17 was answered when the baptism of the Holy Spirit began at Pentecost (Cf. 1 Cor 12:13)



## Lewis Sperry Chafer

vol. 5, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 158.

“Thoughtless and absurd is the modern notion that Christ was praying that denominations which exist in this remote time and in a country then unknown might become organically united in one, and therefore it is the duty of all sects to unite and thus help to answer this prayer. As indicated before, this unity is sought at the hand of the Father, indicating that it is a divine undertaking. It is that, and it results in a unity as organic and vital as that between the Father and the Son. This prayer began to be answered on the Day of Pentecost when believers were by the Spirit baptized into one Body, and is constantly answered whenever a soul is saved and thus joined as a member to the Body of Christ by the same baptism of the Spirit.”

45 and they would sell their property and possessions and share them with all, to the extent that anyone had need.

45 and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

45 They made it their practice to sell their possessions and goods and to distribute the proceeds to anyone who was in need.

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

- Before you can understand what this verse means, you have to first understand what this verse doesn't mean. Progressive Christianity uses this verse to argue that a form of communism is biblical, because it was practiced by the early church.

- Antonio Gramsci, a well-known communist from the early 1900s, who was imprisoned in 1926, wrote more than 30 notebooks and 3000 pages of history and analysis

— He fell out of favor with the communists of his day because he thought they were going about the promotion of communism in the wrong way. He believed that you do not conquer countries through force if you want to bring in lasting change, but instead you have to infiltrate the centers of thought.

— This is called the "Gramsci Method"; it's a "long march through the institutions" which include academia, entertainment, media, and you have to change the church, because Gramsci believed the church was a natural resistance to Marxism.

— Today, the church is preaching a model of Christianity that is not biblical; it has more to do with Marxism than the Bible. The church doesn't use the terms Marxism or Communism today; they've rebranded those words as "Equity," "Social Justice," or "Liberation Theology."

— Gramsci believed that you didn't have to turn everyone in a country into a full-blown communist in order to transition a country into Marxism. What you have to do is alter their value system to the point that when communism comes, there won't be any serious resistance against it.

— On January 10, 1963 congressman A.S. Herlong (FL) read into the congressional record the 65 goals of communism. When you read this list, it's stunning how much progress the communists have made in the past 60 years. They have achieved nearly all of their goals. [\[https://www.marxists.org/subject/art/literature/children/ref/gov/gov1.html\]](https://www.marxists.org/subject/art/literature/children/ref/gov/gov1.html)

- What the Jerusalem saints were doing is volitionally (of their own free will) liquidating their assets in order to have cash on hand to help those in need.

— This could be the reason why the Jerusalem church was poor and in need of financial assistance (Cf. 2 Cor 8-9; Rom 15:26-27). Paul went to many churches on his missionary journeys and raised money for the Jerusalem church. They were poor because they went in this communal direction.

— Although the Jerusalem church did these things out of their generosity, it's clear that the Bible says that it wasn't a great idea, since it made them poor and in need of financial assistance from other churches.

— You see a reference to this communal living arrangement here (2:42), then again in Acts 4 and Acts 5, then there is no more mention of it. It isn't mentioned anywhere else in the Bible where churches or Christians practiced this type of communal living arrangement.

## John Adams

John Adams, *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*, 3 vols., American Constitutional and Legal History, ed. Leonard W. Levy (London: Dilly, 1787; reprint, NY: Da Capo, 1971), 3:217



“The moment the idea is admitted into society, that property is not as sacred as the laws of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence. If ‘Thou Shalt Not Covet,’ and ‘Thou Shalt Not Steal’ were not commandments of Heaven, they must be made inviolable precepts in every society before it can be civilized or made free.”

### Communal Living

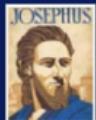
These 3,000 Jews who traveled from foreign countries (2:5-11), in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, were persuaded by the Holy Spirit to change their minds about Christ. They went from being Christ-rejecting Jews to Christ-accepting ones, and they needed to learn new doctrine. Since the NT was not yet written, they decided to remain in Jerusalem in order to learn this doctrine from the apostles (Acts 2:42). However, because their employment was back home and they had originally planned to remain in Jerusalem just a short while, they were without any means of support. Thus, believers in Jerusalem liquidated their property so that they would have available cash in order to support these Jewish believers so that they could remain in Jerusalem in order to learn from the apostles (v44-45).

Note that:

- Communal living was voluntary and temporary in the Jerusalem church (4:32,34-35; 5:4); it was not government forced socialism or communism (see note: **Was Jesus a Socialist?** in Acts 5:4)
- Their goods were not evenly distributed among all, but were given voluntarily to meet needs as they arose
- No other NT church practiced communal living to the extent the Jerusalem Christians did
- The NT does not command communal living, and it's not referenced again in Scripture after Acts 5

46 Day by day continuing with one mind **in the temple**, and breaking bread from **house to house**, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,  
46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,  
46 United in purpose, they went to the Temple every day, ate at each other's homes, and shared their food with glad and humble hearts.

**46** And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,  
- "Day by day" - they had a single-minded devotion; they had no other priorities in their lives other than learning apostolic doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread (communion), and prayer (Cf. v42)  
- "...in the temple" - big church meeting  
— Notice these new Christians did not feel the need to disassociate themselves from the Jewish temple or Judaism  
— All of these new believers were Jewish (or proselytes), and they didn't see Jesus as someone who was inconsistent with Judaism. They saw Him as the fulfillment of Judaism.  
— This is what 1st century Israel got wrong: they thought Jesus was antithetical to Judaism, but in reality He was the fulfillment of Judaism (Cf. Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39,46)  
- "...house to house" - small group meetings



## Josephus

*Antiquities 18.3.3*

"About this time there lived **Jesus**, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who performed surprising deeds and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was **the Christ**. And when, upon the accusation of the principal men among us, Pilate had condemned him to a cross, those who had first come to love him did not cease. He appeared to them spending a third day restored to life, for **the prophets of God had foretold these things** and a thousand other marvels about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared."

OT Prophecies About Christ		
Prophecy	Scripture	Years in Advance
Manner of Birth	Is 7:14	700 years
Place of Birth	Micah 5:2	700 years
Nationality	Num 24:17	1400 years
Tribe	Gen 49:10	1800 years
Pierced	Is 53:5	700 years
No Broken Bones	Ps 22:17	1000 years
Gamble for His Clothing	Ps 22:18	1000 years
Buried in Rich Man's Tomb	Is 53:9	700 years
Crucified Between Thieves	Is 53:9	700 years
Time of and Response to His Messiahship	Dan 9:25-26	600 years

47 **praising God** and having favor with all the people. And **the Lord was adding to their number day by day** those who were being **saved**.

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

47 They were praising God and enjoying the good will of all the people. Every day the Lord was adding to their number those who were being saved.

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

- "praising God" - they were worshippers; worship is a response to truth. The idea is that you hear truth, and once you understand it, you want to audibly praise the Lord.

- "...the Lord was adding" - note where the glory is going for the growth of the church (Cf. Zech 4:6; Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:6)

- God doesn't give us a five-step method that, if followed, will get your church to grow. They were daily being obedient to the Lord's instructions, and the Lord added to their number daily.

- "...their number" - in the KJV/NKJV, it translates this as "the church." The reason for the difference between the KJV/NKJV and the NASB is a Textual Criticism issue.

- The NASB and KJV follow different theories of textual criticism: the NASB goes with "the earlier the manuscript the better" while the KJV goes with "the more manuscripts the better."
  - "...day by day" - these things were happening every single day (Cf. v42,46)
  - "...saved" - *sōzō*, justified saved from the penalty of sin (hell) (v38)

### **Eight Numerical Progress Reports in Acts**

- 1. Acts 2:47: "...And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."**
2. Acts 4:4: "But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."
3. Acts 6:7: "The word of God kept spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith."
4. Acts 9:31: "So the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed peace, as it was being built up; and as it continued in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it kept increasing."
5. Acts 12:24: "But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied."
6. Acts 16:5: "So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily."
7. Acts 19:20: "So the word of the Lord was growing and prevailing mightily."
8. Acts 28:30-31: "Now Paul stayed two full years in his own rented lodging and welcomed all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching things about the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered."