

“Peter At Pentecost”
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 Texts: Acts 2: 14-42

Peter’s first recorded sermon occurs at Pentecost. A multi language event in Jerusalem (**And how hear we every man in our own language, wherein we were born . . . are not these men** (the apostles who were praising God, speaking **the wonderful works of God**) (v. 11) **all Galileans?** (v. 7) . . . **what could this possibly mean?** (v.12). So the occasion of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (like **tongues of fire**) and God’s praises being voiced publicly (**Now when this was being noised about**—occurring audibly, the witnesses were confused, confounded and or, well, perplexed: *what is the meaning of this? Just what is going on?* And Peter, inspired of God, arose to address the situation.

Something new, something old
 Something true and foretold.

Now from last week, you should anticipate a *repent and believe the gospel moment—and you shall have it!* But Peter, first addresses the natural assessment of things according to which these men were speaking ecstatically, or, as we say, **speaking in tongues**. It is not evident to me that this occurrence tracks with what goes on with charismatic groups in our day—it could be what happens in Assembly of God churches and other Holy Spirit denominations. The scriptures do suggest that this was not a “one-off-thing-that this spiritual awakening manifestation repeated itself in the early days of the church. Furthermore, Paul addresses the matter of speaking in tongues (**I speak in them more that most do** (1 Cor. 14:18-40) in his church practice. The first thing is that these men were not inebriated, or drunk! That would be to misprize one of the **inaugural signs** of the new day, the dawning of the Messianic/church age—or birthday of the church in Jerusalem.

The first mark of the apostolic preaching is that is explains something in the present and that something relates to the current activity of God!

This clarification is necessary because there is evidence to suggest that the church had already gathered in other places, such as in Sycchar as a result of the witness of the woman Jesus met at the well. There may have been other home-based fellowships of the earliest disciples scattered throughout Galilee. But Luke’s narrative is, at this point in time focused on Jerusalem and the birth of the church ion that location.

So, the descent of the Holy Spirit was an inaugural sign of the advent of the kingdom of God. Now this event had been prophesied, according to Peter: Joel 2:28-32:

28 “[a]**It will come about after this**
That I will pour out My Spirit on all [b]mankind;
And your sons and daughters will prophesy,
Your old men will dream dreams,
Your young men will see visions.

29 “Even on the male and female servants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days.
The Day of the Lord

30 “I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth,
 Blood, fire and columns of smoke.

31 “The sun will be turned into darkness
 And the moon into blood
 Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

32 “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord
Will be delivered;
 For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
 There will be those who escape,
 As the Lord has said,
 Even among the survivors whom the Lord calls¹.

The second mark of the apostolic preaching is that it sets forth prophetic fulfillment.

True, Peter’s rendition of Joel is not complete—but his over-all allusion to this passage is inescapable. I have the following to observe about this passage: 1. It is an announcement of the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy: **I will pour out my Spirit**. That, friends, is exactly what you’ve witnessed: a day of reformation has come, and the Spirit has been poured out on **sons and daughters, male and female servants, right before your eyes!** 2. This day is somehow **the day of the Lord**, the Kingdom of God has come with power as of right now—a new age has dawned. And 3. whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered—*that is, healed, made sound, saved entirely*.

The third mark is the identity of Jesus: It is critical to know who the Lord is so that you can call out his name, believe on his name and enter the kingdom.

There’s more to the passage. In verse 31 of Joe; 2, Peter is alluding to recent history—events that occurred within two months— during the crucifixion of the Christ. Both familiar and known, currently verifiable. The shock of all these supernatural occurrences had hardly died out. Evidence of the signs and wonders and miracles performed by Jesus was walking the streets: Lazarus, freshly raised from the dead; the man born blind who had received his sight—he was still adjusting to being sighted. If the name of Jesus was mentioned. All that God had performed through him was bound to resurface—through gossip and through witnesses. All of that was there as signs of divine approval of this man Jesus, who called to be the Messiah, the Lamb of God etc. And, most compellingly, Jesus’ resurrection from the dead was, as we shall see, touted by Peter and the others united with him. Whatever it was that happened, it was supernatural and it was religiously very significant—to wit the efforts of the Jewish authorities to suppress the Jesus movement, and the extraordinary efforts to cover up the reports of an empty tomb and of resurrection.

¹ Footnotes

a. Joel 2:28 Ch 3:1 in Heb

b. Joel 2:28 Lit *flesh*

And now this, the fourth mark:. Peter is advancing a prophetic word by Joel and making current application—what you, visitors to Jerusalem, are seeing is the fulfillment of prophecy. What you, residents of Jerusalem are experiencing (tongues, evaluation of God's wondrous works, the testimony of some whom Jesus personally healed (the poor, the deaf, the blind, the lame, the brokenhearted and the oppressed according to Isaiah 49 and 61²), the supernatural occurrences (graves opening, earthquakes and the rending of the temple veil (top to bottom) are all the aftershocks of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God who is the perfection of the sacrificial system. He is creating a resurrection narrative.

Now it is significant that Peter apprizes the residents of Jerusalem and their Passover guests together of the testimony about Jesus of Nazareth. **A man approved of God amongst you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in your midst as you yourselves know** (v.22). Peter is drawing on popular knowledge of Jesus' approval (amongst believers and some of the public) because the authorities were in agreement not to approve of Jesus.

And this is the fifth mark of apostolic preaching:the approval of Jesus as Lord.

If the Messianic Age has commenced, as Peter believed it had, in and through the person of Jesus, Peter was going to have move the conversation—or more properly the proclamation, in the direction of *identifying Jesus as the Promise One of Israel*. If people are going to believe on the name of Jesus, they absolutely must be introduced to him as messiah. And if all of this was about God keeping his covenant promises, Peter needed to establish, in the sixth mark of apostolic preaching, that this was in keeping with the divine plan of salvation.

23 this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of [d]godless men and put *Him* to death.

This Man, about whom you have been hearing much of late, Peter asserts, was by divine plan (a thing determined in eternity past—the plan of salvation) **was delivered by you into the hands of wicked hands** (namely,. by your Jewish leaders in collusion the Romans and Gentile governing authorities, namely Pilate) **crucified and slain.** (v.23) And while the authorities thought that that would end the matter, God had other plans, *for Jesus was neither a deceiver, nor a seditionist!* While the sinlessness of Jesus was probably in Peter's mind, what he wanted to declare was ***the vindication of Jesus through resurrection from the dead.***

24 [e]But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the [f]agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held [g]in its power.

Truly human, truly the Son of God, truly dead and now truly alive! Something new, something old, Something true and foretold.

² This was the word Jesus preached in Nazareth according to Luke 4:18-19. The message enraged them and the worshippers **thrust him out of the city and led him to the brow of the hill that they might cast him down headlong.** Luke 4:28-29 Such is the obstinate resistance of unbelief coupled with an arrogant trust in natural understanding: we know Jesus as a mere person, a carpenter and Joseph's son,

And, for you and for me, this is enormously great news: the power of the grave, the finality of the death ***have been overthrown—death is no longer the end, and no longer the enemy that it used to be, even just a few short weeks ago!***

The seventh mark: And if you believe in this Jesus, if you trust in the power of His name, you can be saved from the penalty of sin—death, futility and oblivion forever!

Human destiny has been altered by the sovereign power and authority of Jesus!

What proof does Peter have of this seismic shift *in the structure of reality*? *This something new!* Well, he has the testimony of word of God. Listen carefully.

25 For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken.

26' Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will live in hope; 27 Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades,

Nor [h]allow Your [i]Holy One to [i]undergo decay.

28' You

have made known to me the ways of life;

You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.'

Peter has begun to exposit the Old Testament in terms of New Testament revelation! He is explaining what Psalm 16 means—Scripture interpreting Scripture—just as we say. This citation establishes the eternal existence of Christ, what we call the co-eternity of the Son with the Faith and the Spirit. It also contains the promise of resurrection life (vv. 27-28); the Son first, then we, by faith, follow in resurrection.

Peter cites David as meaning (prophetically), that Jesus is **the Lord always in my presence—at the right hand of God** and from that position he declares, **Thou, O God, wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither will Thou suffer The Holy One to see corruption.** *Both fulfilled in Jesus' death and resurrection.* David could hardly speak these words of himself for, as Peter points out, **David, the patriarch is both dead and buried and his sepulcher is with us to this day.** **Being a prophet** Peter declares, David foresaw the day of Christ—this day—and scripture cannot be broken!

This is the form, in seven marks, of the apostolic preaching! 1. Explaining the present activity of God; 2. Expounding prophetic fulfillment; 3. Establish from scripture the identity of Jesus; 4. Current application of all that's going on; 5. The commendation of Jesus as Lord; 6. Vindication of Jesus by resurrection from the dead (and exaltation); and 7. If you believe on Jesus, having repented, you are saved.

He seeing this (the eternal Christ, the right hand prominence of Christ) **before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell,**

neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. (Acts 2:31-32)

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the .Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear. (v. 33)

Thence we come to Peter's conclusion:

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (v.36)

If this be who Jesus is, and all that he accomplished, then we are saved indeed.

Amen