

## The Filling of the Holy Spirit and the Beginning of the Church

### Acts 2

#### Outline

- 1-4 | Filling of the Holy Spirit
- 5-13 | Disciples preach in other languages known to the listeners
- 14-36 | Peter preaches
- 37-42 | 3000 baptized; the church begins
- 43-47 | Life in the early church

#### Reflections

How many times in your life did you promise to do something for or send something to another but fell short of your promise for any number of reasons? I ask not to accuse but to remind us that we are imperfect and at times fall short of our desired commitments. However, God, on the other hand, is perfect and always does what He promises. In this chapter in Acts we find the fulfillment of a promise given by Jesus to His disciples, the coming of the Holy Spirit.

**John 14:26 NASB** “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

**John 15:26-27 NASB** “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, **27** and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

The disciples are gathered together on the day of Pentecost and “suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.” (Acts 2:2) This was the arrival of the Holy Spirit as promised and immediately they began testifying about Jesus in tongues or, more accurately, languages that were known by those attending the Pentecost services from all parts of the Mediterranean world.

Jesus told them that they would be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the most remote parts of the world (Acts 1:8). This is where it began. It is true that they had already been preaching in Jesus' name as Jesus sent them out into the surrounding areas of Judea and Galilee but this is something new. God was beginning to fulfill the promise given to Abraham some 2500 years earlier.

**Genesis 12:1-3 NASB** Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; **2** And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; **3** And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

The significance of Pentecost is found in the events of the Exodus. Here is a basic timeline to help us understand the significance of this day to both Jews and Christians.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a very rough summary of the importance of Pentecost and is a subject well worth studying further. For more detailed discussions on Shavuot and its significance, see the following:  
Parsons, John J. “Shavuot - the Fulfillment of the Covenant.” [Hebrew4Christians - www.hebrew4christians.com](http://www.hebrew4christians.com).

Kasdan, Barney. *God's Appointed Times: A Practical Guide for Understanding and Celebrating the Biblical Holidays*. Clarksville: Lederer Books; Messianic Jewish Publishers, 1993.

Nadler, Sam. *Messiah In the Feasts of Israel*. Revised Edition. Charlotte: Word of Messiah Ministries, 2006.

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Passover	Feast of Unleavened Bread and Counting of the Omer (49 Days)	Shavuot or Pentecost (50th Day)
Preparation for exodus	Travel to Red Sea and to Mt Sinai	Giving of the Law - Marriage covenant between God and Israelites
Death of Jesus	Resurrection, Appearances, and Ascension of Jesus	Filling of Holy Spirit and start of the Church

God used the events of the Exodus as a foreshadowing of the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus, the imparting of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church.

The message Peter and the rest of the apostles preached that day was simple and direct but presented the truth of the gospel resulting in men being moved to seek a remedy for their situation. Peter's response then is still true for anyone seeking atonement for their sins.

**Acts 2:37-41 NASB** 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?" **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. **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." **40** And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" **41** So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

Thus begins the church, starting in Jerusalem. We will see that the growth of the church continues along the lines of Acts 1:8 - Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the remotest parts of the world.

Lord God, the One who sees from the beginning to the end and keeps His promises to His people. You showed in times past how You would bless all the families of the earth through a descendant of Abraham, Your only Son, Jesus. You kept Your promises to bless and also to give Your Holy Spirit to Your people to help them remember and to be witnesses to the truth of Jesus being the Messiah. Help us, we pray, to be effective witnesses as we do our part in fulfilling Your command to go and make disciples of all the world. May Your Spirit go before us, preparing the way for the preaching of the gospel, in which is the power of salvation to all who would hear and respond. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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