

Pentecost
5/23/2010

INTRODUCTION

Contrary to popular modern Christian belief, the Holy Spirit did not arrive on the earth at Pentecost. He had always existed here. He was in the beginning hovering over the waters as God created the world. He spoke by the mouth of the prophets. He inhabited the praises of His people in a very tangible way in the glory cloud, in the pillar of fire and between the cherubim over the mercy seat. The Holy Spirit did not begin to exist at Pentecost, but most certainly something new and glorious happened there.

It is the inauguration of a new age in the church and a new age in the world. The old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. We must see the coming of the Holy Spirit with all the splendor that our God desires. Jesus died for us and we have the hope of eternal life in Him. We thank God for that.

But the Jews had promises given to them from God and they counted on God to fulfill that which He promised. Faithful Jews believed that God would fulfill these promises. In order for us to understand what was going on at Pentecost and the days following, we must get a hold of some idea of what the believing Jews expected.

There are three main expectations.

1. That the Jews would inherit the Land of Promise.
2. That they would have innumerable descendants like the sand of the sea or the stars of heaven.
3. That the glory of the Lord would dwell with them perpetually.

These expectations are different than what we typically think of when we think of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. But we should expect these fulfillments of promise plus all the other benefits of God's presence with us.

Acts 2 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

They were waiting in Jerusalem, the special place of God's presence. That special place of God's presence had initially been the Garden of Eden, and then with the people in the wilderness, the Tabernacle and finally the Temple in Jerusalem. God had made wonderful promises about the land being blessed but those had only been partially fulfilled.

They were waiting on Pentecost, the day when they offer their first fruits. We need to remember that they were still operating with an Old Covenant paradigm. The Sabbath Day was Saturday but God in His wisdom made this festal day fall on a Sunday.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

God appeared as a pillar of fire and cloud. The cloud blows were He will and the Spirit of God in fire speaks fear to His enemies and safety to His friends.

When Jesus Ascended, He was received up into a cloud. That cloud must have been the glory cloud of God, the Holy Spirit of fire. When Jesus went to heaven, He took His glory with Him. However, His glory did not stay in heaven. He made a promise that the Spirit would come. God's glory descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. But it also descended upon the church in the form of tongues of fire.

The cloven tongues of fire come. I think we place the wrong emphasis here. It was not so amazing that God's Spirit had come. God's Spirit had always come to the prophets of old. What is amazing here is that God's Spirit sat upon EACH of them and they were ALL filled with the Holy Ghost and the Spirit gives them all utterance.

THE NATIONS ARE GATHERED TO HEAR THE GOSPEL- VV. 5-12

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

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

This is a glorious few verses that we often rush over. The nations are gathered before God so that the curse of Babel can be reversed. God scattered them at Babel because of their rebellion but the Holy Spirit speaks all languages. God is gathering them again under the language of the Holy Spirit. Now, this was a representation of the nations. Only a few were there. Many more were not there. So, the Holy Spirit must go beyond Jerusalem to all of them. God scattered the rebellious people at Babel. He confused their languages that caused them to separate into various people groups. In Christ, all the people are regathered as the Holy Spirit speaks all of the languages.

This is both the fulfillment of land and descendants. It took awhile for the promise to be fulfilled. The saints had to be driven out of Jerusalem by persecution in order to take the gospel to the nations. But they did so.

UNBELIEVERS REFUTED

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14 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: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

Peter gives a short answer to the Mockers saying, "Don't be ridiculous, it is only nine o'clock in the morning."

Then, he goes on to give a Biblical explanation to those willing to hear it. The prophecy is about the Last Days mentioned in Joel. We tend to take those last days as the days at the end of all the ages. But that is not what it means. The last days are NOW and those last days have Edenic Promise. Listen to this passage from Ezek. This is another promise of the blessing of the Land.

The last days are days of Edenic Promise the last days are from Pentecost to the final Resurrection.

Ezekiel says that the land will be like Eden again. Ezek 36:22-30

Ezek. 36:33-35 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. 34 And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. 35 And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.

So, God made man and put him in the garden. But he sinned as was driven out. Later, man rebelled further and the people were scattered. In the New Creation in Christ, the people are regathered and the land is restored to Eden.

Back to Acts. Peter Again.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 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: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Last days were at Pentecost. The sun was turned into darkness, the moon into blood. And men called upon the name of Jesus to be saved.

22 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:

Peter wasn't proving but preaching. There's a difference.

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Theology, simple and deep. God planned it. Men did it. In this, God is not guilty of sin but men are. God's decretive will was accomplished but His descriptive will was disobeyed. A child can understand this. Touching example. Parents decree that it should be done, so they want it to happen. However, their will for obedience from the child is not accomplished. Why can't theologians understand?

25 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: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul

in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29 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. 30 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; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 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. 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

Peter teaches that David was speaking about something greater than his own reign. He was talking about Messiah and Jesus is that Messiah. **Glory** of the reign of Jesus Christ. Peter reiterates this promise at Pentecost. He does not say that it does not apply. He affirms that Jesus is both Lord and Christ, sitting in the seat of David, even though He has gone off to heaven.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 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?

They were pricked in their hearts for two reasons. One, they had sinned and are made to feel the weight of it. Two, they realize that Jesus is Lord. He is the King. Also, that Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One, the Saviour. This kind of Saviour was not so much a personal Saviour but a national one. As people believed in Jesus during His ministry on earth, they came to realize that He is also a personal savior. These believers come to realize the same thing. It is when we confess the truth of the universal Lordship of Christ that He comes to rule us individually, not the other way round.

Does current preaching prick men's hearts? Or tickle itching ears? Do we need a salve for our sickness or the Spirit of life to regenerate us from death?

38 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. 39 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. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

What to do? Repent and be baptized. That is, confess and repent of sins. Stop unbelieving and start believing. Then, in a public profession of faith, called baptism, take the name of Christ upon you. This is one place we get baptism wrong. Repent is not the public profession. That is done in the heart and will. Baptism is the public profession of faith. Or we might even say the public profession of our faith. Baptism adds souls unto us. That is, it adds men, bodies, to the church.

v.39. This is the promise. This is what Joel spoke of. This is the fulfillment of all those Old Testament types. “What?” we say. But did they? I think they got, or at least anticipated much. We will talk more about the reception of the promise in our application.

APPLICATION

What is the promise? The saints of old were waiting for it. They died in faith waiting for it. What were they waiting for?

*****Heb 11:17-18 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:**

Descendants

Heb 11:20-26 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Land

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

The something better for us is here.

****Heb 12:28-29 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God is a consuming fire.**

We, receiving a kingdom!

Descendants

The Land

The Kingdom of God

Glory of God

Peter tells us that what the crowds were seeing on Pentecost was the fulfillment of the promises. How do you think the crowds would have received this message? Would they have automatically understood that the promise was only to be some internal reception of God's Spirit? That it was only meant to regenerate individuals to new life in Christ?

EXHORTATION

By the giving of the Holy Spirit, God has conquered us and for this we give Him glory and honor and praise. But He has done more than conquer us. He has also brought forth innumerable descendants of King Jesus, a multitude of brothers and sisters, from every scattered nation under heaven.

He has given us the land of the entire earth, leaving no place that is not already claimed by Jesus Christ until His regents can arrive and proclaim this truth. In gathering the nations this way, He has reversed the curse of Babel, gathered up the nations into one people, all who speak the language of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, He has revealed His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of God. This lamp of God burns in the temple day and night. For the temple is the Church, the gathered saints through all the earth. In her, the Spirit resides. And even though we sometimes wonder if His glory is fully glorious in His Church, we must also live by faith.

The Hebrews 11 saints all died in faith waiting for these promises. We do not have to wait for them. Nor, do we even have to have faith to see them. For what is seen does not require faith. We have seen these promises fulfilled in ways that the Hebrews 11 saints never even imagined and yet they died believing them in faith.

Now, where does our faith come in? First of all, in believing that Jesus is the Messiah. Lay hold of Him and lay claim to the promises of descendants, of land, and of glory. These promises are to you. So, trust in Jesus as Christ and they are yours.

Second, we must have faith to see that which is not yet given. **Heb 11:13 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

There are more descendants of Jesus that must be birthed to new life. There is more land to conquer. There is much more glory needed in the Church. I am convinced that what we see now of the promises in comparison to what will be given to man, is probably less than what the Apostles saw in their day compared to what we have now. It takes faith to see this. But not really that much. The trajectory of Christ's reign ought to be obvious to us by now. He will rule all the earth. Believe it so that you will be able to see it. Amen.