

The Bible Companion Series

Christianity in Action

The Acts of the Apostles

A Bible-Believing Study Guide

The Bible Companion Series of Bible Studies

These Study Notes Belong to: _____

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The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Two *The Church Empowered*

Focus Verse: **Acts 2:4**

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

I. Study Introduction

- A. The New Testament Christians have now been mobilized (chapter 1), and primed by the command of their Captain, are only waiting for the signal that they have can commence the battle (Eph 6:12).
- B. The signal finally came, on the day of Pentecost, exactly 50 days after the death of the Passover Lamb - right on schedule!
- C. From that moment on, Christians have relied on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in their lives to do the work that Christ has called for us to do (John 15:4,5; Eph 5:18)
- D. This chapter sets the start of the "Christian Era." Christ had brought to a close the era of the Law (John 1:17). The coming of the Holy Spirit brought in the Christian Era, or "dispensation of Grace" (2:21).

II. Study Outline

A. The Empowerment of the Church (2:1-4)

1. What Pentecost was to the Jew
 - a. The Pentecost Feast (Lev 23:15-21) - one of seven:
 - 1) The Passover Feast - Calvary
 - 2) The Feast of Unleavened Bread - Calvary
 - 3) The Feast of the First Fruits - The Resurrection
 - 4) The Feast of Pentecost - feast of seven weeks - Pentecost
 - 5) The Feast of the Trumpets - Rapture and Second coming
 - 6) The Feast of the Atonement - The tribulation
 - 7) The Feast of Tabernacles - Millennium
 - b. Pente-cost means ' ___ and represents a feast occurring ___ days after the Passover.
 - c. It coincides with remembering and celebrating the giving of the ___ at mount Sinai (Ex 19:1). Notice how that in the New Testament, it will become a celebration of the giving of GRACE (John 1:17).
 - d. It celebrated the birthday of the _____ (Ex 19:5)
 - e. Great signs and wonders announced its arrival (Ex 19:16,18)
 - f. Some _____ people died at that time (Ex 32:28)
2. Pentecost's Importance to the Church
 - a. At the Passover (Matt 27) Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was humiliated, degraded, and put to a criminal's death. But at Pentecost, Jesus is highly glorified!
 - b. It celebrates the official birthday of " _____ " (Cf "the church in the wilderness" Acts 7:38)
 - c. Great signs and wonders marked its arrival (Act 2:2,3,17-20)
 - d. _____ souls got SAVED (Acts 2:41)
3. The particulars of Pentecost
 - a. These Christians were **still** in _____, and waiting for the arrival of the **promise** of the Father - expecting the fulfillment (2:1). It is not right, or "normal" in God's eyes for Christians to be apart, and busy doing their own things in life, but they **MUST** set aside the time to faithfully be together (Heb 10:25)!
 - b. The sound of the "rushing mighty wind" filled the house (2:2). This event has only happened ONCE.
 - c. The appearance of "cloven (divided) tongues" (like the word "cleave" or "cut in half") that looked like _____ (2:3). Each person individually received the ability to speak. This event has only happened ONCE. This is not a baptism of "fire" (Cf Matt 3:11). This is the arrival of something that looks like it is on fire because it came from heaven (Cf rev 1:13-15).
 - d. The filling of the Holy Ghost caused them to begin to speak with "other tongues" (2:4) a supernatural sign gift. Somebody is going to start talking differently now. Turns out to be in ALL the main different languages of the world! Remember how that God had to "DIVIDE" the languages back at the tower of Babel in Gen 11? Well, God now overcomes that "confusion" with a special ability for His people to be able to speak ANY language needed so that the Gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ could be heard and UNDERSTOOD by all!!! Look at 2:4 where they are given "cloven tongues" and begin to speak in "OTHER tongues!" What could be clearer? Tongues are _____ (2:8; 1 Cor 14:21)!

B. The Experience of Pentecost (2:5-13)

1. Every Jew in town heard of what was going on in that little upper room (2:5-7), and how it had spilled out into the streets - the sound of wind coming out of the sky and entering into a house couldn't be contained (like a helicopter dropping out of the sky and onto the roof of a house). Not a secret meeting.
2. These were Jews that had traveled from every nation to Jerusalem for this feast - remembrance of the _____ of Israel!
3. All of the people heard these few men speaking in so many different _____. Very confounding/confusing.
4. The disciples are doubted to have the ability to know so many languages - people could tell they sounded like Galilaeans because of their accent. This tells you that probably, only the ones from _____ were speaking in tongues- the 12 Apostles (1:11)
5. These disciples spoke with "_____" not "unknown" tongues to fifteen represented countries and ethnic regions. These were Jews and proselytes that were part of the "_____" that came back to Jerusalem every year to worship (see the "Ethiopian" eunuch doing this same thing a couple of years later in Acts 8:26-28).
 - a. The *Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Arabians*, and the people from *Mesopotamia* were Jews from the _____ that were part of the dispersion of 2 Kings 17.
 - b. The *Judeans* are the local people that lived in southern Israel
 - c. The *Capadocians, people of Pontus, Asians; Phrygians, and Pamphylans* all come from areas of the _____ dispersion.
 - d. The *Egyptians, and Lybians* were from Africa - the _____
 - e. The *Roman, and Cretian* proselytes represented the Jewish dispersion to the _____ and _____ of Israel.
6. These are said to represent "every nation under heaven." This definitely is only a partial list of the nations represented.
7. The areas listed form a complete circle around the Mediterranean, *with the center being _____* (see Figure 1).
8. These were the directions that the good news of Christ would be first carried by these people as they believed, and then returned "home." Jesus had commanded the Christians to go to the "uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15) and here the uttermost had come to them!

9. Everybody heard the "wonderful WORKS of God" (at the cross) in their own language! God had gone the extra mile! He could have made all listen in Hebrew or Greek, but God inspired the translation process so that His word could be _____ (Rom 10:17) and easily understood by the whole world!!!

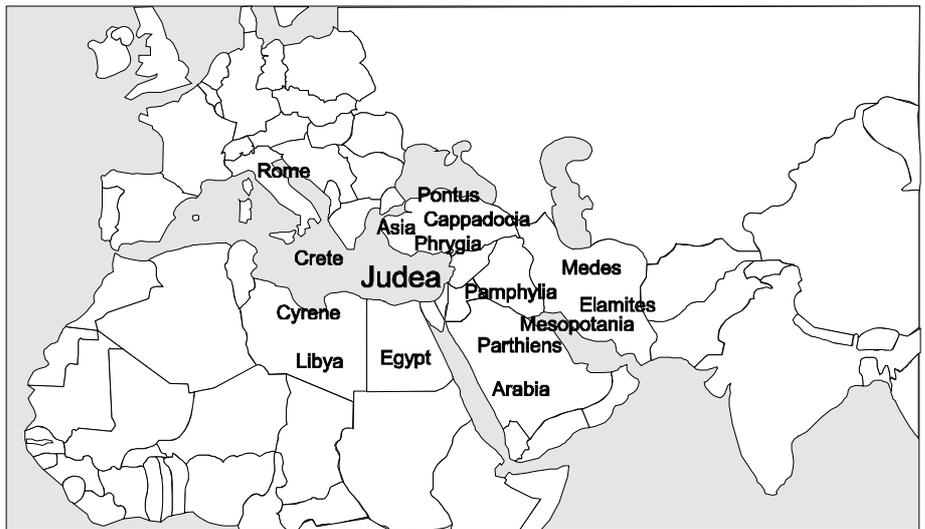


Figure 1 - The World in the First Century

- a. Two important things to notice:
 - b. The whole world needed to hear the news of Jesus Christ!
 - c. But most importantly, the Jews needed to be convinced that they really had _____ the Messiah - that they had missed Him. So God gave them one more "_____" - tongues.
10. Those who doubted came up with illogical conclusions.
- a. Some said this was "_____" (this event has no meaning).
 - b. Others thought they were drunk with "new wine," which is only a derogatory statement. Like saying they were *dippy* because of only drinking buttermilk. The world just brands things that they don't understand as crazy, or immature. That's how they treat most of history and the Bible

Note: Concerning wine. New wine is grape juice, fresh out of the _____ (Prov 3:9,10), having no alcohol content - it is this kind of wine that Jesus drank (Matt 26:29). The other kind of wine is referred to as "_____" wine (Prov 23:29-30, not just grape juice, but *mixed* now with alcohol), and is usually associated with drinking "_____" (high alcohol content).

C. The Explanation of Peter (2:14-21) Peter's First Revival

1. His Audience - "Ye men of _____ and everyone dwelling in Jerusalem" - Dealing directly with the _____ here.
2. His Rebuke (2:15). The people really believed that these "disciples" of Jesus were wimps, and that really had gotten drunk on new wine! But thinking that they were drunk at the third hour of the day (9AM) was just showing their gullibility. Principle: Learn to have something to say to show just how ignorant people really are about Christianity (Cf 1 Pet 3:15)
3. His Message. This is the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy of the "Last Days" (Joel 2:28-32)
 - a. **The Last Days** - the days leading up to Christ's _____ which is the "Day of the Lord"
 - 1) Peter knows that _____ is only the beginning
 - 2) There is much more to come - only the "_____ " of the Spirit (Rom 8:23)
 - 3) Peter thought that the rest of the prophecy is about to be fulfilled (Cf Matt 3:1,2; 4:17). But it is up to the Jews!

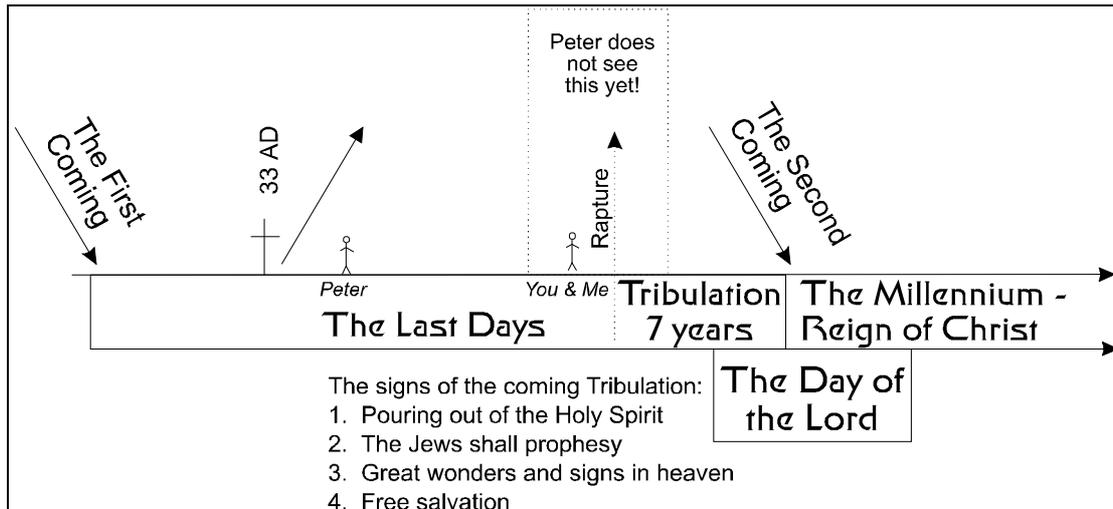


Figure 2 - The Last Days as seen by Joel and Peter

POINT: Only the outpouring was fulfilled. The remainder of the prophecy is still yet to be fulfilled. Peter did not understand that God's timing can span _____ of years (Luke 4:14-20 & Isa 61:1,2, Gen 3:15 & Rom 16:28)

- b. **The pouring out of God's Spirit** - on ALL flesh. This event was identified by the sound of wind, the cloven tongues, and by the various world languages being spoken miraculously.

POINT: Yet, the Jews did not as a nation get saved like they are supposed to (Ro 11:26) - it was the wrong _____. So, not even this point is completely fulfilled, yet.
- c. _____ **JEW prophesying and seeing visions and dreams** (2:17,18). Not for everybody. "upon your sons... daughters... my servants"
- d. **Wonders and signs from the heavens** (2:19,20) - telling us that these events are associated with the _____ (Mt 24:21,29,30)
- e. **The Day of the Lord is coming** (2:20). The day of Christ's _____. Peter knew the tribulation was next on God's schedule (Joel 2), so he is readying everyone for its approach
- f. **The time of salvation is** ____ (2:21; Ro 10:13; 2 Cor 5:20; 6:1,2). The means of salvation is no longer associated with the Temple, ceremony, the Law, and the death of a lamb - but with calling on the once crucified Lamb to save you!

D. The Exhortation to the Jews (2:22-40) - His Application

1. Hear the words of the Scripture (Cf 7:57,58) as preached!
2. Recognize who Jesus is (2:22)
 - a. He was a _____ person - with a name, an address (Nazareth). Jesus had to be all man to effectively live out the perfect life and pay for our sins (Heb 2:9-12)
 - b. He was a _____ person - proven by God by miracles and signs right before their very eyes - Messiah, anointed One of God, appointed to do what only He could do
 - c. He was God's _____ to our sin - delivered by the determinate council (God figured out the only way to pay for sin and still remain holy)
3. Realize that it was _____ who crucified the Messiah (2:23)
 - a. You can't blame the Roman soldiers
 - b. You can't blame the religious leaders

- c. You can't blame it on ___ either. He did not force people to sin, nor did he fix it so that people HAD to get saved, or HAD to be lost (election and predestination). God holds PEOPLE responsible for their actions (Dt 30:19)
 - d. You can only blame yourselves. You rejected the only hope for eternity (Mt 27:22-25). Just accept the responsibility! God brought Christ here, and then you PEOPLE killed Him!
 - e. Realize our sins brought Jesus here to begin with, and it was our sins that killed Him on the cross (John 1:29; 10:17,18)
 - f. Realize also that if Jesus had been born in the 20th century, then He would have been rejected just the same!!!
4. Accept the _____ as final proof (2:24) of His Messiahship
- a. Nobody had to go in to the tomb and raise up Jesus
 - b. Nobody had to roll away the stone for Jesus to get out
 - c. Jesus laid down His own life, and then He got up again!
 - d. All as proof that He is ___ in the flesh (Matt 1:23; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:8)
 - e. And all so that He could remove the _____ of death (2:24). Jesus endured the pains of death (wages of our sin), so that we could be free of them!
5. Look to the prophecies about all this (2:25-36). David spoke of Christ's eternal life that could not end - Even when Jesus' body was dead, Jesus lived on (Eph 4:8-10). David knew that the Messiah would be glad to take our place and give us _____ (2:26).
- a. Jesus had to go to _____ in our place (2:25-30)
 - 1) His Spirit went back to the **Father** (Lk 23:46; Eccl 3:21)
 - 2) Christ's body went to the _____ (Luke 24:1-4)
 - 3) Christ's soul went to hell to dump our _____ there (Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24), and then He ends up in _____ (Abraham's bosom, Lk 16:19-26) for the remaining 3 days and nights where He did some preaching (1 Pet 3:19). Notice that it was Christ's _____ that was our offering for sin (Isa 53:10) on the cross!
 - b. David knew that where he was going, one day, the Messiah would come and get him. This was only for those who believed God before the resurrection (Christ had to be the first one who resurrected, *never to die again*, 1Cor 15:20)
 - c. David died, and his body was still in the grave (2:29-31). So, evidently, David's _____ did not get resurrected in Mt 27:50-54, so it is yet to be. But many O.T. saints **did** resurrect! So the reference is to the fact that David was not talking about himself, but about the Messiah. So, David was a prophet (2:30,31), and much of the Psalms are about _____!
 - d. Peter witnessed Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (2:32).
 - e. Peter then points out that the Promise of the Holy Ghost is just "icing on the cake" as proof that all this is going on just like the Scriptures had predicted (2:33)!
 - f. David is not the one who has ascended bodily to heaven yet, only the _____ could do that (2:34,35)
 - g. Therefore, let everyone know that Jesus is Lord and Christ - the Promised One (2:36), and that everyone must repent!
6. Allow the _____ message to do the work (2:37-40)
- a. The gospel pricks the heart - _____ (Heb 4:12)
 - b. The gospel requires a response - "*What shall we do?*"
 - 1) _____ - must accept it as true, and right
 - 2) _____ - must see yourself as wicked and wrong
 - 3) Be _____ - must openly confess Christ (John 12:42,43)
 - 4) _____ - no exception - all need to repent (1 Pet 3:9)
 - 5) All for the remission of sins - _____
 - a) Believe and repent to _____ remission
 - b) Be baptized _____ of remission
 - 6) All so that you too can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost - every believer was promised the gift. Not dealing with tongues, but with the gift **OF** the Holy Ghost Himself!
 - c. You are simply believing God's promise of salvation made to all who will respond to God's call to be saved (2:39)
 - d. The gospel provokes us to care about _____ things - to save ourselves from this ungodly generation (2:40)!

E. The Environment (Culture) of Jewish Christianity (2:41-47) The Believer's New Life is:

- 1. Evidenced by ___ (2:41; In spite of 2:37. Cf 16:31-34; 1Thes 1:6)
- 2. Faith is followed by Baptism. Baptism is the _____ of a person's _____. Presentation of a person's death to the old life, and new life in Christ (Rom 6:1-6)

3. Christians join themselves unto a local _____ (2:41). No Christian is to be alone, and “independent!” All are to link-up with other Christians who are determined to live for Christ - no “comfortable” Christianity wanted by God! Not a DIY type of “church” either, but one wanting to follow the apostle’s doctrine!
4. Continues _____ (unchanging commitment) in (2:42):
 - a. The apostles _____ (Cf Eph 2:19,20) - the New Testament before it was written.
 - b. _____ with other believers (their primary friends) - no longer having friendship with the world (James 4:4)
 - c. Breaking of bread (The Lord's _____)
 - d. _____ (loved to spend time worshipping, adoring, interceding, to their God and Saviour Jesus (1 Tim 2:1)
5. They all had a *balanced* fear (2:43). Had a right view of God, and feared Him, even though saved by Him (Prov 8:13, 9:10)
6. Their new culture was evidenced by _____ (2:43)
 - a. In the first century, there were special signs and miracles to convince the _____ that God was with the Christians (Mark 16:17-20). The miracles were mainly associated with the _____ (2:43; 3:6,7; 4:33; 9:40; 14:3; 19:11; 2 Cor 12:12). Others were Stephen (6:8) and Philip (8:6).
 - b. Today, the supernatural is focused on spiritual needs, and greater miracles than the physical (ie, marriages being salvaged, souls being saved, etc). We still desperately need real miracles (James 5:13-20)! And God still does them best!
7. They _____ to each other's needs (2:44,45)
 - a. Had all things common - met each other’s needs (Phil 2:4)
 - b. Sold possessions so that they could meet each other's need. When money ran out, possessions were worth less than people. the Christian’s sacrificed for each other (John 15:13)
 - c. This is **not** communism. Communism is _____ upon people. This is completely voluntary, and in response to need
 - d. This attitude is because they were staying ready for Christ’s return - busy soul-winning, preaching, praying, trusting God! Not worried about real estate, or tomorrow.
 - e. Christians need to live like Jesus is coming back today, but plan like he is not coming back for 1,000 years.
8. The Christian culture is identified by _____ (2:46; 1:14; 2:1) - In one accord. Unity under the authority of the word of God.
9. Still connected with the Jewish _____ (2:46; waiting on the second coming of Christ, 1:11). They later abandon the Temple for _____ churches when they realise it is irrelevant at this time
10. They had preaching and worship services from house to house (2:46; Ro 16:3-5; Act 8:3; Col 4:15). Enjoyed preaching and teaching more than TV (1 Cor 1:18)!
11. As a group, they had favour with ALL the people (2:47) - the people knew that the Christians had been changed for the better!
 - a. With each other (Rom 12:10)
 - b. With the world - The Christian life is one that is called to holiness (1 Pet 1:14-16) Trustworthy, honest, clean, humble
12. New Testament Christianity grew _____ (2:47). People were getting saved, and were being added to the local church, as they yielded to God’s direction in their lives.

III. Conclusion and Study Questions