



16 – 22 Sep, 2018

Living Pentecost, part 1

**‘While Peter was still speaking these words,
the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the Word’ Acts 10:44**

The birth of the Church

- † **The Book of Acts provides an eyewitness account of the birth and spread of the Church**
 - **Beginning in Jerusalem with a small group of disciples, the message traveled across the Roman Empire**
 - **Empowered by the Holy Spirit, this courageous group preached, taught, healed, and demonstrated love in synagogues, schools, homes, marketplaces, and courtrooms, and on streets, hills, ships, and desert road**
 - **Wherever God sent them, lives and history were changed**
- † **The Book of Acts is far more than a book of history, even though the history is rich. It also shows how**
 - **Christians can engage other people, anywhere, turning them into disciples of Jesus Christ**
 - **Christians show grace under pressure and persecution**
 - **A disciple should prioritize the Gospel and living it in his/her own personal life**
- † **The Book of Acts provides a bridge between the life of Jesus and the growth of the early Church. It was written by Luke between 63 and 70 AD**
- † **Paul’s missionary travels as they are related in the Book of Acts show us the progress of Christianity. The Gospel could not be confined to one corner of the world. This was a faith that offered hope to all humanity. We, too, should venture forth and share in this heroic mission to witness for Christ in all the world**

The evolution of Pentecost

- † **What was Pentecost at the time?**
 - **Pentecost was one of the festivals that Jews observed both in the period of the Old Testament and in the time of Jesus**
 - **Its name came from the Greek word meaning fifty because it occurred fifty days after Passover or Exodus**
 - **According to Jewish tradition, Pentecost celebrates God giving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai**

- With time, Pentecost became a pilgrimage festival, meaning that Jews came to Jerusalem to celebrate during that week
- † In the Old Testament, Pentecost became associated with the Feast of Weeks or the Feast of Harvest (*Exo 23:16; 34:22; 23:15-22; Deu 16:9-12*)
- † The festival celebrated the end of the grain harvest, and participants brought a grain offering to the Lord in thankfulness for His provision (*Lev 23:16*). They also offered burnt offerings and refrained from labor (*Lev 23:18-21*)
- † The new Pentecost is the fulfillment of the old one; at the new Pentecost, there was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (*Act 2:1-13*). The harvest was the new converts. Christ's offering on the Cross was the final (*Heb 9:11-15*). He paid it all and there is no more need for burnt offerings

God's work is always perfect; through the small details He produces great work on a worldwide level and beyond description (*Act 2; Mat 25:23*)

- † Peter's speech was given to an international audience, and it resulted in the first converts to Christianity, a worldwide harvest of new believers
- † Some of the Jews who responded to Peter's message returned to their homelands with God's Good News of salvation. Thus, God prepared the way for the spread of the Gospel
- † This was a new Peter, humble yet bold. His confidence came from the Holy Spirit, Who made him a powerful and dynamic speaker (*2:14*)
- † Believers could hear the Gospel in their own language that day (*2:8-12*) and take it back home to others
- † The apostles and other early Christians had a tremendous opportunity to share truths about Christ with those who had come to observe Pentecost
- † Pentecost is a divine reversal or recapitulation of the events at the Tower of Babel (*Act 2:4-8; Gen 11:1-9*). In the account of Babel, pride was shown to possess the awesome power to divide; here, the humble reception of the Holy Spirit is shown to have the overwhelming power to unite, even in diversity
- † When I plan, I fail. When God plans, I will succeed. The Church grew against all odds, and so will everything in my life (*Act 2:43-47*)
- † God's work through us unites the past, the present and the future together; He overcame the evil at the tower of Babel and of all times and He spread His Word to all the world even to non-Jews (*Act 10:44-48*)
- † 'Be faithful in small matters because it is in them that your strength lies'
Mother Teresa

The Holy Spirit marks the Christian experience (*Rom 8:9*)

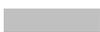
- † It is only through the Holy Spirit that
 - we can be united to Christ (*1 Cor 6:17*)
 - we can be adopted as children of God, the Father (*Rom 8:14-17; Gal 4:6-7*)

- we can be in the body of Christ at baptism (*1 Cor 12:13*)
- ✝ The Holy Spirit is the power of our new lives revealed in courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability, and authority and other gifts
 - This Spirit begins a lifelong process of change making us more like Christ (*Gal 3:3; Phi 1:6*)
 - When we receive Christ by faith, we begin an immediate personal relationship with God
 - The Spirit unites the Christian community in Christ (*Eph 2:19-22*)
- ✝ The Holy Spirit can be experienced by all, and He works through all (*1 Cor 12:11; Eph 4:4*)
- ✝ 'If God can work through me, He can work through anyone' Francis of Assisi

Bibliography

1. *Life Application Study Bible KJV* (Tyndale House Publishers, Illinois, 2007), Kindle Edition
2. *NKJV, Know The Word Study Bible, Gain a greater understanding of the Bible book by book, verse by verse, or topic by topic* (copyright Thomas Nelson, 1982) Kindle Edition, 2016
3. *The Orthodox Study Bible: Ancient Christianity Speaks to Today's World* (For the Old Testament text copyright of St Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology, 2008 and for the New Testament text the NKJV, copyright Thomas Nelson, 1982), Kindle Edition, 2008

Legend

 Refers to mandatory readings

Verse to memorize

'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' Jer 29:11

During the coming week, let us pray expectantly

1. seeking the Lord's will to be done in Lebanon
2. for CrossTalk to find a locale
3. to become more of saints and less of sinners
4. to seek the Lord in every word I say, every act I do and every thought I think
5. to help in building His Kingdom by building His Church on earth
6. to thank Him for creating us and each one around us, on His image and likeness, and choosing us to reveal His splendor
7. to all the sick
8. to all those in prison
9. to the unity of the Christians

10. to one another to be honest and not lack integrity
11. to put all that we have in the Lord's hands trusting His management
12. to all the Christians who are being persecuted, and to those who are persecuting them
13. to all families, that the Lord unites the parents together in His Name and stops all fights
14. to the situation in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iraq and the whole region

During this coming week, we will lift the Armenian Orthodox Church in prayer

<p>الصلاة الربانية أبانا الذي في السموات ليتقدس إسمك ليأت ملكوتك ليتك مشيئتك كما في السماء كذلك على الأرض أعطنا خبزنا كفافاً اليومنا وأغفر لنا ذنوبنا وخطايانا كما نحن نغفر لمن أخطأ وأساء إلينا ولا تدخلنا في التجارب لكن نجنا من الشرير أمين</p>	<p>قانون الايمان نؤمن بآله واحد الآب ضابط الكل خالق السماء والأرض كل ما يرى وما لا يرى ويرب واحد يسوع المسيح ابن الله الوحيد المولود من الآب قبل كل الدهور إله من إله، نور من نور، إله حق من إله حق مولود غير مخلوق الذي له ولآب جوهر واحد الذي به كان كل شيء والذي من أجلنا نحن البشر ومن أجل خلاصنا نزل من السماء وتجسد من الروح القدس ومن مريم العذراء وتأنس وصلب عنا على عهد بيلاطس البنطي وتألم ومات وقبر وقام في اليوم الثالث كما جاء في الكتب وصعد إلى السماء وجلس عن يمين الله الآب وسوف يأتي بمجد عظيم ليدين الأحياء والأموات والذي لا فناء لملكه وبالروح القدس الرب المحيي المنتق من الآب والابن الذي هو مع الآب والابن يسجد له ويمجد الناطق بالأنبياء وبكنيسة واحدة، جامعة، مقدسة، رسولية ونعترف بعمودية واحدة لمغفرة الخطايا ونترجى قيامة الموتى والحياة في الدهر الآتي أمين</p>
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