

## The Book Of Acts: Verse-By-Verse Acts 2:1-4

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### Study Notes – Part A

- **Pentecost/Firstfruits: The Arrival Of The Father's Promise**

The events that are about to unfold happened on the day of Pentecost. It was called Pentecost – the Greek word is “Penteoekostos” - because according to the Jewish Calendar, it fell on the fiftieth day after the presentation of the first sheaf to be reaped of the barley harvest.

The Hebrew and Aramaic speaking Jews called Pentecost “The feast of weeks” and “The day of the Firstfruits”. The instructions for this feast are found in Exodus 34:22 and Deuteronomy 16:10.

The feast of Pentecost commemorates the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Later, it also commemorated the giving of the Law because the Jews believed from the Exodus to the giving of the Law was about 50 days.

Pentecost marked the end of the barley harvest and the beginning of the wheat harvests. The barley had already been brought out of the fields, but the wheat harvest was just beginning. So this is a celebration of harvest.

v. 1: “They were all together in the same place.” Luke does not tell us what “place” this was. Most commentators assume Luke means the Upper Room, since it is mentioned in Acts 1:13, but that isn't certain.

- **The Spirit's Coming:**

“When the day of Pentecost arrived ... Suddenly from heaven came a sound of a strong, rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they

were sitting.”

It was morning when these events took place. Two references: 1. “When the day of Pentecost arrived”. 2. Peter says, “These people are not drunk: It’s only nine o’clock in the morning.”

“When the day of Pentecost arrived.” - This is Divine Choice, or as John MacArthur puts it, this is a matter of “Divine Chronology”.

God lined this great event up with the celebration of Pentecost. Pentecost was a required festival for all Jews. Thousands of people from all over the world were in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost.

- **The Spirit’s manifestation was not a response to prayer.**

Although the 120 were praying and searching God’s Word that is not why the Holy Spirit came on that day. The Spirit’s manifestation was not a response to the 120 meeting any specific conditions. It was simply God’s timing and nothing else.

- **A Sound Of A Strong Wind: v. 2**

“Suddenly from heaven came a sound of a strong, rushing wind...”

What came from heaven was a “sound” of a strong, rushing wind. It was not an actual wind, but a sound of wind. Luke locates the genesis of this sound when he says it came from heaven. He’s letting us know right away that the source of this event is not natural.

A negative parallel from the Old Testament: Job 1:19 records, “Suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on all of your children, and they are dead...”

What happens on Pentecost has two characteristics. 1<sup>st</sup>, it came in God’s Timing. 2<sup>nd</sup>, it came from heaven. This is totally a God-thing.

Throughout the Old and New Testament wind is used a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Wind is a very common Old Testament indication that the Holy Spirit is either present or is the source of some supernatural event.

- Example 1: I Chronicles 14:15 - King David facing an enemy.
- Example 2: Ezekiel 37:7-10

### **New Testament Examples**

John 3:8: "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you don't know where the wind comes from or where it's going. That's the way it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Greek word for wind: "Pneuma". In our text, Luke doesn't use the word "pneuma" for "wind". He uses a rare Greek word, "pnoes". (only one other use in the New Testament – in Acts 17:25).

Luke uses the word pnoes, meaning a violent blast of wind – not a gentle blowing of wind. An Old Testament parallel: "With a blast from your nostrils, the water piled up. The waves stood up like a dam. The deep water thickened in the middle of the sea." – Exodus 15:8

- **The Second Manifestation: Fiery Tongues**

Luke 3:16-17: "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

John predicts that Jesus will baptize his followers with the Holy Spirit and fire. John's prediction accurately describes the Acts 2 events.

If we compare John's prophecy to the Acts 2 events, we see the accuracy of John's prediction. Acts 2:2-4 - from the International Standard Version:

“Suddenly, a sound like the roar of a mighty windstorm came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated, and one rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign languages as the Spirit gave them that ability.” – Acts 2:2-4 International Standard Version

**Three manifestations of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost: Wind, Fire, and Foreign Languages.** F.F. Bruce: “The manifestation of the Spirit’s advent was visible as well as audible.” I would add that the manifestations were also visible as well as invisible.

The audible manifestations were wind and languages. The visible manifestation was “tongues of fire”.

Throughout the Old Testament fire is connected to sacrifices, the Holy Spirit, purification, and judgment. On the Day of Pentecost the tongues of fire were no doubt meant to represent the Holy Spirit and purification. See: Ezekiel 1:4-5; Exodus 3:2

On the Day of Pentecost two kinds of tongues are identified – “tongues of fire” and “other tongues” or foreign languages that are spoken by the 120.

Here’s the picture: A pillar or cloud of fire manifests as the 120 are praying. Seconds later, it starts dividing and settling on the 120. This was a visible manifestation of the invisible Spirit of God. This is a totally supernatural event: The 120 don’t have any control over what is happening.

A parallel event: Jesus’ baptism by John.

Luke 3:21-22: “When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove.

While the 120 had tongues of fire settle on them, the Holy Spirit settled on Jesus in the form of a dove. It's a similar experience because Jesus is said to have been filled with the Holy Spirit: Luke 4:1-2 - "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil."

Every person had a tongue of fire hovering over them. All 120 had an identical experience. The manifestation of tongues of fire was the indication that the Holy Spirit had come in identical fashion for every one of the 120.

What would it have meant if only Peter, James, and John had that experience? What would it have meant if some of the 120 experienced this, but others did not?

Next Time: "Speaking In Foreign Languages"