

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Acts 2:1-32 & 36-47

Tuesday Bible Study – June 16, 2020

PLEASE NOTE: I am taking some breaks from my Sunday I CONNECT class on June 21 July 12, 19 & 26. Sandy and I will be away June 20 – June 24, so I'm looking for one or more of you to lead the class on June 23. We can discuss the options in class on the 16th. Please???

*I added parallel New and Old Testament scripture versus in these notes...just in case you want to do a little extra reading before we go to class. See "Parallels between Moses...Christian Pentecost" below in the first four verses in this study guide. Look for more opportunities throughout this study...ENJOY!!

These notes are for the entire writing in chapter 2. I'm pretty sure we will **not** get to the end Tuesday, so please hang on to the notes and we'll wrap it up in another—possibly more sessions. There are three chapters that I consider worthy of verse by verse study and discussion. Chapters 2, 9, and 10. I intend to use all verses in 2 and 9, and will use over half in 10. Patience please.

Acts 2:1-4

For your thoughts: Luke began his Gospel with the story of Jesus' birth. He begins the book of Acts with the story of the church's birth. From Dr. Luke's perspective, first came the Messiah; now comes the Holy Spirit.

1. Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2. Suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. Tongues like fire appeared and were distributed to them, and one sat on each of them. 4. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak.

"Now when the day of Pentecost had come"

The "fulfillment" language is important here. Jesus had promised, "you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5). Now his promise is fulfilled.

Pentecost is also known as the Feast of Harvest.

- The word "Pentecost" is Greek, meaning fifty.
- Jews living near Jerusalem are required to attend
- Jews from other nations make pilgrimage as they are able.

*Parallels between Moses' experience and the first Christian Pentecost include:

- Pentecost wind and fire parallel Sinai thunder and lightning (Acts 2:2-3; Exodus 19:16).
- Peter parallels Moses as God's spokesman (Acts 2:14-40; Exodus 31:12).
- The Spirit-inspired speaking in languages by 120 disciples at Pentecost parallels God's gift of the Spirit at Sinai to the Seventy, who prophesied (Acts 2:1-4; Numbers 11:16-30).

"they were all with one accord in one place"

These events take place in Jerusalem, the place where Jesus was tempted and where he died.

“Suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind.... Tongues like fire appeared.... They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak”

Christians retreated into hiding after the crucifixion and waited quietly for God to act.

It amazes me how much happened: The heavens roar! Fire burns! The Spirit of God fills! Disciples preach! Crowds wonder! This gift comes “from the sky” from God.

“a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind...Tongues like fire”

Like other Old Testament scripture that Jesus and the Disciples fulfilled...this one is a big one.

Wind and fire, two great symbols of Pentecost, testify to God’s presence among these disciples:

- At the creation of the world, (Genesis 2:7).
- God breathed breath into Israel, and their dead bones came to life (Ezekiel 37:7-10).

“Tongues like fire”

Old Testament, God showed his presence as “a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch” (Genesis 15:17)—and “a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush” (Exodus 3:2-6)—and “a pillar of fire” (Exodus 13:21)—and smoke and fire at Sinai (Exodus 19:18)—and “devouring fire” (Exodus 24:17).

What parallels do you see in the Pentecost story in Acts?

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit”

Peter is the great preacher at Pentecost, but note the emphasis on the wider community of faith:

- “They were all with one accord” (v. 1).
- “Tongues like fire...were distributed to them, and one sat on each of them” (v. 3).
- “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (v. 4).

“and began to speak with other languages.”

Speaking in “other languages” at Pentecost is different from the speaking in tongues that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians 12-14

At Pentecost, speaking in other languages is for the purpose of communication—making it possible for each person to understand in his or her own language.

The church still proclaims the Gospel in many languages, but that usually requires the preacher to learn the language of those to whom he/she would preach.

Acts 2:5-13

5. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under the sky. **6.** When this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because everyone heard them speaking in his own language. **7.** They were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, “Behold, aren’t all these who speak Galileans? **8.** How do we hear, everyone in our own native language? **9.** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, **10.** Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11.** Cretans and Arabians: we hear them speaking in our languages the mighty works of God!” **12.** They were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, “What does this mean?” **13.** Others, mocking, said, “They are filled with new wine.”

This first call to discipleship takes place to **“Jews, devout men, from every nation under the sky”**

“Devout men” would be Jews who observe the law.

Their devoutness will not insure their salvation. Peter will later call them to repent and be baptized “for the forgiveness of sins” (2:38).

“When this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because everyone heard them speaking in his own language”

Some scholars have noted that Pentecost reverses the curse of the Babel story, in which “Yahweh confused the language of all the earth...scattered them abroad on the surface of all the earth” (Genesis 11:9).

Amazed and astonished, the people asked, **“Behold, aren’t all these who speak Galileans?”**

“Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians”

Luke not only tells us that the crowd has gathered, but also lists the nations . Fun information from an overzealous commentary.

- Parthia = Northern Iran, southwest of the Caspian Sea
- Media = Northern Iran, southeast of the Caspian Sea
- Elam = Southwest Iran, near Kuwait, north of the Persian Gulf
- Mesopotamia = Iraq and eastern Syria
- Judea = The West Bank of Israel and west to the Mediterranean
- Cappadocia = Eastern Turkey
- Pontus = Northern Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) on the Black Sea
- Asia = Western Asia Minor (Turkey)
- Phrygia = West-central Asia Minor (Turkey)
- Pamphylia = Southern Asia Minor (Turkey)
- Egypt = Northeast Africa on the Mediterranean
- Libya = West of Egypt on the Mediterranean
- Cyrene = A small part of Libya on the Mediterranean
- Rome = Rome, Italy
- Crete = A large Greek island located southeast of mainland Greece
- Arabs = Saudi Arabia

“we hear them speaking in our languages the mighty works of God”

All are amazed to hear in their own languages. It is clear that they understand, because they speak of a message of “the mighty works of God” (v. 11). However, while they understand the language, they are not sure of its meaning (v. 12).

Some of the bystanders mock the disciples, saying, **“They are filled with new wine”**

Acts 2:14-15

14. *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spoke out to them, “You men of Judea, and all you who dwell at Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to my words. 15 For these aren’t drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is only the third hour of the day.”*

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spoke out to them”

“Peter, standing up with the eleven” means Peter plus the other eleven apostles equals twelve

“For these aren’t drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is only the third hour of the day”

Peter deflects humor with humor, saying that it is much too early in the day to be drunk.

Acts 2:16-21

16. *But this is what has been spoken through the prophet Joel:*

17. *‘It will be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. 18. Yes, and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days, I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy. 19. I will show wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and billows of smoke. 20. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes. 21. It will be, that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’*

Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32, where Joel prophesied that God would pour out his Spirit **“on all flesh”** but changed those three words to **“whoever will call on the name of the Lord”**

For the time being, that included Jews and proselytes only. Later you will see that God will open the door to include Gentiles as well. Chapter 10...one of the reasons I consider 10 critical in this study.

“It will be in the last days”

The phrase “last days” is eschatological (end of time). And similar to the phrase “the Day of the Lord”.

“that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh”

Until now, God bestowed his Spirit on a few favored individuals, but this first Christian Pentecost is the beginning of a new era in which God “will pour out (his) Spirit on all flesh”.

“Yes, and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days”

The Greek can be translated servants or slaves. Since it refers to those who serve the Lord, it might best be translated servants.

“I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy”

The connection with Pentecost is clear in this verse, because this is what happened at Pentecost. God poured out his Holy Spirit on Peter and the other disciples, and they began to prophesy.

“I will show wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath”

Just more OT prophesy

Verse 19 parallels what Jesus said earlier: **“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines, and plagues in various places. There will be terrors and great signs from heaven”** (Luke 21:10-11).

Some of these signs, announced by the prophet Joel as future events, have already taken place.
As Jesus died, “darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.”
An earthquake signaled his death (Matthew 27:51-54)
Another earthquake signaled his resurrection (Matthew 28:2)
The sound of a violent wind and tongues, as of fire, appeared at Pentecost (2:1-4).

“blood, and fire, and billows of smoke”

These signs have an ominous character, and warn of impending judgment.

“The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes”

The ominous character of these signs confirms the judgmental intent of verse 19.

When he speaks these words, Peter is still a Jew addressing Jews, and his vision is not as broad as his words suggest.

“whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved”

The fulfillment of this prophecy will begin within the hour when three thousand people will call upon the name of the Lord and will be saved (v. 41).

Acts 2:22-24

22. *“Men of Israel, hear these words! Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as you yourselves know, 23. him, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by the hand of lawless men, crucified and killed; 24. whom God raised up, having freed him from the agony of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it.”*

“Men of Israel, hear these word! Jesus of Nazareth”

Peter goes immediately to the crux of the matter—Jesus.

“a man approved by God to you”

This word, approved, is at the heart of this verse. It can mean “approved” or “shown” or “demonstrated” or “accredited” or “attested.”

It is God who has approved Jesus.

“by mighty works and wonders and signs”

God attested to Jesus with works of power, wonders and signs. God had taken his Stamp of Approval and used it to mark Jesus as God’s special man.

“which God did by him in the midst of you”

It was not Jesus acting alone who worked these works of power. As a matter of fact, this portion of this verse shows God as the actor and Jesus as God’s agent.

That Gospel includes many accounts of Jesus’ teaching with **authority** (Luke 4:32, 36) and healing (Luke 4:31-41; 5:12-26; 6:6-11, 18-19; 7:1-17; etc.).

Authority is an important word.

“even as you yourselves know”

Peter reminds them that they know exactly what he is talking about when he speaks of “mighty works and wonders and signs.” Many of them saw these things, and all of them heard of them.

“him, being delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God”

As was the case in the last verse, God is the primary actor in this verse. God handed Jesus over to the people of Israel, just as the prophets foretold it (Luke 18:31; 24:25-26, 46).

I don’t know about you, but I’ve been bugged by some nagging questions in my mind...so help me out here:.

If Jesus died according to God’s plan, shouldn’t that pardon the people who carried out Jesus’ execution? **YOUR THOUGHTS.**

“you have taken by the hand of lawless men, crucified and killed”

In Luke’s Gospel, the Jewish people bore primary responsibility for Jesus’ death.

- Chief priests, officers of the temple police, and elders who arrested him (Luke 22:52).
- The Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling body) who brought Jesus to Pilate and accused him falsely (Luke 22:66 – 23:2). When Pilate said, “I find no basis for a charge against this man,” it was these same Jewish leaders who insisted that Jesus be punished (Luke 23:4-5).

- Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, “the chief priests and scribes stood, vehemently accusing him” (Luke 23:10).
- Herod sent Jesus back to Pilate, Pilate offered to release Jesus—but they all (the chief priests, leaders, and people—Luke 23:13) shouted, “Away with this man! Release to us Barabbas!” (Luke 23:18) —insisting that Pilate crucify Jesus (Luke 23:21-23).
- In summary, the Jewish leaders instigated the crucifixion, but the Jewish people are also complicit.

“lawless men”

The law in question is the Jewish Law—the Torah.

Were any people involved in the trial and execution of Jesus outside the law?

“whom God raised up”

- Jesus didn’t just rise up from the dead.
- God raised him up.
- God freed him from death.
- Humans killed him, expecting that to be the last word.
- God raised him up so that the last word would not be death but resurrection.

“having freed him from the agony of death”

This verse alludes to Psalm 18:4-6, where the Psalmist speaks of the “cords of Sheol” entangling him and God answering his cry for relief.

“because it was not possible that he should be held by it”

“not possible” is a strong statement. What are your thoughts about these words?

Acts 2:25-28

25. *For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. 26. Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced. Moreover my flesh also will dwell in hope; 27. because you will not leave my soul in Hades, neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay. 28. You made known to me the ways of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence.’*

I’m moving straight to verse 27 because it is worthy of discussion and thought based on the diverse views on Hades, Sheol, Hell...etc.

“because you will not leave my soul in Hades, neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay”

This verse (quoting Psalm 16:10) is the key to understanding Peter’s argument, which unfolds in verses 29-31. Hades is the Greek word for the place of the dead (Sheol is the Hebrew word). Hades is thought to be a place where the unrighteous suffer punishment. The Psalmist seems to be saying that he expects God not to abandon him to the place of the dead or to allow his body to decay.

Acts 2:29-31

29. *“Brothers, I may tell you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31. he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was his soul left in Hades, nor did his flesh see decay. 32. This Jesus God raised up, to which we all are witnesses.*

“Brothers, I may tell you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day”

The audience was Jew and had followed the process of memorizing the scripture. Peter’s listeners would know exactly where David’s tomb was located. Many of them would have visited it.

“Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne”

The second point of Peter’s argument is that the Lord promised *to set one of David’s sons* on Israel’s throne. That promise is recorded in Psalm 132:11.

So, what is the connection of Jesus to David and Israel’s throne?

“he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was his soul left in Hades, nor did his flesh see decay”

Peter interprets this messianically, and concludes that it was Jesus, the messiah, whom David foresaw as the one who would not be abandoned to Hades and whose flesh would not experience decay.

Peter doesn’t use Psalm 16 to prove Jesus’ resurrection. He uses Psalm 16 to establish that the messiah was to be raised from the dead.

Luke recorded several of these resurrection appearances.

- Jesus appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32)
- To Peter (Luke 24:34)—and to the disciples (Luke 24:36-43).
- Jesus even ate a piece of broiled fish in the presence of the disciples (Luke 24:42-43).
- Other resurrection appearances are in Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21-22; 21:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:5.

Peter and the apostles are believable witnesses to the resurrection:

Acts 2:33-35

Please allow me to shorten these verses:

- Verse 33 speaks of Jesus being “exalted at the right hand of God” and being the one who caused the miraculous events that the crowd observed at Pentecost.
- Verses 34-35 read as follows: “For David didn’t ascend into the heavens, but he says himself, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, Sit by my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet’.”

- These two verses quote Psalm 110:1, which the Jewish people attributed to Davidic authorship. While teaching in the temple, Jesus quoted Psalm 110:1 and then said, “David himself calls him Lord, so how can he be his son?” (Mark 12:37).

YOUR THOUGHTS??

Why was this important for Peter to preach?

Acts 2:42

42. *They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and prayer.*

“They continued steadfastly”

The disciples’ faithful and regular adherence “in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and the prayer.”

“in the apostles’ teaching”

In his Great Commission, Jesus instructed his disciples to make disciples, “teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20).

“and fellowship”

Many people today are familiar with the word *koinonia*. We talk about *koinonia* groups, by which we mean small groups that encourage Christian fellowship and sharing. That’s a good use of the word.

“in the breaking of bread”

When Luke speaks of “the breaking of bread,” does he mean an ordinary meal or the celebration of the Lord’s Supper?

“and the prayer”

The use of the definite article (*the* prayers) suggests that these may be set prayers used in public worship.

Acts 2:43.

43 *Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.*

“Fear came on every soul”

I don’t believe there is a reason to assume that the apostles who are working these wonders and signs are not awed by the power being wielded by their own hands.
How do you feel about that thought?

“and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles”

Wonders would typically be miraculous events. Signs are actions that point to something beyond themselves.

ACTS 2:44-45

44. *All who believed were together, and had all things in common. 44. They sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need.*

“All who believed were together, and had all things in common”

“and had all things in common”

When I read this, I thought of it as first-century communism, not the top-down system that forces people into communal situations, regardless of their preferences. This first-century commonality is voluntary—not required or forced:

Okay, it’s a stretch, but that’s where my head went.

“They sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need”

The Jewish people had a tradition of distributing food to needy people, so these Christians are following a familiar practice by helping the needy. The thing that is different here is the heartfelt unity underlying their benevolence—and their willingness to make real sacrifices to help others.

Sound familiar?

ACTS 2:46-47

46. *Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, 47. praising God, and having favor with all the people.*

“Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple”

Jesus spent a good deal of time in the temple—cleansing it (Luke 19:45-46)—and teaching (Luke 19:47; 20:1; 21:37). Luke closed his Gospel by telling us that the disciples “were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God” (Luke 24:53). Now he tells us that they are continuing in that tradition. They have not left Judaism behind. Even though temple authorities were behind Jesus’ crucifixion, these disciples observe temple worship on a regular basis—“day by day.”

These disciples were surely aware that their participation in the temple put them in contact with large numbers of people to whom they could witness for Christ.

Sound familiar? We find new people for Martin by reaching out like this.

“and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart”

The breaking of bread in this verse is almost certainly ordinary meals and not the Lord's Supper. What we have pictured here is table fellowship unencumbered by pretentiousness or petty egos.
I LOVE THAT ABOUT THE DISCIPLES/APOSTLES...HOWEVER MANY THERE ARE.

“praising God, and having favor with all the people”

Luke wrote the Book of Acts nearly a half century after these events took place, and he paints a beautiful picture of what Church should look like.

ACTS 2:47

47b The Lord added to the assembly day by day those who were being saved.

“The Lord added to the assembly day by day those who were being saved”

The disciples were doing everything right—taking care of each other—living in harmony—worshiping God—but it was the Lord who added to their number. As Paul says in his first epistle to the Corinthians, “I planted. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6).

In many churches today, there is a great concern for growth. Churches are often tempted to adopt the fad-of -the-month to pull in new people. Of more concern are churches who decide to avoid unpleasantries such as the crucifixion in conjunction with the wonder of the resurrection.

I think this chapter in Acts may be one of the most important books in the Bible for Church formation and cohesiveness. Martin Rocks!!