

GOD

Pentecost – Sealed with the Holy Spirit

God loves us. We were in His foreknowledge from before the foundation of the world, and as we will see He took great thought in His preparations for us to receive what He made available. God also has great things in store for us in the future. On top of all that, He guaranteed His promises to us, letting us know that what He promised He will absolutely perform. Also, what God has done for us in the past, made available by the accomplishments of His Son Jesus Christ, are established and will never be taken away.

John 3:16 says “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We know that when our Lord Jesus Christ returns, we will be given new, incorruptible bodies:

I Thessalonians

- 4:16 For the Lord (Jesus Christ) himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up (away) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so (in this manner) shall we ever be with the Lord.

This is still future, and in the meantime, we live in the Grace Administration. We are living the Great Mystery, which God kept secret since before the world began, because if the adversary had known about this time and what we have available to us, he never would have had Jesus Christ crucified (I Corinthians 2:8).

When we confessed Jesus as Lord and believed in our hearts that God raised him from the dead (Romans 10:9), we were saved, born again, becoming children of God, members of the Body of Christ, dwelling together in God’s household. We also received a gift from God when we got born again, the gift of holy spirit, which as we’ll see is but a token, or down-payment, of the greatness of what we will experience at the Return.

The first time that it was made available to become born again and receive this gift of holy spirit was on the Day of Pentecost, which marks the beginning of the Grace Administration and the birth of the Church of the Body to which we belong.

The name “Pentecost” is from the Greek *pentēkoste*, for 50th, because it took place 50 days counting after the weekly Sabbath that was included in the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread that began on Passover. In Old Testament times, Pentecost was one of the three major feasts that the Israelites were required to attend. It commemorated the wheat harvest with the offering of the first-fruits of that harvest.

Traditionally, Pentecost was considered to mark the time when God first revealed the Law to Israel on Mt. Sinai after the Exodus from Egypt that followed the Passover. After the perfect Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, fulfilled the Law, Pentecost marks our Exodus from the bondage of the Law, and we now live in the Administration of Grace.

The record of the original outpouring of the gift of holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost is recorded in the first four verses of Acts, Chapter 2:

Acts

- 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
- 2:3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
- 2:4 And they were all filled with holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Notice the repeated use of the word “and” (7 times). This is the figure of speech polysyndeton (“many ands”), God’s way of emphasizing each of the points made in this record.

As verse 1 says, the day of Pentecost was “fully come”. Even though both Greek and Aramaic texts read “the days of Pentecost were fulfilled” indicating that the counting of 50 days was accomplished, this particular Pentecost had a far greater significance. God had long been preparing for this momentous occasion, and it had been in the process of “coming” since the fall of man and God’s promise of the “seed of the woman” (Jesus Christ, the Promised Seed) recorded in Genesis 3:15.

Verse 1 says that they (the twelve apostles, including Matthias who replaced Judas Iscariot) were all with one accord (“*assembled together*” in the text) in one place, referred to in verse 2 as “the house,” meaning the Temple. Luke 24:53 says that they “were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God.”

On the day of his ascension ten days before, Jesus Christ had told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until “the promise of the Father” came (Acts 1:4), at which time they would be baptized with (in) holy spirit (Acts 1:5), which meant that they would be endued (clothed) with power from on high (Luke 24:49). This promise was to be fulfilled on this Day of Pentecost as the apostles sat, decently and in order, in the Temple at one of the hours of prayer.

Verse 2 says that “suddenly”, or as one Aramaic text reads “suddenly out of quiet”, there came “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind”. The word “from” in this verse is translated from the Greek word *ek*, which denotes motion out from the interior of something, in this case “heaven,” a place above earth.

The phrase “as of a rushing mighty wind” may be better rendered “as of (like) a heavy breathing”, but the individual words give more impact. The word “mighty” is from the Greek word *biaios*, which according to *Bullinger’s Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament* has the sense of “violent”, “vehement”, or “forceful”. The word “wind” in this verse is a poor translation. In the Greek it’s the word *pnoē*, which comes from a word meaning “to breathe”, or more specifically “to blow”. Bullinger’s Lexicon defines *pnoē* as a “blast” or a “blowing”. In the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*, this part of the verse reads “And suddenly came out of the heaven a sound as of a violent breath rushing.”

This sound of breathing is significant. In the Gospel of John, Chapter 20, Jesus is instructing his apostles during the days between his resurrection and his ascension, getting them ready for what was to come:

John

20:22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the holy spirit.

The word “them” in the phrase “he breathed on *them*” is in italics: it is not in the text. The words “breathed on” are from one Greek word, *emphusaō*, which in the New Testament is only found in this verse. This Greek word is also found in the Septuagint, an ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, in Genesis 2:7 where it says that when God formed man He “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”. In that verse, the corresponding Hebrew word has the sense of “to blow with force”. Of course, this is the figure of speech condescensio, since God, being Spirit, does not breathe. In Genesis, this “breath from God” marked the beginning of life in man (birth); in John 20:22, the breath was to signify the new birth, the beginning of spiritual life in man, when it would become available for the first time.

In both places, the word *emphusaō* carries the meaning “to breathe out”. In John 20:22 Jesus followed this action by saying “receive ye holy spirit”. The word “receive” in this verse is from the Greek word *lambanō*, which means to receive into manifestation. We know that to receive holy spirit into manifestation we speak in tongues, and when we speak, we exhale, or breathe out: Jesus instructed the apostles on what they were to do when receiving holy spirit into manifestation became available.

Whether the sound mentioned in Acts Chapter 2 was the actual breathing of the apostles, or initially a sudden sound that they heard as a cue for them to follow Jesus’ instructions to “breathe” and receive into manifestation, verse 2 says that the sound “filled all the house where they were sitting.”

The next verse in Chapter 2 (verse 3) follows verse 2 in all the critical Greek manuscripts as well as in the Aramaic texts, indicating that after this sound of heavy breathing the apostles saw something:

Acts

2:3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

The apostles were the only ones who saw these “cloven tongues”, as indicated by the words “there appeared unto them”. What they saw was not fire, but looked like fire, and from both the Greek and Aramaic texts this “fire” that came down to them was divided, or separated into parts, so that a part rested upon, or over, each one of them.

Fire is symbolic in that it purifies, or cleanses, burning up sin. It represents victory. Matthew 3:11 says that Jesus Christ came to “baptize with holy spirit and with fire.”

Records in the Old Testament indicate that at times God would accept a sacrificial offering by igniting the fire, for example in I Kings 18:38 where God ignited the sacrifice made

by Elijah. The “cloven tongues like as of fire” that the apostles saw would then signify God’s acceptance of them as they carried out the instructions given by Jesus Christ before his ascension. This may have been the moment that they subjectively received (*dechomai*) the promised gift of holy spirit. Remember that Romans 10:9 says that we need to confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead. The apostles had first-hand knowledge that God had raised Jesus from the dead (they were with him after the resurrection), and by following Jesus’ instructions they made him their Lord.

Acts

2:4 And they were all filled with holy spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

It’s significant that in this verse the word “filled” is *plēthō*, filled to overflowing. They had already subjectively received (*dechomai*) the gift of holy spirit, being filled to capacity (*plēroō*), and now it was time to *lambanō*, to receive into manifestation by speaking in tongues. The verse says that they spoke, but the words that they spoke were from God.

We know from God’s Word that speaking in tongues is one of the nine manifestations of holy spirit that every born-again believer can operate by their freedom of will, and that there are many benefits to speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues can be defined as “the believer’s external manifestation in the senses world of the internal reality and presence of the power of the holy spirit”. We know from Romans 8:16 that speaking in tongues is the proof that we are born again, children of God.

As we see from these first four verses in Acts, Chapter 2, it was on the Day of Pentecost that it first became available to be born again of God’s spirit. Acts 1:15 refers to this new birth as being “baptized with holy spirit:”

Acts

1:15 For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with (in) holy spirit not many days hence.

This verse is significant in that it compares two baptisms: the baptism by John the Baptist using water for a symbolic cleansing, and the baptism with holy spirit that we each got when we were born again.

Even though the baptism with holy spirit is part of the Mystery, which had not been revealed in Old Testament times, we can find some great truths about both of these baptisms and how they relate to the accomplishments of Jesus Christ in a prophecy in the Book of Daniel.

It has been shown that many of the prophecies in the Old Testament had both an immediate application as they pertained to Israel and a later fulfillment either in the Gospel Administration or even in the Age of Grace (the time of the Mystery). Daniel, Chapter 9 contains one of these prophecies. Even though it was originally to Israel, it also applies to the accomplishments of Jesus Christ as they relate to us in this Grace Administration that began on the Day of Pentecost. It not only tells of God’s dealings with Israel, some of which are still

future, but also of God's preparations for us, the Church of the Body. Careful study of this prophecy has revealed how, even though He kept this Administration of Grace a secret, God put it all together right down to the minute details of days, weeks, and years.

We'll just consider one verse of this prophecy:

Daniel

9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.

The word "weeks" in this verse is the Hebrew word *shābua*, which literally means "a seven". Biblically, the number seven stands for spiritual perfection.

Where this prophecy applies directly to Israel (the only application that Old Testament believers were knowledgeable of), a "seven" refers to a period of "seven years", making this prophecy represent a time period of seventy seven-year periods, or 490 years. We won't go into this aspect of the prophecy here, but an earlier teaching I compiled for Pentecost shows how this time period not only covered actual historical dates, as well as events that for Israel are still future, but even pinpoints the actual year of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

Here, we'll just consider how this prophecy in Daniel 9 relates to the accomplishments of Jesus Christ as they relate to God's preparations for Pentecost. In this application, a "seven" refers to a period of seven days, or one week, so Daniel 9:24 refers to a literal period of seventy weeks, or 490 days. This period records God's preparation for us in the Church of the Body which began on the Day of Pentecost.

In researching the prophecy as it pertained directly to Israel, it was found that the 490-year period was divided into three parts: first a part including seven seven-year periods, then one representing 62 seven-year periods, and finally one (still future) seven-year period. Similarly, in the prophecy as it pertains to God's preparations for us, the 490-day period is divided into three parts: the first lasted 62 weeks, followed by one lasting one week, then one lasting 7 weeks.

The 62-week period started with the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist, as recorded in Matthew 3:16-17. Acts 10:38 refers to this baptism, in which "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with holy spirit and with power". Biblical research has indicated that Jesus was baptized by John and received holy spirit upon him on Sunday, February 16 in the year 27 AD.

If you count 62 weeks from that date, you arrive at Sunday, April 25, 28 AD. Matthew 26:7 records how that evening a woman with an alabaster box of very precious ointment poured that ointment on Jesus' head as he sat at meat. This event signified the anointing of the Jesus the Messiah as King of Israel.

Following that 62-week period was a period of one week, during which Jesus was arrested, crucified, died, and then was raised from the dead. Counting takes us to Sunday, May 2. Even though Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on Saturday, the day before, it was on that Sunday that he presented himself to God as the first-fruits from the dead, an event that signified the ultimate defeat of the adversary.

Now, if you add the remaining seven-week period to get to the total of seventy weeks, you arrive at Sunday, June 20, 28 AD, which that year was the Day of Pentecost!

So, it was exactly 70 weeks from the baptism of Jesus Christ to the baptism of the Church of the Body with holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

If you look back at Daniel Chapter 9, verse 24 you see six things listed that are to be accomplished by the end of the specified time period. For Israel these six things will be accomplished at the end of the 490 years, which is still future because the counting of those years has been temporarily stopped until the end of the Grace Administration, the gap of the Great Mystery. As the prophecy applies to God's preparations for us, however, all six of these things have been accomplished. Let's briefly consider these:

1. To finish the transgression – Jesus Christ as the second Adam paid the price and bought us back.
2. To make an end of (the text reads “to seal up”) sins (sin) – we have received remission of sins, and are freed from the consequences of sin.
3. To make reconciliation for iniquity – Jesus Christ reconciled man to God.
4. To bring in everlasting righteousness – with the new birth, God made us righteous.
5. To seal up the vision and prophecy – Jesus Christ, the red thread, is the subject of the Word and accomplished what he was sent to do.
6. To anoint the most Holy – on Pentecost came the baptism (anointing) with holy spirit. We got anointed, and together all members of the Body of Christ are God's dwelling place, referred to in Ephesians 2:19-22 as the Temple: we are the Temple of the living God.

Notice that in two of these six things, the text uses the words “seal up”. In the Septuagint, these words “seal up” are the Greek word *sphragizō*. Biblically, this word is used in reference to the seal used to authorize or guarantee transactions, or to secure something so it couldn't be tampered with. To seal something, an engraved stone, which often was attached to a ring, was pressed into clay or wax on the object to be sealed, for instance on a document.

According to the prophecy in Daniel Chapter 9 as it applies to us, two things are sealed. The first, listed as the second of the six items, was “to make an end of (to seal up) sin”. By putting His seal on it, God put an end to the consequences of sin for us. The ultimate consequence of sin is death, and when we got born again God promised us eternal life.

The second thing sealed is the fifth thing listed: “to seal up the vision and prophecy.” For us, all the preparations God did to make Pentecost available for us were completed, and

everything prophesied about Jesus Christ, all that he came to make available to us, has been accomplished. God put His seal on it: it's all guaranteed, and we can't lose the benefits.

When we apply this to what we received when we got born again, we see the significance of this even greater. Not only are we filled with holy spirit, but we are sealed with holy spirit. We see this in Ephesians Chapter 1:

Ephesians

- 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.
- 1:13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.
- 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Verse 13 says that we are “sealed with that holy spirit of promise.” When we believed, we received the promise of the Father, the gift of holy spirit. God put His seal on it: we can't lose it, and it can't be tampered with.

Verse 14 tells us that this holy spirit we have is the earnest, the token or down-payment, of our inheritance (what God has in store for us). We'll have this down-payment, or token, until “the redemption of the purchased possession”, which will be at the Return of Christ. Then, we'll get all that God promised, including new bodies and eternal life. God's seal is His guarantee that He will fulfill these promises.

We see this same truth in two other verses, establishing it for us:

I Corinthians

- 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts.

Ephesians

- 3:20 And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

We have seen that on that great Day of Pentecost, the birth of the Church of Grace to which you and I belong, God for the first time made it available for people to become born again, receiving the gift of holy spirit and manifesting power from on high by speaking in tongues. We saw how God had prepared for this event, working out the exact timing and details, putting His seal on the benefits we get from the accomplishments of Jesus Christ. We know that we can trust God to carry out what He has promised, because we have not only been filled with holy spirit but we have been sealed with the holy spirit of promise.

God truly does love us, and He has great plans for us. We have a lot to be thankful for and a lot to look forward to.

- Dr. Rick Batt