

# *How to Read the Bible for All its Worth*

## Lesson 6a: Acts 1-2 – The Ascension of Christ and Pentecost

### *Introduction*

Within the first two chapters of Acts, we see the ascension of Christ, the replacement of Judas Iscariot, and the eventful happenings of the Day of Pentecost. This was a time of great transition and new beginnings for the early church. They went from simply following Christ around to having to seek Him through prayer and following the Holy Spirit. We are living in the church age today and it is for us to understand the origin of this age.

### *Acts 1:1-11 – Introduction and Ascension of Jesus*

What was Christ's purpose in appearing to the disciples after His resurrection?

**To convince them of His resurrection and to teach them about the kingdom of God.**

Did the Apostles understand what Jesus was teaching them concerning the Kingdom?

**Their question to Jesus shows an imperfect understanding on their part.**

What does vs. 11 teach us about the return of Christ? See also Luke 21:27

**He will return to earth upon a cloud in a sky.**

### *Acts 1:12-26 – Replacing Judas Iscariot*

Peter quotes two Old Testament passages in his speech. Read these passages and determine whether how they fit with Judas Iscariot.

Psalm 69:20-28 – **This passage is a curse upon those who participated in His crucifixion**

Psalm 109:1-13 – **This passage speaks of his deceit and the curse that followed**

### **The Qualifications of an Apostle to the Jews** (see Acts 1:2, 1:21-25)

1. **Initially baptized by John**
2. **Followed Christ through His earthly ministry**
3. **Witness of His Resurrection**
2. **Chosen by Christ**

### **The Purposes of an Apostle**

1. To become a spiritual foundation for the Church
  - a. Revelation 21:9-14 - **Twelve Sons of Jacob became the physical foundation (tribes) for the Kingdom of Israel. Twelve Apostles became the spiritual foundation for the Church, God's Kingdom.**
  - b. Ephesians 2:19-22 – **They are part of the spiritual foundation of the Church**
  - c. Acts 2:42-43 – **The early church looked to the apostles as teachers and leaders**
2. To serve as witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus to the Jews
  - a. Acts 1:22 – **Peter states that they are to be witnesses of Christ's resurrection.**
  - b. Galatians 5:15-19 – **Paul looked to Peter as an authority on Jesus (1 Cor 15:3-9) – Paul relates the confession**
  - c. 2 Corinthians 12:12 – **The signs of an apostle were the miraculous abilities bestowed by Christ**

### **Advanced Questions for Discussion:**

- 1.) Does Scripture imply that Judas Iscariot was saved or lost? (See John 17:11-12) If he was lost, how did he fulfill the ministry of an apostle? – **Lost. The authority & power of God**
- 2.) Does the Apostle Paul qualify for the office filled by Matthias? – **Not for this Apostleship, but he was an apostle to the Gentiles.**

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### Acts 2:1-13 – Day of Pentecost Part 1: Baptism of the Spirit

#### The Day of Pentecost

Pentecost – fiftieth – it is the 50<sup>th</sup> day since the Passover (when Christ died)

- It was the anniversary of the giving of the Law (10 Commandments) on Mt. Sinai
- Also known as the “Feast of Weeks” in the OT because it was 7 weeks after Passover

Why would there have been a sound like the wind? – The word, “Spirit” means wind.

What were they doing when this event occurred? – They were sitting in this room. It doesn't indicate they were praying for this or anything else. This wasn't something they “prayed down”. It was something the Lord sovereignly appointed to happen.

Why Cloven Tongues? – The tongues being cloven may represent the diversity of languages that they would now be empowered to speak.

Why Fire? – Spiritual gifts are usually represented as a fire (a zeal) that burns within us. Not only did these people have the ability to speak in other languages, but the zeal to use this gift to tell others about Jesus.

2 Timothy 1:6 – “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.”

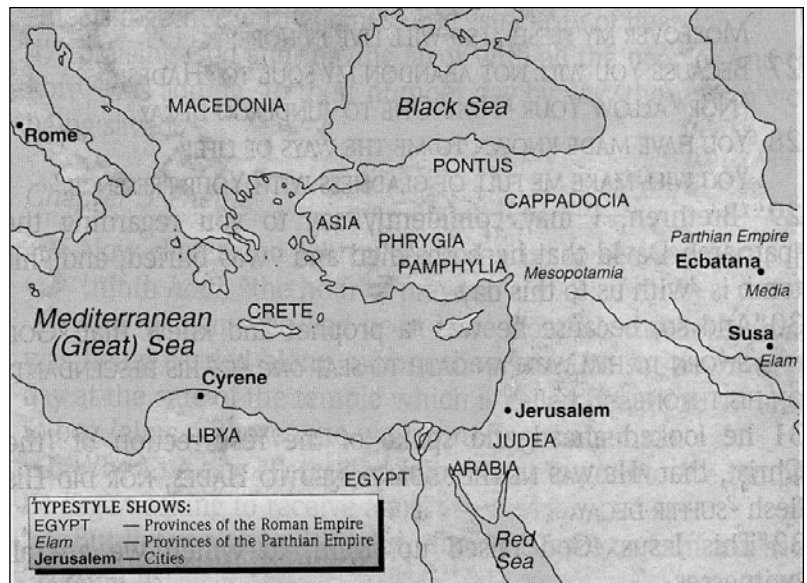
- “stir up” in this passage literally means, “fan the flame”

What type of people were present in Jerusalem at Pentecost? – Jews that had been scattered throughout the Middle East, Africa, Rome, Asia.

Why was this a wonderfully strategic move on the part of the Lord? – It gave the gospel a great head start by having people from throughout that part of the world present. When they returned to their homelands, they took the gospel with them.

What were the people speaking in tongues saying? – They were praising the wonderful works of God.

What did some accuse them of and why? – They were accused of being drunk.



A Map of the Areas surrounding Jerusalem

#### The Basics of Spiritual Gifts:

Scriptures teach that there are two types of spiritual gifts given

1. Miraculous Gifts – gifts meant to attest to the truthfulness of the witnesses' message

Examples: Miracles, Healings, Tongues

2. Edifying Gifts – permanent gifts meant to spiritually build up the church

Examples: Ministering (Serving), Teaching, Exhortation

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### *Acts 2:14-36 – Day of Pentecost Part 2: Peter's Sermon*

How did Peter handle the accusation that the disciples were all just drunk?

He said it was just the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour (9 am) and that it didn't make sense that 120 were drunk.

### **Joel's Prophecy**

Joel 2:28-32 – “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. 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 calls.” NASU

What did Peter say about the crowd's knowledge of Jesus?

Why didn't Jesus remain dead?

### *Acts 2:37-47 – Day of Pentecost Part 3: Salvation of 3000 and the Aftermath*

### *Assignments:*

Read Acts 1:1 – 2:47 and answer the following questions:

1. Why does Luke start Acts with Jesus' ascension?
2. What did everyone do after Jesus' ascension?
3. How did they choose a successor to Judas Iscariot?
4. What is, “speaking in tongues” and why did God allow it to happen here?
5. What were some of the main points in Peter's sermon?
6. What did the people that were saved on Pentecost do?
7. What type of people (race or ethnic origin) were the people who were saved on Pentecost?