

Pentecost

[Jesus said to them,] *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8, NASB)

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each of them was hearing them speak in his own language. They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?...We hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.”

And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, what does this mean?” (Acts 2:1-12, NASB)

The gift of God’s indwelling Spirit changed the Church from timid, self-centered individuals to a bold and loving body of disciples. They left their fearful hiding and became effective witnesses to the Living Christ.

Jesus Christ had come to make us holy, to reconcile us completely to the Father, to remove all the barriers between Him and us. His ministry to us did not end when He rose from the dead and ascended back to His Father. The Man of the Spirit poured out the Gift of the Father, the promised Holy Spirit, on the Jewish festival of Pentecost, ten days after His ascension. His coming was accompanied by two signs. Both of these signs had long been symbols of the living presence of God.

- *“A noise like violent rushing wind”* (Acts 2:2, NASB) - In both Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek, the word for “Spirit” also means “wind” and “breath”. Thus God’s Spirit has always been associated with wind. God’s Spirit is His life in motion. For example, read Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-10.

- *“Tongues as of fire...rested on each one of them”* (Acts 2:3, NASB) - Fire is another frequent symbol of God’s presence. For example, recall that God’s presence was a pillar of fire in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21). God revealed His holy presence on Mt. Sinai by fire (Exodus 19:18). When Elijah faced the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, the God who answered by fire was the true God (1 Kings 18:24).

The dramatic sights and sounds of the Spirit’s arrival gave proof that Jesus was who He said He was, that He had completed His earthly ministry, and that He was reigning triumphantly at the Father’s right hand. He signaled unmistakably that the powerful, living presence of God Himself was now among, with, and within His people. The promise God had given centuries before through the prophet Ezekiel was now fulfilled:

“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes.” (Ezekiel 36:25-27, NASB)

Being God’s holy people is no longer the impossible task of obeying rules. It is receiving God’s holy life by faith. It is no longer a burden from the outside, but a power from the inside.

Hymn: [Pentecost Hymn](#)

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