

# THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

**BIBLE TEXT** : Acts 2:1-47

LESSON 281 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

**Acts 2:1-47** <sup>1</sup> And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>7</sup> And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galillæans?

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

<sup>9</sup> Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

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

<sup>11</sup> Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **NOTES:**

#### **The Lord's Promise**

On the last night that Jesus spent with His Apostles before He was crucified, He promised them that the Comforter from Heaven would come to dwell in them. The Comforter would tell them more about Jesus and about Heaven, and would teach them what to do and where to go.

Again, after Jesus had risen from the dead, He told them that the Holy Ghost would come upon them. He promised them: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The Holy Ghost was the same Person as the Comforter about whom Jesus had told them. He would comfort them, teach them, and also give them power.

The disciples could not comprehend all that Jesus was telling them, and they still wanted to know if Jesus was going to set up His Kingdom on earth at this time. Perhaps they thought this power was physical, and it would make them strong enough to overthrow the Roman Empire. But Jesus let them know that that was not important. He wanted them to be interested in having spiritual power over Satan. He wanted them to be witnesses through whom the Holy Spirit would be able to convert them to be witnesses through whom the Holy Spirit would be able to convert sinners for the heavenly Kingdom.

#### **The Meeting in Jerusalem**

Jesus told them that it was at Jerusalem where the Holy Spirit would come upon them, and it would be "not many days hence." So the disciples returned to Jerusalem right away, and began to pray. There were 120 people in that meeting, worshiping and praising God. They were no longer sad because of Jesus' death, but they were rejoicing because He had conquered death and had gone to Heaven. What a triumph it was for them that their Saviour had risen from dead, proving Himself to be the Son of God!

That meeting went on for ten days, with the glory of God resting upon them. They were all sanctified, worshiping in one accord; therefore the Spirit of God could bless. All the Apostles and the women who had followed Jesus, including His mother Mary, were there praising their glorified Lord.

#### **The Day of Pentecost**

Fifty days after the feast of the Passover the Israelites celebrated the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai by a ceremony called the feast of Weeks, or the feast of Pentecost. Jesus, our Passover Lamb, died on the date of the Passover feast. Fifty days later, when the Day of Pentecost had come, the 120 were still worshiping and praising God. They had not grown weary and gone home, but they were tarrying as Jesus had

tongues the wonderful works of God.

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

<sup>13</sup> Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

<sup>14</sup> 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:

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

<sup>16</sup> But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

<sup>17</sup> 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:

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

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

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

<sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

<sup>22</sup> 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:

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

<sup>24</sup> Whom God hath raised up,

commanded. Suddenly they heard something that sounded like a rushing, mighty wind, coming from Heaven. It filled the whole room where they were sitting. It was the Spirit of God coming upon them, the Holy Ghost whom Jesus had promised.

How thrilled they were! Imagine, the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Trinity, coming to live in the hearts of men. And He came into the heart of every one of them. How they rejoiced and praised the Lord!

### **In Other Tongues**

Do you know how they knew that the Holy Ghost had come upon them? He spoke through each one in a language that they did not know. And people from other countries who spoke those languages could understand them.

As this was the season of religious feasts, there were in Jerusalem great numbers of devout people from many foreign lands to celebrate the holy days. When these people heard of what was happening among the 120 humble followers of Jesus, they went to listen. And every one of those people from other countries could hear someone talking in his language – telling about God’s wonderful works. It was the Spirit of God speaking through those unlearned Jews, using their tongues to glorify God in a language they did not know themselves. The Spirit was telling them more about Jesus, just as he had said He would. No wonder the visitors were amazed, and marvelled. Had such a thing ever been heard of before?

### **Joel’s Prophecy**

Yes, about 800 years before, the Prophet Joel had prophesied that this would happen; and Peter now boldly stood with the eleven and proclaimed to that great company of people that the prophecy of Joel was being fulfilled. “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” What confidence, what power there was in those words of Peter! This was it; the promise of God was fulfilled.

Peter proved by the fearless words he spoke that he had received power from God to witness to the people who were mocking and saying that the disciples were drunk. Peter had once denied his Lord before a little maid, because he was afraid to stand for the right. But now, since the Holy Spirit had come upon him, nothing could have stopped him from declaring that Jesus was the Son of God; and that he, Peter, was one of His followers.

He accused the Pharisees of having killed Jesus. He fearlessly told them, “Him, . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” That was enough to make them angry, but Peter had more to tell them of Christ “whom God hath raised up.” They did not want to believe that Jesus was risen for then they would have to admit that He was the divine Son of God.

### **David’s Prophecy**

Peter told of David’s prophecy, Jesus speaking through the mouth of their forefather David: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” These Jews honoured David; and they should have paid attention to his words, for he honoured the Lord and spoke of His resurrection. Now David was dead and gone, and they had only his sepulchre. But Jesus was so much greater than David that He had risen from the dead and left an empty tomb.

having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

<sup>25</sup> 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:

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

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

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

<sup>29</sup> 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.

<sup>30</sup> 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;

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

<sup>32</sup> This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

<sup>33</sup> 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.

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

<sup>35</sup> Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

<sup>36</sup> Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that

If David, more than a thousand years before, had prophesied and believed in the resurrection, why could not these people believe it who had seen it with their very own eyes? Jesus had walked among them for forty days after He rose from the dead. All the 120 were witnesses to the resurrection.

### **Their Conscience Pricked**

There were people in Peter's audience who believed he was speaking the truth. Their conscience began to hurt them for their part in rejecting Jesus, and they wanted to know what they could do to get such power as Peter had. Peter told them that they must first of all repent and be saved. They were religious people who went to church and paid tithes and had much zeal. But they had never repented of their sins.

Peter told them that if they wanted power such as he had, they would have to believe that Jesus was the Son of God. And after they were saved they would have to be baptized in water as Jesus had commanded – in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost – not according to their old forms, nor even the baptism of John the Baptist.

### **Power Through Consecration**

There are many people today who would love to have the power of God in their lives so that they could do things for the Lord, but they are not willing to give what God wants them to give. Peter had had to make many consecrations in order to receive the power he now had. Peter had been self-confident, and had promised the Lord he would go with Him even unto death. He had made his own plans and had even led the other Apostles. He could make bold statements, and he really meant to do things for Jesus. But he had often lacked power to make good his intentions. Just a sneer caused Peter to deny his Lord!

When Peter realized his weakness and failure he went out and wept bitterly. In those prayers he gave up his own ideas and asked for God's help. He was forgiven and was once more a Christian. Later, when Jesus appeared to the eleven when they were fishing, and said to Peter, "Lovest thou me than these?" Peter could say with all his heart that nothing was as important to him as the service of the Lord. Three times Jesus asked, until Peter knew not what to answer. He had consecrated to the depths of his being, and he just cried out: "Lord, thou knowest all things" (John 21:17). Yes, Jesus knows everything, and He can see right into our heart. He knows whether or not we are giving all to follow Him.

Think of the power Peter received after he was baptized. Through his preaching that first day, 3000 people were converted. And that was only the beginning of his Spirit-filled ministry.

### **The Power in Us**

If we want the power on our lives that comes with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we are going to have to make the same kind of consecrations that Peter did. We must yield our body, soul, and spirit completely to Jesus to be used, as He desires. Jesus said that the power would come upon us after we had received the Holy Ghost. As we keep consecrating and using the power He has given us, we will receive more.

After a person is saved his consecrations will lead him into holiness. Consecrations, coupled with faith in the promise of God, will bring sanctification. That is the cleansing of the "temple of the Holy Ghost." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (I Corinthians 6:19). The Holy Ghost will not come into an unclean temple, so we must be purified and cleansed through sanctification. Then we have

God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

<sup>37</sup> 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?

<sup>38</sup> 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.

<sup>39</sup> 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.

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

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

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

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

<sup>44</sup> And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

<sup>45</sup> And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

<sup>46</sup> 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,

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

a right to ask the Holy Ghost to come in and dwell in us.

Peter said: "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." Those "afar off" include us.

It has been almost 2000 years since the disciples received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, yet we today are receiving the same fulfilment of the promise in our hearts when we answer the call of God and give ourselves completely to His will. And we receive the same sign that they received as a witness that the Holy Ghost has come in: speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. On what day did the Holy Ghost first descend?
2. Who received the baptism of the Holy Ghost at that time?
3. Describe the change in Peter after he had received the baptism.
4. Who had prophesied about the Holy Ghost about 800 years earlier?
5. How long after the Passover feast was Pentecost?
6. How did the people know that the Holy Spirit had come upon them?
7. What did the strangers in Jerusalem think about this event?
8. What did Peter tell the people they must do in order to have the power?
9. To whom was the promise of the Holy Ghost made?
10. What evidence do we receive when we are baptized with the Holy Ghost?