

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2018: *The Book of Acts*

#### Lesson 2 Pentecost

#### Read for this week's study

Acts 2:1–4; John 14:16; Acts 2:5–13; Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:22–39; Psalm 110:1–3.

#### Memory Text

“This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear” (Acts 2:32, 33, NRSV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Coming of the Spirit
- III. The Gift of Tongues
- IV. Peter's Sermon
- V. The Exaltation of Jesus
- VI. The Firstfruits
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “The term Pentecost means ‘fiftieth’ and owes its usage to the fact that the Feast of the Firstfruits was celebrated on the fiftieth day from the offering of the barley sheaf on the first day after the Passover. It was a day of joy and thanksgiving, when the people of Israel brought before the Lord “the firstfruits of the wheat harvest” (Exodus 34:22, NIV). The feast then became a fitting symbol for the first spiritual harvest of the Christian church, when the Holy Spirit was poured out more abundantly than ever before.” (Sabbath afternoon).
2. “In Scripture, wind and fire are frequently associated with a ‘theophany’ or a divine manifestation (for example, Exodus 3:2, 19:18, Deuteronomy 4:15). In addition, wind and fire may also be used to represent the Spirit of God (John 3:8, Matthew 3:11). The Spirit had always been at work. Its influence on God's people in the Old Testament times was often revealed in a notable way, but never in its fullness.” (Sunday's lesson) What does ‘the Holy Spirit now works in His fullness’ mean? How do we know?

3. “The gift of tongues at Pentecost did not occur because it is the typical or the most important evidence of the endowment of the Spirit. It was manifested in order to launch the church’s world mission. That is, the calling given in Acts 1:8 required the gift of tongues.” (Monday’s lesson) What is the connection with the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)?
4. What is the significance of Peter’s sermon? What is the significance of Jesus’ resurrection and His exaltation? (Tuesday’s, Wednesday’s & Thursday’s lessons)
5. “When the day of Pentecost came, they [the first followers of Jesus] were all together in one place.” Acts 2:1 The first major gathering of people who had been estranged from God who asked our first parents, “Where are you?”, was at Sinai. During the Pentecost the Jews read the Scripture passage about Sinai – God’s invitation to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. And God’s presence shows up again (as wind & fire). This time God is not taking up residence in a tabernacle or a mountain. Now God is dwelling in people. And these are people from “every nation under heaven” (2:5).
6. A new reality is created by the Holy Spirit in which everyone everywhere can understand what God is offering through Jesus. Luke tells us the massive number of people who joined the Jesus movement – 3,000 (2:41).
7. At Sinai, 3,000 people were killed in a day because of their unfaithfulness (Exodus 32:28). Now people are returning back to God. Sinai is not forgotten; the covenant is alive. What was lost is being reclaimed.
8. It is also about reversing the Tower of Babel experience. There, the tongues threw people into confusion, unable to understand each other. Now a new community is constituted, people are not divided by differences, but united by the Spirit. People from all over the world are able to understand each other. There is a new reality, new community, new Exodus, new Sinai, new covenant. The Story continues with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. And it continues even today with you and me.

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

And Jesus says, “It would be better that I go, because you’ll never grow up if you don’t start thinking it through for yourselves.” And so he says, “It’s better that I go now. And you can’t see the Spirit. If you want to consult the Spirit, you’d better open the books that he has inspired. You’d better read those.” And as Ellen White says, “Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be, must be, judged by the Scriptures.”

So he doesn’t come as just a voice of authority. He comes with the authority of truth, which you will find in the Scriptures. And the men began to grow up, in the upper room. And when finally they realized that the authority of their message lay in the truth, which they found, as the two men on the way to Emmaus did, by comparing the teachings of the Old Testament with the life

and the teachings and the sufferings and the death of Christ. When they put that all together, at last they were ready to go. And then the Spirit showed himself. He'd been there all along. Who inspired the Scriptures they were reading? Who was guiding them in the interpretation of these Scriptures? But when finally they put it all together and they were ready to go, the Spirit appeared. Some say, "The Spirit came." No, they wouldn't have been where they were if the Spirit hadn't worked all along. Now the Spirit gave them visible endorsement.

"Now you're ready to go. Now take the truth. And you're going to take it just as you found it, you're going to take the Bible." Look how Paul did that. "You're going to take the Scriptures out, and you're going to tie it in with the culminating revelation, based on the Old Testament, to be found in the way Jesus lived, the way he treated people, the way he suffered, and the way he died.

And then they really had authority and power, but not a visible leader. And that's the authority we have. So I think there were many ways, perhaps, in which it was better that Jesus go. And the one that appeals to me most is that they never would have grown up so long as he was there, and they could run to him and say, "Is it this? Is it that?" And then, of course, they were preoccupied with being with him in the kingdom. "What position will I hold in the kingdom?" He said, "There are much more important things than that. I think I'd better go. I think I'd better go, and leave you to think this thing through." And they grew up. They still had some growing to do, as you recall. Peter had some growing to do. But in the end, he really grew up, didn't he? {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Acts*, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/59MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/60MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

You have that in *1 Selected Messages*, 233-235: "We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin." Now she's very strong on discipline, whom the Lord loves he disciplines, no question. She's talking here about final destruction:

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character.

{Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio presentation, *We've Camped Around This Mountain Long Enough*, #1, recorded July, 1989, South Dakota Conference Ministers Meeting} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/1MMCAMPED>

## Further Study with Ellen White

Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.

{DA 123.3}

To us today, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Spirit belongs. God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word,—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 20. {ChS 250.1}

The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50. {ChS 251.2}

At all times and in all places, in all sorrows and in all afflictions, when the outlook seems dark and the future perplexing, and we feel helpless and alone, the Comforter will be sent in answer to the prayer of faith. Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.

{DA 669.4}

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. . . . There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God. . . . Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. {ML 37.4}

The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high. {DA 669.2}

God takes men as they are, and educates them for His service, if they will yield themselves to Him. The Spirit of God, received into the soul, quickens all its faculties. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the mind that is devoted unreservedly to God, develops harmoniously, and is strengthened to comprehend and fulfil the requirements of God. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed to one of strength and steadfastness. Continual devotion

establishes so close a relation between Jesus and His disciples that the Christian becomes like his Master in character. He has clearer, broader views. His discernment is more penetrative, his judgment better balanced. So quickened is he by the life-giving power of the Sun of Righteousness, that he is enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God. {GW 285.3}

All that Christ was to the disciples, He desires to be to His children today; for in that last prayer, with the little band of disciples gathered about Him, He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." John 17:20. {SC 75.1}

If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy. {MH 249.1}

But God has set in the church different gifts. These are all precious in their place, and all are to act a part in the perfecting of the saints. {3SM 25.1}

In all the Lord's arrangements, there is nothing more beautiful than His plan of giving to men and women a diversity of gifts. The church is His garden, adorned with a variety of trees, plants, and flowers. He does not expect the hyssop to assume the proportions of the cedar, nor the olive to reach the height of the stately palm. Many have received but a limited religious and intellectual training, but God has a work for this class to do if they will labor in humility, trusting in Him.—Letter 122, 1902. {Ev 98.3}

From the endless variety of plants and flowers, we may learn an important lesson. All blossoms are not the same in form or color. Some possess healing virtues. Some are always fragrant. There are professing Christians who think it their duty to make every Christian like themselves. This is man's plan, not the plan of God. In the church of God there is room for characters as varied as are the flowers in a garden. In His spiritual garden there are many varieties of flowers.—Letter 95, 1902. {Ev 99.1}

**Recommended Reading:** *The Acts of the Apostles* chapter 5 – "The Gift of the Spirit"

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