

## **When the Day of Pentecost was fully come**

These are the opening words in the King James Bible for the day when the Holy Spirit was first poured out on to human beings. It was a truly momentous time and the beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is vital to see and understand what God was doing when the Holy Spirit was outpoured, what preparations had been made, and what the outcomes of this great happening are, not just for that time but right through time until the return of the Lord Jesus. Peter preached the first 'spirit filled' sermon which gives us so much information. He states that they had 'received the promise of God'. The coming of the Holy Spirit, and therefore the promise, was 'not just to them and their children but as many as are afar off, as many as the Lord Our God shall call'. This promise is still available today for the people of God that they too might receive and know the full benefit of the Spirit of God in their lives. This power/ability brings forth in each Christian life, and the life of the church, the same fruits and gifts of the Spirit known by those who received the Holy Spirit in those very early days. It makes people who receive the Spirit of God spiritual men and women, they are born again. They can enter the kingdom of God, worship the Father in Spirit and truth, and offer up spiritual sacrifices to God.

The coming of the Holy Spirit was another stage in the full redemption of human beings through the grace of God by Jesus Christ, and provides all the necessary power and ability for every Christian right up to the time of Jesus' return. At that time, we will receive our new bodies, redemption will be complete, and we will be ready for the ages to come as the bride of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost in older Bibles, is the third person of the Godhead. Totally equal in nature with the Father and the Son. There is no diminishing in the nature and power and glory of the Holy Spirit, who takes a different role within the Godhead but is totally involved in every aspect of the outworking of the will and purpose of God on the earth. We read in Genesis chapter 1, 'the Spirit of God moved upon the waters', so the Holy Spirit was totally involved in creation from the beginning and in some ways could be described as 'the worker' in the things of God. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12 we read of the gifts of the Spirit being 'worked' by that one and self-same Spirit. When Our Lord Jesus was conceived, it was the Holy Spirit that would come upon Mary, the power of the Highest would overshadow her. So, the means, the worker, in these things is the Holy Spirit and therefore He comes to be 'the worker' in us. When we read 'it is God who works in you', it is because we have received 'power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you'. That happened to the people in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, they received power, - ability, is the other good word - and that power transformed their lives.

It was instant and with that transformation came the spiritual knowledge of what God had done in the death, resurrection, and glorification of Our Lord Jesus. They knew, they really knew, that is the wonder of the Holy Spirit, and therefore they had that ability, not just Peter but all of them, to communicate the wonderful works of God. Jesus Himself, when teaching them about the coming of the Holy Spirit said, 'In that day you will know that I am in my Father, you in me and I in you'. They did!! Everything came together in one glorious moment and experience. No wonder they had the boldness to declare what had happened to them and turn Jerusalem upside down. Everyone heard the words in their own language, God overcoming the sin of the tower of Babel when different languages were given to people and confusion reigned. The Holy Spirit wonderfully overcame that barrier and enabled the disciples to speak in many languages so that all could understand. It shows from the outset God's heart, 'the promise is to as many as are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call'. God was making sure that everyone could hear, understand, and therefore receive. It was the Feast of Tabernacles so many people were in Jerusalem from other lands, and is why God, with

His desire for all nations, brought these people together and chose such a time for them to hear His word, so that they could receive the Holy Spirit. We note that 3000 were added to the church on that day. God does not always bring people together, this was in some ways unique, but with God's love for the world, Jesus had already told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel. So they went, and we are to go, so that the Holy Spirit can come upon the people of God from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

Those gathered in Jerusalem who heard such speaking wondered what this meant, so Peter, the spokesman, stands up to explain. They were not drunk but they had received the new wine of God, the Holy Spirit outpoured from heaven. Peter, as did all the New testament writers and preachers, takes them back to the 'more sure word of prophecy'. The irrefutable, as far as the Jews were concerned, words spoken by the prophets were the basis for this wonderful work of God. This is exactly what God had spoken through the prophet Joel, 'I will pour my Spirit out on all flesh'. It is probably the most famous of the prophecies related to the coming of the Holy Spirit, but there are many in the Old Testament about God giving His Spirit to human beings. In Ezekiel chapter 36, "*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. **And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them***" is also well known. There is not one word but many, as God through the ages declared His eternal desire. We should not of course forget John the Baptist, who tells us that the Lord Jesus is the 'Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world' but also 'He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire'. So John the great messenger, Jesus called him the greatest of the prophets, declares the ministry of the Lord Jesus; firstly, that He should lay down His life on the earth for our sins, and secondly, the heavenly ministry baptising us with the Holy Spirit. Both are essential for the Christian, the latter words of John are often overlooked, but John gave the true word fully declaring God's intention in salvation for His people. Peter used the prophecy in Joel as it so perfectly described that wonderful day of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

In Galatians 3 we read, "*That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*". We see that God had always wanted His people to receive the Holy Spirit. The words spoken to Abraham declare the eternal purpose of God for the Holy Spirit to come upon the Gentiles, all nations, and here the day of Pentecost is the fulfillment of the word to Abraham, 'In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed'. 'God has poured His Spirit out on all flesh'.

The thought of the Holy Spirit being poured out on to flesh was astonishing to the Jews. In their history, the High Priest was anointed for ministry with a special anointing oil made only for that purpose. The holy anointing oil, an illustration of the Holy Spirit, was not to be poured on flesh, it was strictly forbidden, as flesh, even the flesh of the High Priest, was unclean and the oil was holy. Hebrews chapter 10 tells us, 'The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins', but now we have the Lamb of God who takes away sins, the sins of the whole world. Flesh could be made clean and the Spirit of God can be poured out on to all flesh. Our Lord Jesus can now 'baptise us with the Holy Ghost and fire'. It is wonderful, and yet for Joel to have prophesied such things may have seemed questionable, surely the Jew would say it is not possible, but 'with God nothing shall be impossible'. God knows what He is doing, He always speaks the truth, and not only was this prophecy, given hundreds of years before, accurate but here was the evidence before the very eyes of those gathered in Jerusalem. They heard it and saw it. God is true!!

In his prophecy, Joel also speaks of salvation, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved'. Jesus is Our Saviour, God's will is that all may be saved. He is in the work of salvation, and the

coming of the Holy Spirit is about salvation, changed lives, eternal life coming into the lives of human beings. It is about people being 'born again', being taken from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God. It is about being given a new heart and a new spirit. God is in the business of saving souls and giving them eternal life, this is why Jesus came and why the Spirit of God was outpoured. 'If we have not the Spirit of Christ we do not belong to Him'.

God, when He made human beings, made them body, soul, and spirit. God breathed into humans to make them living souls thus creating a spirit within humans into which God Himself could come and live. It was all spoiled by sin, sin entering into the heart/spirit of humans when Adam, the first human being, sinned. With the sin came spiritual and eternal death, and that sin was passed on to every human born on the earth until Jesus came. Our Lord Jesus was a life-giving Spirit, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and had the Spirit of God in His Spirit, eternal life and not death. This explains why Jesus was able to live as He did on the earth, free from the nature of sin, and eventually offer His life, as a Lamb without spot and blemish, as a sacrifice to God for the sins of the world. The coming of the Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost brought the Spirit of Jesus Christ in to the hearts of those who received, and took them from death into life. The purpose of God in making people 'alive' was fulfilled, in that God Himself had come to live in them. This is the wonderful truth of the day of Pentecost; we read in the book of Revelation, 'Behold the tabernacle (dwelling place) of God is with man'. God poured out His Spirit on to all flesh once their sins had been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Peter's use of the prophecy of Joel in His preaching on the day of Pentecost is so wonderfully right and so inspired, as it sets out the way of salvation for all who would receive from the Lord Jesus His wonderful baptism in the Spirit.

As we read through Acts chapter 2, Peter goes on to explain the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It is essential to our understanding of the day of Pentecost and the coming of the Spirit of God, and was vital to those who heard to know the basis on which the Spirit of God had been outpoured. Our opening words were 'When the day of Pentecost was fully come'. In other words, everything was ready. Jesus had died, He had laid down His life on a cross, but it was not possible for death to hold Him. God raised Jesus from the dead. Peter uses David's prophecy in psalm 16 to show us the basis for the resurrection. Peter told them, 'God has therefore raised Jesus from the dead and made Him Lord and Christ'. The resurrection changed everything and demonstrates Jesus' power over sin and death and all spiritual authorities and powers. The resurrection declares Jesus to be the Son of God with power. Jesus, having been raised up, had returned to heaven and received the promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was the great goal, the great target for the Lord Jesus; the promise was there but someone had to enter into heaven to receive the gift. Jesus had returned to be anointed as the Christ, and then from the Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah, the Spirit of God, which had been first upon the Lord Jesus, could be outpoured on all flesh. Jesus was in the right place; sin had been dealt with, He had been raised up, He was Lord and Christ, and finally the people were all there in the right place, their sins had been forgiven. The 120 were in the upper room, all of one accord and in the one place, and so came the sound of the rushing mighty wind and the tongues of fire on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. God had come to dwell in each heart, they were new creations, they were free, they were the people of God. Also, many were gathered in Jerusalem to hear the words of God from the original 120, so that they might receive the Spirit of God too. God's heart is always reaching out, often beyond our own thoughts and ideas. 'His ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts, but as the heavens are higher than the earth so are God's ways and thoughts higher than ours'. If ever there were higher thoughts and ways, here they are; the Holy Spirit has come, and the power of Almighty God has come to take up residence in the hearts of His people.

'We are witnesses of all these things', is what Peter says. They were witnesses of the death, of the resurrection, of the ascension of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God being outpoured upon them, of the truth as it is in heaven. Jesus is Lord. Truly the day of Pentecost was fully come.

When we look in to the book of Revelation, we find the seven Spirits of God. *"Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and **from the seven Spirits** which are before his throne"*. Seven is the 'number for perfection', for God in reality, in the Bible and clearly refers to the Holy Spirit. First we find Him before the throne, there ready to do the work of Him who sits on the throne. We read in 1 John that 'there are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word (the Lord Jesus) and the Holy Ghost, and these three agree in one', which means they are of the same nature. All are God, the Holy Spirit is God. If we move on to chapter 5, we find the 'Lamb' seated on the throne having seven horns and seven eyes. We are told these seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. The Lamb, the Lord Jesus, has the seven Spirits; He has the Holy Spirit whom He has sent forth into all the earth. Jesus has poured out the Spirit of God upon the earth. This agrees with Acts 2 and Peter's comments, *"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"*. Jesus Christ being at the right hand of the Father, having been raised from the dead, receives the promise of the Holy Spirit, and sheds/pours forth/sends Him into all the earth. The Holy Spirit has come. That is what all those in Jerusalem saw and heard on that amazing day, the Holy Spirit outpoured and manifest in the lives and the words of those who had received Him. They all heard the wonderful works of God in their own language. (The Holy Spirit is of course a person, not an 'it' but a 'Him', just as the Father and the Lord Jesus are persons. Jesus when talking of the Holy Spirit, the comforter, coming says, 'when He the Holy Spirit it is come', calling the Spirit of God a person.)

Now we hope we have understood what really happened on the day of Pentecost, the fulfillment of the whole purpose of God, to come by His Spirit and be manifest in and empower the lives of His people, the church of Jesus Christ. It was wonderful and quite marvellous, in some ways almost unbelievable, except that it is the work of God and with Him 'nothing shall be impossible'. God had raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead and made Him Lord, the disciples were witnesses, they had received the Holy Spirit, Jesus must be Lord, they knew it, His power had come, His glory had come, His life had come into them. They were new men, new creations, old things had passed away, all things were new. They had entered into the kingdom of God and had started to understand the things freely given them of God. They had salvation, they had eternal life, they had hope, they found faith and love rising in their hearts. God had just filled them with His love when the Holy Spirit came into them. This applies to all who receive the Spirit of God.

What was the response required of those who had seen and heard? Repent, confess your sins, acknowledge your wrongdoing before God. These people had been involved and complicit in the death of Jesus, they knew it; they had not recognised Jesus as Lord. They had been responsible for denying Him, in spite of all He had done to bless the people of Israel. So repent! Change your thinking, admit your error, acknowledge your huge mistake, and confess Jesus as Lord. Confess your sins to Him, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world will take away your sin. He will wash you clean in His own blood and then baptise you in the Holy Spirit. You can receive the same gift of the Holy Spirit we have all just received. Jesus will come to you. How great the mercy and the love of God, how gracious our Lord Jesus is to forgive all our sins and to fill us with His Spirit. How powerful is His blood in its cleansing power to make people so clean that the Holy Spirit can enter into lives and fill them with the power of Almighty God, and give eternal life to all who will receive the Lord Jesus. To those God gives the right to be called sons of God.

What did they do? They obeyed, they repented gladly, so much grace was available, and they too received the Holy Spirit. He came on 3000 souls that very day. They were added to the church of Jesus Christ.

By that one and self-same Spirit every Christian is baptised/immersed into the body of Jesus Christ. There is only one baptism, one way into the kingdom of God, one way of becoming a member of Jesus' church and belonging to Him. All must come to Him that way. We become members of His body, His church, flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. We become one with Jesus in the Spirit and He is then not ashamed to call us brothers. He is the first born from the dead and has pre-eminence in all things, but we will be His at His coming. Each Christian then functions as a member of the church of Jesus Christ with the power of the Spirit of God working in them, and **each** and **every** Christian becomes a witness to the eternal truth that Jesus is Lord. Each Christian has received the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, which Jesus received for them on His triumphant return to heaven.

These people, all of them, were baptised in water, and they continued in oneness sharing everything. They broke bread from house to house, continued in the apostles' doctrine and in fellowship and prayer. God had brought them together in a unity of Spirit and purpose and the church of Jesus Christ was born. The power of God was in them: 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh'. God had poured out His Spirit on all flesh and it was wonderful. They went everywhere praising God and reaching out to others with the gospel which had changed their lives, and which they knew to be the true gospel of God. Miracles, signs, and wonders happened and have been happening ever since. The church of God has continued through the past 2000 years, each member having received the same gift of the Holy Spirit. The church has continued through many trials and temptations, through dreadful persecution and hatred. Jesus said, 'If they have hated me they will hate you also'. The church, God's true people, will continue to serve the Lord Jesus until He returns. Yes, there are many weeds among the true plants, many errors have come in, there has been much division, but the Lord knows them that are His. He will remain faithful to His people; He cannot deny Himself and those who belong to Him. The church, the true people of God, each member who has received the Holy Spirit has found, and will always find, that 'Greater is He that is in me than He that is in the world'. We have all found 'we are more than conquerors through the one who loves us'.

The Spirit of God in those first recipients had brought the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus into them, as he does into every Christian, making them free from the law of sin and death. The Holy Spirit provides a spirit of power, love, and a disciplined mind to keep us in the will of God. The Holy Spirit, the spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead, even brings life, the life of God into our mortal bodies. God manifest in human flesh, the will and purpose of God in Jesus Christ, who poured out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when the day was fully come. Those first people to receive the Spirit of God were truly filled with the Holy Spirit, He was working in their bodies, their minds, and their hearts. They had the power of God operating in every part of their lives, they truly could offer their bodies a living sacrifice to God and be transformed by the renewing of their minds, and prove the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. God had poured His love into every heart by the Holy Spirit and nothing would ever separate them, and us, from the love of God in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

What a wonderful day it was; it can be your day too. If you have never been filled with the Spirit of God, if you don't know the power of the Holy Spirit working in you, come to Jesus, acknowledge Him as Lord, confess your sins, and YOU TOO can receive the Holy Spirit, this wonderful gift from God, and enter into life everlasting. THE DAY OF PENTECOST IS FULLY COME.

There is a wonderful hymn which sums it all up. It is found in the Redemption hymnal.

Here are the words.

**218** HALLELUJAH sing exulting  
For the Holy Ghost has come,  
To prepare a chosen people  
For their Lord and heavenly  
home,  
Soon in clouds of Light appearing,  
Faithful to His promised word,  
We shall see Him, therefore, brethren,  
[Lord,  
Watch and pray and serve the  
Come, believing, cleanse your garments  
In the blood on Calv'ry shed,  
From the old, set free for ever,  
Formed anew in Christ our Head.

**2** Fall upon us, mighty Spirit  
In Thy fulness from above;  
New creating, all conforming  
In us, to the Lord we love.  
To Thy service consecrated  
And with hearts from self set  
free,  
Burning with Love's pure devotion  
We will live and die for Thee.  
Gifts and graces for His members  
Thou art come, abroad to shed,  
Thus through signs and wonders  
bringing  
Glory to our risen Head.

**3** Hark, the ransomed choir is singing  
Hallelujah to the Lamb.  
Glory, honour, praise and worship,  
Hail Him as the great I AM.  
See the Bride in dazzling raiment  
Hastes her glorious Lord to meet;  
Come, Lord Jesus, we await Thee,  
While we worship at Thy feet.  
Hallelujah! Everlasting  
Glory dawns upon us now,  
As we hear with joy and rapture  
His clear summons; "Enter  
thou!" *Martin Gensichen.*